



Position Specification

Case Western Reserve University
Vice President for Student Affairs

The University

Established in 1826, Case Western Reserve is one of the country's leading private research institutions and a member of the [Association of American Universities](#).

Case Western Reserve includes seven schools and one college:

- Case School of Engineering
- College of Arts and Sciences
- Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing
- Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences
- School of Dental Medicine
- School of Law
- School of Medicine
- Weatherhead School of Management

The University enrolls more than 12,000 students—approximately half undergraduate and half graduate and professional students—and almost 3,700 full-time faculty members, 3,200 staff members, and more than 110,000 alumni worldwide. The student body hails from all 50 states and from 94 countries. Case Western Reserve has a \$1.2 billion operating budget, more than \$465 million in research expenditures, and a \$2 billion endowment.

Case Western Reserve offers a wide variety of [academic programs](#) including more than [100 undergraduate programs](#), about [160 graduate and professional options](#), and more than [145 dual-degree programs](#). Students can also study in one of [seven online master's degrees](#) or more than a dozen noncredit online courses.

CWRU caters to high achieving, intellectually engaged students who are concerned about their community and want to make an impact to advance a more just world. They are often highly talented in more than one area as evidenced by the large number of students with dual majors that might span STEM-oriented through highly creative fields. Ninety-nine percent of CWRU undergraduates take part in experiential learning, 47% receive financial assistance equal to their full demonstrated need, and 26% of the undergraduate class that entered in fall 2022 are from historically underrepresented groups. CWRU receives [high ranks from international publications and organizations](#) in academic programs, research, return on investment, and innovation, to name a few.

Under the skillful and visionary direction of [President Eric Kaler](#), Case Western Reserve is committed to enhancing academic excellence by expanding the University's undergraduate enrollment, elevating research by increasing research expenditures, and enhancing community engagement and impact—particularly in local communities adjacent to the campus. The [Neighborhood Advisory Council](#), which serves as a liaison between neighboring communities and University leadership, is one example of this effort. Through connections with faculty, staff, and students across the University and with the local community, Case Western Reserve seeks to be a “high impact research university where humanity, science, and technology meet to create a just and thriving world.”

[Prestigious awards and recognition](#) underscore the research excellence within the University. Among its faculty are recipients of MacArthur, Guggenheim and National Endowment for the Humanities fellowships, Fulbright scholarships, a Pulitzer Prize, National Science Foundation Career Awards, and elected fellows from the National Academy of Sciences, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Association for the Advancement of Sciences, and the American Council of Learned Societies, among others. Furthermore, the research of its alumni and faculty have led to multiple Nobel Prizes—including to longtime dean and faculty member Frederick Robbins (for his contributions to the polio vaccine) and alumnus Paul Berg (for recombinant DNA).

Collaborations and interdisciplinary efforts extend well beyond research. Launched in 2016, the annual [Cleveland Humanities Festival](#) involves more than 30 partners across the region offering dozens of events each March and April. [Sears think\[box\]](#)—the nation’s largest innovation and makerspace open to the public—regularly partners with schools and other university programs to support student entrepreneurs. The Coleman P. Burke Center for Environmental Law also provides learning and research opportunities for students and faculty across the campus. In 2026, Case Western Reserve marks the 200th anniversary of Western Reserve College.

Case Western Reserve University is proud to have received the national Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award from INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine, a diversity-focused publication in higher education, for the last eleven years. The award recognizes colleges and universities nationally that have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Division of Student Affairs

The departments within the Division of Student Affairs direct and support the academic and co-curricular needs of CWRU students and the University. The Office provides leadership in the development of services and programs that enrich student life, extend and enhance the academic experience, and contribute to an environment that encourages personal growth and development. The Vice President and staff administer all departments within Student Affairs and liaise with other administrative offices and the faculty. A central source of information, the Office of Student Affairs oversees policies, procedures, and programming that promote and support student life and well-being. Student Affairs departments include the following:

- The Office for Academic Support Resources for Students is the home base for tutoring and other academic supports needed for student success.
- [Accommodated Testing and Services](#) (OATS) provides accommodations for CWRU students including testing accommodations, note-taking services, and assistive technology.
- The [Undergraduate Advising Support Office](#) (UAS) provides integrated academic advising to all students in partnership with faculty advisors in the schools and college.
- The Career Center offers a one stop set of supports for all students, connecting their academic interests to their career paths prior to entering the campus community.

- The [Center for Civic Engagement and Learning](#) (CCEL) works to create an engaged campus by providing and supporting opportunities for community service and collective action while promoting civic awareness and leadership.
- The [Dean of Students](#) Office serves in an advocacy role for all students. The Office assists students, parents, faculty, and staff with all matters related to student life for academic success at CWRU and provides support for students experiencing a range of challenges.
- [Disability Resources](#) is committed to assisting all CWRU students with disabilities by creating opportunities to take full advantage of the University's educational, academic, and residential programs.
- The Education Abroad Office works with students, faculty, and advisors to prepare students for global experiences.
- The [Office of Family Programs](#) provides support for student families to help appropriately engage them in their students' CWRU experience.
- The [Flora Stone Mather Center for Women](#) empowers all women and promotes gender equity and inclusion throughout the CWRU community.
- [Graduate Student Life](#) provides resources that assist graduate students during their time at CWRU in being successful personally, professionally, and academically.
- [Greek Life](#) strives to foster the positive development of CWRU's member fraternities, sororities, and of each individual member by upholding the values of citizenship, scholarship, ritual, and leadership.
- The Office of International Student Affairs provides support for all international students, building community and a sense of belonging at CWRU.
- The [LGBT Center](#) exemplifies CWRU's commitment to serving its diverse students, staff, faculty, and alumni.
- The Office of [Multicultural Affairs](#) (OMA) works to develop an inclusive CWRU community, one that supports all students, respects and celebrates their identities, and facilitates their success.
- The Student Affairs [Operations and Planning](#) Group facilitates exceptional learning experiences by providing support, information, tools, and solutions for department staff and students.
- [Physical Education and Athletics](#) helps students develop fitness and lifetime sports skills. The activities in intramural, open recreation, wellness, and sport club programs are designed to enhance the quality of life for students of all levels. Case Western Reserve University, a Division III institution, is home to 19 varsity teams and over 500 student-athletes who participate in the University Athletic Association (UAA) conference.
- The Undergraduate Research Office works to connect students with faculty and research opportunities throughout the academic year and during the summer.
- [Residence Life](#) works to build an on-campus community that fosters personal growth and teamwork and offers an opportunity for students to enjoy creative, social, educational, and cultural programs.

- [Student Activities and Leadership](#) provides a variety of programs, events, organizations, and leadership opportunities for both undergraduate and graduate students.
- [Student Centers](#) is a group of centers that serve as central gathering places for students, faculty, and staff at CWRU, housing several student and staff organizations, outside community institutions, and space for campus and community events.
- [The Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards](#) is responsible for the student conduct process for the entire University. This includes conduct policy issues with all students – undergraduate, graduate, and professional.
- [University Health and Counseling Services](#) advances the success of CWRU's diverse student body through integrated medical, mental health, and wellness services, and promotes a culture of safety, respect, and global citizenship that fosters lifelong resilience.
- The [student life strategic plan](#) is built around three strategic anchors, which serve as a distillation of the goals of our work in student affairs and student success, as well as aspirational statements for what our divisions hope to become.

The strategic anchors of the Division of Student Affairs aim to inspire students to belong, be well, and experience. Aspiration statements accompany each anchor and serve as a guide for student life efforts at CWRU into the future. Each statement reflects a value related to the discovery of what already works best and what more is to come.

The Role

Under the leadership of President Kaler, the University is focused on three priorities – elevating academic excellence, expanding research and entrepreneurial opportunities, and enhancing community engagement and impact. Building a diverse and inclusive community is part of each of these priorities, and the University embeds these values in all aspects of its work.

CWRU seeks an innovative, knowledgeable, and collaborative leader to serve as its next Vice President for Student Affairs (VPSA), who will join a committed leadership team in advancing the university's priorities. The VPSA will join CWRU during a time of prosperity and will become part of a vibrant community committed to providing an excellent student experience. In strong partnership with the Provost, deans, and other campus leaders, the VPSA will bring a creative, data-informed, systems approach that will promote student success and bolster student retention and graduation.

The VPSA leads all aspects of student life that enrich and promote the intellectual and personal growth of all undergraduate, graduate, and professional students. Reporting to the Provost and serving as a member of the President's Cabinet, the Vice President oversees all departments within the Student Affairs division, assumes all budgetary and strategic planning goals related to the development and support of student life programming, and develops relevant policies and practices that ensure student well-being and development. The VPSA oversees a budget of nearly \$27 million and a team of 230 staff members and actively collaborates across the University. As a member of the President's Cabinet, the VPSA will meet monthly with the President.

The VPSA's direct reports include:

- Senior Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students
- Associate Vice President of Student Engagement and Learning
- Associate Vice President of Operations and Planning
- Assistant Vice President and Chief Health Officer, Health & Counseling Services
- Director, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs, James C. Wyant Director, Athletics and Chair, Physical Education
- Student Affairs Executive Aide
- Dean of Undergraduate Advising Support Office
- Assistant Vice President of Academic Experience

Priorities

In addition to the day-to-day responsibilities of leading the Office of Student Affairs, the VPSA will be expected to focus on the following opportunities:

Share deep expertise

- Build on the longevity and deep professional expertise of a collegial, cohesive, and highly regarded Student Affairs leadership team and staff;
- Strengthen the collaboration between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, with academic advising a key part of the collaboration;
- Understand the nuances of the current and evolving Student Affairs landscape and create programming that anticipates new directions, changing student expectations, and the evolving composition of the CWRU student body - one quarter of whom are from historically underrepresented backgrounds - and a growing international and graduate student body;
- Serve as a highly regarded leader on the forefront of national conversations and issues related to student life and well-being. Participate in and develop connections through relevant professional associations and represent the University at conferences and workshops appropriate to the position, with particular attention to leadership roles in the NCAA and the University Athletic Association;
- Advise the President and Provost on all policies and matters related to students;
- Demonstrate a high degree of energy and organization and an open, confident, and convincing communication style with persuasive and inspiring oral and written presentation skills; and
- Effectively lead and manage crises that impact the campus community.

Enhance student development

- Advocate for undergraduate, graduate, and professional students;
- Develop programs and strategies aimed at supporting students and improving graduation and retention rates;
- Understand best practices around supporting undergraduates in a research environment, as informed by the [Boyer 2030 Commission Report](#), and be prepared to

lead divisional efforts in this regard in collaboration with faculty and academic departments;

- Create, direct, and support programming and services designed to address student well-being, mental health and wellness, and the various learning needs/styles of students;
- Keep up with the most current practices related to student development, discipline, safety, conduct, and risk management;
- Demonstrate experience with mediation and conflict resolution strategies;
- Collaborate with student leadership groups, including Greek Life organizations, Student Executive Committee, Undergraduate Student Government, and Graduate Student Council;
- Participate in planning and development of programs, policies, and services that facilitate students' CWRU experience and remove barriers to their personal and academic success.

Raise visibility and resources

- Collaborate with faculty and academic affairs to create a seamless, holistic experience that weaves together academic and co-curricular life for CWRU students;
- Demonstrate cultural sensitivity, the ability to work within a diverse community, and a commitment to the promotion of a campus culture that respects individuals and personal accountability;
- Support fundraising priorities and alumni relations interests in the division and assist in the development of grant proposals to provide funding to assigned programs from outside governmental and private agencies; and
- Demonstrate effective listening skills, intellectual curiosity, an ability to engage in constructive debate and discussion, and leadership that leads to mutual understanding, shared interests, and goals.

Provide visionary leadership

- Align with university strategy and lead Student Affairs strategic planning in a manner that aligns with and supports broader community-wide goals;
- Promote a culture of assessment and continuous improvement in the division and use data and student learning outcomes to make evidence-based decisions regarding campus life programs and services;
- Participate in system audits, professional accreditation studies, and other University evaluation processes and planning and implement systematic assessment and evaluation of all programs and projects within Student Affairs; and
- Oversee the recruitment, management, development, and retention of the division's professional and support staff and support performance evaluation for staff that fosters and maintains mentoring, support, and collaboration within the division and with other academic and administrative units within the University.

Qualifications

Candidates should be highly experienced executive-level student affairs professionals who demonstrate progressively responsible experience in areas such as student activities, student organizations, academic advising, conduct, health services, crisis management and residential life. A demonstrated ability to develop and implement a strategic vision into a vibrant living-learning environment through collaboration with faculty and academic administrators is essential.

Candidates should have successfully developed a diverse and equitable campus life program, with a deep understanding of the best ways to support students who have been severely affected by the pandemic and the social unrest and racial reckoning of the past few years.

The ideal candidate will demonstrate very high emotional intelligence and a collaborative, consultative, and compassionate leadership style.

Location

Case Western Reserve University is located in the University Circle, a renowned arts and cultural district in Cleveland, Ohio. The campus is within walking distance of three major hospital systems ([Cleveland Clinic](#), [Louis Stokes VA Medical Center](#), and [University Hospitals](#)) and within a 10-minute drive of the [MetroHealth Medical Center](#). In more recent years, the university has capitalized on opportunities for collaboration that its location provides, including a Health Education Campus with Cleveland Clinic and educational and research partnerships with the Cleveland Museum of Art and the Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

The campus—just 5 miles east of downtown -- places students, faculty, and staff within easy reach of incredible research and career opportunities, not to mention outdoor attractions and lively city life. As a mid-sized metropolis that is home to nearly three million people, Cleveland gets very high marks for its thriving healthcare and biotechnology industries, lively arts and cultural scene, low cost of living, four seasons, and a wealth of natural resources.

Contact

Nominations, inquiries, and expressions of interest should be sent to cwruvpsa@russellreynolds.com.

Case Western Reserve University strives to maintain a diverse and inclusive work environment. All applicants are protected under Federal law from discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age and genetics.

Case Western Reserve provides reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities. Applicants requiring a reasonable accommodation for any part of the application and hiring process should contact the Office of Equity at 216-368-3066 or by email at equity@case.edu. Determinations as to granting reasonable accommodations for any applicant will be made on a case-by-case basis.