Inaugural Vice President for Learning Enterprise Growth
Northeastern University

THE SEARCH

Northeastern University—one of the most entrepreneurial and innovative universities in the world –
welcomes applications and nominations for the position of inaugural Vice President for Learning
Enterprise Growth. This role is responsible for one of Northeastern's core beliefs—to identify what
educational opportunities are needed in our global marketplace and develop scalable, accessible, and
impactful programming in response. This work directly supports the University's mission to provide
lifelong learning to students of all ages and all skills levels, as they adapt to a changing world. The inaugural
Vice President for Learning Enterprise Growth will develop a strategic roadmap for product development
at the university level and to build a team to execute against this forward-looking vision.

Northeastern is on an impressive upward trajectory. Annual external research funding has increased
dramatically over the last 20 years, driven by the work of top-tier faculty, global expansion that creates
opportunities for collaboration, and a robust and diverse array of research institutes and centers.
Northeastern's signature co-op program has expanded in popularity beyond the undergraduate student
experience, creating a unique, experiential learning experience that attracts top students at all stages of
learning from around the world. With locations throughout North America, a significant footprint in the
U.K., and ambitions for further growth, Northeastern is ideally positioned to advance the boundaries of
knowledge, create and define new fields of application and economic impact, enrich the lives of students
the world over and from all walks of life, and find interdisciplinary solutions to the world's most pressing
challenges.

In scaling its programming across the network and beyond, Northeastern has created a new enterprise-
wide unit to cultivate educational innovation and product development and delivery. Reporting to the
Chancellor, the inaugural Vice President for Learning Enterprise Growth (VP, Vice President) will articulate
and execute a vision for product development at Northeastern to drive enrollment, revenue, and value
creation at scale. They will bring together existing functions and build out a new enterprise-level team
dedicated to innovation in product development that enables Northeastern to both build and bring to
market programs and products that anticipate workforce needs, leverage its strengths and brand, and
offer a distinctive experience to learners at all levels and to corporate partners. The University seeks a
dynamic and entrepreneurial leader with the capacity for sophisticated market sensing in the ed tech,
higher education, and workforce development spaces as well as the operational and leadership acumen

to drive strategy as well as execution and build a new unit and team that is well integrated and aligned with Northeastern's mission and ambitions.

Northeastern has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in this search. All applications, inquiries, and nominations, which will remain confidential, should be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

Trajectory

Founded in 1898, Northeastern University was a commuter school in the heart of Boston. Though absent from any national ranking, it had great assets in land, in its cooperative education program, and its location in Boston, a resurgent city powered at that time by its prestigious universities and medical centers and now complemented by other high-growth fields, including finance, biotechnology, and high-tech startups.

Today, Northeastern is a technologically infused, globally located, diverse, research intensive R1 university and a recognized leader in experiential learning. It is a comprehensive university aimed at the future, teaching students to adapt to the age of artificial intelligence and to do what is human and cannot be duplicated: to create, to innovate, and to work with cultural agility and empathy among the diverse peoples of the globe. Northeastern educates 25,800 undergraduates and more than 22,400 graduate students who are served by more than 7,000 faculty and staff. The University now offers around 190 undergraduate degree programs and 138 master's programs and 67 doctoral programs, including master's, professional, and doctoral degrees, as well as certificates of advanced study. Today, there are nine colleges and schools that offer Northeastern's degree programs throughout its global campus system, each led by an academic dean who reports to the provost.

The pace of change and progress has accelerated significantly under the leadership of President Joseph E. Aoun. Northeastern's research profile and external funding levels have risen sharply; in 2015, the University moved into the top tier for research activity when it achieved R1 status under the Carnegie Classification system. Northeastern was ranked 53rd among national universities in *U.S. News and World Report* (2024 edition), an increase of 71 places in just 16 years. The University had an endowment of $1.5 billion, as of June 30, 2021, and an FY22 operating budget of $1.6 billion.

Northeastern's faculty totals nearly 3,100 and comprises a diverse and talented group of teachers and scholars. The Academic Plan prioritizes research, personalized experiential learning, and an orientation to global impact. The chairs, deans, and provost have built a tenure-track faculty aligned with Northeastern's strategic themes, supported by large investments in new campuses, facilities, and startup packages. Faculty productivity and distinction is at the heart of the Northeastern mission and of the University's commitment to grow its academic enterprise. The nontenure-track faculty receive progressive titles for promotion, training on the science of teaching and learning, and direct participation in shared governance.

Faculty cite the interdisciplinary and translational intellectual culture of the campus, Northeastern's excellence in foundational disciplinary research, and institutional momentum as key reasons for joining the University community.

Northeastern's distinctive, internationally recognized programs for experiential learning attract an increasingly diverse and academically talented pool of students. The University's signature cooperative education program (co-op) and other experiential programs have enabled Northeastern undergraduate and graduate students to have professional, research, and service opportunities in 149 countries and 37 U.S. states, giving students real-world experience that adds enriching new dimensions to their classroom studies. A record 96,640 applications were received for the first-year class entering in Fall 2023, and the mean composite SAT score of Fall 2023 freshmen was 1488. Over the past five years, 97% of Northeastern graduates were employed (full or part-time) or in graduate school within nine months of graduation, and 91% of employed 2022 graduates were doing work related to their major. About 60% of alumni obtain their first job placement at one of their co-op employers.

For additional information on Northeastern, including its strategic plan and senior leadership, please see the appendices at the end of this document.

Global Campus Network

Northeastern has built a network of campuses in cities in the U.S. and abroad, offering varying combinations of undergraduate, graduate, and professional learning; use-inspired research; and entrepreneurship—aligned with the talent and innovation needs of the region. Campuses are located in Boston; Arlington, VA; Charlotte, NC; Miami; Portland, ME; Oakland, CA; Seattle; San Jose, CA; Toronto; Vancouver; and London. It is now the only university with comprehensive residential campuses on both U.S. coasts.

The University operates as a distributed global network. For example, new programs may be developed and established at one of the network campuses, enhanced locally, and then offered throughout the broader ecosystem, consistent with local needs and demand. The successful Align computer science master's program—which accelerates people with no prior computer science education or training into a career in computing— is an example of this approach; it was designed, implemented, and revised in Seattle before being offered in Boston and other campuses. The University also encourages and enables students to benefit from pursuing learning at more than one campus in the system. The Academic Plan envisions that all Northeastern students will have a "passport" to the University's global network of campuses, and so will members of the faculty, staff, and alumni/ae communities.

ROLE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR LEARNING ENTERPRISE GROWTH

Northeastern recognizes that the world is changing with great speed. For citizens to be effective, they will require a steady stream of accessible educational opportunities to expand their skills throughout their

lifetimes. These learning programs will likely be both on-ground and digital and be informed with an interdisciplinary mindset that reflects the challenges and opportunities our society faces. The recent academic plan from Northeastern sums up the ambition for this role perfectly:

"Northeastern aspires to be the indispensable university for learners and innovators wanting to make a dent into the world's biggest challenges, to be a trusted lifelong learning partner, with an experiential learning platform, linking the classroom and the world. We aim to advance our leadership in experiential education, through lifelong learning that is modular and stackable, with an expanded online portfolio enabling personalized, customized learning that happens anywhere, anytime and with anyone. Our goal is transformation at scale – 'globally all at once,' not a patchwork quilt of change. We will do all this by being more diverse, erasing boundaries, maximizing experience, finding new currents for discovery, and immersing ourselves in the world."

To this end, the inaugural Vice President for Learning Enterprise Growth will oversee three main bodies of work:

- Strategic Intelligence
  - Identification of emerging trends, learner preferences, and competitive landscapes.
  - Provide data to make informed decisions regarding product positioning, differentiation, and pricing strategies.
  - Define and track key product performance metrics, analyzing data to make informed decisions and optimize product performance.
- Product Development
  - Manage the product development lifecycle, from intake/concept to launch, ensuring quality, scalability, and timely delivery.
  - Translate market insights into actionable product plans, ensuring that the product portfolio remains relevant and competitive.
  - Collaborate with faculty and subject matter experts to develop new products and introduce enhancements to existing products.
- Digital & Enterprise Learning Design
  - Design and develop online courses and programs in partnership with the colleges and faculty.
  - Manage the external partner and student experiences by creating and delivering a best-of-class online experience.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

This role is not for someone looking for traditional measures of success or change that comes in small increments. To that end, the inaugural Vice President for Learning Enterprise Growth will address the following opportunities and challenges:

Develop and drive an enterprise-wide vision and strategy for product development at Northeastern

In close collaboration with key stakeholders across the University, the VP will articulate and drive the overall product vision and strategy in alignment with Northeastern's mission and ambitions. They will develop a strategic roadmap for new product development, including an internal framework for collaboration across functions and units and the capacity to identify market opportunities, assess risks, and make informed decisions. In partnership with the Chancellor, Provost, executive team, and academic Deans, the VP will bridge across the Northeastern network to ensure product initiatives are aligned with business objectives and contribute to overall enrollment and revenue growth as well as drive real world impact for learners and workforce partners. Enrollment, revenue, and value creation are the key drivers for this new unit and metrics by which the VP and their team will be evaluated.

Build net new programming that both anticipates market needs and leverages Northeastern's brand and signature strengths while assessing and enhancing existing offerings to drive enrollment at scale

The primary aim of the product development team is to drive enrollment at scale. The VP must understand the educational market needs years in advance and then bring programs to market in a way that is efficient, fast, and nimble. While a small element of the team's work is to assess and enhance existing programming, the major focus will be on the development of new programs, including on-ground, hybrid, and digitally scalable products at the undergraduate, professional, graduate, and B2B levels. In collaboration with the education innovation team and strategic intelligence, the VP will identify program opportunities that leverage Northeastern's brand and reputation in experiential education and core areas of excellence that are distinctive and compelling. They will develop a process to capture continuous feedback and allow for regular iteration and improvement while ensuring a high standard of academic excellence and student experience is met across the board.

Assemble and lead a high-performing product team

The VP is charged with both integrating existing teams and functions related to product development at Northeastern and further building out their unit. Elements of product development related work currently reside in various pockets and teams across the University, and in uniting these functions under one umbrella, the VP will be a thoughtful steward of change management, ensuring that everyone sees their value-add to the larger team and mission and that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. They will build out the office and ensure that its infrastructure can optimally support its aims. The VP will develop and lead a high-performing product team that fosters a culture of innovation, collaboration, and continuous improvement to drive product excellence in service of Northeastern's academic plan. The VP will provide guidance, mentorship, and support in developing their staff.

Cultivate strong relationships and engage stakeholders across the matrixed Northeastern global network

Northeastern has built one of the most vibrant educational ecosystems in the world, and navigating and leveraging its highly matrixed, globally dispersed structure is key to success in any leadership role at the University. The new VP must build and cultivate strong relationships internally, working in close partnership with senior leadership, the college and regional Deans, faculty, enrollment management, marketing, education innovation, and others to ensure effective communication, strategic alignment, and coordination throughout the product development process. Robust feedback gathering across the enterprise is essential to driving continuous improvement in standing up and scaling the product development process, incorporating new insights, and enhancing opportunities for collaboration toward shared goals. The VP will be an advocate for product development broadly, communicating Northeastern's products' value propositions and business impacts to gain support and alignment across the University and out in the market.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

Northeastern has a bold vision and an aggressive plan for the institution's future. The senior officers of the University embody and cultivate an institutional culture of rigorous engagement focused on strategic and operational excellence. Successful leaders at Northeastern demonstrate confidence and flexibility, enjoy creative and collaborative planning and problem-solving, and combine outstanding capability in their own domains with an appetite and enthusiasm for discussing programs, initiatives, and challenges that span the University. Innovation is a cornerstone of the Northeastern culture.

Northeastern seeks an inaugural Vice President for Learning Enterprise Growth with exemplary strategic leadership ability and an entrepreneurial spirit. The successful candidate will bring many of the following personal and professional qualities and characteristics:

- A proven track record of leadership within product management and product development, including experience working with executive-level leaders.
- Strong experience in developing and executing product strategies that drive business growth.
- A deep understanding of trends, market dynamics, and customer needs in higher education and future workforce development.
- A data-driven mindset with a strong analytical background, capable of making data-backed decisions.
- A proven record of strategic and effective leadership and project management in a complex, decentralized, matrixed environment, particularly in non-academic environments and multi-site operating models.
- A demonstrated ability to execute ambitious, fiscally responsible entrepreneurial initiatives.
- A commitment to global education and cultural diversity, equity, and inclusion, with the ability to lead a diverse staff.

- An effective change agent with the ability to think strategically and translate ideas into action.
- A calculated risk-taker, comfortable working with ambiguity.
- A self-assured problem solver who can anticipate challenges and obstacles and has the intelligence, creativity, and tenacity to provide and execute strategic solutions.
- An ability to operate across a complex organization, applying superb interpersonal skills for developing close relationships with external partners and key influencers around campus and the broader University.
- An appreciation for Northeastern's mission and for a curriculum that emphasizes experiential learning and includes core technological, data, and human literacies.
- A bachelor's degree is required, with an MBA or advanced degree preferred.

COMPENSATION

The budgeted annual salary that Northeastern reasonably expects to pay for this position is between $400,000 and $450,000with an additional performance-based bonus option.

TO APPLY

Northeastern has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist with this search. Review of applications, nominations, and expressions of interest will begin immediately and continue on a confidential basis until an appointment is made. Applicants should send a cover letter and resume or curriculum vitae. Nominations, applications, and inquiries should be sent electronically in confidence to:

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Andy Lee, Managing Partner
Elizabeth Dorr Weithman, Managing Associate
Isaacson, Miller
https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/northeastern-university/inaugural-vice-president-learning-enterprise-growth

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APPENDIX 1: Academic Plan

In 2021, the Northeastern community adopted a new strategic plan, *Experience Unleashed,* that builds on previous efforts and sets ambitious goals for Northeastern's coming decade. At the heart of the framework is the central goal of maximizing Northeastern's positive impact in the world. To do this, the university aspires to:

- Recognize the complexity of acute and chronic challenges, and work across disciplines to address them.
- Translate excellence in scholarship and learning into measured impact.
- Ensure all students, faculty, and staff have access to the skills and tools they need to take projects from idea to implementation.
- Advance leadership in experiential education by enabling globally mobile, culturally agile lifelong learners.
- Develop an academic community that reflects the diversity of the surrounding society and leverages that diversity in all its forms for an equitable, inclusive university.
- Provide an unparalleled experience for those that place their trust in Northeastern—learners, employers, research partners, families—enabled by seamless technology integration.

APPENDIX 2: University Leadership

President Joseph E. Aoun

Joseph E. Aoun, a well-known higher education thought leader and renowned scholar in linguistics, is the seventh president of Northeastern University. An internationally respected voice on the value of global and experiential education, President Aoun has led the expansion of experiential learning—centered on Northeastern's signature co-op program—to offer opportunities for work, research, service, and global study in 136 countries.

President Aoun has strategically aligned the university's use-inspired research enterprise with three global imperatives—health, security, and sustainability—a focus supported by eight interdisciplinary research institutes. Northeastern has also established a network of 13 campuses in the U.S., Canada, and the United Kingdom, as part of the president's vision for a global university system that will expand opportunities for lifelong learning and collaborative research. As a result of these and other initiatives created during the president's tenure, Northeastern has attracted record numbers of high-talent students, while external awards for research have more than tripled.

Among his awards and honors, President Aoun was recently appointed as Chevalier of the Legion of Honor by the President of the French Republic. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences,

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fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and a past chair of the American Council on Education.

Chancellor and Senior Vice President for Learning Ken Henderson

Ken Henderson, appointed Northeastern University's first chancellor and senior vice president for learning in 2019, leads Northeastern's broad portfolio of learning functions. He oversees innovation in experiential learning, embracing digital and lifelong learning; learner mobility across both the global university system and internationally; student life including housing, wellness and student organizations; enrollment management, incorporating admissions, marketing, and financial aid; strategic partnerships; Division 1 athletics and university recreation; The Roux Institute at Northeastern University; as well as jointly leading, with the Provost, the Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion.

Chancellor Henderson joined Northeastern in 2016 as dean of the College of Science. He previously served as the chair of the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry at the University of Notre Dame. During his 14-year tenure at Notre Dame, he was also the senior assistant provost for internationalization, developing strategic international partnerships for research and learning collaborations.

A scholar of synthetic and structural inorganic chemistry, Chancellor Henderson's research interests lie in organometallic and materials chemistry, with a particular focus on energy-related systems. He has published over 100 peer-reviewed research articles and was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry in 2007. He received a first-class Honors B.Sc. in Chemistry from the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, Scotland, as well as his PhD, for which he was awarded the Ritchie Prize for the best PhD thesis and conducted post-doctorate research at Brown University.