



Jacksonville University
Provost
Jacksonville, FL

THE SEARCH

Jacksonville University (JU) seeks a distinguished academic and administrative leader to serve as its next Provost. This is an exciting opportunity to join a university experiencing incredible momentum thanks to the development of innovative new partnerships, programs, schools, and colleges. JU is a private liberal arts university in Jacksonville, FL, and serves as a regional hub for business, technology, law, aviation, and healthcare education. As the chief academic officer, the next Provost will serve as an important member of the senior leadership team, helping to sustain and strengthen JU's positioning. Over the past decade, JU has launched the Brooks Rehabilitation College of Healthcare Sciences, accredited their College of Law, and created a partnership with the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (LECOM). These efforts were achieved while still preserving the historic, mission-driven, liberal arts core and the close-knit community for which JU is known. The University seeks a collaborative and data-driven leader to guide it into the next phase of its academic journey.

The recent growth at JU is impressive, with the enrollment of the largest incoming class in JU history and an ongoing \$175M fundraising campaign. With five colleges, a new honors college, partnerships with international universities, over 100 majors available to undergraduate students, and more than 75 master's and doctorate programs, JU is poised to be a destination University for students across the country as well as a regional base for healthcare and law. JU is home to approximately 4,250 students, with the majority of undergraduate students residing on campus and one-fifth participating in the University's D1 NCAA athletics. JU also leans into its ideal location minutes from the beach and Atlantic Ocean, which enables the University to provide first-class programming, research, and curriculum in marine science, sustainability, natural sciences, and engineering. Further, in 2024, JU was ranked in the Jacksonville Business Journal as one of the Best Places to Work. The University has 260 full-time and part-time faculty and 400 staff members committed to student success and JU's mission of providing a transformative education.

The successful provost candidate will have significant administrative leadership experience, familiarity with academic budgeting and planning processes, a commitment to faculty governance and shared governance, and the capacity for strategic and well-informed decision-making and change management. An unwavering ethical compass and commitment to diversity in all forms is also crucial to this role, as is a student-centered mindset and passion for student success.

JU has a highly interpersonal campus culture, and the Provost will possess the talents necessary to bring constituents together under a clear and informed vision for JU's academic future. Consistent with JU's culture, the next Provost will be a collaborative and transparent communicator who is committed to interdisciplinarity and will understand future trends and markets in higher education. The Provost will serve as a trusted and valuable advisor to institutional leadership, senior colleagues, and faculty.

Jacksonville University has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist with this important recruitment. All inquiries, applications, and nominations should be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

JACKSONVILLE UNIVERSITY

Jacksonville University empowers students for life-long growth as global citizens through a transformative, innovative, educational experience, built on excellence in community-centered service. Affirming the importance of scholarship, leadership, creativity, and service, Jacksonville University prepares students to build better communities and make meaningful contributions to an increasingly connected society.

– Jacksonville University Mission and Vision Statement

Jacksonville University is located in Jacksonville, FL, across the St. Johns River from downtown and just minutes from the Atlantic Ocean. Founded in 1934, JU began as a private two-year college, but in the late 1950s, it merged with the Jacksonville College of Music and became Jacksonville University. In the 1990s, JU reconfigured itself as a liberal arts college and embarked on a fundraising campaign that allowed its campus footprint to expand. Today, Jacksonville University has a 240-acre campus and is a North Florida academic leader, attracting students from across the state, country, and world.

Jacksonville University has approximately 4,250 students, with 2,950 undergraduates and roughly 1,300 graduate students. JU prides itself on a diverse student body, representing 48 states and 80 countries, and over 30 percent of students identify as students of color. In Fall 2024, JU enrolled 759 full-time first-year students, the largest incoming class in JU's history. JU also welcomed 251 transfer students in Fall 2024, a 20 percent increase from the year prior. The growth mirrors the University's broader success; as graduate and undergraduate enrollment continues to rise, Jacksonville University also enjoys growing retention rates for the third consecutive year. The first-year freshman to sophomore retention rate was 75 percent for 2023, an 11.8 percent increase from the year prior. JU has an enrollment strategy geared towards academic excellence and a student success plan structured around support, advising, and

empowering students to flourish. In 2023, JU received 8,879 applications for undergraduate admission and admitted 57 percent. Tuition and fees for JU are \$47,830, and JU's average tuition discount is 72 percent, with 40 percent of undergraduate students being Pell eligible.

Faculty

Jacksonville University employs approximately 260 full-time and part-time faculty who pride themselves on being teacher-scholars. Sixty-one percent of faculty are in full-time positions and the majority of credit hours in academic programs are delivered by full-time faculty. Standard teaching loads for full-time faculty are 24 hours on a nine-month contract or 30 hours on a 12-month contract. The average class size is 16 students, and the student-to-faculty ratio for undergraduates is 14:1. Students cite the accessibility of faculty and their eagerness to teach and engage with students as a compelling part of campus life. Many faculty are also engaged in research and supported by the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs through internal grants. Many faculty involve students in their research and scholarly activity to support experiential learning. Faculty governance and shared governance are crucial aspects of JU's structure, which contribute to an organized and active faculty community.

Colleges and Institutes

JU has five colleges: the College of Arts and Sciences, the Davis College of Business and Technology, the Linda Berry Stein College of Fine Arts and Humanities, the Brooks Rehabilitation College of Healthcare Sciences, and the College of Law. JU is also in partnership with the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine, which will reside near campus. Further, in Fall 2025, JU will launch the Cost Honors College.

The [College of Arts and Sciences](#) (COAS) is considered the liberal arts core of the University and has 558 undergraduates and 91 graduate students as of Spring 2024. The College houses the School of Social Sciences and Education as well as the School of Sciences and Mathematics. These disciplines emphasize critical thinking, scientific methods, communication skills, and a commitment to meaningful research and service to the community. A significant portion of students' core courses are housed within the College in conjunction with the Stein College of Fine Arts and Humanities. Additionally, COAS has created a partnership with OCEARCH, the largest shark-tagging and oceanic research organization in the world.

In February 2024, the [College of Law](#) achieved provisional accreditation by the American Bar Association. It is the newest law school in the state of Florida since 2004 and the only law school located in Jacksonville. In August 2024, the College moved to its permanent location in downtown Jacksonville, and as of Spring 2024, the College of Law has 85 students enrolled.

The [Linda Berry Stein College of Fine Arts and Humanities](#) contains the School of Performing Arts, the School of Art and Design, and the School of Humanities, which are key contributors to northeast Florida's cultural and artistic scene. The College collaborates closely with other colleges across campus to create

cross-disciplinary opportunities for students and also focuses on providing mentorship and personal attention to its artists.

The [Brooks Rehabilitation College of Healthcare Sciences](#) (BRCHS) houses the Keigwin School of Nursing, the School of Orthodontics, and the newly created School of Applied Health Sciences. BRCHS aspires to be the region's premier provider of health science education. The College offers several graduate degree programs that target critically needed areas such as speech-language pathology, the occupational therapy doctorate, health informatics, psychiatric mental health, clinical mental health counseling, and the Master of Science degree in Dentistry. BRCHS also provides a Healthcare Simulation Center. Opened in 2019, the Center supports experiential learning and cutting-edge collaborative training. In 2021, the Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing program began in partnership with Baptist Health and has been the most successful bachelor's program on campus. In 2023, the program created a partnership with the Mayo Clinic.

The [Davis College of Business and Technology](#) contains the School of Business, School of Engineering and Technology, and School of Aviation and Military Science. The College is AACSB, ABET, and ABBI accredited. The Davis Center for Professional Development, the Center for Organizational Research and Executive Education, and the Zimmerman Scholars Program also find their home within the College. An NSA-designated Center for Cybersecurity within Davis serves as a hub of cyber expertise in northeast Florida. Students and faculty take advantage of downtown Jacksonville's strong business and technology partnerships that result in practical coursework and applied experiences. Davis offers six master's programs and a DBA. Davis's EMBA is capped at 20 students, with 800 total graduates, many being key business leaders in Jacksonville. The School of Aviation provides a unique curriculum that includes a business core with a degree in Aviation Management or Aviation Management and Flight Operations. JU was selected in 2024 as one of only five universities to be included in advanced artificial intelligence work by the American Association of Colleges and Universities.

In January 2023, Jacksonville University began a [partnership with Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine](#) (LECOM). LECOM is the nation's largest osteopathic academic health system and Jacksonville's first four-year medical school. Initial plans for LECOM at Jacksonville University are to enroll 75 students in Fall 2026, with the class size growing to 150 students annually by 2030. At Jacksonville University, LECOM will be housed in a newly built 65,000-square-foot extension of Jacksonville University's 104,000-square-foot, \$30 million Applied Health Sciences complex located at the north end of "medical mall" of the Arlington campus.

JU also has multiple institutes that contribute to JU students' research and experiential learning. These institutes include: the Public Policy Institute, the Marine Science Research Institute, the STEAM Institute, the UpSkill Institute, and the Office of Partnerships and Development.

Students and Student Life

Jacksonville University students are focused, energetic, and thoughtful. They are highly engaged with the 60 clubs and organizations available at JU and the Campus Recreation and Wellness (JAXWell) department. The majority of students live on campus, which is an integral part of the JU experience with a three-year residency requirement. JU has three residence halls and eight on-campus apartments. JU also offers Gender Inclusive Housing, an environment where student housing is not restricted to traditional limitations of the gender binary.

JU is a small, close-knit campus with only nine percent of undergraduates and 35 percent of graduate students enrolled in full-time distance education. Additionally, Jacksonville University provides an Experiential Learning program that ensures all students participate in research, study abroad, internships, or service-learning. JU also offers students [Pathways of Distinction \(PODS\)](#), a JU-patented mobile app where students can create their own unique program of study.

Sports, including intramural and e-sports, are also an important component of life at JU. Jacksonville University has 17 NCAA Division I sports teams with approximately 450 student-athletes. Nearly one in five undergraduate JU students compete in an intercollegiate varsity sport. The University is in the Atlantic Sun Conference. Its athletic facilities include a premier baseball stadium overlooking the river, new beach volleyball and softball complexes, and top-level soccer and men's and women's basketball facilities.

Jacksonville University works to develop a supportive and inclusive campus culture that embraces and celebrates all members of the community. JU is committed to a holistic approach to fostering an inclusive environment through advocacy, collaboration, community, empowerment, and learning. The [Student Inclusion Center](#) has a mission to support underserved and marginalized students, empower students to be their authentic selves, and advocate for the injustices of others through experiential learning and collaborative partnerships. The University provides additional organizations that support these efforts, such as [Campus Ministries](#), [Disability Support Services](#), [Dolphin Allies](#), [International Student Services](#), and the [Veteran and Military Resource Center](#).

Resources such as the [Student Health Center](#), [Student Counseling Center](#), and [JAXWell](#) support JU's commitment to the wellness and mental health of its students. This is a crucial piece of the services provided at JU. They believe that students' intellectual and personal development are inseparable and strive to help them reach their academic and personal potential.

Finances

Through the launch of new graduate and professional programs, increasing enrollment, and active alumni, Jacksonville University is in a sustainable financial position. The University has a centralized financial budget model. Eighty percent of revenue comes from tuition, fees, and room and board, 10 percent from

government grants, and 10 percent from private gifts. The University's annual operating budget is \$118M, and its endowment stands at \$65.2M as of May 2024. Presently, JU is in year two of a \$175M campaign, [FUTURE MADE](#). The University has already met 65 percent progress towards this ambitious goal. This is the largest fundraising campaign in University history. Jacksonville University has an engaged alumni network with a total of 40,000 alumni and seven alumni affinity networks. JU also has several advisory boards across its five colleges and 11 schools, which offer their expertise as well as financial contributions.

Leadership

Tim Cost became the 12th president of his undergraduate alma mater in February 2013. Before coming to JU, President Cost spent 30 years as a senior leader at several of the world's largest companies, most recently serving as the Executive Vice President for PepsiCo. President Cost was part of successful senior management teams known for innovation, optimal workplace environments, inclusion, and progressive management throughout his career.

President Cost graduated with his bachelor's degree from JU and received his MBA in Finance and Economics from the William E. Simon School of Business at the University of Rochester. He is also a graduate of Harvard University's Presidential Seminar. He is the first alumnus to serve as President of JU, and his commitment to the institution is deep and genuine. Since his arrival, the University has thrived in community engagement, programmatic development, fundraising and revenue growth, and the overall culture of campus.

At JU, President Cost is known for his passion for students and their success, as well as his engaged presence on campus. In January 2024, JU announced the formation of the Cost Honors College with plans to formally launch in 2025. The naming of the Cost Honors College, endorsed by the University's 26-member Board of Trustees, recognizes President Cost and his wife, Stephanie Cost, for their transformational philanthropic support of the University, which now totals \$10M.

Jacksonville, Florida

Located in Florida's growing northeastern region, Jacksonville offers natural beauty, professional sports, abundant waterways, thriving businesses, and enticing cuisine. Jacksonville has a vibrant atmosphere, is the most populous and growing city in the state of Florida, and is the tenth most populous city in the U.S. Well-situated on the Atlantic coast, Jacksonville is home to 22 miles of beaches. The city has an elite NFL team and a thriving arts and music community. They also have the largest urban park system in the country, with more than 80,000 designated acres. It is also home to extraordinary cultural and historical locales as well as outdoor experiences through nature-filled waterways and ecological preserves. Jacksonville was named a "Supernova City" and one of the best places to live in the U.S. It is also known for its diverse neighborhoods and unique charm. Jacksonville has also been ranked third in "Top Cities for

US Job Seekers in 2024”, ranked second in “America’s Hottest Job Markets,” and ranked first for “Best Cities for College Graduates.”

THE ROLE OF THE PROVOST

Reporting to the President, the Provost is a member of the senior leadership team, the eight-member Cabinet, and the University's Chief Academic Officer. The Provost is responsible for the development, administration, growth, and quality of all academic programs and supporting functions. The Provost's charges include articulation of an academic vision, leadership in academic planning, development and administration of academic budgets, and facilitation of excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service. The Provost also acts for the President in their absence. They will be responsible for faculty and administration recruiting and hiring in the areas under Academic Affairs and make final recommendations to the President in all personnel matters. JU seeks a Provost with intellectual vitality, commitment to liberal arts and sciences, a transparent leadership style, and a deep understanding of how shared governance strengthens an institution.

The Provost has 15 direct reports and oversees all colleges, schools, and institutes, the Honors Program, Analytics and Planning, the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, International Affairs, Academic Advising, Academic Technology, the Center for Teaching and Learning, the Library, the Academic Support Center, the Writing Center, and Experiential Learning.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Specifically, the Provost will work to address the following opportunities and challenges:

Provide a refreshed academic vision for the future of Jacksonville University, 2025-2035

JU takes pride in its identity as a liberal arts and sciences institution that is also a regional destination for business, technology, law, and health care. The growth of JU is supported by the development of entrepreneurial academic programs that drive enrollment while ensuring that current programs are well-packaged and marketed. The next Provost will support the University's identity and JU's progress while thoughtfully and strategically managing its academic growth. Building on the momentum of recent years, the Provost will work with the President, the Deans, and the faculty, providing support for curriculum innovation, interdisciplinary collaborations, and program development. The Provost will also be responsible for confirming that all academic programs have ongoing assessment and accreditation processes.

Support and champion a dedicated faculty and staff

Jacksonville University's faculty are student-centered, committed, and have established a well-organized system of faculty governance and shared governance. The Provost will uphold and support the faculty and shared governance system, creating and maintaining strong relationships with faculty committees to implement future initiatives that position faculty for success. Communication is key as the Provost champions the continued growth of faculty as teachers and scholars – supporting their service to the University, monitoring workloads, supporting pedagogical innovation, and strengthening research infrastructure to encourage scholarship and teaching in partnership with the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs and the Center for Teaching and Learning.

The University is also supported by high-achieving and hard-working professional staff who maintain a collaborative culture and work together to achieve the mission of the institution. Staff members are campus leaders who guide the institution in providing services, identifying growth and student success opportunities, supporting current programs, and implementing new ones. The next Provost will support staff in these crucial efforts. They will also promote mentorship opportunities and professional development for both faculty and staff and ensure openness, transparency, and responsiveness in their interactions with the Provost's Office.

Foster interdisciplinary collaboration across colleges

The academic culture at Jacksonville University promotes interdisciplinarity and collaboration, which offers students a well-rounded curriculum through Pathways of Distinction (PODs) and the opportunity to engage in courses and research across the institution. This is part of the fabric of JU and encouraged by the academic leaders at each college. The Provost will be a collegial and creative partner in these collaborative endeavors, exploring additional ways to encourage interdisciplinary partnerships in order to further programmatic and scholarly initiatives that cut traditional boundaries. The Provost will foster open communication and information sharing across colleges in order to build new and deeper connections amongst faculty members from diverse disciplines.

Strategically allocate resources and expand revenue generation

In collaboration with JU's CFO, President, and senior leadership team, the Provost will analyze, assess, and lead the financial strategy for the academic units to ensure long-term sustainability. JU has a centralized budget model, with the Provost overseeing the allocation of resources to their units. The Provost will encourage and assist college leaders in discovering creative and entrepreneurial ideas for revenue growth and making crucial and fair decisions about the allocation of resources. The Provost will bring financial acumen to strategic conversations about enrollment, program development and assessment, organizational structure, and the implementation of new initiatives while also supporting existing successful programs. They must balance a realistic understanding of the financial pressures facing higher education with the inspiration to bring a solutions-oriented approach to academic planning.

While JU is in a stable financial position, the Provost will continue to identify and address budget challenges and diversify revenue sources, including fundraising and grants. The FUTURE MADE campaign has seen incredible progress and engagement from alumni and donors. The mission of the campaign is closely tied to partnerships, growth, research, applied learning, and community engagement. The Provost will assist the President and the Office of Advancement in fundraising and communication efforts by telling the story of JU and being actively involved in external commitments.

Further strengthen the student experience

JU students embrace their University's size and the opportunities it provides them for personalized support and an individualized academic journey. The Provost will work in conjunction with the deans and senior leadership to ensure that the University continues to provide a vibrant, engaging, and supportive campus environment for all students that integrates curricular and co-curricular experiences in unique ways.

Experiential learning is a cornerstone of JU's mission and the Provost is responsible for administering academic policies and programs that support that initiative. The new Provost should possess an understanding of the needs and expectations of today's students as well as an interest in engaging with pressing student issues, including campus issues related to diversity and belonging and attention to student mental health.

Promote and practice communication, trust, and transparency

JU is a close-knit community of passionate students, faculty, and staff who are committed to the University's student-centered mission. A keen listener and communicator, the Provost will be skilled at disseminating information across the institution, having candid conversations, creating space for the open exchange of ideas, leading the community in engaging one another across issues of both difference and commonality, and will be a champion of the [Quality Enhancement Plan](#) (QEP). Serving as a unifier in bringing the faculty and staff together under a coalesced vision, the Provost will ensure that all constituencies are heard, and will balance consultation with timely decision-making, cultivating a culture that respects many perspectives that exist on campus while also embracing opportunities and attending to challenges as they arise. The next Provost will be student-centric and faculty-forward while also bringing joy and purpose to the already dynamic campus culture.

CHARACTERISTICS AND QUALIFICATIONS

Jacksonville University seeks in its new Provost a scholar and experienced administrator who combines the ability to communicate effectively with a commitment to collaboration. Candidates should have significant experience in academic leadership and a demonstrated ability to cultivate consensus and a

sense of shared purpose in a diverse community. Preference will be given to those who have held the office of Provost, Vice Provost, or Dean of a reasonably comparative university.

The search committee understands that no single candidate will have all the ideal qualifications, but it seeks candidates with the following experience and abilities:

- Successful and significant experience in academic administration;
- Practical experience in creating, developing, and executing complex academic partnerships;
- Budgetary experience and an astute understanding of university finances;
- Proven commitment to the importance of undergraduate education and academic excellence in graduate and professional programs;
- Ability to serve as an excellent ambassador for Jacksonville University and to engage effectively with alumni, donors, parents, and external audiences on behalf of the institution;
- Dedication to upholding and supporting the processes of shared governance;
- Significant intellectual acumen and wide-ranging intellectual curiosity and the ability to learn areas outside their own expertise quickly;
- Commitment to innovation in curriculum and program development;
- Dedication to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging, including demonstrated experience successfully recruiting, retaining, and developing a diverse campus community of faculty, staff, and administrators;
- An interest in the adoption and implementation of technology, including AI;
- Emotional intelligence, intercultural competence, and awareness; a demonstrated ability to communicate with nuance and foresight; demonstrated experience with and a commitment to engaging and listening to diverse constituencies and audiences;
- Integrity of the highest order, strong listening skills, and a transparent and open style;
- Interest in learning and cultivate appreciation and respect for the University's distinctive culture and traditions;
- A doctorate or equivalent terminal degree and a record of distinguished scholarship and teaching requisite for a tenured appointment as a full professor at Jacksonville University.

TO APPLY

Confidential inquiries, nominations/referrals, and applications (including CVs and two- to three-page letters of interest responding to the opportunities and challenges outlined above) should be sent electronically to:

Kate Barry, Partner
Kristen Andersen, Senior Associate
Kaitlin Cruz, Senior Search Coordinator
Isaacson, Miller

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/jacksonville-university/provost>

Jacksonville University values diversity, equity, and inclusion and strives to create a welcoming community where all stakeholders feel valued and a sense of belonging. We believe in lifelong learning and preparing globally-minded citizens for the real world. We recruit students, faculty, staff, and leaders from all over the globe and respect differences in ability, age, appearance, athletic and student organization involvement, ethnicity, faith, gender, gender expression, immigration status, language, military/veteran status, nationality, political ideology, race, religion, talent, sex, sexuality, socio-economic status, and other personal identities and experiences.

Jacksonville University is an equal-opportunity institution and prohibits discrimination. We consider each stakeholder to be a key player in Jacksonville University's civic responsibility and commitment to this work.