



POSITION PROFILE

VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Alverno College
Milwaukee, Wisconsin



THE OPPORTUNITY

The Alverno College community seeks a Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) who is an innovative, collaborative, and student-focused servant leader. Working in close partnership with President Christy L. Brown, JD and the President's Cabinet, the VPAA will lead this unique, Catholic and mission-focused institution that "prepares women for lives of personal and professional distinction and meaningful engagement with the world" to its next level of academic excellence, student success and faculty support and engagement. In addition, the VPAA will be a visible leader at the College, in the greater Milwaukee community, and beyond, championing Alverno's mission to be an "inclusive community that engages students in active and collaborative learning and fosters academic excellence."

ABOUT ALVERNO COLLEGE

Alverno College is deeply rooted in the Milwaukee community it calls home. At Alverno, you'll find a community that inspires, challenges, and supports its students throughout their academic journey.

Founded in 1887, Alverno College ("Alverno") is a four-year independent Catholic liberal arts college for women sponsored by the School Sisters of St. Francis, and Wisconsin's first **Hispanic-Serving Institution**. The College also offers a robust array of graduate and degree completion programs for women and men.

For more than 130 years, Alverno has been transforming lives with a powerful combination of liberal arts education and career readiness with an innovative and empowering educational model of non-graded assessment and abilities-based approach which has been studied by others around the world.

With more than 17,000 alums worldwide, Alverno prepares women for lives of personal and professional distinction and meaningful engagement. Alverno creates an inclusive community that engages students in active and collaborative learning and fosters academic excellence.

Moreover, Alverno's mission and vision creates an organization that attracts the best and the brightest students, faculty, staff, and professionals. Alverno enrolls approximately 675 undergraduates and 650 graduate students in its 29 majors and 19 graduate programs. There are 196 full-time employees (43 full-time faculty and 153 full-time staff) plus 20 part-time/temporary staff, almost 300 adjunct faculty members and 250 student employees. Alverno also has approximately \$35 million in total revenues and \$81 million total assets.



MISSION STATEMENT

Alverno College prepares women for lives of personal and professional distinction and meaningful engagement with the world. Alverno extends this mission by offering graduate and adult programs to women and men. Inspired by its Catholic, Franciscan, and liberal arts heritage, the College intentionally creates an inclusive community that engages students in active and collaborative learning and fosters academic excellence.

VISION

To be the leading Catholic, Franciscan college inspiring passionate and principled leadership through transformational education.



During the summer of 2024, Alverno declared financial exigency as a proactive measure to restore financial stability and secure its financial future. As a result of the exigency declaration, Alverno underwent a substantial restructuring plan, which included reducing its undergraduate majors and graduate programs plus reducing full-time faculty and staff positions.

Today, Alverno has demonstrated its promise to sustaining its growth and success in the years ahead. Furthermore, funding to support the mission of Alverno was bolstered this past August with a **\$10 million gift** from John and Tashia Morgridge through the TOSA Foundation. These contributions, combined with a recent six-year **\$1.9 million grant from the National Science Foundation**, signal positive momentum for the College. Most recently, Alverno unlocked and exceeded a \$1.5 million matching gift from a group of anonymous donors who believe in the mission of the College, ultimately bringing in gifts from more than 470 donors, resulting in over \$3 million in funds raised. The College secured the funds to fulfill the match two months ahead of schedule, and donors continue to contribute gifts inspired by the match.

ALVERNO COLLEGE AT-A-GLANCE

56%

of undergraduate students come from the city of Milwaukee

59%

are students of color

90%

acceptance rate

13:1

faculty to student ratio

3.01

average high school GPA

WHY ALVERNO?

The 8 Abilities

Alverno's **ability-based curriculum** goes beyond traditional education. Students learn through a unique approach that focuses on developing their skills, knowledge and personal confidence to excel. Alverno graduates acquire not just a degree, but also the highly sought-after skills that employers value for leadership and making a difference. Alverno's innovative and empowering education model of non-graded assessment and feedback provides opportunities for academic exploration and excellence that put its students on a path towards professional distinction and engagement with the world. Recognized internationally for our abilities-based curriculum and assessment as learning model, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation awarded Alverno College a grant of \$750,000 in 1996 for our "distinctive approach to liberal arts education."

A Diverse and Welcoming Community

As a Minority-Serving Institution with the **Hispanic-Serving Institution** (HSI) designation, the Alverno community celebrates diversity and, through its commitment to its Franciscan values, fosters an inclusive environment where every member — students, faculty, and staff — feel valued and supported. It is a community rich with perspectives from different backgrounds creating a vibrant and dynamic learning experience.





A Commitment to Women's Education

As a college dedicated to women's education, Alverno empowers women to lead and succeed in a wide array of careers. The Alverno community is highly focused on student success, with support services including academic advising, internship placement, career counseling and mental health resources.

Mission-Focused Programs of Study

Alverno's 30-plus undergraduate programs reflect majors, minors and adult degree completion programs. They are contained within two academic divisions: Liberal Arts and Professional Studies, and the JoAnn McGrath School of Nursing and Health Professions. Within the Liberal Arts and Professional Studies division are the departments of: Business and Communication; Education; Multidisciplinary Studies; Psychology and Social Work; and Natural Sciences. Its undergraduate social work program was recently approved by the Council on Social Work Education to be offered fully online.

Alverno offers certificate programs, digital badges and graduate programs for women and men. Graduate degree programs include Educational Specialist in School Psychology; Master of Arts in Education; Master of Science in Nursing with multiple advanced practice specialty tracks; Direct Entry Master of Science in Nursing offered at both the Milwaukee campus and Mesa, Arizona location; Master of Science in Community Psychology; Doctor of Nursing Practice; and online Doctorate in Education program.

A Student-Centered Faculty

Alverno has 42 full-time faculty members, 75% of whom have the highest degree in their field. Alverno faculty are recognized nationally for their teaching expertise. *U.S. News & World Report* ranked Alverno College highest in the state in its "Strong Commitment to Teaching" category, the only Wisconsin college ranked in this category 15 years in a row.

Career Preparation

Nearly 90% of Alverno graduates are employed in areas related to their major and career goals. Beyond the classroom, Alverno students intern for at least one semester. These internships lead to networking opportunities and in many cases employment right out of college. Alverno's **Career Studio**, which is connected to more than 2,000 partner sites, assists students in their career goals. In addition, *U.S. News & World Report* recognized Alverno for its ability to impact the social mobility of its graduates.



LEADERSHIP

President Christy L. Brown, JD is the ninth President of Alverno College. She has over two decades of experience providing strategic and visionary legal and executive leadership in higher education and non-profit organizations. Prior to assuming the Alverno presidency in July of 2023, she was chief executive officer of Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Southeast (GSWISE), which serves more than 17,000 members in the Milwaukee Metropolitan area. Other previous higher ed roles include Vice Chancellor, Finance and Administrative Affairs at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and Executive Vice President & General Counsel at Milwaukee Area Technical College.

She earned a BA in Psychology from Stanford University, and a JD and MA at Duke University.

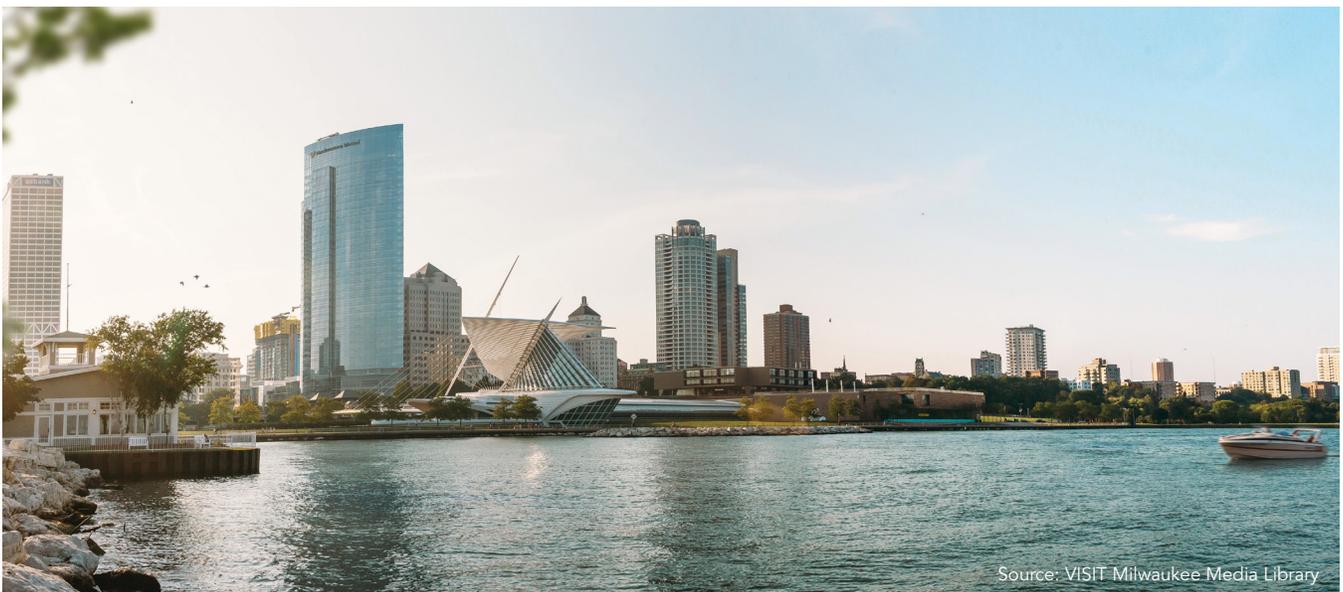


Christy L. Brown, JD, President

LOCATION

Milwaukee is a vibrant city on the western shore of Lake Michigan, about a 90-minute drive from Chicago. It is the largest city in Wisconsin, with a metropolitan population of approximately 1.8 million with nearly 200 distinct neighborhoods. Aside from the shore of Lake Michigan, Milwaukee's location is at the confluence of three rivers. The Milwaukee RiverWalk District, along the Milwaukee River, was formed in the 1990s and today is a shining example of bringing life through commercial, residential, and entertainment accessibility to a downtown neighborhood. Milwaukee has earned the nickname "City of Festivals" hosting celebrations from cultural to holiday, music and film, and all things Milwaukee.

Abundant experiences in nature are available with over 150 state and county parks, 1,500 acres of beaches, and over 150 miles of bike trails. The opportunities to experience city life are endless with 30 museums, 11 major colleges and universities, more than 200 locally owned restaurants, and 8 professional sports teams, including the Milwaukee Bucks and the Milwaukee Brewers.



Source: VISIT Milwaukee Media Library



THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

OVERVIEW

The Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) is the Chief Academic Officer of Alverno College and oversees an array of academic programs, departments and services. Reporting directly to the President, the VPAA is a member of the President's Cabinet and serves as liaison to the Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee of the Board of Trustees.

Direct reports include:

- The Dean of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies
- The Dean of the JoAnn McGrath School of Nursing and Health Professions
- The Executive Assistant for Academic Affairs
- The Registrar
- The Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness
- The Director of the Library
- The Dean of Student Development and Success

The VPAA fosters and inspires academic excellence, innovation and inclusive excellence by enabling faculty effectiveness, student success, and active collaboration, both internally and with external partners. The Vice President collaborates actively with the Advancement division to secure resources that support excellence and the development of new academic programs.

The VPAA provides leadership for the deans and the faculty and staff in Academic Affairs in imagining, designing, implementing and assessing programs and projects that align with the Alverno College mission and strategic plan, and in building a strong, relevant curriculum.



STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES

Academic Leadership

- Initiate and lead in planning, development and implementation of strategic high-quality academic programs that build on Alverno's strengths, are financially viable, and are relevant in the current market;
- Re-envision Alverno's academic mission, including potentially refreshing the 8 Abilities to better resonate with students' interests and reflect employers' current needs;
- Ensure academic excellence in all programs and promote a culture of innovation and accountability in teaching and learning in the context of Alverno's core mission and institutional values;
- Provide organizational structure and stability in processes that support students;
- Prepare and manage the academic budget, working with the deans to propose a coherent, balanced academic budget thoughtfully tied to Alverno's strategic agenda;
- Promote program efficiency through cross-disciplinary collaboration, broader use of technology, setting appropriate program requirements, and other initiatives;
- Serve as chief academic officer in managing faculty governance and personnel matters, including oversight of annual faculty evaluations and promotions in collaboration with the deans;
- Provide clear and effective leadership in managing key decisions in all aspects of faculty employment;
- Serve as primary liaison to regional accreditation associations and state licensure bodies and oversee all matters related to institutional and/or program accreditation;
- Develop an agenda for academic grants and fundraising projects in collaboration with the Advancement office; and
- Plan and execute the periodic comprehensive review of academic programs, employing relevant data in assessing outcomes and making key decisions.



Institutional Leadership

- Provide visionary leadership and facilitate the development, enhancement, quality and growth of Alverno's academic programs;
- Inspire and lead a culture of growth and innovation among Alverno faculty and academic deans;
- Serve as an advocate for faculty and staff professional growth and development in this work;
- Model an institutional culture that is welcoming, collaborative, transparent, supportive, and joyful;
- Partner effectively with other departments (e.g., Admissions, Student Affairs) to attract, enroll, and retain both traditional and adult students;
- Assume a key leadership role in enabling academic innovation based on emerging higher education trends, market demand for programs and the evolution of existing Alverno programs;
- Assume the lead academic role in developing and implementing Alverno College's strategic plan, including offering vision, support and oversight for dean and faculty engagement in planning for Alverno's future; and
- Oversee implementation of strategic academic initiatives.

External Leadership

- Serve as an advocate for Alverno College externally by collaborating with the president and vice president for advancement to engage local and regional partners to support Alverno graduates and academic programs;
- Serve as a key collaborator with the vice president for advancement in securing external support for academic programs and faculty;
- Reinvigorate partnerships and public engagement, including with the corporate sector, with other educational institutions, and with key community organizations;
- Support work of the deans in establishing, maintaining and effectively engaging the College's Advisory Councils;
- Serve on external boards and committees as possible, especially those connected to the strategic agenda of Alverno College.

QUALIFICATIONS

Professional Skills and Experience

The successful candidate should have:

- An earned doctorate and be eligible for the rank of full professor (preferably in a discipline represented in Alverno's degree programs);
- Progressed through the faculty ranks, including significant experience in teaching, scholarship, and service;
- A proven track record of success in academic administration at highly tuition-driven institutions with undergraduate and graduate offerings;
- A demonstrated understanding of the impact of the evolving trends and issues impacting higher education, both broadly and for small to mid-sized, regional institutions;
- A record of effectively representing an institution to external constituencies, including community leaders, current and prospective regional partners, donors and grant awarding agencies;
- A deep understanding of, and commitment to, shared governance along with a demonstrated trust in faculty, staff, students, and other community members to support the Alverno's strategic plan and key initiatives;
- A demonstrated knowledge of the principles of sound fiscal management and an ability to develop and manage budgets in consultation with key constituents;



- A commitment to, and evidence of, facilitating an inclusive, vibrant community that supports and lifts up all;
- An understanding of the requirements of professional programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, including accreditation and clinical-based education;
- A record of support for teaching excellence with significant time spent in the classroom; and
- A record of accomplishment in the effective incorporation of technology in teaching and learning as well as experience with creating forward-looking learning environments.

Personal Qualities and Leadership Skills

The successful candidate should have:

- A passion for the value and opportunities inherent in higher education focused on a transformational educational experience along with an unwavering commitment to Alverno's Catholic, Franciscan mission and values;
- The ability to passionately articulate the relevance of that mission and those values to the Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, students, and external community;
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills; the ability to serve as a key ambassador and advocate for Alverno to a broad range of internal and external constituencies;
- A highly collaborative, communicative and transparent leadership style that fosters team building and demonstrates a commitment to the importance of community;
- The ability to serve as a strategic thought partner with the President and her Cabinet to advance Alverno's mission to serve both students and the larger community;
- The ability to work with a diverse group of constituencies who have differing perspectives and build consensus toward shared academic goals;
- A proven track record as an accomplished problem-solver and decision-maker who is skilled at gathering input and building consensus through open, respectful and empathetic discourse with the goal of identifying the opportunities that will best serve Alverno's students;
- A transformational, inclusive, collaborative, and equitable approach to leadership that is inspiring to others;
- A passion for student success with demonstrated success in leading student-centered initiatives that enhance the entirety of the student experience;
- A personable, approachable and accessible manner to staff, faculty, and students; demonstrates a high level of enthusiasm and energy in the work of higher education; and
- A record of exhibiting transparency and personal integrity, with a sense of humility and a sense of humor.



APPLICATION & NOMINATION PROCESS

The Vice President for Academic Affairs Search Committee will begin the review of applications immediately and continue work until an appointment is made. To assure full consideration, applications should be received by **Friday, April 25th, 2025** and must include:

- A letter of interest addressing the strategic objectives and qualifications identified in the profile;
- A current curriculum vitae; and
- The contact information (email and phone) for five professional references, including their relationship to the candidate. References will not be contacted without prior authorization from the candidate.

Alverno College is being assisted by AGB Search. Application materials should be in PDF format and submitted through the AGB Search portal system here: [Alverno College – Vice President for Academic Affairs](#).

Please direct nominations and expressions of interest or any questions regarding the application process to Alverno-VPAA@agbsearch.com or:

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**AGB
SEARCH**

Advancing Higher Education Leadership

Alverno College Employment Policy

Alverno College does not discriminate against any employee, applicant for employment, student, or applicant for admission on the basis of actual or perceived inclusion in a protected class or group.

Alverno College seeks to comply with all federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and ordinances prohibiting discrimination in private post-secondary education institutions.

This Policy applies to, covers, and requires nondiscrimination in both employment and access to educational opportunities. Therefore, any member of the Alverno community whose acts deny, deprive, unreasonably interfere with, or limit the education or employment, residential, social access, benefits, or opportunities of any member of the Alverno community, guest, or visitor on the basis of that person's actual or perceived protected characteristic(s), is in violation of this Policy.

