



University of Nevada, Reno
School of Medicine

Associate Dean for Student Affairs
University of Nevada, Reno School of Medicine
Reno, Nevada

THE SEARCH

The University of Nevada, Reno School of Medicine (UNR Med) seeks a collaborative and inspiring medical professional in student affairs to become its Associate Dean for Student Affairs (ADSA). As UNR Med embarks on the fifth year of its landmark 50-year affiliation agreement with Renown Health, it is actively searching for a visionary and dynamic leader to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of student success and to align the Office of Student Affairs' work with the institution's mission, vision, and values.

The state of Nevada is experiencing an increasing demand for enhanced health science training and research capabilities. With elevated rates of chronic diseases like cancer and diabetes, there is a pressing need for substantial growth in preventive care services. Compounding the challenge is the shortage of healthcare professionals, ranking Nevada 45th out of 50 states in physicians per population, with the lowest number of physicians in residency training per population among states with medical schools. UNR Med showcases nationally recognized basic science research departments, as evidenced by NIH funding, and has identified significant opportunities for expansion of clinical research activity. UNR Med and Renown view these efforts as a way to proactively address the state of Nevada's needs, leveraging existing foundational talent and resources for a substantial impact. UNR Med has earned a reputation for its rich diversity, strength in medical and health sciences education, and basic science research. The 2025 edition of U.S. News & World Report ranks the R1 institution within the top 70 for the proportion of recent graduates practicing direct care in underserved and rural areas.

With special attention to UNR Med's context, the Associate Dean will lead a team dedicated to UNR's mission of improving health and healthcare in Nevada by preparing well-rounded, compassionate, and competent physicians. The Associate Dean for Student Affairs will be expected to bring a strategic vision, a dedicated commitment to student success, and strong interpersonal and management skills to play a major leadership role in the School of Medicine and act as an effective UNR Med representative across the community. The position requires a leader who will serve an exemplary role model, inspiring the ideals and values of the medical profession to students and faculty throughout the learning environment. As a strong advocate and communicator, the Associate Dean will successfully maintain positive relationships

between the student body and the UNR Med administration and ensure students are able to take advantage of the robust student success offerings the Office of Student Affairs provides.

A list of the desired qualifications and characteristics of the incoming leader can be found at the conclusion of this document, which was prepared by the search committee with the assistance of Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to provide background information and detail the key opportunities and challenges related to the position. All confidential applications, inquiries, and nominations should be directed to the parties listed at the conclusion of this document.

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, RENO

Founded in 1874, the [University of Nevada, Reno](#) (UNR) is Nevada's flagship land-grant research and teaching institution and serves as one of eight institutions of higher education governed by the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE). UNR comprises 12 schools and colleges and offers bachelor's degrees in more than 80 disciplines, as well as more than 110 master's and doctoral degrees. Operating with a total budget of approximately \$780 million, UNR enrolls over 20,000 students and employs more than 2,500 academic and administrative faculty members and over 1,000 classified staff. The main UNR campus is based in and around the city of Reno, Nevada, on the eastern slope of the Sierra Nevada foothills, 45 minutes from Lake Tahoe and four hours from the San Francisco Bay Area.

Over the past decade, the University has grown at a dynamic and record-setting rate, including student enrollment, number of National Merit scholars, student diversity, faculty achievement, and productivity, as well as infrastructure. Through a commitment to world-improving research, student success, and outreach benefiting the communities and businesses of Nevada, the University has an impact across the state and around the world.

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, RENO SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

[UNR Med](#) is a community-based, basic science research-intensive medical school that has served Nevada for more than 50 years. When the University of Nevada, Reno School of Medicine was chartered in 1969, its mission was to train and provide primary care doctors for Nevada's rural communities. While the school's mission has expanded, it has also remained true to its original charter to provide statewide medical education and patient care.

The School is comprised of 12 academic departments and five centers. The clinical departments consist of [Emergency Medicine](#), [Family and Community Medicine](#), [Medicine](#), [Obstetrics and Gynecology](#), [Pathology and Laboratory Medicine](#), [Pediatrics](#), [Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences](#), [Speech Pathology and Audiology](#), and [Surgery](#). The basic science departments include [Microbiology and Immunology](#), [Pharmacology](#), and [Physiology and Cell Biology](#). The centers and labs are the [University of Nevada Simulation Center & Lab](#), the [Student Health Center](#), the [Sanford Center for Aging](#), the [Translational Research Center](#), and the [Nevada State Public Health Lab](#). The 60 basic science faculty, 107 academic clinical faculty, nearly 1,000 community faculty support educational and research programs that brought

in annual research funding of \$26M in FY25. The educational programs include the [MD program](#), graduate programs in the basic sciences, [Physician Assistant Studies](#) program, undergraduate and graduate programs in [Speech Pathology and Audiology](#), and [Continuing Medical Education](#). UNR Med is characterized by an entrepreneurial and intimate culture where strong relationships exist between students and faculty. Each class size is less than 100 students, allowing for personalized and individual experiences with the opportunity to develop strong professional relationships with faculty, staff, and students. On the clinical side, UNR Med's comprehensive clinical curriculum occurs in Reno as well as other rural sites throughout the state, wherein students are exposed to providing healthcare in rural communities.

Renown Health and its Partnership with UNR Med

[Renown Health](#), formerly known as Washoe Health System, was established in 1862 and was the area's first hospital when Nevada became a state in 1864. Renown is now Northern Nevada's healthcare leader and Reno's only locally owned, not-for-profit health system to serve the community by providing care through a network of hospitals, urgent care centers, outpatient medical offices, institutes, and an insurance plan, Hometown Health. The health system employs more than 6,000 doctors, nurses, and care providers whose collective mission is to make a genuine difference in the health and well-being of the people and communities served by Renown.

Renown Health and the University of Nevada, Reno School of Medicine have worked together for decades to advance a mutual commitment to improving the health of the community. Over the last 50 years, UNR Med has educated more than 3,900 physicians with over 30% percent practicing in Nevada, increasing access to care for residents across the state. UNR Med and Renown Health have collaborated in research, medical education, grant funding for public health, clinical trials, and integrated clinical practices to improve access and affordability of care. In 2021, UNR Med and Renown advanced their missions through a 50-year affiliation agreement that integrates clinical education, research, and patient care for the benefit of Northern Nevada. The agreement reinforces what has already been a strong and impactful partnership and will benefit the community far beyond the next generation.

Leadership

Paul J. Hauptman, M.D. is the Dean of the UNR School of Medicine and Chief Academic Officer for Renown Health. In these capacities, Dr. Hauptman actively promotes and advances the academic and clinical integration established through the affiliation between UNR Med and Renown Health. Dr. Hauptman is a nationally recognized investigator in outcomes assessment in advanced heart failure, the evaluation of cardiac care delivery, and clinical trials. Dr. Hauptman has received research grants from the American Heart Association and the National Institutes of Health and has served as a reviewer for the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute and as a consultant to the Circulatory System Devices Panel and Medical Device Advisory Committee of the FDA. Prior to UNR, Dr. Hauptman served as the Dean of the University of Tennessee Graduate School of Medicine and Chief Academic Officer of the University of Tennessee Medical Center.

The Office for Student Affairs

The Office for M.D. Student Affairs is dedicated to supporting the holistic development of UNR's medical students, ensuring they have the resources, guidance, and opportunities to thrive academically, personally, and professionally. The Office provides comprehensive services and resources tailored to the needs of medical students, offering personalized career advising, learning and wellness support, financial advising, and more. As such, the Office is committed to helping students navigate the challenges of medical school and contributes to UNR Med's mission of improving health and health care in Nevada by cultivating skilled, empathetic, and well-prepared physicians. The Office supports student success in the following areas:

- **Career advising:** The team offers longitudinal and individualized guidance to help students explore specialties, establish connections within the medical community, and develop career plans. From matriculation through the residency match process, a team of dedicated professional and faculty advisors support students in their professional growth.
- **Learning and wellness support:** Resources to promote academic achievement and personal well-being are paramount. Services include learning specialists, direct therapy services, and wellness programs designed to foster mental, emotional, and physical resilience. The team works to cultivate an environment for learners that integrates sustainable learning and well-being practices that support students' successful medical education and prepare them for healthy lifelong learning as physicians.
- **Financial aid and scholarships:** A dedicated financial aid and scholarships team works to support medical students' academic and professional success while having the financial support and guidance that can help minimize debt and improve financial health throughout medical school and beyond. This team helps learners plan and prepare proactively to manage their finances and also offers responsive assistance when they encounter challenges.
- **Peer mentoring and leadership:** The Student Affairs team works closely with learners to support a myriad of opportunities for student engagement, leadership, and mentorship. The team partners with the UNR Med community to provide robust orientation, transition, and retention programming that leverages the strengths and experiences of near peers to offer support and a sense of belonging as learners navigate their medical education. Learners benefit from the wisdom and support of peer mentors in their first-year MedFIT Orientation, Pack Mentorship, supplemental instruction, tutoring throughout pre-clinical and clerkship years, and numerous opportunities for leadership through student organizations, Student Interest Groups, and UNR Med's student government, the Associated Students of the University of Nevada, Reno School of Medicine.

ROLE OF THE ASSOCIATE DEAN

Reporting to the Senior Associate Dean of Undergraduate Academic Affairs, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs is the designated leader and key contact for student needs and advocacy. The Associate Dean will oversee a team of 15 staff and will be a stabilizing and supportive figure for both the team and the UNR student body, working closely with UNR Med leaders and community partners to create a culture of accountability across stakeholder groups that interface with UNR Med learners. The wide-ranging roles and responsibilities of the ADSA span the spectrum of student advocacy: creating, disseminating, and implementing institutional policies and procedures; representing the institution and the profession to students; advising and counseling students; supporting students' professional development and identity formation; as well as serving as a prominent and compelling role model to faculty and students alike. The new Associate Dean will tap into this special opportunity for UNR Med to build upon the strengths and high-quality programs established by the Office of Student Affairs and to further assess and respond to current and future challenges that will allow UNR Med to continually innovate and advance its reputation for exceptional student-centered support.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE ASSOCIATE DEAN

The ADSA must be innovative, student-centered, communicative, and collaborative in developing and expanding the student affairs enterprise at UNR Med. In doing so, they will be responsible for addressing the following key opportunities and challenges:

Provide and optimize a cohesive strategic vision and direction for student affairs

With a particular emphasis on identifying and responding to evolving student support needs, the next Associate Dean will create and employ a collaborative vision for the Office of Student Affairs. With special attention to the student experience, the Associate Dean will lean on recent evaluation and assessment metrics to guide their vision and enhance the overall student experience and level of satisfaction. The ADSA will be accountable not only for service delivery, but also for ensuring that students clearly understand the role, scope, and value of Student Affairs in supporting their academic, professional, and personal success.

The Associate Dean must have a continuous improvement mindset that inspires their team and others across UNR Med to solve challenges and to provide a sophisticated framework for support in all categories of student success. As such, the ADSA will be charged with the development of strategic goals, initiatives, and activities involving student affairs while partnering with UNR Med leadership around institutional strategic planning.

Strengthen collaborative relationships across the UNR student body and administration

Through improving the accessibility to the Office of Student Affairs to the broad range of students, faculty, and staff in the UNR ecosystem, the Associate Dean will serve as an effective advocate and spokesperson

for the Office of Student Affairs team. Using innovative communication tools and technologies, the ADSA will be a transparent resource to both students and other administrative leaders and improve the Office's outreach to the broader UNR Med community. The Associate Dean will work closely with curricular affairs and admissions leadership to develop plans that ensure enrollment and retention continues at an upward trajectory, and will promote communication, collaboration, transparency, and trust across UNR Med. The ADSA will also proactively manage critical external and cross-institutional partnerships (including those with main campus units), recognizing that misalignment in pace, process, or priorities can directly impact the student experience and satisfaction. Equally important, the ADSA will be a consistent, approachable resource for all students and function as an exemplar of ethical decision-making. By creating a culture of wellness and accountability, the Associate Dean will be able to connect and empathize with UNR Med learners while also upholding them to the highest standards of excellence.

Develop data-driven, strategic programs to ensure immediate and long-term student success

Combining empathy and an understanding of the student experience, the ADSA will ensure that a full spectrum of support is in place for all learners and will successfully align existing programs with new initiatives. Leaning on findings from UNR Med student impression surveys, and in concert with all team members in student affairs, the ADSA will develop fully integrated, accessible student wellness programs that proactively address students' needs and promote the maintenance of student wellness as a core value. By navigating challenging student issues and developing protocols to address them in a timely and consistent manner, the Associate Dean will address wellness, wellbeing, and sense of belonging for UNR Med students. The ADSA will also ensure that Student Affairs services, policies, and processes are applied consistently and are highly visible and easily navigable for students. As a result, student affairs resources will be visible and accessible to all students and will effectively enhance student satisfaction and support.

In addition to student impression surveys, the Associate Dean will have substantial contribution and maintenance around accreditation efforts that pertain to student affairs and services. The ADSA will be fluent in data collection, analysis, and monitoring, and will function as an important resource across UNR Med in these efforts. As LCME accreditation results will be released later in 2026, the ADSA will be tasked with assessing the results and leading efforts to address relevant findings and action items.

Lead, manage, and empower the Office of Student Affairs staff

The Associate Dean will inherit a dedicated and collegial team of staff across career advising, learning, financial aid, and wellness. The ADSA will prioritize supporting, mentoring, and developing the talented group of colleagues across the team, drawing on the institutional knowledge and expertise of seasoned team members while also providing mentorship and facilitating professional development and growth. The ADSA must be an experienced and thoughtful people manager who is accessible, fosters open communication, and inspires best in practice work across student affairs units. As UNR Med is a tight-knit community, the ADSA will be expected to create strong, collaborative working relationships across the team and foster effective connections with other UNR Med faculty and administrators.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The desired qualifications and experience of an ideal Associate Dean for Student Affairs include the following:

- MD, PhD and/or a combination of degrees, with a strong academic record. An MD degree is highly preferred.
- Minimum of five years of experience in medical education, student affairs, or academic leadership.
- High emotional intelligence and demonstrated commitment to student advocacy and wellness.
- An orientation towards listening to student concerns and advocating on their behalf.
- Outstanding record of effective team building and managing people; a strong team orientation, along with a willingness to circulate widely and listen well.
- Knowledge of current trends in medical education and student support services.
- The highest standards of ethics and integrity, with a deep commitment to transparency and accountability in policy.
- Strong leadership, organizational, and interpersonal skills.
- Familiarity with LCME standards and accreditation processes.
- Ability to serve as a role model for students both professionally and in promoting wellness.

LOCATION

The position is located in Reno, Nevada at the base of the Sierra Nevada Mountains and world-class open spaces. Reno offers a beneficial tax climate, easy commute times, and a diverse selection of arts, culture, and entertainment events. Known as “The Biggest Little City” for a reason, Reno has the look and feel of a small town yet offers the lifestyle of a much bigger city. It has experienced a renaissance in its arts and culture, with galleries and bookstores as well as opera, several theatre groups, symphony and chamber orchestras, a jazz festival, a month-long summer arts festival, and other cultural events.

The city is 45 minutes from Lake Tahoe and a four-hour drive from the San Francisco Bay Area. The Reno/Tahoe area offers cycling, whitewater rafting, kayaking, world-class skiing, fly fishing, climbing, hiking, and countless other outdoor activities. To learn more, please visit www.visitrenotahoe.com.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

UNR Med has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist with the search. Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/university-nevada-reno-school-medicine/associate-dean-student-affairs>.

Jay Torio, David Bellshaw, Lauren Wilkes, and Maria Pena
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