



Rector (President)
Zamorano University
San Antonio de Oriente, Francisco Morazán, Honduras

THE SEARCH

Zamorano University, an institution dedicated to sustainability, innovation, and social impact in Latin America, seeks a leader to amplify the power of its highly effective and distinct educational model to take on the great issues of our era: global challenges in food security, sustainable agriculture, and environmental science. Its next rector will uphold this institution's remarkable legacy as one of the top agricultural universities in the world and honor its traditions, and also propel this critical institution forward, accelerating its ability to shape the next generation of ethical leaders who will contribute to a more prosperous and food-secure world. With a deep understanding of Zamorano's distinct institutional culture and challenges, the rector will balance aspiration with achievable priorities, leading with pragmatism through structural and financial constraints.

Founded more than 80 years ago, Zamorano University's teaching, applied research, and community outreach programs are focused on sustainable and competitive agriculture, agribusiness, food technology, food security, and environmental science. The University has a transformative impact on its talented, hardworking students, who come from over 20 Latin American countries and around the world. Zamorano places a strong emphasis on providing need-based scholarship funding to enable students to come to the University from communities impacted by poverty and malnutrition, studying alongside full-pay students and building bridges across the University's diverse population. Its campus is a botanical garden and biological reserve in Honduras, and the impact of this enriching, multicultural, and Pan-American environment spans far beyond the grounds. The University is a strategic ally to international universities, communities, governments, and the private sector for the advancement of agricultural programs and enterprises that benefit all of Latin America, as approximately 95% of Zamorano alumni (Zamoranos) return to their home countries to apply the skills and expertise they develop at the University.

This role calls for a proven leader who can leverage the expertise of a multinational Board of Trustees, foster strong shared governance, and drive strategic growth in enrollment by expanding outreach throughout the region. The rector will champion academic excellence, advancing Zamorano's reputation as a global reference in tropical agriculture through curriculum innovation, faculty empowerment, and

increased funding. With strong operational and financial acumen, they will enhance institutional efficiency, maximize revenue from production units, and invest strategically in infrastructure and technology. They will also work to strengthen Zamorano's commitment to environmental sustainability. Central to this role is nurturing a collaborative, inclusive community that supports students' academic and personal development. Additionally, the rector will elevate the University's visibility by cultivating lasting relationships with alumni, donors, governments, and partners worldwide, leading impactful fundraising efforts that fuel Zamorano's mission and regional influence. It is vital that the rector be highly visible as an engaged and committed leader to all constituencies.

Zamorano University has retained the executive search firm Isaacson, Miller to conduct the search. Confidential inquiries, nominations, and applications may be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

ABOUT ZAMORANO UNIVERSITY

Zamorano University, located in Honduras, was founded in 1941 with the goal of creating a high-quality agricultural education center for Central America. The University's name, Zamorano, comes from the family that originally owned the estate where the school is located, in the Yeguaré River Valley, a rural area of Honduras about 30 kilometers southeast of the capital, Tegucigalpa. This geographic location, which is a key part of its identity and mission, provides a natural laboratory for its agricultural and environmental programs. Since its founding, it has been a lifeline for students from across Latin America who are passionate about making a difference. Many students come from vulnerable communities and are committed to returning with the skills to drive local positive change. Zamorano has 1,200 students on campus and has more than 10,000 graduates to date. Currently, Zamorano's alumni work in 35 countries spanning five continents, shaping communities by applying their expertise in agribusiness, academia, food system resilience, economic development, and social impact. Fifteen percent of the alumni work in academia; 53% work in private industry, 23% of whom are in R&D. A remarkable 30% of Zamorano alumni own job-generating businesses.

With Latin America's demand for higher education projected to grow by 20% by 2030, Zamorano's "Learning by Doing" mission is more vital than ever. With plans to expand Life Sciences, the University is positioning itself as a leader in this field, reaffirming its commitment to innovation.

Academic Programs

Undergraduate Degree Programs

Combining theory and practice, Zamorano's undergraduate education is centered on four fields:

- [Agricultural Sciences](#): This curriculum focuses on addressing issues in agrifood systems by promoting sustainable food production, problem-solving through data analysis, and the responsible use of natural resources. The program provides a holistic understanding of

agricultural production, animal husbandry, crop science, and sustainable resource management, preparing students for careers in modern agronomy.

- [Food Science and Technology](#): Internationally approved by the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT), students in this program delve into food processing, quality control, safety, and innovation, preparing them for roles in the food industry. The curriculum is built on a strong foundation of science and technology, integrating knowledge from basic sciences, agriculture, food technology, and engineering.
- [Agribusiness Management](#): This degree focuses on the economic, managerial, and marketing aspects of global agricultural enterprises, equipping students with the skills to address challenges in food systems by using innovative technological and social tools, and applying principles of sustainability, resilience, and inclusion. Graduates are equipped to identify local and international business opportunities and administer agricultural businesses.
- [Environmental Science and Development](#): Preparing students to tackle complex environmental and development challenges, this curriculum focuses on the intricate connections between environmental quality, economic growth, and social equity. Its goal is to create a more prosperous and food-secure world by developing sustainable solutions for issues like population growth, poverty, climate change, and environmental degradation, all while promoting social inclusion and sound governance.

Graduate Degree Programs

Zamorano's specialized Master's programs deepen students' expertise and foster leadership in key areas:

- [Master's Degree in Agribusiness](#) (including an option in executive format): A double-degree program between Zamorano and EAFIT University in Colombia provides advanced training in the management of agricultural and agribusiness companies.
- [Master's Degree in Coffee Growing and Business](#): Also working with EAFIT University, this program provides a professionalizing degree, combining technical and business aspects of the coffee industry.
- [Master's Degree in Nutrition and Community Development](#): This program strengthens the capabilities of those who work in policies, programs, and projects related to nutrition, agriculture, and food systems, preparing professionals to generate a greater impact on the well-being of Latin American communities.

Continuing Education: Zamorano Executive Education (ZEED)

Zamorano University's [Center for Entrepreneurship and Development \(ZEED\)](#) training programs come in various formats and are designed for individuals looking to improve their knowledge and skills. These

programs offer the chance to acquire new strategic tools for decision-making, access the latest technologies, and ultimately achieve better performance in both personal and professional development. This program was formally launched in 2021 and is still in early stages of development, but has demonstrated substantial potential for future growth. In 2023, ZEED successfully conducted a total of 20 courses, providing training to more than 600 people.

Learning by Doing

Through its signature “[Learning by Doing](#)” approach, Zamorano empowers students to tackle urgent challenges such as poverty, immigration, and environmental sustainability. This pedagogical approach integrates theoretical classroom instruction with extensive practical experience in the University's productive units, laboratories, and research centers. Students spend half of their time in residence engaged in hands-on work in areas such as crop production, animal production, agro-industrial processing, forestry and environmental management, and machinery and maintenance.

This immersive approach produces graduates who are not just academically knowledgeable but also immediately productive and capable. They hit the ground running in their careers, possessing a confidence and practical acumen that sets them apart. This approach aligns perfectly with the needs of employers in the agricultural and environmental sectors, who increasingly seek candidates with demonstrable hands-on experience and the ability to innovate and lead in dynamic environments. The methodology is a key reason for Zamorano's strong reputation and the success of its alumni globally.

In line with this philosophy, all undergraduate students complete at least one 15-week internship program, usually in a foreign country, which opens doors for their future graduate studies or employment. Zamorano also provides each student with an intensive [English as a Foreign Language program](#), strengthening communication skills in professional and academic settings.

Research, Partnerships + Innovation

Applied research is an important part of the Zamorano experience, with faculty and students actively engaged in projects that drive innovation and address practical, real-world challenges in agrifood systems. Zamorano's studies are not just for academic purposes; they are designed to have a direct, positive impact on businesses, local and global communities, developing solutions to increase productivity, improve food security, and enhance environmental health. Dynamic collaborations with international organizations, leading private sector companies, and governmental bodies ensure that Zamorano's innovations are translated into widespread positive impact.

Zamorano has developed strong partnerships with US-based universities, including, among many, Auburn University, Cornell University, Louisiana State University, Ohio State University, and the University of Chicago. These often involve student and faculty exchanges, joint projects, and training programs. The University has also worked with various NGOs and private companies, such as USAID, Walmart, and the Fondazione Ernesto Illy, on projects related to sustainable agriculture, capacity-building, and technology transfer.

Key research areas include:

- **Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security:** This includes developing climate-resilient crop varieties, optimizing water and nutrient use, implementing integrated pest and disease management, and promoting organic and regenerative agricultural practices to enhance food production sustainably.
- **Environmental Science and Conservation:** This focuses on renewable energy solutions, bioremediation of contaminated sites, waste revalorization, watershed management, biodiversity conservation (leveraging the Uyuca Biological Reserve), and environmental policy development.
- **Food Science and Technology:** Dedicated to improving food safety, enhancing product quality, developing innovative value-added food products, and optimizing food processing techniques to reduce waste and increase efficiency.
- **Agribusiness and Rural Development:** Projects explore market dynamics, supply chain efficiency, agricultural finance, and the socio-economic impacts of agricultural interventions, with the aim of identifying opportunities for rural communities and strengthening agricultural value chains.

The University's facilities, including specialized laboratories (Soil, Food Microbiology, Sensory Analysis, Sustainable Consumption, Human Nutrition, Biological Control), production and marketing units, an agro-industrial park, and a herbarium with nearly 300,000 classified botanical specimens, provide an ideal environment for investigation and experimentation.

Students + Faculty

Zamorano's 1,200 students come from more than 20 Latin American countries. The vibrant, multicultural environment enriches the learning experience, building bridges of understanding and cooperation that extend far beyond graduation. Students learn not just from their professors, but from the diverse perspectives of their peers, preparing them for effective leadership in a complex globalized world. Until 1980, an all-male institution, women now comprise 40% of Zamorano's students. The University has a 94% undergraduate graduation rate, and 98% of alumni were employed or in graduate school within six months of graduation.

Student life at Zamorano is heavily influenced by its "Learning by Doing" approach, wherein students spend a significant amount of time engaged in hands-on work. All students live on campus, fostering a close-knit community. The University offers a variety of extracurricular clubs and activities, ranging from sports to music, dance, and entrepreneurship, to support the well-being and personal development of its students.

Zamorano has more than 100 faculty, of whom 40% have doctorates and the remaining 60% hold master's degrees in their fields. Their expertise spans a diverse array of topics, including sustainable livestock systems, plant breeding, food technology, climate-smart farming, and the use of innovative technologies

in agriculture. Many faculty members have a strong practical background and are key to Zamorano's unique hands-on approach, working directly with students in production plants, laboratories, and on-campus businesses. Reflecting the University's pan-American identity, the faculty, like the students, come from various countries. This multicultural environment enriches the academic experience and provides students with a broad perspective on global agricultural challenges.

Campus

Located in the heart of the Americas in Honduras, just 30 kilometers from Tegucigalpa, the campus itself is expansive, including a 4,500-hectare operational farm and a diverse range of environments. It features productive agricultural areas, natural forests, micro-basins, and even the Uyuca Biological Reserve, which covers a total area of 907 hectares full of biodiversity in fauna and flora. With campus areas ranging from 600 to 2,000 meters above sea level, the University's high elevation contributes to a variety of ecosystems, allowing for hands-on learning across different agricultural and ecological systems. This unique and varied landscape serves as a living classroom that supports the University's "Learning by Doing" approach.

Zamorano's laboratories, research centers, production and marketing units, as well as an agro-industrial park, provide students with hands-on learning opportunities in diverse sectors of the food system, including farming, processing, finance, and agricultural business. Investing in this critical infrastructure and addressing deferred maintenance will be a top priority for the next rector. Aligned with the University's educational focus on environmental science and sustainability, Zamorano also has a solar park that supplies 37% of the University's energy demand. All of these campus resources are further bolstered by strong relationships with leading universities, research centers, and development organizations around the globe.

Finances, Fundraising + Financial Aid

In FY2023, Zamorano University's total operating budget was approximately \$50 million. The institution has an endowment of approximately \$120 million. Zamorano has recently established a US-based Foundation, which will manage its endowment funds and work to garner philanthropic support from US-based sources. Annually, the University typically receives private philanthropic support of \$2 to \$4 million and government grants from \$2 to \$5 million.

Students come from all socioeconomic backgrounds and from 35 countries, exemplifying Zamorano's core value of Panamericanism. Zamorano's "all-in" tuition for the 2025 academic year is US\$23,369, and 70% of undergraduate students receive scholarships or grants to attend the University. The University only awards scholarships based on financial need; it does not offer merit-based scholarships, though its process does reward academic excellence.

Many scholarships are funded by Latin American government entities; however, support from many governments has decreased significantly in recent years. Some of Zamorano's strategic partners who have provided scholarship, academic, and community project funding include:

Public Sector:



Private Sector:



Academia/Research:



International Orgs:



Civil Society:



The University is registered in the United States as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt non-profit organization. It holds multiple program-specific [accreditations and certifications](#), is recognized by the Ministry of Education of Honduras, and is actively pursuing accreditation with the Western Association of Colleges and Schools. Often viewed as one of the leading institutions in Latin America, the university has also been recognized in the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2025, placing among the Top 40 Latin American universities in Agriculture and Forestry, and achieving a 4-star QS rating.

Explore more about Zamorano University and its impact on students' lives through this [profile video](#) of the University on the documentary series *Visionaries*.

ROLE OF THE RECTOR

Reporting to the Board of Trustees, the rector provides overall leadership, operational guidance, and political, financial, and social support for Zamorano's work. The rector will work closely with the board in carrying out the vision to be one of the top agricultural universities in the world, growing student enrollment, advancing academic excellence and innovation, strengthening campus infrastructure, forging strong external relationships, and nurturing a synergistic organization. As Zamorano's representative, ambassador, and advocate, the rector will work to benefit the institution's faculty, staff, and students.

The rector's direct reports include an executive council of seven leaders, including the vice president and academic dean, vice president of operations and finance, legal advisor, director of strategy and innovation, head of internal audit, director of human resources, and director of institutional development.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE RECTOR

The next rector of Zamorano University will be energized and inspired by the following opportunities and challenges, and entrusted with the responsibility to address key priorities:

Embody student-centered leadership, placing students at the core of all institutional decisions.

The rector will reinforce Zamorano's emphasis on character formation as an integral part of its educational model, fostering teamwork, responsibility, discipline, and resilience within the values-based community fostered through the residential model and "Learning by Doing" pedagogy. Academic rigor is critical, as is ensuring students thrive socially, emotionally, and professionally. Strengthening career readiness through expanded internship opportunities, alumni networks, and placement services is a priority. Enhanced financial aid and outreach will further enable student access and success.

Responsibly steward the institution's operations and finances.

The rector will bring financial and operational experience, thinking strategically about how to promote greater efficiencies and increase revenue from a variety of sources across a complex enterprise. An assessment of policies and procedures will also be necessary to effectively achieve the university's strategic goals. In essence, the rector will lead and drive efforts to ensure that internal and external constituents experience Zamorano as a financially healthy and operationally sophisticated university. With an emphasis on revenue generation and cost control, the rector will improve the performance of the university's production units and strengthen internal systems and accountability measures.

Build on the University's level of academic distinction and its intellectual contribution to the world and cement its place as a global reference in tropical agriculture.

The rector will ensure academic programs remain aligned with regional needs and global trends in agriculture, food systems, and sustainability, maintaining a strong teaching faculty focused on student outcomes and applied instruction and research and promoting continuous improvement in curriculum, pedagogy, and faculty development. Unwavering in commitment to academic excellence, the rector will work closely with the vice president and academic dean and other university and academic leaders to advance the curriculum and its distinctive "Learning by Doing" teaching methodology. The rector will understand that Zamorano must adapt to rapid changes in a fast-paced, interconnected world, embracing agility and innovation to stay highly relevant and impactful.

The rector will also motivate and inspire the faculty. Building on and enhancing the University's academic activity, they will support faculty members in competing for more external research funding, implement an equitable and accountable teaching load across academic departments, and encourage the academic council to stay attuned to current challenges.

Continue to grow and diversify enrollment.

With students from over 35 countries, including 20 across Latin America, Zamorano's enrollment is both strong and diverse. However, particularly with growing demand for higher education across Latin America, there is still tremendous opportunity to increase the number of applications and tap into student interest from across the region. Essential to enrollment growth will be effective brand leveraging through expanded yet tailored, high-quality communications and marketing to increase the pool of prospective students and applicants. The rector will understand Zamorano's unique market position and encourage their staff to continue recruiting high-achieving students from all socioeconomic backgrounds. Scholarship allocation must continue to be efficient and mission-aligned, and improved student success metrics will encompass retention, career placement, and postgraduate access.

Expand and improve the infrastructure.

The rector will need to assess Zamorano's current infrastructure, including, but not limited to, classrooms, labs, and equipment, and invest accordingly. They will also innovate with respect to technology and address pertinent issues like internet connectivity across campus, ensuring that the University is equipped to excel in research and teaching, and in living out its Pan-American and global identity.

Elevate the visibility of the University and forge strong relationships with alumni, donors, and external stakeholders to elevate fundraising and engagement.

The rector will champion Zamorano University, look for ways to contribute to external communities, establish long-term and substantial relationships with entities outside the University, and extend the impact and awareness of Zamorano's research. They will bring experience leading successful fundraising initiatives with a strong ability to grow philanthropic support in a way that emphasizes people and relationships. An effective and strategic storyteller, the rector will generate excitement with sophisticated donors about a wide variety of projects. Most importantly, they will cultivate and nurture relationships with key individuals, governments, corporations, university partners, and other organizations across the world, in service to Zamorano, Honduras, and Latin America more broadly. The rector will coordinate fundraising efforts with the U.S.-based foundation and lead Latin America fundraising.

Build, support, and nurture a high-performing, collaborative, and diverse organization.

Zamorano is served by a talented and engaged faculty and staff whose work and presence are critical to the student experience. When the next rector joins the University, they must immerse themselves in the community and seek to listen and learn from its diverse constituents. The rector will further strengthen the sense of community at Zamorano, drawing individuals to work together toward a vision that celebrates the contributions and achievements of all. They will encourage the exchange of creative ideas, promoting a sense of shared goals linked to real-world needs. The rector must build trust among all constituencies and embody a performance-driven and transparent culture.

Leverage the talent, expertise, and commitment of the board, and work closely with them in advancing Zamorano's mission.

The Zamorano Board of Trustees is foundational to the institution's leadership and is composed of leaders of various nationalities and professions who share deep commitments and altruistic goals for the benefit of Latin America. The rector will engage with board members as thought partners, leveraging their diverse expertise to support a short- and long-term strategy for the University. Furthermore, to achieve a successful shared governance structure, the rector will work closely with the board to ensure there is a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities between the board, the rector, and their executive leadership team. They will also endeavor to keep the board apprised of Zamorano's operations by communicating regularly with the board and inviting staff leadership to make presentations about their respective areas at board meetings.

Promote institutional sustainability.

The rector will strengthen Zamorano's commitment to environmental sustainability and support efforts to model sustainable practices in all campus operations and activities. They will promote practices oriented to ensure water conservation, energy efficiency, waste reduction and management, regenerative land use, and natural resource management. These practices will be connected to the university's educational model, serving as learning scenarios that bolster courses, Learning by Doing, and student research. Ultimately, the rector will cultivate a culture of innovation to guarantee environmental and social responsibility.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

Candidates will possess many, if not most, of the following professional qualifications and leadership characteristics:

- A commitment to the mission, vision, and values of Zamorano University.
- Deep professional experience in agriculture, food systems, sustainability, higher education, or related disciplines. Broad comprehension of today's global challenges, including environmental issues, climate change, a digital world, and the implications of the biotech and info-tech revolutions.
- Successful management of complex organizations within an academic setting or relevant industry. A record of leading complex organizations with clear outcomes is essential.
- A keen focus on operational efficiency, resource utilization, and strong financial acumen with an open and transparent leadership style.
- Effective and inspirational communication, strong listening skills, and excellent presentation capabilities to serve as a passionate advocate for Zamorano.

- Demonstrated ability to work effectively with boards, volunteers, and people of diverse backgrounds to cultivate a spirit of cooperation and the necessary flexibility to manage change.
- Honed analytical and strategic skills, with experience using data to support decision-making, craft persuasive storytelling and case statements, and create ambitious and achievable goals.
- Transparency, reliability, and humility in leadership; the ability to instill trust and confidence among others and a record that demonstrates a high degree of integrity, honesty, and fairness.
- Demonstrated experience and genuine commitment to longevity in leadership.
- Strong emotional intelligence with relationship-building, conflict-resolution, and teamwork skills.
- Fluency in both Spanish and English is required.
- A terminal degree (PhD or equivalent) is highly desirable, but not essential.
- Deep interest and expertise in Latin America and the world more broadly; the knowledge base and diplomatic skillset to navigate complex geopolitical environments in these regions. A commitment to living full-time on campus and a willingness to travel internationally.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Compensation for this position will be competitive and negotiated in good faith. The role has an attractive benefits package including housing support, health insurance, and more. Relocation and visa support can be provided for this role, depending on the needs of the candidate.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Confidential inquiries, nominations, referrals, and applications (including resumes and two- to four-page letters of interest responding to the opportunities and challenges outlined above) should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/zamorano-university/rector>.

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Zamorano University is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We believe we are a better, stronger, and more effective organization when we create a culture that welcomes and includes a diverse set of backgrounds

and perspectives, and we can learn from one another. We welcome people of all backgrounds—especially when their life experiences, abilities, and perspectives can offer valuable insight to our work supporting some of the most vulnerable and marginalized populations in the world. Zamorano will provide equal employment and advancement opportunities to all individuals. Employment decisions at Zamorano will be based on merit, qualifications and abilities. Zamorano does not discriminate in employment opportunities or practices on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, gender identity, age, disability, marital status or any other characteristic protected by the law. Zamorano will make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with known disabilities unless doing so will result in undue hardship to daily operations.