Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Leadership Profile

California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB) invites inquiries, nominations, and applications for the position of Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (Provost). The next Provost will partner with newly appointed President, Dr. S. Terri Gómez, in bringing to life an exciting new vision of the future for the University as delivered in her first address as President at CSUSB's 2026 Convocation. President Gómez seeks an ambitious and innovative academic leader who will bring a high level of enthusiasm for strengthening and magnifying CSUSB's impact in the Inland Empire, the High Desert, the Coachella Valley, and beyond.

The University

CSUSB is the preeminent center of intellectual and cultural activity in the inland region of Southern California known as the Inland Empire (IE), set at the foothills of the beautiful San Bernardino Mountains. The University is part of the California State University system, the largest system of higher education in the country, with two campuses in San Bernardino and Palm Desert, located in two of the largest counties in the United States, CSUSB has grown from its founding in 1965 as a state college with an inaugural class of 293 students to a major metropolitan university with approximately 19,000 active students and 2,400 employees.

CSUSB reflects the Inland Empire's diverse and predominantly Hispanic population. It ranks second in Hispanic/Latino enrollment percentage and fifth in African American enrollment percentage among all CSU and UC campuses. A designated Minority and Hispanic-Serving Institution, CSUSB graduates approximately 5,100 students annually. The student body represents the vibrant diversity of the communities it serves, with 70% of the students identifying as Hispanic, 10% White, 6% African American, 6% Asian, 1% non-resident foreign students, and <1% Native American/Alaskan Native or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. The University has over 133,000 alumni of which 1,000 live outside the U.S. and over 111,000 (84%) live in California. Interestingly, and as an example of CSUSB's significance in the region, over 93,000 alumni reside in the IE and nearly 1,000 serve as CSUSB faculty and staff. Given the recent growth in African American student enrollment and robust transfer rate, CSUSB is currently seeking the Black-Serving Institution designation and joining the Umoja Community (an academic learning community and statewide program primarily operating within California community colleges).

The University is supported by a budget of $315 million, consisting of $197 million from the state's General Fund allocation and $118 million from campus-generated revenue. The

University also has an endowment of approximately $75 million and in 2025/26 faculty were awarded a total of $48 million in research contracts and grants, across all divisions.

CSUSB's commitment to diversity, access, value, and excellence are reflected in numerous national and international recognitions, awards, and rankings at all levels of the University. The University was recently ranked #2 in social mobility by The Wall Street Journal and is regularly listed among the best colleges and universities in the western United States, according to The Princeton Review, Forbes, and U.S. News & World Report in their respective annual rankings. The University is also the recipient of the 2024-27 Seal of *Excelencia* from the *Excelencia* in Education organization, which focuses on ensuring America's future by increasing Latino college completion.

Palm Desert Campus

In the early 1980's, citizens of the Coachella Valley recognized the economic, cultural, and social benefits that a four-year university would bring to the region and organized to meet that need. Shortly thereafter, the state legislature approved funds to establish what was then called the Coachella Valley Center (CVC). The CVC opened in Fall 1986 with 80 students. Years later, under the leadership of then President Albert Karnig, a unique public-private partnership was established between the state and community members of the Coachella Valley to support the development of the campus. In November 1994, the CSU Board of Trustees accepted a donation from the city for land upon which to construct a permanent campus. With the move to the permanent campus, the campus officially changed its name to the Palm Desert Campus (PDC) of California State University, San Bernardino. In the fall of 2013, the Palm Desert Campus opened its doors to its first freshman class, becoming the Coachella Valley's only four-year public university. In 2015, the City of Palm Desert donated an additional 114 acres, making the total size of the current campus approximately 169 acres.

In 2021, the Palm Desert Campus, the City of Palm Desert, and the Coachella Valley Economic Partnership collaborated to launch the Palm Desert Entrepreneurship Resource Center (Palm Desert ERC). Originally conceived to support technology-based entrepreneurs and emerging startups, the initiative serves market needs by providing aspiring and established entrepreneurs throughout the Coachella Valley with education, advising, connections, and access to resources that support business development and equitable economic growth. Additionally, the PDC has been allocated $79 million by the California legislature to build a Student Success Center, which is scheduled to open in March 2027.

Today, the Palm Desert Campus is thriving and expanding its impact across the Coachella Valley and surrounding communities. Its distinctive regional context includes a strong philanthropic and business community, as well as significant cultural and economic contributions from Tribal nations, including the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. These contributions have helped advance economic diversification, cultural preservation, and workforce development throughout the region. The Palm Desert Campus is currently home to 2,057 students and offers programs in a wide range of academic areas; however, enrollment growth at this campus has been driven by the addition of new programs in Hospitality Management, Entrepreneurship, Cybersecurity, Kinesiology, and undergraduate and graduate programs in Social Work.

New Leadership

In July 2026, Dr. S. Terri Gómez was appointed to serve as president of CSUSB by the California State University Board of Trustees.

Prior to leading CSUSB, Dr. Gómez served as Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Cal Poly Pomona where she championed innovative, equity-centered strategies that strengthen academic achievement, improved graduation and transfer outcomes, expanded research opportunities, and enhanced institutional effectiveness. To achieve these goals, Dr. Gómez advanced efforts to strengthen proactive advising, expanded student success teams and increased institutional capacity to support students at scale—while also leading transformative initiatives in academic innovation, artificial intelligence in teaching and learning, career-connected education, enrollment strategy and regional K-16 partnerships that increase educational access and workforce readiness. These collective efforts delivered significant and measurable institutional gains in first-time four-year and six-year graduation rates, while strengthening outcomes for first-generation, Pell-eligible, and transfer students.

Dr. Gómez began her academic career at Cal Poly Pomona in 1999 as a faculty member in the Department of Ethnic and Women's Studies, where she advanced to full professor and served as Department Chair. Her academic leadership roles at the University have included Interim Associate Dean, Associate Vice President for Student Success, and Associate Provost for Student Success, Equity, and Innovation. She is a first-generation college graduate who began her higher education journey at San Bernardino Valley College. Dr. Gómez earned her bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in Political Science at UCLA.

The Division of Academic Affairs

With the strongest commitment to advancing student success and supporting faculty, Academic Affairs is the largest division at CSUSB. The Division is responsible for the administrative oversight of five academic colleges, the College of Extended and Global Education, the Honors College, the CSUSB libraries (Helene A. Hixon Information Center and Pfau Library), and several supporting offices. With more than 1,000 faculty and staff members, the Division has a budget of $139.1M.

The five academic colleges are: the College of Arts and Letters, Jack H. Brown College of Business and Public Administration, James R. Watson & Judy Rodriguez Watson College of Education, College of Natural Sciences, and College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. Collectively, these colleges offer more than 70 traditional baccalaureate and 20 graduate programs, education credential and certificate programs, a doctorate program in educational leadership, and a new Doctor of Nursing Practice program.

The Division is supported by the following offices:

- Academic Budget and Planning – Provides support in the areas of budget management, staffing, and space planning.

- Academic Programs – Supports faculty in program development, implementation and evaluation, student learning assessment, CSUSB and CSU initiatives, University Libraries, and accreditation.
- Academic Research – Provides strategic planning and assistance to promote faculty and student research, scholarship and creative activities that support the service mission of CSUSB.
- Academic Success and Undergraduate Advising – Provides academic services that promote equity, retention, timely graduation and student-defined success for all undergraduate students.
- Community Engaged Learning – Facilitates service learning, community-based research, and volunteer service by engaging students, faculty, and community partners in collaborative partnerships that serve the public good.
- Faculty Affairs and Development – Supports the president, provost, deans, department chairs and faculty on academic personnel matters, including the recruitment, appointment, advancement and retention of diverse faculty members.
- Graduate Studies – Promotes a culture of graduate education at CSUSB from recruitment and outreach to graduation. This office oversees graduate admissions and coordinates funding opportunities for graduate students.

CSUSB is accredited by WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC), and in 2022, the University earned reaffirmation of accreditation for 10 years. The University also houses 48 externally accredited programs in addition to teaching credential programs approved by the California State Board of Education, California Commission on Teacher Credentialing and the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).

Position Summary

Reporting to President Gómez and serving as a member of her cabinet, the Provost will serve as CSUSB's chief academic officer and will be responsible for developing and implementing, in collaboration with faculty, a compelling vision for how a comprehensive regional university can best serve its students and expansive community during a period of rapid technological, societal, and political change. The evolving national educational landscape requires that the Provost be a strategic and forward-thinking leader with the agility to navigate short- and long-term challenges while maintaining a steady focus on the core mission and values of the University. The Provost must be transparent in their actions, function with integrity, and communicate with clarity, authenticity, and promptness. The Provost must be a proven champion of students, faculty, and staff and passionately communicate the University's priorities to campus stakeholders and beyond.

The Provost will provide overall leadership for the Division of Academic Affairs and serve as the leader of the University in the absence of the President. They must partner with campus stakeholders to create a learning environment that places students at the center, inspires

creativity and innovation, encourages thoughtful risk-taking, and reinforces a culture that embraces fairness, collaboration, and collegiality.

The Provost, in collaboration with faculty, will define the University's academic priorities, align annual goals with the values of the institution, actively participate in annual and long-term University budget planning, and skillfully and effectively leverage the University's revenue streams to derive the maximum benefit and impact. The Provost will be a fierce advocate for the university's academic, research, and teaching mission and will assist the President, academic deans, and others in garnering philanthropic and grant support for strategic initiatives.

Key Institutional Priorities

CSUSB's next Provost will join the University at a crucial moment in its history. Embracing CSUSB's dedication to academic excellence, access, and student success, the Provost must have the ability to set priorities, determine a plan to achieve them, and communicate effectively with multiple constituencies across the San Bernardino and Palm Desert campuses to implement them. To succeed, the Provost must cultivate a healthy, collaborative, and high-performing work environment grounded in care, transparency, trust, accountability, and mutual respect. With this in mind, the Provost will be well-positioned to address the following key institutional priorities:

- **Leading with Vision** – CSUSB's next Provost will develop and implement a cohesive vision for the Division of Academic Affairs to support the University's commitment to academic excellence, student success, access, and social mobility. The new Provost must demonstrate a high level of intellectual curiosity and a willingness to invest time in learning about the needs of each academic unit with an ethic of care. In doing so, the Provost will invest in existing strengths; help address emerging needs; and develop new programs and initiatives to support student success and improve enrollment and graduation rates. This work will require a sophisticated understanding of academic quality, student demand, workforce needs, institutional capacity, and long-term financial sustainability.

- **Preparing CSUSB for the Next Strategic Plan** — With the University's current strategic plan, *We Define the Future: Transforming Lives and Communities*, coming to a close, CSUSB finds itself poised to undertake the exciting process of developing its next strategic plan. CSUSB's next Provost will have the opportunity to partner with the University's dynamic new President to guide the creation of a new plan for the future that sets clear and inspiring goals for the campus community to strive toward. In leading the Division of Academic Affairs, the Provost will play a key role in aligning the strength of CSUSB's academic enterprise with the needs of its community and the ideals set forth within CSU's new systemwide strategic plan, *CSU Forward*.

- **Building Partnerships for Student Success** – Following the CSU's unveiling of *CSU Forward*, the Student Success Framework, and the Strategic Enrollment Framework, coupled with lessons learned from Graduation Initiative 2025, CSUSB's next Provost will work closely with the divisions of Student Affairs and Strategic Enrollment Management & Marketing to ensure that student success remains the top priority in all the University does. To achieve this end, the Provost, the Vice President for Student Affairs, and the Vice President for Strategic Enrollment Management & Marketing will partner and lead their respective divisions to align their collective efforts in support of CSUSB's new strategic plan and the CSU's systemwide initiatives. In doing so, the Provost will serve as an integral partner in the creation of initiatives that enhance student access to education, deliver robust academic programs, address affordability and basic needs concerns, and enhance the educational experience and career preparedness of all students.

- **Amplifying the Presence of the Palm Desert Campus –** The PDC campus serves a highly diverse population that includes many first-generation college students from predominantly Hispanic households, agricultural communities, and families historically underrepresented in higher education. These intersecting opportunities and needs position PDC to contribute meaningfully to the region's intellectual capital, talent pipeline, and long-term economic and social vitality. Sustaining this upward trajectory will require an engaged provost who recognizes PDC's potential and is prepared to serve as a vocal advocate for its programs, faculty, staff, students, and community partnerships.

- **Leveraging the Unique Attributes of CSUSB's Campuses** – CSUSB's next Provost will join a university comprised of two campuses located in San Bernardino and the Coachella Valley (Palm Desert Campus), each with its own distinct identity and a shared commitment and passion for achieving the University's mission. Through department chairs and deans, the Provost will support and champion faculty at each campus to develop and implement a cohesive, well-integrated multi-campus environment that showcases the unique culture, attributes, and strengths of campus academic programs and initiatives.

- **Supporting CSUSB's Shared Governance Environment** – CSUSB's next Provost will join an institution and university system that is home to an engaged faculty and effective system of shared governance. The Provost must be committed to an ethic of care in their practice of shared governance and must foster a transparent and inclusive environment in which the administration actively listens to faculty and staff, and acknowledges their perspectives on the University's direction, student and faculty/staff needs, and opportunities for shared success.

- **Promoting Student Success** – CSUSB is proud of its commitment and efforts toward creating an effective and welcoming teaching and learning environment for all students. The Provost must be similarly dedicated to these ideals of excellence and access, and, in collaboration with the faculty and other institutional divisions to enthusiastically guide the University's work in improving academic services and student support programs, prioritizing future program development, and expanding existing delivery methods of instruction to further elevate the student experience in meaningful ways.

- **Recruiting, Retaining, and Developing Faculty and Staff** – CSUSB's next Provost will lead an academic enterprise encompassing multiple complex academic and administrative units. The success of these units relies heavily on the University's deeply dedicated and talented faculty and staff. Therefore, the Provost must foster an institutional culture that supports the well-being and professional development of faculty and their capacity to engage in teaching, scholarship, and service at all levels. In addition, the Provost must be willing to invest in the professional growth and development of staff to maximize their potential and contributions to the University.

- **Enhancing Existing and Establishing New Academic Programs** – With a strong understanding of current and emerging trends in higher education, and in collaboration with faculty from all academic units and considering the workforce needs of the region, the Provost will identify and implement effective strategies and initiatives for enhancing existing and developing new and innovative academic programs.

- **Implementing Innovation and Best Practices** – The Provost will ensure that the Division of Academic Affairs is poised to adopt best practices across all functional areas, including but not limited to teaching, mentoring, business operations, budget, academic technology, research, etc. The Provost will have an opportunity to work with their team in assessing current practices and procedures to identify areas that could benefit from new and improved perspectives.

- **Ensuring Fiscal Sustainability and Strategic Resource Alignment** – Similar to universities across the country and within the CSU System, CSUSB is navigating constrained state funding, rising costs, and shifting enrollment patterns. The next Provost will partner closely with the Vice President for Finance, Technology & Operations and the Vice President for Strategic Enrollment Management & Marketing to align academic planning with enrollment demand and the University's budget model. Using data, the Provost will guide decisions on program investment, course scheduling, faculty hiring, and space so that resources flow to the University's highest academic priorities and support its long-term financial health.

- **Leading Through Social and Higher Educational Change** – Like universities across the nation, CSUSB is navigating the current national landscape marked by change, challenge and, often, division. The next Provost must be prepared to serve as a critical member of the President's leadership team guiding the University toward meeting the needs and expectations of its stakeholders while also preparing students for success

beyond graduation in a world that is undergoing rapid change. CSUSB's next Provost must serve as an inspiring and uniting force that fosters an environment that builds and strengthens institutional collegiality and esprit de corps while articulating the value of a college education and the University's larger impact within the community.

Qualities and Attributes

The successful candidate must have or be:

- Be a champion for promoting access to higher education and student success.
- A transparent, inclusive, and accessible leader who listens intentionally and builds trust through deep dialogue, shared governance, and the development of shared goals and a vision for the future of CSUSB.
- The ability to envision, articulate, and implement strategic goals using a data-informed approach, with experience establishing assessment and outcomes measures, aligning resources with priorities, and navigating accreditation requirements and processes.
- Be proactive in engaging with the Inland Empire, High Desert, and Coachella Valley communities and connect with sovereign Tribal nations and other external stakeholders to establish high-impact collaborations.
- A high level of emotional intelligence, empathy, and a collaborative mindset fueled by an ethic of care and a desire to build partnerships across CSUSB that bolster academic excellence and faculty, staff, and student success.

- The disposition to engage with and support the Palm Desert Campus and its faculty, staff, and students, recognizing its unique identity, advancing CSUSB's reputation as a trusted regional partner aligning student success with community needs.
- A strong commitment to and demonstrated accomplishment in the implementation of initiatives that promote inclusivity, equity, diversity, belonging, and social justice serving underrepresented and minoritized students, faculty, and staff.
- A strong commitment to supporting and addressing the holistic needs of students and their wellbeing, including mental health.
- The ability to foster and strengthen respectful collaboration with sovereign Tribal nations to proactively create strategic partnerships throughout the region and deepen the commitment to support of Native American students.
- A track record of creating pathways to increase enrollment, promote safe spaces, and provide support for overcoming any challenges students may encounter to achieve academic success.
- A passionate advocate for faculty wellbeing, sustainable workload, and professional growth, who can protect and secure resources for research, scholarship, and creative activities for faculty and students.
- A demonstrated record of successfully navigating and leading institutional change in response to emerging trends, challenges, and opportunities impacting higher education nationally and globally.
- Have a commitment to promoting interdisciplinary programs and research as well as identifying and eliminating impediments to effective interdisciplinary initiatives.

- A proactive approach to institutional technology tools that balance system-wide compliance with a commitment to streamlined, user-centered processes, to maximize efficiency while protecting faculty and staff time and energy.
- The clear understanding of and fluency with, and openness to, innovative pedagogy and instructional technologies, including artificial intelligence that supports faculty, staff, and students.
- The judgment and courage to make difficult decisions while navigating competing interests and differing stakeholder perspectives, building support for outcomes that are fair, transparent, and respectful of shared governance, and that balance institutional sustainability, academic quality, student needs, and the well-being of faculty and staff.

Required Qualifications

The next Provost must be an accomplished academic administrator and possess:

- An earned doctorate or terminal degree in an academic discipline from an accredited institution.
- A distinguished record of teaching, scholarly achievement, service, and other qualifications that merit appointment as a full professor in one of the disciplines at CSUSB.
- A successful track record of administration and leadership in higher education, including a minimum of five years of progressively responsible experience as Department Chair and/or Associate Dean, and as Dean of a College, Associate/Vice Provost, or equivalent position.
- Experience managing complex budgets and allocating resources with a high level of transparency and fairness.

- A record of successful commitment to equity, inclusion, diversity, and social justice.
- A record of successful leadership in shared governance values and processes.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills.
- Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively with senior administrators, deans, department chairs, faculty, staff, and external constituents to achieve institutional goals.

Preferred Qualifications

- Experience in a public higher education institution and multi-campus system.
- Experience working in a collective bargaining environment and at an institution that embraces an active shared governance model.
- Demonstrated ability to support the use of effective information technology for pedagogical, administrative, and student support needs.
- A demonstrated commitment to advancing faculty research and scholarly activity, student research and mentorship, grant development, professional development, and excellence in teaching.
- A history of innovation in developing and supporting academic programs that support student success goals.
- A commitment to responsible AI innovation and ethical navigation of emerging technologies.

- Evidence of successful accreditation work, both at a campus and individual program level.
- A demonstrated record of success serving as an academic leader within a minority-serving institution.

Application / Nomination Process

The Search Committee will begin reviewing applications immediately. Applicants must submit a current curriculum vitae and a letter of interest that describes their relevant experience. Submission of materials via email is strongly encouraged. Nomination letters should include the name and contact information of the nominee. All nominations, applications and related materials will be handled with strict confidence.

Applications and letters of nomination should be submitted by email to:

SP&A EXECUTIVE SEARCH

Alberto Pimentel, Managing Partner
Emy Cruz, Partner
Sal Venegas Jr., Partner
Email: apsearch@spaexec.com
Refer to code “CSUSB-Provost” in the subject line

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CSUSB considers qualified applicants for employment without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, genetic information, medical condition, disability, marital status, or protected veteran status.