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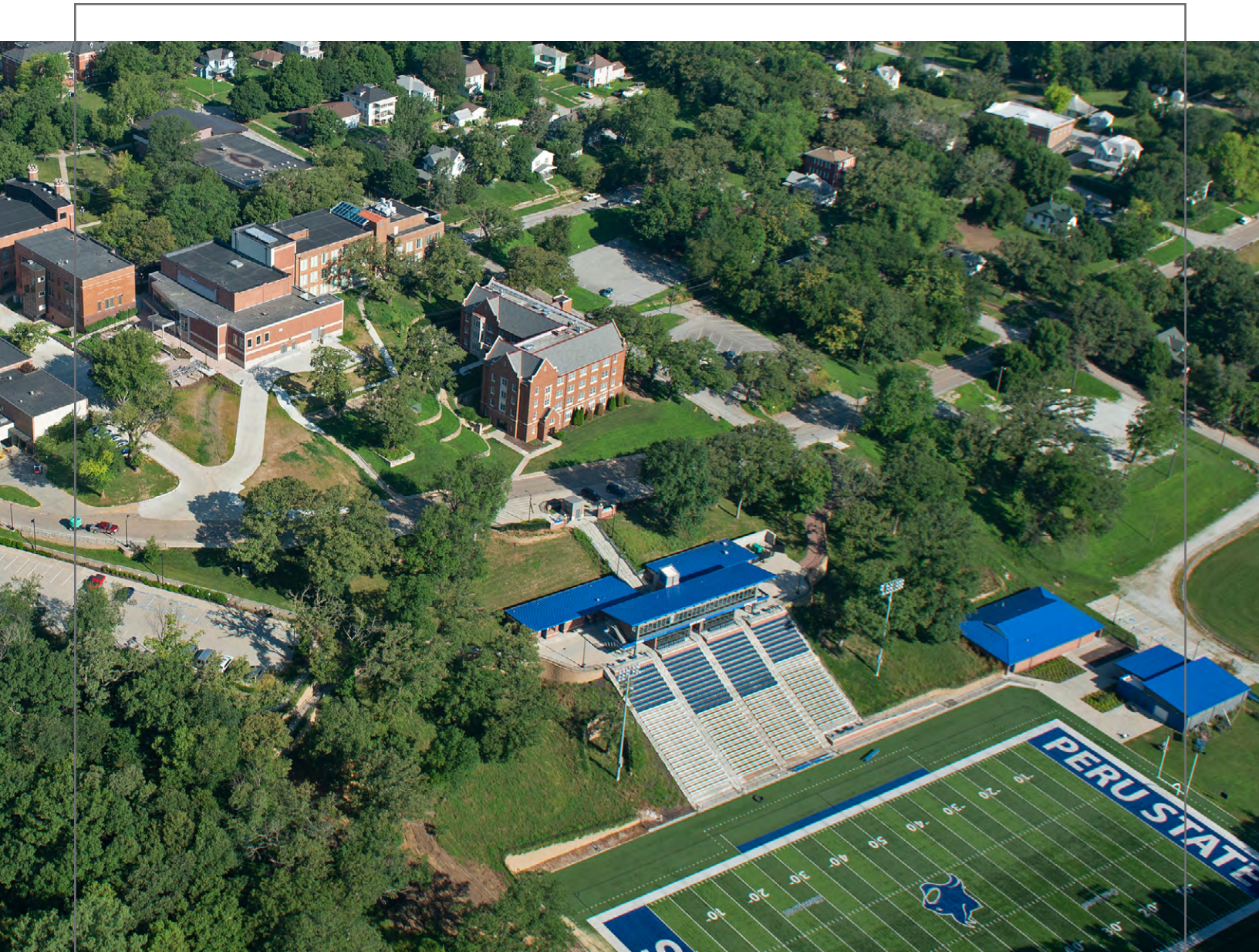
Presidential Search



Peru
State
— College

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THE OPPORTUNITY

The Board of Trustees of the Nebraska State College System invites applications and nominations for the position of President of Peru State College. The Board seeks a new President who will build on the decade of success of President Daniel Hanson, and work with Chancellor Paul Turman and the Board of Trustees in an exciting time of transition and promise. A highly

motivated and passionate leader will be poised to make a significant difference in the lives of students, faculty, staff, alumni, the local communities, and the region. This leadership position will provide the opportunity for the next president to embrace the rural community and culture of Peru State while serving as an advocate for the institution and region as it moves forward in the next decade.

ABOUT PERU STATE COLLEGE

[Peru State College](#) is nestled in the hills of historic southeast Nebraska along the Missouri River. Known as the “Campus of a Thousand Oaks,” the College is a member of the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum. Serving more than 1,900 students, the College offers a mix of innovative online and traditional classroom undergraduate and graduate programs.

Peru State was Nebraska’s first college, established in 1867 as a teacher training school with one building and 60 students. It has transformed over the past century and a half into a state-of-the-art institution offering diverse, multifaceted educational programs. The College has long been a wellspring of leadership, an invaluable resource for communities and businesses in the region, and a source of accomplished graduates known for their excellent education and professional competence.

Peru State is one of three institutions that comprise the [Nebraska State College System \(NSCS\)](#). Combined with Chadron State and Wayne State Colleges, the three colleges serve nearly 9,000 students and offer more than 200 degree, certificate, and pre-professional programs. The open-enrollment institutions are located in the far reaches of the state, partnering with the rural communities they serve to provide an engaging, personalized, and rewarding college experience. NSCS is committed to providing a high-quality, four-year education that is affordable and accessible to all students.

The State of Nebraska offers generous support for higher education, ranking 9th in the nation in spending per student, according to [U.S. News & World Report](#), and having increased the amount of money it spends per student by 5.3 percent from 2008 to 2018. Similarly, Peru State has enjoyed considerable support from the State, with more than \$75 million of campus renovation projects funded over the last fifteen years.

While the College serves students around the globe, Peru State retains a special commitment to serve the residents and needs of southeast Nebraska through education, research, and public service programs. As a small school with personalized attention and generous state support, Peru State

touts itself as offering a private school experience with a public school price tag.

ACCREDITATION

Peru State is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), and the next accreditation visit is scheduled for March 2022. The College has continuing accreditation by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and anticipates accreditation by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) in Fall 2022.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Peru State’s strategic plan, [Engaging the Future: 2018-2023](#), resulted from a collaborative effort of faculty, staff, students, alumni, and foundation and community members. The plan aligns with the Nebraska State College System Strategic Plan and sets a vision and direction for the next five years while positioning the institution for success many years into the future. The main goals outlined in the plan are: (1) achieve academic excellence through engagement; (2) provide a transformative student experience; (3) broadly share the Peru State story; and (4) advance excellence for the future.





CAMPUS & LOCATION

The 104-acre campus features residence halls, academic buildings, athletic facilities and fields, a performing arts center, and the historic Little Red School House. Recent campus renovations include the Oak Bowl Stadium, the campus entrance, the T.J. Majors academic building, W.N. Delzell Residence Hall, and the Performing Arts Center. Plans are underway for additional student and athletic facilities to support and enhance the student experience and better help serve the region's needs.

The College is located in the city of Peru (estimated population: 755) in the southeast corner of Nebraska. Established along the Missouri River, Peru has been shaped by the forces of the river since its founding. The College, the city, and the region face those same impacts today as they continue to recover from the devastating floods of 2019. The can-do spirit and strong partnership of the College and the Peru community have been vital to the recovery and critical to securing infrastructure investments needed for the future.

[Southeast Nebraska](#) is rich in history, culture, and charm. Nearby towns like Auburn, Brownville, and Nebraska City, provide ample opportunity for shopping, dining, browsing galleries, and outdoor recreation. The region is characterized by small and mid-size enterprises and rich agricultural and residential areas. Located within a one-hour drive to Omaha and Lincoln and a two-hour drive to Kansas City, Peru State has easy access to large urban centers while offering the tranquility of small-town life.

MISSION, VISION & VALUES

MISSION

Peru State College provides students of all backgrounds access to engaging educational experiences to strengthen and enrich communities, Nebraska, and the world.

VISION

Peru State College will be renowned for transforming student lives through personal and engaging educational experiences.

VALUES

Peru State College lives its mission and vision through engagement in the classroom, engagement across campus, and engagement in the region and beyond while valuing:

- *Pride*: proudly celebrating history as Nebraska's first college, heritage of educating all students, and tradition of achievement by students, alumni, faculty, and staff; cherishing the stately *Campus of a Thousand Oaks*.
- *Excellence*: pursuing excellence through best practices and innovation in scholarship, teaching, research, and student development; committed to providing exceptional facilities and resources supporting an engaged collegiate experience.
- *Resilience*: recognizing resilience as a key factor in success; providing support and encouragement to achieve high standards by cultivating passion and perseverance.
- *Unity*: embracing unity as a diverse and inclusive community; believing in the creation of a culture of respect, mutual support, and understanding; leading and modeling this culture on campus, in the region, and around the world.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Peru State is known for its student-centered environment with personalized attention from faculty and staff, relevant coursework, and flexible scheduling options. With a 19:1 student to faculty ratio, Peru features small classes and hands-on opportunities, like internships, practicum, and research activities, that enable students to work closely with faculty and mentors. Peru State is an open-enrollment institution, and the College's 52 faculty and 116 staff members are fully invested in students and committed to their success. A sign of that dedication is the nearly 95 percent participation rate by faculty in mid-term reporting and the quick pivot by faculty and staff from across the campus to do weekly student check-ins during the pandemic.

Peru State continually strives to meet students' needs with new programs, flexible course offerings, and unique partnerships that address the workforce demands of the region. The College offers 14 undergraduate programs with 47 options, 20 teaching endorsements, 24 minors, 17 pre-professional programs, 11 online programs, and two online Master's degrees.

The [School of Arts and Sciences](#) offers majors in Fine Arts, Literature and English, Mathematics, and Natural and Social Sciences, and provides preparation for a variety of careers. Pre-professional programs in law, medicine, nursing, pharmacy, physician assistant, and other areas of study prepare students for continuing post-baccalaureate education. The School hosts band, choir, and theatre performances every semester.

The [School of Education](#) provides teacher preparation programs in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the Nebraska Department of Education and is accredited by NCATE. It offers certification in early childhood, elementary education, middle-level education, secondary education, and special education. In addition to a variety of field, subject, and supplemental endorsements, the School offers a path in Kinesiology. The School has a special relationship with regional schools, including the Southeast Nebraska Teaching Academy for substitute teachers.



ACADEMIC PROGRAMS (CONT.)

The [School of Professional Studies](#) offers majors and minors in Business, Psychology, and Criminal Justice, emphasizing practical applications. With numerous options available in each major, students are prepared for a wide variety of careers in business, government, and nonprofit organizations, and graduate studies. The School hosts two national award-winning honors fraternities: Phi Beta Lambda for Business and Lambda Alpha Epsilon for Criminal Justice. Beginning in Spring 2021, the School will be instrumental in managing the new Corrections Leadership Scholarship program, which was funded with roughly \$1 million by the Governor and Legislature during the most recent legislative session.

All School of Professional Studies degrees, options, and minors (except Alcohol and Drug Counseling) are offered entirely online through [Peru State College Online](#), as are the College's two [Graduate Programs](#): a Master of Science in Education – Curriculum & Instruction and a Master of Science in Organizational Management – Entrepreneurial & Economic Development. Fully accredited, accessible, and affordable, Peru State has 20+ years of online experience and a new partnership for delivery.

The [Honors Program](#) promotes advanced study and scholarship for students with strong records of academic achievement. It is available to all students

who receive the Board of Trustee Scholarship and those who meet specific requirements. This promising program provides students with opportunities for in-depth study through small class sizes, frequent interaction within the program, a unique curriculum, and mentored scholarly and research opportunities. Students accepted into the Honors Program may choose to live in the Honors Living Learning Community. This revitalized program has the opportunity to expand into a meaningful and robust program, creating potential growth opportunities for Peru State.

The [Center for Achievement and Transition Services \(CATS\)](#) provides academic assistance that empowers students to reach their educational goals. Offering a range of services that include academic and career advising, counseling resources, disability support, and tutoring, CATS is committed to helping students succeed. The College has also offered a successful TRiO Student Success Services program since 1990 that currently serves more than 230 students annually.

Nearly 400 well-qualified high school juniors or seniors participate in the [Dual Enrollment Program](#), earning college credit through either an online course offered through Peru State College Online or their high school classroom with a qualified instructor.

STUDENTS & STUDENT LIFE

Peru State's 1,902 students are comprised of 1,634 undergraduates, 268 graduate students, and 570 non-degree seeking students. Across the undergraduate student population, the average age is 24, 59 percent are women, 69 percent are from Nebraska, 68 percent take classes on campus (versus 32 percent online), 39 percent are first-generation college students, 44 percent are Pell-eligible, and 24 percent of those reporting come from ethnic/racial minorities (representing a steady increase in recent years). In the graduate student population, 80 percent are from Nebraska, 71 percent are women, and the median age is 32.

Nearly 88 percent of first-time Freshmen live on campus. In keeping with its focus on building community and increasing student retention, Peru State offers Freshmen the opportunity to choose to live in one of seven [Living Learning Communities](#). The Living Learning Communities allow students to explore an interest, develop skills, and build connections during their first year on campus. The retention rate for first-time, full-time students increased over the prior two years, and was 64 percent for the 2019 cohort.

STUDENTS & STUDENT LIFE (CONT.)

Peru State has an active and engaging student life program with more than 40 campus [clubs and organizations](#), including academic groups, honor societies, special interest organizations, music ensembles, intramural sports, and religious groups. Students can take the lead in student government, club sports, journalism, theater, and service activities.

Peru State students are committed to giving back to their community, and [Feeding 44](#), is one example of students' effort to fight food insecurity in the region. Started in 2013, Feeding 44, is a student-created, student-led mobile food pantry that, along with the Lincoln Food Bank and local charities, distributes food at an on-campus location. It has served an average of 155 southeast Nebraskans monthly and even more during the pandemic.

The [Peru State Bobcats](#) are a member of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) Division I and the Heart of America Athletic Conference. Athletics have expanded in recent years to include 13 varsity sports, five junior varsity sports, and two co-ed competitive teams in cheerleading and dance. Varsity men's sports include football, basketball, baseball, bowling, and cross country; junior varsity offerings for men are

basketball and baseball. Varsity women's sports include basketball, bowling, cross country, golf, softball, and volleyball; junior varsity offerings for women are basketball, softball, and volleyball. The new athletic programs have contributed to the enrollment growth strategy, supported student retention efforts, and enhanced on-campus opportunities for engagement.

The Bobcats have been consistently named a "Five Star Champions of Character" institution by the NAIA, recognizing Peru State teams' conduct around integrity, respect, responsibility, sportsmanship, and servant leadership. Peru State College has now earned the highest ranking, Gold, and a perfect score of 100 for two years in a row.



AFFORDABILITY

Accessibility and affordability are at the heart of a Peru State education, and the College has one of the lowest overall tuition rates in the region. Through its *One Rate, Any State* program, all students can attend for the same low in-state tuition rate, regardless of residency. Additionally, there are a variety of full- and partial-tuition scholarships and awards available to eligible students. One such example is the Nebraska State Colleges Tuition Guarantee which ensures that Pell-qualified Nebraska students can attend Peru State tuition-free.

The Rural Health Opportunities Program (RHOP) is a cooperative program between Peru State and University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC)

in which students from rural areas who intend to practice in rural areas receive full-tuition waivers while enrolled at Peru State and pre-admittance into their specific program (i.e., pharmacy, physical therapy, nursing, etc.) at UNMC.

The College's online programs have been nationally ranked for affordability. Peru State was named in 2020 as the most affordable online college in Nebraska for the third year in a row by *OnlineColleges.net*. It was also ranked fifth in the nation and first in Nebraska for the best online colleges in 2019 by *BestValueSchools.com*, and *GradSchoolHub.com* has ranked the Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction on its list of the "Best Affordable Online Masters Degrees" for 2020.

FINANCES

For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019, Peru State had revenues of \$25.1 million. It receives its funding from various sources, including 39.2 percent from state appropriations, 24.9 percent in tuition and

fees, and 17.1 percent from state and federal grants. The auxiliary enterprise accounted for 15.1 percent, and the remaining 3.6 percent came from other revenue sources.

FOUNDATION & ALUMNI SUPPORT

The College is supported by the Peru State College Foundation, a nonprofit organization established to benefit Peru State College and its students, faculty, staff, and programs. The Foundation draws on the support of more than 24,000 alumni and friends, holds in excess of \$17 million in net assets (as of November 30, 2020), and received nearly \$1.4

million in donor contributions this year. It is led by a staff director and governed by an all-volunteer Board of Directors. The Foundation works in collaboration with the Peru State National Alumni Association Board to help meet the College's long-term needs.

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

Peru State is a member of the [Nebraska State College System](#). The System is governed by a seven-member Board of Trustees, six of whom are appointed by the governor. The commissioner of education serves as an ex-officio member, and the governor also appoints a non-voting student board member annually from each of the three colleges. A board-appointed chancellor leads the System, and the president of Peru State reports directly to the chancellor.

The President's cabinet at Peru State includes the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Vice President for Administration and Finance, the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs, and the Director of the Peru State College Foundation. Other leadership bodies include the faculty senate and the staff senate.



PRESIDENTIAL RESIDENCE

Peru State offers on-campus housing for the president and their family as part of the compensation package. An excellent benefits package is provided for the successful candidate.



AN AGENDA FOR LEADERSHIP

The next president of Peru State will be a servant leader who values the history and mission of the College while capably advancing and strengthening the institution for long-term success. The new leader must be entrepreneurial, innovative, and deeply committed to students.

All campus constituencies were involved in conversations and surveys in order to ascertain the most desired presidential priorities needed for a successful future for Peru State. The following leadership agenda and personal qualifications were identified.

The successful president will focus on the following priorities:

PROVIDE TRUSTED, COLLABORATIVE, AND ENTHUSIASTIC LEADERSHIP AS A BUILDER OF COMMUNITY.

Peru State is a unique state college that has the enviable characteristics of a private values-oriented institution. It has a long history of embracing and caring for students with the goal of student success, both academically and personally. The next president will need to have an appreciation for and leadership of the mission of Peru State. It will be essential to truly “live the mission.” It is important to bring successful senior-level leadership and a clear enthusiasm for the vision of the College and the System. It is expected that the new president will be

a humble servant leader who engages with students from all backgrounds, encouraging their access to quality educational experiences. The ongoing strategic plan will allow the new president to work with the campus community, the presidents from the two other colleges in the system, the chancellor, and the board to strengthen the identified goals. The next president will be a supporter of faculty and staff and serve as an effective advocate for Peru State and southeast Nebraska.

BE A CHAMPION FOR DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION.

The new president must demonstrate personal experience and a strong commitment to advancing and supporting diversity, inclusion, and social justice initiatives. It will be critical to build on the progress made to date and encourage all campus members to engage in these on-going challenges as the campus develops new priorities and evaluative measures. The president must foster a culture of respect and appreciation of differences, building on the current success of the Council for Diversity, Equality and Inclusion team comprised of students, faculty, and staff and the racial reconciliation initiative work. Attention will be needed to strategize increasing diversity within the faculty and staff to better reflect an increasingly more diverse student body.

AN AGENDA FOR LEADERSHIP (CONT.)

BE A STRONG LEADER IN ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT AND RETENTION AS PERU STATE WORKS TO GROW ITS ON-CAMPUS AND ONLINE ENROLLMENT.

The campus needs a leader with an entrepreneurial approach for enrollment and retention. It will be essential to determine optimal target numbers while maintaining the necessary infrastructure. With a high percentage of first-generation and Pell-eligible students, ensuring academic support systems are in place to enhance student success will help increase retention and graduation rates and leverage the belief that students receive a private education at a public price. There is potential for continued growth within the region, including Omaha, Lincoln, Kansas City, and their surrounding communities. The addition of junior varsity and club sports has been successful, and there are opportunities to explore new options as well. Additional recent funding support from the state to develop the Career Scholarship Program and the Corrections Leadership Scholarship will help bolster student numbers as will highlighting the recently revamped honors program. Each of these efforts can support enrollment growth as well as student retention efforts. The president will need to understand the need to drive online enrollment within competitive markets and continue the “Peru State College Online” agenda and creatively think outside the box.

PROVIDE EXPERTISE IN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT.

Peru State is fortunate regarding budgeting and planning because it receives state support in the form of appropriations and grants of over 59 percent. However, it will be critical for the president to work with the Foundation Board in strategizing fund-raising initiatives and methods to raise dollars for designated projects and campus priorities. The next leader must be an advocate for Peru State within the system, and among communities, foundations, corporations, alumni, donors, and for relevant grant opportunities. The new president must also be an excellent steward of the budget, endowment, and spending performance to assure financial stability for long-term strategic planning initiatives.



RECOGNIZE, APPRECIATE, AND EMBRACE THE GEOGRAPHIC SETTING AND CULTURE OF PERU STATE AND SOUTHEAST NEBRASKA.

The next president must have humility as a campus leader but must have the ability to articulate the strengths of the institution to important constituents. Peru State is a gem in the area and within the state of Nebraska and needs a president who will convey with pride examples of student, faculty, staff, and alumni success. The new leader will exhibit optimism, pride, energy, and charisma along with strong interpersonal and outstanding communication skills.

IMPROVE FACILITIES.

Great progress has been made regarding needed facilities. The Oak Bowl Stadium and Performing Arts Center are points of pride at Peru State. There are identified facilities that will become goals for the new president. There are goals to build a new student center and a facility that would house an indoor track and recreation center. Other identified projects include improved housing and a crime scene house. The new president will be highly engaged in promoting and supporting facility and infrastructure needs.

DEVELOP SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS.

The president will maintain internal and external partnerships and work to create new collaborations. Opportunities exist for building specific program agreements with community colleges. Other partnerships with community agencies, organizations, higher education institutions, corporations, foundations, and industry will build visibility and pride as well as improve enrollment and financial stability and expand Peru State's footprint in the State.

LEADERSHIP & PERSONAL QUALITIES

The next president will bring strength in academic leadership and an understanding of the role that higher education plays in an ever-changing world. The need for flexibility is evident given the many challenges brought by COVID-19. The following set of leadership experiences and personal qualities are essential to the success of the next Peru State president.

- A demonstrated record of transparent, accessible, empathetic, and motivating leadership that encourages, nurtures, and inspires faculty, staff, and students; an ability to engage all campus stakeholders.
- An appreciation for the developmental role that Peru State plays as an open-enrollment institution and a willingness to be an integral leader in that process; a demonstrated commitment to serving a high percentage of first-generation and Pell-eligible students on their path to degree completion.
- The ability to understand and embrace the mission of the College within the Nebraska State College System and an appreciation for the special characteristics of the rural environment and culture of the region.
- Effectiveness working with assessment and accreditation priorities as the HLC visit will occur soon after the president takes office.
- A caring and humble servant leader who works shoulder to shoulder with others in meaningful projects and community needs.
- An optimistic and entrepreneurial leader with intrinsic passion and enthusiasm.
- A role model and champion for diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- A successful listener and communicator who connects well to people both internally and externally; a true builder of community.
- A track record of shared governance and a collaborative leader with demonstrated success in strategic planning, budgeting, and evaluation initiatives.
- Experience with technology, online and hybrid educational pedagogies, as well as innovative modalities of instruction.
- The ability to work within a system, advocating for Peru State when appropriate.
- A successful friend- and fund-raiser who maintains personal contact with donors, foundations, and other organizations.
- The ability to make difficult decisions informed by inclusive processes and reliable data.





APPLICATIONS & NOMINATIONS

Academic Search is assisting Peru State College in this search. Confidential discussions may be arranged by contacting Pam Balch at pam.balch@academicsearch.org, Jay Lemons at jay.lemons@academicsearch.org, or Jennifer Kooken at jennifer.kooken@academicsearch.org.

Applications, nominations, and inquiries may be sent to: PeruStatePresident@academicsearch.org.

Applications should consist of a detailed letter of interest, a current curriculum vitae, and a list of five professional references with contact information and an explanation of the working relationship with each. References will not be contacted without the explicit permission of the candidate. The position is open until filled, but full consideration can only be guaranteed to those applications received by **February 1, 2021**.

The Trustees of the Nebraska State College System are committed to providing applicants with the highest level of confidentiality provided by Nebraska law. As a public body, application materials may become public records in the event the applicant is deemed a finalist under Nebraska Revised Statute 84-172.05(15).

Peru State College is an equal opportunity institution. Peru State does not discriminate against any student, employee, or applicant on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion, or age in employment and education opportunities, including but not limited to admission decisions.

ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting Peru State College 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. For more information, visit www.academicsearch.org.



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