



## **PRESIDENT JOB ADVERTISEMENT**

The State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) for the North Dakota University System (NDUS), together with the Bismarck State College (BSC) community, invites applications for the position of President. The SBHE and the NDUS Commissioner have charged the search committee to identify a dynamic, collaborative and forward-thinking leader. The successful candidate will guide BSC, North Dakota's polytechnic institution. They will also advance the college's robust, workforce-focused academic portfolio, which includes more than 100 career pathways spanning bachelor's and associate degrees, as well as stackable certificates that empower students to build skills and credentials. BSC is deeply committed to developing partnerships and immersive, hands-on learning experiences that allow students to engage with industry and prepare them for a rapidly evolving workforce.

The President of BSC serves as the chief executive officer for the state's third-largest higher education institution and one of 11 colleges and universities within the NDUS. The President reports to the Commissioner and the SBHE and directly oversees the Executive Vice President (Finance and Operations), as well as the Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and College Advancement, who also serves as Executive Director of the BSC Foundation. The Chief Human Resources Officer, the Public Information Officer, the Director of Athletics and the Executive Assistant for the President's Office also report directly to the President.

Founded in 1939 and overlooking the Missouri River, BSC is a vital part of the Bismarck-Mandan community. Located in North Dakota's capital city, BSC serves as an educational and economic anchor. The institution partners closely with statewide industry, government, schools and community organizations to expand workforce development, enrich quality of life and support growth and opportunities in the state's communities. BSC's dedicated faculty and staff support more than 4,500 students pursuing certificates, two-year and four-year degrees, workforce training and transfer pathways to four-year institutions. The college offers ladder degrees in more than 100 technical areas that prepare students for high-demand, well-paying careers in two years or less, along with nearly 50 focus areas for transfer students. Many programs are offered both online and on campus, ensuring flexibility and access for all learners.

BSC is fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and holds numerous program-level accreditations, which can be [found here](#). BSC is a proud member of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), competing in the Frontier Conference. With 14 bachelor's degree offerings, BSC aligns with the NAIA's four-year institution model. The Mystics athletic program provides student-athletes with competitive opportunities while fostering academic achievement, personal growth and strong community engagement.

## KEY ASPECTS OF BSC'S MISSION

**Polytechnic education:** The core of the mission is to provide a hands-on, career-focused education that combines technical training with a liberal arts foundation to prepare students for both a living and a life.

**Experiential learning:** BSC emphasizes "learning by doing" through practical, real-world situations, with modern labs and collaborative working environments to prepare students for on-the-job situations.

**Student success:** The mission is centered on student success, offering multiple pathways to achieve educational goals, including certificates, two, and four-year degrees, as well as opportunities to transfer credits to other institutions.

**Community and industry connection:** BSC works closely with its Business and Industry Leadership Teams (BILTs) to develop specialized programs and curricula, creating career-readiness pathways for students that include internships and field experiences.

**Affordability and flexibility:** The mission includes providing flexible and affordable options, such as online classes and multiple entry and exit points into programs.

The successful candidate will be able to promptly take the helm of this evolving effort and its many elements.

## EXPECTATIONS

The President will be asked to provide consistent, balanced, thoughtful leadership, serving as the trusted voice of BSC for the long-term. With **Polytechnic Education** noted in its mission, BSC's President must be a creative thinker with a proven ability to lead energetically into the future. The next President will have a strong grounding in academia and insight into economic drivers, workforce needs and the inherent connections among the three. They will be an advocate for the college and community, and a transparent communicator able to connect to and motivate faculty, staff, alumni, industry and BSC's partners at the local, national, and international level.

The successful candidate will be tuned into the changing landscape of both higher education and the needs and expectations of the students it serves. The President will be a strong advocate and a positive presence able to inspire the campus community as it moves forward. The successful individual will be able to make complex, data-driven decisions for the common good and communicate the path to those decisions. She or he should be able to manage diverse relationships, build consensus, and practice integrity. The President will be expected to build partnerships and collaborate for the well-being of the campus, the system, and the state of North Dakota.

The President will embody a **Polytechnic mindset**—a forward-looking philosophy that integrates applied learning, interdisciplinary collaboration, and innovation-driven education. This leader will champion a **unique educational model** that bridges theory with practice, ensuring students graduate not only with knowledge but with the ability to solve real-world challenges and immediately enter the workforce.

The President must demonstrate the **ability to manage substantial institutional growth**, including expansion of academic programs, student enrollment, and industry partnerships, while maintaining quality, fiscal responsibility, and alignment with BSC's mission.

BSC's spirit of collaboration, sense of belonging, and reputation for innovation make it an exceptional place to lead, learn, and grow. The next President will join a campus that values servant and transformational leadership, transparent communication, and decisive action. BSC offers unique opportunities in expanding academic programs, athletics, and industry partnerships, while maintaining a strong teaching mission and a vibrant campus culture.

### **Growth at BSC**

- **Enrollment:** BSC has achieved record enrollment, with a significant increase in full-time students. Fall 2025 marked the seventh consecutive semester of significant enrollment growth for the college.
- **Specific program growth:** Enrollment has grown substantially in fields like healthcare, agriculture, cybersecurity, energy and automation.
- **Facilities:** The college has expanded its campus with new facilities, such as the Health Science Hall and the Advanced Technology Center. The Bavendick Center athletic facility will open in February 2026 and 350-bed residential hall in August 2027.
- **Workforce development:** Growth is driven by industry partnerships and programs that prepare students for in-demand careers, helping to meet workforce needs in North Dakota and the region.
- **Student financial support:** In addition to \$1.3M in scholarships awarded by the BSC Foundation, initiatives like the BSC In-Demand Careers Scholarship have helped remove financial barriers for students in qualifying programs.

### **CHARACTERISTICS**

The successful candidate should possess most, if not all, of the following characteristics:

#### **Relational**

- Demonstrated commitment to student access, achievement, and retention
- Understanding and appreciation for the values, trends and needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century students
- An attitude of open, honest, mutual respect in discussion and action
- Ability to forge partnerships and connect with alumni, the community, and private sector
- Ability to leverage the synergies found in post-secondary education, secondary education, workforce and all levels of government
- A demonstrated commitment to fostering belonging and fairness through intentional partnerships among students, faculty, staff, and the broader community
- Understands and fits the unique culture of North Dakota, values local roots, and is committed to long-term service

#### **Communicating and Listening**

- A strong, two-way communicator—transparent, approachable, and able to articulate vision while actively listening to feedback from all campus groups.
- Ability to relate to students, campus, and community stakeholders

- Ability to motivate and invigorate staff, faculty and students around a purpose or vision
- Ability to use a process of active listening and fair assessment to make decisions
- Willingness to take measured risks and engage in creative problem solving
- Connection and commitment to the culture, values, and attributes of the upper Midwest
- Understanding of the college's impact on the cultural fabric of the community through activities such as athletics, enrichment programming and the arts

#### **Organizational**

- Support for a diverse approach to education including the need for multiple modalities of instruction
- Commitment to academic freedom
- Ability to trust and rely on their team, champion faculty opinions, and provide professional development opportunities.
- Demonstrated advocacy for students, faculty and staff
- Strong understanding of large, complex budgets and fiscal responsibility
- Value for strategic visioning, planning, and informed, data-based decision making leading to student success

#### **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

- Progressively responsible administrative experience
- Bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited postsecondary institution

#### **PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS**

- Advanced degree from a regionally accredited postsecondary institution
- Senior leadership experience in a higher education setting
- Leadership experience in a community college offering baccalaureate degree options

The successful candidate should be committed to working effectively in a statewide system of higher education (North Dakota University System) and with a statewide governing board (State Board of Higher Education).

#### **NOMINATIONS AND APPLICATIONS**

To assure best consideration, nominations and applications should be received by January 18, 2026. The application must include a letter of interest of not more than three pages; a current résumé (or curriculum vitae); and the names of five professional references with each person's position, office or home address, e-mail address, and telephone numbers. The current Interim President of BSC is fully eligible to apply and will be given equal consideration alongside other applicants. References will not be contacted without prior authorization from the applicant. The new President will assume office on or before July 1, 2026.

The BSC Presidential Search is being coordinated internally through the North Dakota University System office and BSC Human Resources. Nominations and applications should be sent electronically to [BSCPresidentialSearch@BismarckState.edu](mailto:BSCPresidentialSearch@BismarckState.edu) (MS Word or PDF format). Additional college information may be found at [bismarckstate.edu](http://bismarckstate.edu). Additional information on the BSC Presidential Search may be found at [bismarckstate.edu/PresidentialSearch](http://bismarckstate.edu/PresidentialSearch). Questions may be directed to Jane Grinde, NDUS Chief Human Resource Officer at 701.328.4217

[jane.grinde@ndus.edu](mailto:jane.grinde@ndus.edu) or Nicole Mikkelsen, Chief Human Resources Officer, BSC at 701.224.5427 [nicole.mikkelsen@bismarckstate.edu](mailto:nicole.mikkelsen@bismarckstate.edu)

### **CONFIDENTIALITY OF APPLICATION MATERIALS; RECORDS RETENTION; VETERAN'S PREFERENCE**

Pursuant to NDCC 44-04-18.27, applications and any records related to the applications that identify an applicant are exempt from public disclosure, except that records related to the finalists for the position shall be open to the public after the search committee has identified no fewer than three finalists. Pursuant to the North Dakota University System's General Record Retention Schedule, all records related to this search will be maintained for a minimum of three years, and all applications and related materials shall be retained for a minimum of six years, though the application materials of non-finalists shall remain confidential.

Semi-finalists will agree to an on-campus visit which will include public forums with constituent groups.

Pursuant to NDCC 37-19.1-02(4) this position is not subject to veteran's preference.

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER**

Bismarck State College is an equal opportunity institution that does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, gender, gender identity, national origin, age, religion, sexual orientation, information protected by the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA), marital status, disability, veteran's status or any other status protected by law in its admissions, student aid, employment practices, education programs or other related activities.

<http://bismarckstate.edu/employment/>

BSC Human Resources

Meadowlark Building

PO Box 5587

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Bismarck, ND 58506-5587

701-224-5531 \*800-366-6888 (TTY Relay ND)

**This position requires a criminal history and credit record check. Finalists will participate in a TriMetrix® HD assessment. Applicants must be legally authorized to work in the United States and there is no sponsorship for this position. BSC determines employment eligibility through the E-Verify system.**