

**Vice President, Administration and Chief Operating Officer**  
**University of Saskatchewan**  
**Position Profile**  
**April 2023**

**Primary Purpose of the Position:**

The Vice-President, Administration and Chief Operating Officer (VP Admin and COO) is a member of the senior leadership team reporting to the President. Working closely in partnership with the Vice Presidents, this Vice-President supports USask's academic, teaching and research mission and strategic direction through planning, directing and overseeing the administrative and business functions of the university.

As a principal ambassador for USask, the VP Admin and COO is a highly visible senior leader and builds relationships to further the reputation and resources required for the University of Saskatchewan to take its place among the most distinguished universities in Canada and the world, and to be the *university the world needs (nīkānītān manācihitowinihk; ni manachīhitoonaan)*.

USask's vision is to be an outstanding institution of research, learning, knowledge-keeping, reconciliation, and inclusion with and by Indigenous peoples and communities. The VP Admin and COO will be an active leader in the growth of a more diverse and inclusive campus community and in advancing the university's Indigenous strategy.

**Key Responsibilities**

**As a member of the Senior Leadership Team at the University of Saskatchewan the VP Administration**

- Provides advice, insight and information to support the President, Board, Vice-Presidents and university leaders to effectively pursue the university's mission and their respective roles in the leadership, oversight and management of the university.
- Works closely with the President and other Vice-Presidents to develop and implement long-term operating and capital budgets and plans that promote the university's mission and goals.
- Works closely with and in support of the Provost and with the Vice-President Research to support the development of plans and budgets that align resource allocation to promote and achieve the academic, teaching and research mission of the university.
- Leading and ensuring that the financial operations, human resources, facilities, capital, information and information technology, shared services, administrative services, and ancillary services functions are aligned with and operating in support of the university's mission, objectives, goals and social, economic and financial responsibilities.
- Work effectively with external stakeholders and governance bodies in support of the university's long-term sustainability.

**Accountable for the Administration Portfolio:**

- Ensure provision of progressive and secure data management, information management and information technology services and the continued development of fully integrated enterprise systems.
- Develop and maintain financial operations which provide a system of internal controls to properly secure and record all cash inflows and outflows of the university.
- Ensure the current and long-term effectiveness of financial operations functions of the University including accounting; investments, asset and debt management.
- Provide planning and policy advice and administrative support for university endowments, pension funds and the short-term investment program.
- Oversee campus planning and development, capital project planning and financing, and manage the complex financial and planning issues that can arise with expansion, renovation, and ongoing and deferred maintenance.
- Provide strategic direction to the university's human resource function, including labour relations, compensation, pension and benefits, information systems and organizational development.
- Work with administrative and academic leaders to ensure that human resources policies and practices serve the university mission and provide for the recruitment, retention and promotion of outstanding employees.
- Oversee ancillary functions ensuring that they support university activities.
- Ensure that all functions in the Administration portfolio are aligned with supporting the mission and goals of the university, are delivered efficiently and cost-effectively and continually evolve to meet the changing priorities and needs of the university and contemporary practices of their respective discipline.
- Provide strategic direction and leadership for the Shared Services organization and model that include business advisory services, connectionpoint and centers of expertise for financial operations, human resources, facilities, and information technology to improve administrative services in ways that support the university community in achieving teaching and research goals while clarifying administrative roles and providing opportunities for development and career growth and continuously improve the strategic and operational effectiveness of these functions
- Oversee in partnership with the Provost, a strategy realization office focused on supporting the planning, business case development, and implementation of transformational change initiatives across USask in strategic alignment with institutional plans and objectives.
- Provide direction and coordination of procurement functions within the university.

**As the Leader for the Administration Team:**

- Ensure that the organizational structure of the Administration portfolio is efficient, effective and aligned with achieving the university's goals and that it allows for effective communication and accountability among team members.
- Provide leadership, direction, information and support to the senior leaders in the Administration portfolio to enable them to effectively manage their respective functions and hold them accountable for realization of their function's goals and objectives.
- Foster, promote and ensure a culture of excellence, innovation, accountability and integrity in the Administration portfolio.

**As an Ambassador for USask:**

- Build partnerships with business, government and community leaders to promote USask's academic mission and contribution to the community.
- Be an effective spokesperson to internal and external communities on matters within the portfolio.
- Represent USask with groups such as suppliers, government, advisory committees, other universities, professional organizations and the public

**Priorities for the Vice-President Administration****Plan, Enable and Support Growth and Innovation**

The Vice-President Administration will be expected to identify and pursue opportunities that support the university and its leaders, students and stakeholders to realize this ambitious University vision locally, nationally and globally.

**Planning and Stewarding Long-Term Sustainability**

The Vice-President Administration will lead long range planning in areas of responsibility that enables growth and innovation, ensures long term sustainability and recognizes the university's broader responsibility to build social infrastructure and to use its assets and resources for the betterment of its communities. USask defines sustainability in its broadest context – financial, human resource, environmental and relevance. This long-term financial planning is about more than just a plan, it is about fostering a mind-set that continually looks to the horizon, understanding and considering potential challenges and new opportunities while making plans and taking actions in the short run.

**Modernizing Systems, Processes and Ways of Working**

The Vice-President Administration will be charged with leading the plans and introduction of contemporary systems, processes and ways of working that allow USask to nimbly pursue opportunities and efficiently and effectively respond to its dynamic context.

**Fostering a Culture of Innovation, Service and Solutions**

The Vice-President Administration portfolio serves the university and its students in the pursuit of the mission of the university. The Vice-President Administration will define and role model a culture of innovation, solutions-focus and service within the portfolio and through the definition of common purpose and goals, will align people, processes, systems and structures with these cultural principles.

**Experience and Qualifications**

The Vice-President Administration should possess:

- An advanced degree and/or a professional designation.
- Experience in leading within a diverse portfolio of functions that embrace a service and solutions focus.
- Significant experience in financial and capital planning and management of comparable complexity and magnitude.
- Significant experience in negotiating and managing contracts, relationships and partnerships.
- Experience in or an appreciation for working within a complex governance structure, a unionized environment, and a broadly accountable context whose objectives extend beyond just financial results.

- Experience in fostering and maintaining positive relationships and partnerships with community, business, government, and other institutions and organizations locally, nationally and internationally.

## **Competencies and Personal Attributes**

As the ideal candidate, you will be expected to demonstrate the following competencies as Vice-President Administration and as a lead at USask.

### **Change and Innovation**

You understand the University's objectives from a global perspective and how your role fits into this vision. You are relentlessly curious about what the world is like for others and adapt your behaviour and decision making to the realities of the global marketplace. You are connected to a powerful support network which informs and adds perspective to your decision making. You have played a leadership role in the development and implementation of long-term plans and transformational or ambitious organizational change and are able to lead change and improvement to move the university ahead and enhance organizational results. You bring and are able to develop the skills, attitudes and behaviours needed to produce new or improved programs, services, outputs and strategies to meet current and future needs and gain competitive advantage.

### **Thinking and Acting Strategically**

You think conceptually about the "big picture" and in which direction the organization is or should be headed, developing long-term plans to achieve the desired outcomes and linking daily work to long-term vision. You generate innovative solutions and think expansively; trying different and novel ways to deal with problems and opportunities. You combine ideas in unique ways or make connections between disparate ideas; explore different lines of thought; view situations from multiple perspectives; brainstorm multiple approaches/solutions. You challenge paradigms by identifying implicit assumptions in the way problems or situations are defined or presented; and see alternative ways to view or define problems; not constrained by the thoughts or approaches of others. You leverage diverse resources by drawing upon multiple and diverse sources (individuals, disciplines, bodies of knowledge) for ideas and inspiration. You ensure relevance by targeting important areas for innovation and develop solutions that address meaningful work issues.

### **Relationship Building**

You are passionate about the academic, teaching and research mission of a university and fundamentally believe in the value that the university represents to the economy, the community and the future of society. You appreciate and foster an inclusive culture where all ideas, perspectives, and experiences are invited and respected. You identify, build and maintain formal and informal relationships and networks that add value to others, support the achievement of role-related objectives and further the interests of the university. You work well with and through others. You are a trusted leader, innovator and colleague, someone who others turn to for ideas, advice, inspiration and guidance. You develop and communicate ideas, strategies and solutions and build agreement through evidence, influence, and persuasion. You build and maintain formal and informal relationships and networks that allow others and the organization generally to realize their goals and objectives.

### **Resource and Process Management**

You are oriented to serve and seek to understand the organization's processes, objectives and context, and the needs and expectations of those you support. You align and efficiently manage resources (people, funding, materials and space) and processes to achieve organizational objectives. You see

problems and challenges as opportunities. You don't say 'it can't be done', but instead say 'let's figure out how it can be done'. You view an organization holistically and are able to examine and connect the linking parts. You create sustainable and efficient standard processes for ongoing tasks and organize the work of others in a systemic and consistent manner, including defining people's roles to avoid overlapping responsibilities or ambiguous functions.

### **Accountability for Performance and Results**

You take ownership and accountability for delivering the right results in the right way and improving individual, team and organizational contribution. You have a solid understanding of the broad range of functions in the scope of this Vice-President portfolio and have demonstrated the ability to lead and manage a range of support functions in a university or similarly complex organization or business. You are familiar with a triple-bottom-line approach to planning and management and are comfortable developing options and making decisions that balance financial, economic, and social impacts. Your educational and professional background gives you the foundation and credibility to assume this broadly accountable senior leadership role with significant fiduciary responsibility. You are comfortable making decisions that balance short-term objectives with long-term sustainability, risk with reward, and opportunity with constraint.

### **People Development**

You work genuinely to build capacity and foster individual, team and organizational development. You build and mentor a strong team around you that can manage the day-to-day operations, so you can focus on broader, strategic global challenges. You invite and encourage diverse ideas, perspectives and approaches and harness your global thinking by sharing your expertise and knowledge with your colleagues and partners, particularly your team. Your integrity, capability, accountability and humour allow you to serve as a trusted mentor and motivator to your senior team allowing them to build capacity and provide service excellence across a diverse portfolio.