



PROVOST AND VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

New Mexico State University (NMSU) —New Mexico’s only Land-Grant and one of just two R1 research universities in the state— invites nominations, inquiries and applications for the position of Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

NMSU is a nationally recognized research university distinguished by both academic excellence and accessibility. Rooted in the vibrant landscapes of southern New Mexico and serving communities across the state and borderlands region, NMSU combines the rigor of a leading research institution with the inclusivity and public purpose of a Land-Grant university. With its main campus in Las Cruces, community college partners in Alamogordo, Las Cruces, and Grants, NMSU Global, and a statewide Cooperative Extension presence, NMSU provides a distinctive academic environment where discovery, student achievement, and community engagement are deeply interconnected. The next Provost will join a collaborative leadership team dedicated to advancing academic quality, fostering student success, and supporting faculty excellence across this diverse and dynamic institution.

NMSU offers an exceptional opportunity for an academic leader who values excellence, collaboration, and impact—where discovery and learning directly improve lives across New Mexico and beyond. Reporting to the President, the future Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs serves as the University’s Chief Academic Officer, guiding the academic enterprise in its efforts to fulfill the Land-grant Mission of the University to educate the people of New Mexico, provide our students with avenues toward successful outcomes, and develop their analytic and expressive capacities for life. The Provost will work alongside the Dean of the Graduate School, the Dean of Students, the Enrollment Management Team, and the Deans of the Colleges, as well as the Chancellor for the Community Colleges, NMSU Global, and the Faculty Senate, to devise strategies to ensure our students, graduate and undergraduate alike, complete their academic journeys successfully. The Provost will foster student engagement in career-forming experiences such as research opportunities, cooperative education, capstones, and internships. The next Provost will ensure the integrity of academic programs through accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission and alignment with the state’s Higher Education Department.

As a Carnegie R1 university (the highest research classification), NMSU seeks a Provost who will champion faculty and student success in research, scholarship, and creative

activity. The Provost will collaborate closely with the Vice President for Research, Creativity and Economic Development (RCED) to align academic priorities with research initiatives that enhance faculty and student scholarly achievement. The Provost oversees academic deans and programs with a focus on responsible budgeting, effective use of data, and sound academic stewardship. The position engages in genuine partnership with faculty and administrative leaders to enhance curriculum development, foster innovation, and advance student support systems.

We seek a Provost who leads with integrity, transparency, and collaboration, and demonstrates courage, humility, and a deep commitment to teamwork and communication. The successful candidate will not hesitate to take on ambitious goals and will embody NMSU's hardy spirit of resilience, service, and community. The Provost will cultivate this spirit across the university, inspiring academic excellence and shared purpose.

NMSU's Provost will have extensive and demonstrated leadership experience, having achieved and currently embodying the following:

1. Academic and Scholarly Leadership

- a. Earned a terminal degree in a discipline offered at NMSU with distinguished scholarly, professional, and leadership achievements, and credentials suitable for appointment at the rank of tenured Professor.
- b. Demonstrated success in advancing strategic enrollment and enhancing student success and fostering academic growth while expanding interdisciplinary collaboration across colleges through new academic and research programs.
- c. Champions faculty and student success in research, scholarship, and creative activity including strategies to sustain NMSU's R1 classification and expand research-based student engagement.
- d. Demonstrates a willing commitment to the Land-grant mission with the ability to articulate and advance an environment where all students, faculty and staff can thrive, emphasizing inclusivity and connection to New Mexico's diverse regions and cultural traditions.

2. Student Success and Educational Excellence

- a. Possesses a comprehensive understanding of student achievement and the distinctive challenges of higher education in New Mexico, emphasizing student growth, well-being, and public service.
- b. Demonstrated success improving student outcomes that are inclusive for first-generation, rural, Tribal, and non-traditional students, including affordability strategies and basic-needs support, with progress measured against student-success metrics.
- c. Ensures that the Dean of Students, in collaboration with auxiliaries, financial aid, enrollment and retention teams, promotes the integration of campus life

activities with strategies that enhance student well-being, belonging, and academic success.

- d. Aligns academic programs, advising, and student services to create an integrated educational experience that connects classroom learning, campus engagement, and career preparation.
- e. Demonstrates some experience in transfer and articulation processes between a university's main campus and its community colleges to foster seamless student progression, reduce time to graduation, and enhance overall student success.
- f. Promotes community-based learning, service, and applied research as integral parts of the educational experience.

3. Collaborative and Enduring Leadership

- a. Evinces durable leadership and a track record of seeing multi-year academic initiatives through implementation and assessment, fostering stability and continuity.
- b. Engages in collaborative, transparent, and servant leadership, with the ability to build and support teams through mutual trust, shared purpose, and empathy.
- c. Demonstrated commitment to shared governance and academic freedom, working with faculty, staff, students, and the Faculty Senate in true partnership to advance academic excellence.
- d. Has worked effectively with faculty, staff, and graduate student labor unions to promote shared mission and morale.

4. Fiscal Stewardship and Strategic Management

- a. Demonstrated ability to manage complex academic and administrative environments while navigating the evolving landscape of higher education.
- b. Knows how to prioritize transparency in managing transitional budgets, while protecting the academic core and fostering partnership on workload, morale, and retention.
- c. Leads in promoting responsible budgeting, data-informed decision-making, and stewardship of institutional resources to advance academic priorities.
- d. Works closely with the President to balance academic goals with broader institutional needs.

5. Land-grant Mission and Community Engagement

- a. Reveals a cogent understanding of and commitment to the Land-grant mission of serving New Mexico's diverse regions and traditions.
- b. Builds a sense of community beyond campus, advancing NMSU's service to local, state, and borderlands communities.
- c. Understands and values the importance of partnerships with tribal nations, rural populations, and U.S.–Mexico border communities.

- d. Promotes the integration of community-based research, service learning, and applied scholarship as essential components of the academic mission.

New Mexico State University is committed to identifying a Provost who embodies academic excellence, collaborative leadership, and a passion for serving the people and communities of New Mexico. This is an opportunity for an academic leader who seeks not only to advance research and academic excellence, but to join a community defined by collaboration, purpose, and belonging. The successful candidate will find at NMSU a community that values authenticity, shared leadership, and mutual respect—a place where academic leadership is personal as well as profession. We are seeking not just a Provost—but The Provost who will help shape the next chapter of NMSU’s legacy of committed service and innovation.

President Valerio Ferme, Ph.D.

Valerio Ferme serves as the 32nd President of the New Mexico State University System. As President, he leads the state’s comprehensive research, land-grant university excelling in teaching, research, and public service. He previously served as Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, as well as Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, at the University of Cincinnati (UC).

A firm believer in student success, Ferme supported numerous access and retention investments on behalf of students at UC. At the same time, during his tenure there as provost, the colleges more than doubled hires of underrepresented faculty; and the provost’s office launched a post-doctoral program to attract diverse, prospective faculty candidates; provided permanent professional funds for employee resource groups; created a provost faculty fellow program; and addressed salary minima for advising staff and adjunct faculty.

A native of Italy holding dual citizenship, Ferme earned undergraduate degrees in Biology and Religious Studies at Brown University, Masters in Comparative Literature and Italian Studies from Indiana University and a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from UC Berkeley, where he was awarded Fulbright and Chancellor’s Fellowships.

About Las Cruces, New Mexico

Las Cruces is the second largest city in New Mexico and is located in the southern part of the state at the crossroads of I-10 and I-25. Less than an hour from El Paso, Las Cruces is the mid-point between San Diego, CA and Dallas, TX. Boasting an average of 320 days of sunshine per year and situated at an elevation of 3,900 feet above sea level, Las Cruces is an ideal year-round destination, home to a rich culture and history, vibrant art and music scene, ideal weather for an abundance of outdoor activities, and authentic cuisine made from recipes passed down through the generations.

Applications and Nominations

The Provost Search Committee invites confidential inquiries, nominations, and applications (letter of interest, resume/CV and contact information for at least five professional references) to be submitted to the search firm assisting New Mexico State University. Confidential review of materials will begin immediately and continue until the appointment is made. It is preferred, however, that all nominations and applications be submitted prior to January 20, 2026 to:

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