



## **Associate Vice President for Inclusive Excellence and Chief Diversity Officer Position Profile**

Georgia Southern University (Georgia Southern) invites applications and nominations for the position of Associate Vice President for Inclusive Excellence and Chief Diversity Officer (AVP/CDO).

### **The University**

Since 1906, the University's hallmark has been a culture of engagement that bridges theory with practice, extends the learning environment beyond the classroom, and promotes student growth and life success. Central to Georgia Southern's mission is the faculty's dedication to excellence in teaching and the development of a fertile learning environment exemplified by a free exchange of ideas, high academic expectations, and individual responsibility for academic achievement. Faculty, staff, and students embrace core values expressed through integrity, civility, kindness, collaboration, and a commitment to lifelong learning, wellness, and social responsibility.

In 2018, Armstrong State University and Georgia Southern University consolidated creating an institution that retained the Georgia Southern University name comprised of nine colleges on three campuses: the Statesboro Campus, the Armstrong Campus in Savannah, and the Liberty Campus in Hinesville. The University serves more than 27,000 students from all 50 states, Washington D.C., and Puerto Rico as well as 102 nations. Georgia Southern offers an attractive campus environment that encourages learning, discovery, and personal growth. Nationally accredited academic programs prepare diverse scholars for leadership and service as working citizens. A unit of the University System of Georgia, the University boasts 200-plus student organizations, outstanding Division I athletics, and state-of-the-art residence halls and campus facilities.

As a public Carnegie Doctoral/R2 institution with a [Public Impact Research](#) mission that focuses on community engagement, economic support, and professional development, Georgia Southern is the state's largest and most comprehensive center of higher education south of Atlanta offering 141-degree programs at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels. As the University continues to build upon the existing momentum in its research and scholarship capabilities, Georgia Southern's expert faculty can be found at the forefront investigating, engaging, and discovering new methods for addressing many of the challenges facing the world today. In support of these efforts, the University strives to further elevate its Public Impact Research mission by partnering with industry, businesses, government agencies, and non-profit organizations to make meaningful and sustainable differences in the local, regional, and global communities it serves.

Georgia Southern provides transformative learning opportunities to meet the needs of a diverse student population through its legacy of commitment to academic excellence and personal attention. Through the shared resources of its multiple locations, the University creates vibrant learning environments that foster an inclusive, student-centered culture of engagement designed to prepare students for lifelong service as scholars, leaders, and responsible stewards

of their communities. The University enhances the quality of life and drives economic development in the Coastal Georgia region, the State of Georgia, and beyond by supporting collaborative efforts in technological innovation, scientific advancement, education, health services, artistic creativity, and cultural enrichment. Faculty, staff, and students embrace the values of integrity, civility, kindness, respect, sustainability, citizenship, and social responsibility in every facet of the University. For more information about Georgia Southern, please visit <https://www.georgiasouthern.edu/>.

### **Position Summary**

Reporting to the University President, the Associate Vice President for Inclusive Excellence and Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) has primary responsibility for leading inclusion efforts through the development and implementation of policies, procedures, and mission aligned curricular activities guided by principles of diversity, inclusion, transparency, and shared governance. The CDO serves on the President's Executive Cabinet with authority and responsibility for the vision, strategic planning and advancement of Inclusive Excellence, the center pillar of the University strategic plan and a core value of Georgia Southern University. Inclusive excellence speaks to sustaining a campus climate that honors, respects, and is inclusive of all elements of diversity including but not limited to: culture, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, sex, age, (dis)ability, creed, religious or spiritual beliefs, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, class, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, and political philosophy. This senior leader serves as the primary advisor to the President and University leadership on initiatives and issues related to diversity, inclusion, and climate and identifies opportunities for institutional improvement. The CDO ensures the development and communication of related University System of Georgia (USG) policies, institutional policies, guidelines, standards and procedures. With appropriate working knowledge of laws, regulations and guidelines related to diversity, inclusion, and nondiscrimination in higher education, including, but not limited to, Title IX, Title VI, Title VII, Clery Act, ADEA, ADA, and Section 504, the CDO collaborates with appropriate campus partners to initiate official processes to address concerns and issues related to diversity and inclusion.

The CDO provides vision and leadership to effectively integrate inclusion into all facets of University life, working closely with leadership and the campus communities to shape and implement investments, plans and strategies aligned with the university strategic plan and creating a welcoming environment for all. Engaging appropriate stakeholders, the CDO develops, implements, operationalizes and measures the goals of the [Inclusive Excellence Action Plan](#).

The CDO is responsible for conducting periodic climate surveys and updating the Inclusive Excellence Action Plan considering the results of these assessments. The CDO works collaboratively to develop and implement strategies and initiatives that advance a climate of inclusion for all members of the Georgia Southern community. The CDO has specific responsibilities for leading and directing departments and committees which carry a primary mission intricately connected with Inclusive Excellence including the [Office of Inclusive Excellence](#), [TRIO/ Student Support Services offices](#), [the Office of Multicultural Affairs](#), the [President's Diversity Advisory Council](#), the [President's Student Advisory Committee](#), [Employee Resource Groups](#), [Diversity and Inclusion Faculty Fellows](#), and [Inclusive Excellence Faculty and Staff Fellows](#). This leadership includes direct supervision of five full-time professionals; indirect supervision of graduate assistants, student assistants, faculty and staff fellows, and Presidential advisory committees; and primary support for the co-chairs of the employee resource groups.

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

- Implement, execute, assess, and revise the Inclusive Excellence Action Plan.
- Train, support, and advise inclusive excellence committees housed within academic colleges, departments, institutional divisions, and units.
- Partner with senior leaders to integrate diversity best practices into institutional employment and workplace practices, including business practices and programming with respect to the specific needs and requirements of Georgia Southern University and the University System of Georgia.
- Join the Division of Student Affairs in providing student engagement opportunities centered around inclusive excellence.
- Provide guidance and partnership for mitigation and communication of campus incidents based on diversity, equity, and inclusion concerns through University investigative and adjudicative offices and processes.
- Promote and coordinate research, curriculum, training programs, and grant initiatives on diversity and inter-cultural competencies.
- Collaborate with Human Resources to develop strategic hiring and retention efforts to attract and retain a highly talented, diverse workforce. Drives diverse talent identification and retention strategies for staff and faculty. Working with Human Resources, colleges and other units, proposes, develops and deploys initiatives that broaden the university's outreach to diverse, qualified candidates.
- Foster a campus climate that respects and values diversity and inclusion among students, faculty, and staff.
- Coordinate ongoing assessments of diversity using a range of data-gathering approaches.
- Lead, organize, and facilitate committees that focus on the promotion of diversity and inclusion programming, outreach, and education.
- Chair the President's Diversity Advisory Council and lead facilitation of the President's Student Advisory Committee.
- Serve as advisor concerning inclusive excellence on University committees to include the Faculty Senate Inclusive Excellence Committee and the SACSCOC Reaccreditation Committee.

### **Minimum Qualifications**

The successful candidate must possess an earned Master's degree in a relevant discipline from an accredited institution and five (5) years or more of related work experience. The candidate must also possess a strong sense of professional ethics and demonstrated academic leadership and administrative experience. Additionally, the successful candidate should have:

- Demonstrated success as a collaborator and relationship builder, with strong interpersonal skills and ability to build coalitions and collaborative working relationships with a broad range of diverse individuals and groups, including senior executives, to achieve results;
- Strong track record in managing change with an understanding of the contexts, cultures and politics within institutions that impact the implementation of effective diversity change efforts;
- Demonstrated cultural awareness and agility and ability to build trust, credibility and navigate a complex landscape;
- Demonstrated success in identifying and implementing best practices of diversity and inclusion and an excellent command of modern diversity and inclusion concepts and issues in higher education;

- Proven analytical skills and ability to provide oversight for assessments related to campus climate, diversity, and inclusion;
- History of effective leadership in a culture of shared governance;
- Experience leading departments or units with direct supervision of professionals at the director-level or above.

### **Preferred Qualifications**

- Demonstrated success in working collaboratively to develop and implement recruitment and retention strategies focused on building a diverse workforce;
- Demonstrated success in partnering with faculty in curriculum development efforts that advance diversity, equity, and inclusion;
- Terminal degree in a relevant discipline;
- Knowledge of laws, regulations and guidelines related to diversity, inclusion and nondiscrimination in higher education, including Title IX, Title VI, Title VII, Clery Act, ADEA, ADA, and Section 504;
- Exceptional oral and written communication skills with experience in multiple communication modes, including social media, with the ability to articulate the importance of inclusion and diversity to the broader educational mission of higher education institutions;
- Ability to promote productive collaboration across multiple stakeholders involved in diversity and inclusion efforts;
- Ability to adhere to University policies and procedures to meet Institutional goals and support University's mission for student success.

### **Qualities and Characteristics**

The successful candidate will also possess:

- The interpersonal strengths of an open-minded, strategic, and creative thinker and active listener who can mediate diverse opinions to address shared needs;
- The knowledge, ability, and a demonstrated track record (and deep commitment to) applying practices of equity and inclusive excellence;
- The ability to assess campus issues and priorities related to diversity and inclusive excellence and design and implement a strategic plan addressing these needs;
- An excellent track record managing change along with proven experience as an organizational leader and program builder, especially around initiatives that promote equity, justice and inclusive excellence in a professional environment;
- The ability to connect with students, staff, faculty, administrators, and community members and to work closely with faculty in an environment of shared governance;
- Strong communication skills and conflict-resolution skills to effectively navigate politically-charged situations, resolve problems, build consensus, and reconcile competing interests;
- The ability to set clear goals and milestones and to maintain regular assessment and accountability for achieving them;
- The ability to understand the University needs and expectations by collaborating with students, faculty, staff, administrators, community partners and other stakeholders;
- The ability to serve as a champion, advocate, and ambassador for equity, justice and inclusive excellence efforts on campus;
- Visionary and highly collaborative leadership skills, with an in-depth understanding of equity, justice and inclusive excellence issues and opportunities;

- The ability to engage intellectually on equity, justice and inclusive excellence matters and develop and implement actionable plans and initiatives from these discussions;
- The ability to enhance team dynamics with key stakeholders at all levels in the University;
- An evidence-informed decision-making style and demonstrated experience collecting and using data to assess programs and increase shared accountability with a focus on continued improvement;
- An action-oriented, collaborative leadership style that seeks consensus while effectively managing sensitive issues as well diverse opinions and perspectives;
- The ability to lead with comfort and composure in a fast-paced, dynamic environment.

### **Application Process**

Screening of applications will begin immediately and will continue until the position is filled. A complete application consists of a cover letter addressing the qualifications and a current curriculum vitae. Other documentation may be requested. Finalists will be required to submit to a background investigation. Applications and nominations should be sent to:



**Alberto Pimentel, Managing Partner**

**Matthew Herrera, Associate**

Email: [apsearch@spaexec.com](mailto:apsearch@spaexec.com)

Refer to code "GSU-AVP&CDO" in subject line

SP&A Executive Search

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*Georgia Southern University seeks to recruit individuals who are committed to working in diverse academic and professional communities and who are committed to excellence in teaching, scholarship, and professional service within the University and beyond. The names of applicants and nominees, vitae, and other non-evaluative information may be subject to public inspection under the Georgia Open Records Act. Georgia Southern University is an Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity institution. Individuals who need reasonable accommodations under the ADA to participate in the search process should contact Denise Gebara, Director of Talent Acquisition and Employment Services, at [dgebara@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:dgebara@georgiasouthern.edu).*