

Search Profile:

VICE PRESIDENT FOR BUSINESS AND FINANCE



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California State University, Chico (Chico State) invites applications and nominations for the position of Vice President for Business and Finance (VPBF). The VPBF serves as the chief business officer and chief financial officer for the University. Reporting to President Steve Perez (appointed the University's 13th president in July 2023), the VPBF will be a dynamic, innovative, collaborative, and experienced leader with a track record of progressive management success.



The University

At Chico State, students are empowered to “Do and Dare” in their careers and lives. Founded in 1887, Chico State is the second-oldest institution in the 23-campus CSU, the nation’s largest public university system. Chico State enrolls approximately 14,000 students and serves as the comprehensive university of the North State, the 12-county region where the campus is located. A 21-time US News & World Report “Top Public School in the West,” Chico State prides itself on its high-quality, high-value education, an active and engaged student body, and a strong connection with the local community and the State of California. A Hispanic-Serving Institution since 2014 with more than one-third of its students identifying as Latinx and nearly half being first-generation, Chico State cultivates and nurtures a welcoming and inclusive campus where students, faculty, and staff have an equitable opportunity to thrive.

Chico State is one of the most highly ranked regional public universities in the West. The University is situated in a classic college town with a residential campus experience that rivals many private universities. The campus emphasizes and fosters sustainability, connections beyond campus, and civic engagement. Both graduate and undergraduate students work closely with expert faculty to devise solutions for the global challenges of the 21st century. Over 183,000 alumni have achieved distinction as graduates. In preparation for its future growth, the University is beginning to plan its second comprehensive capital campaign.

Named one of the “greenest” schools in the nation by *The Princeton Review*, about 80 percent of students live, learn, and work within walking or biking distance of campus. The University is committed to working with Native American Tribes and has a close relationship with the Mechoopda Tribe that is indigenous to the area and has contributed to the University for generations.

The campus culture and energy are vibrant, making Chico State an exceptional institution to live, learn, work, and dare to discover!

The [Chico Quick Facts](#) provides a succinct overview of important campus features.

Just the Numbers

132-acre campus core

800-acre University Farm

8,000 acres of ecological reserves

\$247 million campus operating budget

\$60 million of grant and contract activity

58 buildings on campus

51 years average age of buildings

963 faculty

820 staff

178 administrators

13,999 students

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge and are mindful that Chico State stands on lands that were originally occupied by the first people in this area, the Mechoopda, and we recognize their distinctive spiritual relationship with this land, the flora, the fauna, and the waters that run through campus. We are humbled that our campus resides upon sacred lands that since time immemorial have sustained the Mechoopda people and continue to do so today.

Accolades

Chico State has a strong four-year graduation rate and its graduates have among the lowest average student debt in the country.

The campus is consistently ranked high for social mobility, recently being named "A Most Transformative College" in the top 2% in the United States (*CollegeNET*, Social Mobility Index).

Many programs, like nursing, computer animation and game development, and concrete industry management have a 100% job placement rate. Recognized as an outstanding value, Chico State is among the top 8% for return on investment (*PayScale.com*) and a Top College for Educational Quality and Value (*Forbes* magazine)

Other accolades include the following:

- Top 10 US Public University in the West (*U.S. News & World Report*)
- Top 7% of Best Colleges (*Money* magazine)

The University's College of Business was recently recognized in The Princeton Review's 2023 Best Business Schools and Top Online MBA Programs for 2023. The University has also been recognized as one of the top business schools with a Tier One ranking in *CEO Magazine's* 2023 Global MBA rankings. The University's online MBA program also ranked No. 46 globally, jumping up from No. 65 last year. This marks the fifth year that *CEO Magazine* has highly ranked Chico State's MBA program.





Academic Programs

The University offers nearly 400 undergraduate majors and minors, graduate degrees, and professional certifications. Classes have an intimate average class size of 28, and the student-faculty ratio is 24:1.

Chico State's graduate and undergraduate programs are nationally recognized and award-winning for their commitment to ensuring that Hispanic, low-income, and additional historically underserved students have opportunities for educational growth, success, and equitable access to higher education. New programs and grants help to remove the financial barriers many students face, providing support as students participate in research opportunities, internships, and professional development.

Driven by the urgency of closing academic equity gaps faced by low-income, first-generation, Latinx, African American, and Native American students, Chico State's Graduation Initiative Advisory Team has launched an ambitious plan to make rapid and

measurable progress on this challenge. Launched in 2021, the Advancing Equity Project is action-oriented, data-driven, and is led by Academic Affairs, but spans all divisions of the University. For 2022-23, the Advancing Equity Project is focused on equitable student retention in alignment with the campus Enrollment Continuum agenda.

Colleges

- Agriculture
- Behavioral and Social Sciences
- Business
- Communication and Education
- Engineering, Computer Science, and Construction Management
- Humanities and Fine Arts
- Natural Sciences



Strategic Planning

The University's Strategic Plan continues through 2024. Three strategic priorities flow through a foundation of four "enduring commitments" that are time-honored promises the campus community upholds to students and to each other. Discussions are underway to develop a new plan under President Perez's leadership. To learn more about the planning process and to view the 2019-2024 Plan, please visit the [Strategic Planning website](#).

Mission

Chico State is the comprehensive university of the North State with a global reach.

Through excellence of inquiry, innovation, and experiential learning, we develop students who are critical thinkers, responsible citizens, diverse leaders, and inspired stewards of environmental, social, and economic resources.

Vision

Chico State will be known as a preeminent university solving the unprecedented challenges of the 21st century.



Students

In fall 2023, Chico State enrolled 13,013 full-time equivalent students and 13,999 total students. A funded Hispanic-Serving Institution, Chico State students reflect the population of the region, with 36.8% Hispanic and 43.6% White. The 3 percent of students who come from outside California reflect dozens of other states and 46 nations. The largest majors are business administration and psychology.

The undergraduate four-year graduation rate is 35.7% (for first-time, full-time freshman/2018 cohort). The six-year graduation rate is 63.8% (for first-time, full-time freshman/2016 cohort). The second-year retention rate is 68.9% (for first-time, full-time freshman/2021 cohort).

Unlike many CSUs that are commuter schools, Chico State is a true destination college. About 80 percent of students live within a 2-mile radius of campus, and the University houses approximately 1,740 students in six on-campus residence halls and one off-campus apartment complex. The surrounding neighborhoods are home to a dynamic, active community. There is a strong culture of student engagement at Chico State. The University has more than 200 student organizations so that students can find their community. The list of student clubs includes fraternities, sororities, recreational sports, and special-interest, social, and professional groups. Students also manage the operations of campus publications, including *The Chico Historian*, an academic journal, and *The Orion*, the University's

newspaper that has won dozens of national, regional, and state awards, and was recognized as one of the top 100 student publications in the nation by the Associated Collegiate Press in 2022.

All students are members of the Associated Students (AS) of Chico State, a multimillion-dollar corporation managed by students. The AS is responsible for student government, the Wildcat Recreation Center (WREC), Adventure Outings, the student union (Bell Memorial Union), the Well (student wellness center), and many other programs for students, including Community Action Volunteers in Education (CAVE), Child Development Lab (campus daycare), and the Sustainability Program. The AS is also responsible for operating and supporting auxiliary businesses on campus, including all dining services and the Wildcat Store.

Chico State is the home of the Wildcats and has 13 Division II (California Collegiate Athletic Association "CCAA") men's and women's athletic teams, with an all-weather track, putting green, jogging trails, two gyms, a soccer stadium, softball fields, Nettleton Stadium (for baseball), tennis, basketball, weight room, and other facilities. The Wildcats have won more than twice as many regular-season crowns as any other CCAA school. The University also supports many club sports for student engagement as well.

For further information, about the student population, please see the [Fact Book](#) published by Institutional Research and Strategic Analytics.



The Community

Chico is a consummate college town, with an abundance of cultural and recreational resources in combination with a small-town feel. Its population is over 100,000. The city has strived to maintain its strong sense of community, while simultaneously establishing itself as a dynamic regional center for business, education, recreation, and culture.

Over the years, Chico has garnered recognition among the “Best Places in America” by *Forbes* magazine, the “Best Places to Retire” by *U.S. News & World Report*. Its dedication to the environment has landed acknowledgement as the “Best Green Places to Live” by *Country Home Magazine*, and active lifestyle heralded by *TIME* magazine’s “Top 10 Cities in the Nation Where People Exercise the Most”, *Outdoor’s* “Best Towns,” and *Bicycle’s* “America’s Best Bike Town.”

The Division of Business And Finance

The Division of Business and Finance encompasses many distinct functions from maintaining the beautiful campus grounds and ensuring safety, to overseeing capital improvements and providing financial transparency. More than 315 staff members are committed to providing effective stewardship of institutional assets and resources as well as excellent service to students, faculty, staff, alumni, and visitors. The budget of the division is over \$38 million.

Extensive information is available on the division's [website](#). However, some key features are described below.

The division provides audit services for the campus through the **Enterprise Risk Management unit**. This department is also responsible for risk pool, insurance, liability claim management, worker's compensation, and public records requests.

Environmental Health and Safety provides guidance and services to promote the integration of health, safety, and environmental stewardship in all campus activities. Some activities include emergency preparedness, oversight for hazardous materials management, and collaborative campus leadership for general health and injury prevention.

Facilities Management Services responds to general and deferred maintenance, grounds, landscape, custodial, and design and construction. The department is involved with campus sustainability efforts that have resulted in national recognition for the University.

Financial Services is a customer-facing department that provides financial management, accounts payable, financial reporting, as well as student financial services (loans, billing, refunds, tuition and registration fees, and club/organization financial services). The **University Budget Office** is also part of this unit and provides guidance to academic and administrative units with budgeting with a goal of openness and transparency.

The Human Resources Service Center oversees payroll, benefits and leaves, professional development, labor relations, and talent acquisition for staff and management personnel.

Equal Opportunity and Dispute Resolution (EODR) oversees Title IX compliance and the Clery Security Report and provides leadership for the Campus Security Authorities (individuals identified as resources for reporting incidents and crimes related to the Clery Act and Campus Safety Plan). A systemwide assessment related to Title IX, Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation

concluded in July 2023. Recommendations were provided for the entire CSU system as well as for [Chico State](#), and implementation is underway.

Responsible for the acquisition of all goods, services, leases, and construction, **Procurement, Property, Distribution Services and Real Estate** provides oversight and management to ensure that legal requirements are met, and good business practices are followed. They also oversee mail, shipping and receiving, and property management.

Support for the **Staff Council** is also provided in the Business and Finance division. Representing staff in a shared governance environment, the Staff Council is also an active campus supporter, sponsoring recognition and awards, student programs, campus activities, and giving campaigns.

In the CSU system, police officers are sworn law enforcement officers. The **University Police** promote a safe environment for the campus community through proactive, progressive, and professional law enforcement services. The unit is also responsible for parking services, oversight of a number of campus safety policies, and working with others to provide the Annual Security Report.



Departments/Functions

- Enterprise Risk Management (includes Audit Services)
- Environmental Health and Safety
- Equal Opportunity and Dispute Resolution/Title IX Compliance (including Clery compliance)
- Facilities Management Services and Capital Projects
- Financial Services (includes University Budget Office)
- Human Resources
- Procurement, Property, Distribution and Real Estate
- Staff Council
- University Police



Vice President for Business and Finance

The Vice President for Business and Finance is responsible for providing creative vision, leadership, and management of the financial and business functions for the University's educational mission, supporting the academic mission and vision of the institution, maintaining open lines of communication, and seeking to thoroughly understand diverse points of view, providing appropriate opportunity for input, and making necessary decisions that align with University goals.

The VPBF will join the leadership team at a time of unique opportunity, with a new president and provost. The cabinet operates as a high-functioning team in a high-trust environment. Accountability, collaboration, inclusivity, and respect are values shared by team members.

Responsibilities include the following:

- Oversee all aspects of Enterprise Risk Management (including Audit Services), Environmental Health and Safety, Equal Opportunity and Dispute Resolution (including Clery compliance), Facilities Management Services and Capital Projects, Financial Services (including University Budget Office), Human Resources Services Center, Procurement, Property, Distribution Services and Real Estate, and the University Police Department.
- Ensure University budget plans are fiscally sound and sustainable.
- Promote the financial well-being of the University by providing budget management, exercising executive control over University budgets, and safeguarding all financial assets of the University.
- Minimize liability to the University by ensuring compliance with governing regulations and addressing risk management issues.
- Provide financial oversight for and serve on auxiliary organization boards, including acting as Treasurer for the University Foundation and Chico State Enterprises.
- Play a critical role in the planning and implementation of new capital campaigns.
- Marshal the necessary resources to implement mission and vision, utilizing data to assess progress and determine direction.
- Work collaboratively with the President and the Cabinet.
- Support the leadership team by hiring in alignment with the University's mission, providing timely and direct feedback, creating opportunity for personal and professional development, providing incentives for high performance, and ensuring success.
- Articulate, regularly update, and implement a strategic plan for Business and Finance that aligns with the University's Strategic Plan.
- Participate in shared governance and work transparently across the University, including students, staff, and faculty, and applying University policies and procedures.
- Ensure the University's commitment to its values and mission, including diversity and inclusion, the development of the whole person, and the promotion of justice, as evidenced by creative and effective initiatives focused on attracting and retaining talented students, faculty, and staff.
- Provide programming that models inclusiveness and community involvement both within and outside of the University.
- Foster an environment of collegiality, support, and mutual trust.

Leadership Agenda

Supporting Strategic Enrollment Management:

Like many universities recently, Chico State has seen enrollments decline. Enrollment for fall 2023 is 13,999, down from 16,630 in fall 2020. While Enrollment Management is housed within Student Affairs, the VPBF works closely with the Provost, Student Affairs Vice President, and others on campus to address strategic enrollment planning efforts, including understanding student demand and enrollment funnel metrics, assessing the array of programs and online offerings, and ensuring that students' needs and interests are met (especially as a Hispanic-Serving Institution with a growing population of non-traditional-age students).

Leading Sustainable Budget Management and Planning: Relative to the above enrollment challenge, state budget gaps, and the increased cost of goods/ services/ technology (inflation coupled with the requirement that universities acquaint students with newly developing tools and resources in their respective fields), the campus has an all-funds structural budget deficit. While the campus has reserves to address this deficit over the short term, the incoming VPBF will be tasked with creating revenue projections, identifying cost savings and innovative revenue generation (including auxiliary efforts), as well as with supporting other partners as they analyze costs, catalyze new ventures, and review program sustainability. This challenging budget introspection will require transparent management and honest interactions with stakeholders.

Promoting Accessible and Student-Friendly Processes: The VPBF will work to enhance student success at Chico State by developing a user-friendly interface to facilitate intuitive and easy-to-access student accounts and financial aid queries. The Division of Business and Finance will be a partner to facilitate registration and degree planning with Academic and Student Affairs partners. Additionally, the VPBF will lead a division that prioritizes the student experience when managing facilities to include classrooms, and study and outdoor areas. This includes ensuring safe, accessible spaces for all students.

Strengthening Campus and Community Connections: The VPBF works with colleagues to foster collaboration across divisions to ensure a cohesive experience for students and effective relationships with the Chico community.



Additionally, the Vice President plays a crucial role as a liaison with the Chico community, supporting mutual aid with fire, police, and health/safety efforts. Building strong relationships with local communities served by the University is deemed vital for both the institution's growth and success and the overall well-being of the region.

Providing Opportunity for Innovative Campus Capital Planning: Chico State is poised to grow in prominence in the North State and to improve the student experience, community connections, and quality of life for the region. With capital projects rationed for funding through the CSU and State Legislature, if Chico State wishes to forge ahead, it will need to explore ways to build new programs and facilities. Chico State wishes to engage thoughtfully with external partners to create mutually beneficial projects. The VPBF will be a cautious yet open-minded representative of the University to nurture, launch, and monitor such partnerships.



Qualifications

Overview: The successful candidate will have a track record of management success in a university or similarly complex setting; planning, resource development and project management skills; experience dealing with governing boards and municipalities; and experience managing a variety of campus operation functions. In addition, the Vice President will demonstrate the capacity to lead staff through organizational change. The incumbent will appreciate the academic mission, approach tasks with a “people” orientation, and possess exceptional communication and interpersonal skills.

Required Qualifications

- Advanced degree (or equivalent combination of education and experience) in business, administration, or a related field.
- Five years of experience in budget and administration in higher education, government, or comparable organization.
- Experience overseeing multi-disciplinary operational units in a complex organization.
- Ability to effectively establish and maintain cooperative working relationships within a diverse, multicultural environment.

Preferred Critical Attributes

- Demonstrated ability to see the big picture and relate business affairs strategies and resources to the University’s mission and strategic plan.

- An unquestionable personal code of ethics (possess qualities such as wisdom, integrity, optimism, inclusiveness, and sound judgment).
- A transparent management style that fosters collegiality and teamwork.
- Demonstrated ability to model exceptional leadership for colleagues and hold others accountable to the same standards.
- Experience with data-informed assessment for decision-making and improving business processes.
- Demonstrated appreciation for the principles of academic freedom and shared governance.
- Exceptional interpersonal, communication, and conflict resolution skills.
- Demonstrated knowledge of and experience in the strategic leadership of budget development and management, capital planning, facilities management, safety/security, real estate acquisition and development, risk management, human resources, contracting and purchasing services, and in other areas reporting to this role.
- Experience in higher education.
- Ability to communicate a vision for the future of the Division of Business and Finance.
- Demonstrated competence/knowledge in a collective bargaining environment.
- Commitment to diversity demonstrated by leadership, active planning, allocation of resources, and accountability.
- Experience with Public-Private Partnership (P3).



Application and Nomination Process

As a university that educates students from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, Chico State values a diverse faculty, staff, and administration and seeks to create as diverse a pool of candidates as possible. The University is an Equal Opportunity Employer and adheres to CSU policy to provide equal opportunity for every person regardless of the person's protected status. Protected statuses include age, disability, gender, genetic information, gender identity or expression, nationality, marital status, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and veteran or military status.

Chico State welcomes applicants who are knowledgeable about and interested in working within a cross-cultural learning environment.

Applications/Nominations

Review of applications will begin in **late January** and continue until the position is filled. However, only complete applications received by **February 26, 2024**, can be assured full consideration. As a condition of employment, candidates will have to submit to a confidential background check and submit official, sealed transcripts. All information obtained will be strictly confidential.

Applications/Nominations: Applicants should submit a complete and current **résumé or curriculum vitae**, as well as names, addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers of **up to five references**. (No

references will be contacted without the explicit permission of the candidate.) A **cover letter** of interest should indicate how the applicant's qualifications relate to each of the required qualifications, as well as the preferred attributes of the position. Applicants should succinctly articulate their administrative philosophy and the role of the Division of Business and Finance in public higher education. This search is being assisted by Academic Search and applications should be sent electronically to Chicostatevpbf@academicsearch.org. Nominations and requests for confidential conversations may be sent to senior consultants Stacey Morgan Foster at stacey.foster@academicsearch.org and Mary E. Kennard at mary.kennard@academicsearch.org

California State University, Chico employs only individuals lawfully authorized to work in the United States. California State University, Chico is an Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, and Americans with Disabilities Act employer.

An annual security report disclosing crime statistics for California State University, Chico can be obtained by contacting the University Police Department (530) 898-5555 or by accessing the following web site: www.csuchico.edu/up/.

Additional information about the University is available at: www.csuchico.edu.

Start date: Late spring/early summer 2024/ negotiable

Application and Nomination Process (Cont.)

Compensation and Benefits

Anticipated Hiring Range: \$285,000 to \$300,000

The CSU system provides a comprehensive benefit package that includes medical, dental and vision plans, membership in the California Public Employees Retirement System (CalPERS), sick and vacation time, and 15 paid holidays a year. Eligible employees are also able to participate in the fee waiver education program. A summary of benefit information can be found on the [CSU Benefits site](#).

Other Position Information

Work status: Full-time/Exempt/At-Will

Schedule: Monday – Friday, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm, some nights and weekends

This is a full-time management position (Management Personnel Plan-MPP) at the Administrator IV level. MPP employees serve at the pleasure of the campus president. MPPs do not serve a probationary period and never receive permanent status.

NOTE: This position does not offer continuous remote work.



About Academic Search

Academic Search is assisting California State University, Chico in this work. For more than four decades, Academic Search has offered executive search services to higher education institutions, associations, and related organizations. Academic Search was founded by higher education leaders on the principle that we provide the most value to partner institutions by combining best practices with our deep knowledge and experience. Our mission today is to enhance institutional capacity by providing outstanding executive recruitment services, executive coaching, and transition support, in partnership with our parent organization, the American Academic Leadership Institute.



Committed to IDENTIFYING
AND DEVELOPING LEADERS
by providing the highest
level of EXECUTIVE
SEARCH to our
higher education
partners.