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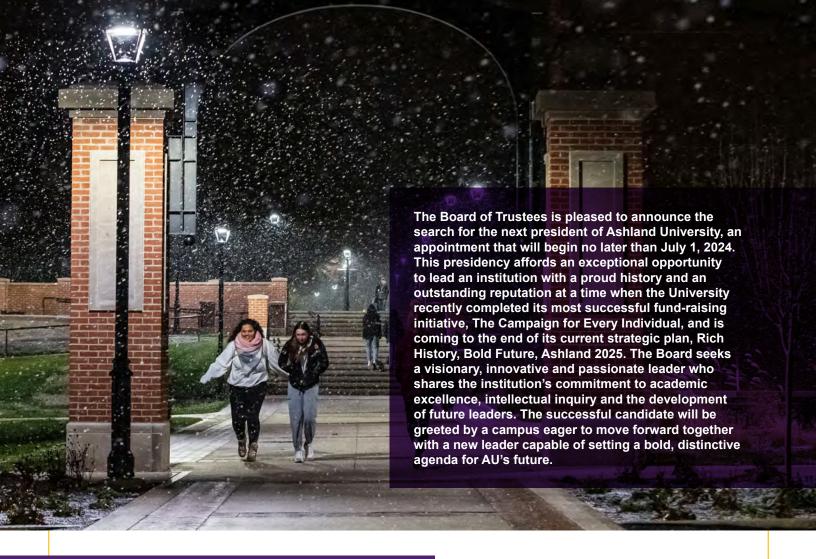
PRESIDENT



ASHLAND

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ABOUT AU - AN OVERVIEW

Ashland College was founded in 1878 in Ohio by the German Baptist Brethren (now The Brethren Church) and renamed Ashland University in 1989, to reflect the many diverse undergraduate, graduate and professional programs offered. One of those programs is the Ashland Theological Seminary, founded in 1906. Today, Ashland is an independent, comprehensive university that consists of four degree-granting academic colleges – the College of Arts & Sciences, the Dauch College of Business & Economics, the Schar College of Education, and the Schar College of Nursing and Health Sciences – as well as eAshland, Correctional Education, and the Ashland Theological Seminary.

In addition to its academic degree offerings, Ashland takes pride in being the home of the Ashbrook Center, a leader in training students and teachers in constitutional self-government. Also, AU is committed to veterans and their families. AU was named among the top 12 schools in the nation for military-connected and veteran students and is the only private university so named. Another point of pride is Ashland's NCAA Division II athletic program with its success and stature as an elite competitor in 23 varsity sports. Ashland's women's basketball team brings national recognition for having won multiple national championships.

Ashland University is a faith-affirming institution that provides a welcoming and nurturing environment in which every student finds the support and encouragement they need to grow intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually. Ashland University is not a traditional Bible college nor is it affiliated with the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU). With values shaped by our Brethren heritage, Ashland University promotes the principles of respect for one another, compassion for all, and a life lived in peace with justice. We believe ourselves to be enriched by the unique contribution of each person. The president also serves as president of Ashland Theological Seminary. Given that the president holds a unique position in the life of the whole University, the president should be a person of demonstrable Christian faith and life, affirming the Seminary's <u>Statement of Faith</u>.

ABOUT AU - AN OVERVIEW (CONT.)

The University's mission is to provide a transformative learning experience, shaping graduates who work, serve and lead with integrity in the local, national and global communities. Ashland aspires to be a nationally recognized, private university where traditions of excellence are fostered and students discern their life calling and thrive. Through its commitment to a personalized education, Ashland prepares each student for a life of personal and professional growth and service to the community. The University provides a welcoming environment where access and opportunity come together to equip individuals to build a better future for themselves and those around them. One of the hallmarks of Ashland's values is that students are taught "How to Think, Not What to Think," and the campus is fiercely attentive to this.

Various college rankings and ratings continue to give Ashland University high marks. U.S. News, Money, Intelligent.com, and the Wall Street Journal are among those that recognize AU's quality and excellence in many areas. The 2024 edition of Best Colleges, Ashland ranked #35 among Regional Colleges in the Midwest, #27 in Best Value Schools, #36 in Best Colleges for Veterans, and #40 in Top Performers on Social Mobility.

CORE VALUES

Accent on the Individual: Pledges the best individual and collective efforts to challenge and encourage each member of the University within a supportive community.

Spirituality and Faith: Affirms Christian values as a core element of the University's institutional identity, emphasizing faith in God, moral integrity and respect for the diversity of values and faith that is found in a community of learning.

Character Development: Promotes integrity, self-discipline, responsibility, compassion, leadership, service and good citizenship.

Academic Freedom: Supports free, open and critical inquiry for both students and faculty that is consistent with intellectual and professional development.

Excellence in Teaching: Emphasizes teaching supported by research and scholarship as the University's central responsibility.

Ashland University is undeniably more conservative or traditional perhaps—than typical colleges and universities across the country. Unlike many other institutions in higher education today, conservatives feel welcome and at home here. We have thriving student religious organizations of various faiths. including evangelical and conservative Catholic groups, as well as students with no professed faith. We have had a Seminary since 1906 and have trained ministers since our inception, and all undergraduate students are required to take a course in Religion. Ashland is home to an award-winning Military and Veterans Services Center and has started a new ROTC program. Ashland is also home to the Ashbrook Center, a center-right non-profit academic center devoted to strengthening constitutional selfgovernment by educating Americans in our history and founding principles.

In accord with our Brethren heritage, however, conservatism—whether political or religious—is not imposed on anyone and in fact one will find a wide range of political, social, economic, and religious views across campus, and all are welcome and treated with kindness and respect. For example. there is an "Eagles for Pride" student club whose mission is to support LGBTQ students. There is broad representation from both major political parties among the student body that enriches campus discussions and deepens our understanding. We have little appetite for becoming cultural warriors, and we instead wish to stay above the fray, outside of or above divisive cultural issues. We remain committed to academic freedom, as evidenced by our early adoption of the Chicago Principles, and do not aim to indoctrinate students.





STRATEGIC PLAN – RICH HISTORY, BOLD FUTURE, ASHLAND 2025

As AU comes to the end of its current strategic plan in 2025, the institution is well-positioned for a new leader to set the stage for and collaboratively develop a new strategic plan that will build on the University's achievements and chart a course to successfully meet the challenges facing higher education today.

Three strategic themes are the foundation of the current strategic plan, each representing overarching goals that include specific objectives and initiatives to guide institutional action.

 Transformational Experiences reflect AU's dedication to students and student learning as the core of the academic enterprise.

- Strategic Growth reflects AU's commitment to identifying distinctive programs that appeal to traditional, non-traditional and adult learners.
- Empowered Community reflects AU's commitment to valuing faculty and staff as key to innovation and success.

Due to Ashland's reputation and expectations for a strong future, the next president will have a solid foundation from which to develop and launch the next strategic plan in partnership with the University community and Board of Trustees.



ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

One of the key features of Ashland University is its high impact practices and mentoring. An average class size of 17 enables students to build close relationships with faculty and gain hands-on experiences. AU's faculty are committed to helping students explore their passions and develop the practical skills they need for future success. Today there are 389 full and part-time faculty. Of the 139 full-time faculty, 55 percent are tenured and 19 percent are on the tenure track; 80 percent have terminal degrees. The faculty are joined by an equally dedicated staff of 541 full-time and 61 part-time employees who are devoted to serving the needs of AU's students.

Ashland University has a diverse set of academic programs and is organized into four colleges – arts and sciences, business & economics, education, and nursing and health sciences – as well as the seminary, eAshland and correctional education. The University offers more than 60 programs of study, including liberal arts, preprofessional and professional undergraduate programs and a variety of graduate programs.

The College of Arts & Sciences is a vibrant community of scholars and learners and home to 12 departments that span natural sciences, mathematics, social sciences, humanities and visual and performing arts, offering both undergraduate and graduate degree programs in these fields. All programs are designed to engage students in critical thinking, problem solving, research and analytical skills, plus hands on experiences that prepare students for meaningful careers and lifelong learning. The faculty and administrators in the college strive to nurture students' creativity and intellectual curiosity as well as draw connections among fields of study. Outstanding professors aim to strengthen mathematical and analytical abilities and help students develop their communications skills in writing, speaking and digital media. Through centers, symposia, seminars and performances, the faculty aim to provide each student a robust education

that is enriched by global perspectives, service opportunities, and mentorship.

Dauch College of Business & Economics offers programs in traditional disciplines such as accounting, finance, management and marketing and specialized areas as well, including entrepreneurship, fashion merchandising and sport management, to name a few. There are 14 bachelor's degree options, 16 minors, and an MBA offered in a variety of formats and specializations. The college is fully accredited by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP), providing strong evidence of the quality of its programs and commitment to a studentcentered approach to teaching and learning (Ashland is in the process of obtaining AACSB accreditation). Students gain both theory and practical skills in small classroom settings where they benefit from one-onone attention from professors. In addition to classroom skill development, real-world experience is provided by requiring an internship for a majority of the undergraduate business programs. The college is also home to the Burton D. Morgan Center for Entrepreneurial Studies, devoted to encouraging the entrepreneurial spirit and fostering innovation that brings new business ideas to local, regional, state, national and global communities.

Dwight Schar College of Education offers

undergraduate, graduate and certificate programs leading to teacher certification, specialized and advanced preparation and leadership. The programs recognize the vital links between theory and practice that serve as the foundation for a lifelong career of service. Programs are offered on the Ashland campus and in other settings. The faculty and staff work diligently to ensure that students experience a deep understanding of human development and how it relates to teaching, classroom management and communicating with families; a strong knowledge base related to all pertinent academic disciplines; highquality field experiences through strong partnerships

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS (CONT.)

with schools and community agencies; a strong focus on diversity that includes frameworks and strategies for working in diverse communities; and extensive use of technology. The college also houses the Center for Civic Life and the Center for Graduate Outreach.

Dwight Schar College of Nursing and Health Sciences is committed to advancing interdisciplinary health education and teaching the essential skills to serve a rapidly changing environment. It offers 11 programs at the bachelor's, master's, doctoral and certificate levels, both on the Ashland campus and on the Mansfield Nursing and Health Sciences campus. Three of the programs are delivered online, all preparing students for a variety of health-related careers. A notable measure of program quality can be found in the results of the recent nursing licensing exam. In 2022, students in the nursing program had a 93.34% pass rate on the NCLEX, compared to the state average for Ohio nursing graduates of 75.83%. The nursing, physician assistant and health science students in the college participate in more than 65 diverse clinical sites in Ohio, ranging from acute care facilities to long term health care agencies.

Ashland Theological Seminary provides an accessible education for students seeking to grow spiritually and fulfill their calling by offering nine master's degree programs, a Doctor of Ministry program and two certificate programs. Taking a broad evangelical approach across degree and certificate tracks, faculty and administration are dedicated to preparing students to follow the leading of Christ. Through individualized attention and community discussions, the seminary's educational model brings together diverse perspectives in ways that foster unity in the things that pull people apart. Instead of teaching students what to think, the curriculum is designed to equip students to approach and apply God's teaching across every level of life and ministry. Ashland Theological Seminary builds in its students a brand of faith that engages the realities of both personal and public life, providing tools and knowledge to empower others as they pursue their own calling.

eAshland is an academic unit dedicated to the development and implementation of non-traditional programming for students from high school through retirement. Units within eAshland include workforce development, professional learning services for k-12 educators, English language learning, college credit plus programs, the testing center, instructional design services, and the academic unit that serves correctional education students. eAshland also provides support for the ideation, development, maintenance and growth of for-credit distance education, as well as support for faculty development through the Center for Innovation and Teaching Excellence



ACCREDITATION

Ashland University is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission. Authorization to grant bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees comes from the Ohio Department of Higher Education. In addition, individual programs are accredited by:

Business

Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP)

Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP)

Dietetics

Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND)

Education

Council for the Accreditation of Education Preparation (CAEP)

Music

National Association of Schools of Music (NASM)

Nursina

Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE)

Seminary

The Association of Theological Schools/The Commission on Accreditation (ATS)

Social Work

Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS (CONT.)

Correctional Education is offered through the four colleges and enrolls 2,650 students in 13 states, making it the largest program in the nation. Correctional Education offers students the choice of two associate degrees and four bachelor's degrees. Students participate in courses and communicate with professors virtually on secure tablets via a learning management system as robust as a traditional online learning environment but customized for the correctional setting. With virtual classrooms and a tablet-based learning environment, students can watch videos, complete assignments and take tests on their own time within the structure of each semester. Every student has access to a digital library and reference materials through a full-time digital reference librarian who provides academic resources to help students. All correction students have access to Math eTutors and Writing and Communication eTutors. In keeping with AU's status as the leader in correctional education, the president is expected to participate in national discussions and policy reform around educating incarcerated students.

The Ashbrook Center, an independent center at Ashland University, aims to restore and strengthen the capacities of the American people for constitutional self-government. The center has programs for students, teachers and citizens designed to teach what America is and what America represents in the long history of the world. In short, the Ashbrook Center creates informed citizens. The Ashbrook Scholar Program is a rigorous

and top-rated academic program for undergraduate students at Ashland University. Students in the program are given a "dialogic education" - engaging with texts to discover truth; they also pursue a major or minor in political science, history, international political studies or integrated social studies. They receive a variable annual renewable scholarship to Ashland University. Through the unique Master of Arts in American History and Government and its live online graduate courses, Ashbrook offers American history and government teachers an unrivaled degree program. Ashbrook makes it possible for teachers to learn from some of the leading history and government scholars in the country and AU's graduates earn accolades in their home districts. Ashbrook has created a national university with unmatched capacity for deepening teachers' understanding and appreciation of America. The center also hosts events and lectures that encourage citizens to develop a deeper understanding of the principles upon which our nation was founded. President Ronald Reagan inaugurated the Center at the first annual Ashbrook Memorial Dinner in 1983 and this event continues to feature some of the world's most noted political dignitaries. Ashbrook hosts several other luncheon lectures and colloquia throughout the year, featuring wellknown speakers who examine current policy issues in the light of America's constitutional principles.





With a total enrollment of over 6400, AU rolls out the welcome mat to all, recognizing that students come to college today – and will increasingly in the future – with a variety of background experiences and current needs. For example, as a member of the Transferology network, Ashland makes it easy for transferring students to check credit they will receive for prior coursework. As mentioned above, Ashland was named among the top 12 schools in the nation for military-connected and veteran students, the only private university on the list. Ashland is also well-known for its extensive educational programs for incarcerated students. Furthermore, the university offers 11 online degree programs -- including a Business associate's degree, a Business bachelor's degree, and an RN to BSN degree – to cater to adults and other students.

Ashland University welcomed nearly 600 new full-time traditional undergraduate students in fall 2023, all while improving its academic profile from a GPA of 3.53 to 3.57 in the past year. The 508 first-year freshmen students represent a 9.0% increase over last fall's class, while transfers are up 14.1%. The total class marks a 9.6% jump from last year, and the group comes together from more than 4.000 applications.

The 2027 class comprises 15% students of color. More than a third of traditional undergraduates are first-generation and 34% are Pell recipients. With a relatively low cost of attendance (\$41,430 total, including room and board), Ashland's average financial aid package of \$31,400 demonstrates the university's commitment to affordability. Traditional undergraduates come from 29 states and 19 countries; however, AU is proud to serve a large percentage of Ohioans (90%).

The most recent six-year graduation rate of Ashland's full-time undergraduates is 61%, with women graduating at a higher rate than men (63% vs. 56%, respectively). Almost three-quarters of Ashland first-year students return for the sophomore year.

AU has a graduate enrollment of 836 students. The most popular graduate programs are the Master of Education, Master of Business Administration, Physician Assistant Studies, Master of Arts in American History and Government and the Doctorate in Leadership Studies.

STUDENT LIFE

Ashland has a wealth of student organizations from which to choose, including academic and professional interest groups and those related to faith, performance, service and volunteerism and student leadership. Three fraternities and four sororities offer fun, networking, and skill development. The Jack W. Liebert Military & Veteran Resource Center provides a hub on campus for veterans and their family members, a growing part of the student population.

While there is no chapel requirement for students, nor any requirement to profess a faith, AU encourages and supports students in exploring faith. Ways to worship on campus include events from the Catholic Campus Ministry, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and the Coalition for Christian Outreach. There are also opportunities for students to participate in small groups, bible studies, retreats, mission trips and community service projects.

Ashland's NCAA Division II athletic teams are known as the Eagles and truly are a point of pride and reputation for Ashland. Ashland offers 24 sports (12 women's, 11 men's and 1 coed team) and has approximately 770 student-athletes. Over the last nine years AU has won five NCAA Division II team championships (two in women's basketball), witnessed a former student-athlete win an Olympic Gold medal and celebrated 45 Academic All-Americans.

Ashland takes seriously its commitment to equity and inclusion. Through the leadership of the Office of CommUNITY and Belonging, as well as five student organizations, people of all religions, races, ethnicities, genders, ages, sexual orientations, and abilities and disabilities are supported with an aim to provide a quality education, as well as a diverse and multicultural one.

FINANCES AND FUNDRAISING

Ashland is dedicated to maintaining a sound financial foundation. The Board's Finance Committee is very active and works closely with the President and CFO on both strategic and operational performance. An annual audit is prepared by an independent audit firm. Monthly financial statements are prepared along with tracking key performance indicators. Ashland is in the process of implementing a new IDMS (integrated data management system) that will improve financial reporting and analysis.

The University has a \$100 million operating budget. To maintain a balanced budget, Ashland evaluates all spending components and makes necessary reductions. Ashland recently engaged a consultant to review significant sources of spending. The project was successful and resulted in many cost savings.

The University has net assets of \$300 million, with \$57 million of debt. Ashland exceeds the required Board Operating Reserve, maintaining at least 90 days of cashon-hand, and appropriate Debt Coverage Ratio levels.

Looking ahead, Ashland needs to create a sustainable financial model that considers annual compensation increases. This will be a key priority for the next President.

Ashland's endowment is valued at approximately \$60 million. The last comprehensive campaign was completed in 2022, with \$100 million in gifts and estate commitments, well over the expected amount. While fund-raising continues, the next campaign is expected to be derived from the next strategic plan. The annual fund goal each year is to raise \$1 million in unrestricted giving.



LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

The Board of Trustees is a group of 27 Christian individuals from diverse backgrounds. Board members include educators, pastors, business leaders, attorneys, and entrepreneurs. A majority of the Board of Trustees must be members of the Brethren denomination. The Board meets three times during the year. Twelve committees serve the University and members of the committees interact well with the campus community. The University president is a non-voting member of the Board of Trustees.

The current president's Executive Leadership Team includes eight members who help direct the day-to-day operations of the University: provost; vice president of operations and planning; vice president and chief financial officer; vice president of student affairs, auxiliary services, and Title IX for students; chief human relations officer and general counsel; vice president of enrollment management and marketing; vice president of advancement; and executive dean of the Ashland Theological Seminary. The president and vice president of the faculty senate attend the ELT. The university's president is also served by the 32-member cabinet, composed of academic and non-academic leaders from across the campus.

Collaborative leadership and a commitment to shared governance will be important characteristics of the new president. The president will count on an active Faculty Senate Executive Team, numbering 10 members, including its past president. The Faculty Senate Executive Team advocates for the concerns and interests of the faculty, the academic programs, and the mission of the college, as well as serves as a consultative body for the administration. Ashland has created a Shared Governance Advisory Board -- including the President, Board Chair, President of the faculty Senate, trustees, faculty, staff and a student. A faculty member currently chairs this body.

The Ashland University Alumni Association Board consists of up to 25 members (currently sitting at 22), formally meets 5 times a year, and operates in an advisory capacity. The AUAA serves over 57,000 living alumni, including 4,100 from the Seminary and almost 20,000 other graduate degreed alumni. The University president is invited to provide an update at each Board meeting.

The president also benefits from meeting regularly with members of the Student Senate, adding a student voice to the administration. The Student Senate also regularly attends the Board of Trustees committee and full board meetings three times a year.

THE CAMPUS AND ITS ENVIRONS

A 2013 Master Plan guides campus improvements. Through generous donations, the University has recently undergone a \$10 million campus beautification effort, with upgrades to sidewalks, parking lots, signage, and landscaping. With gratitude for additional generous gifts, we have invested \$10 million to significantly improve our largest residence hall.

The Seminary campus is conveniently located less than one mile from the main campus. Nursing, Physician Assistant and other programs are held in the Dwight Schar College of Nursing and Health Sciences in Mansfield, Ohio.

Ashland's main and Seminary campuses are located near downtown Ashland, a charming city with a population of

about 20,000 full-time residents. The City prides itself on its friendliness, advertising Ashland as "The World Headquarters of Nice People." While providing easy access to Columbus (82 miles away), Cleveland (66 miles), and Akron (50 miles) metropolitan areas, Ashland provides local, cultural activities such as the symphony and the popular Ashland Chautauqua, in which actors portray famous historical figures. The annual BalloonFest has led Ashland to be called the "balloon capital of the world." Ashland's mayor is an alumnus, as are so many of the town's business owners and educators.

Ashland is surrounded by rolling hills, farms, and extensive parkland, and attracts outside enthusiasts who love hiking, fishing, and canoeing.

LEADERSHIP AGENDA AND PRESIDENTIAL PRIORITIES

Ashland University's next president will be expected to engage and empower the University community to collaborate on an agenda that includes the following major initiatives and priorities:

- AU's current Strategic Plan will be complete in 2025. As such, it is essential to develop a process for creating Ashland's next strategic plan. That process is an opportunity to engage the entire Ashland community, build trust, and strengthen the relationships between and among the University's loyal and dedicated faculty, administrative, professional and support staff.
- Like virtually all colleges and universities today, Ashland faces financial challenges. Recent enrollment growth has improved the University's financial position. However, AU must strengthen its position by creating a more sustainable financial model, one that annually invests in academic excellence and the University's faculty and staff. Given that one key driver of sustainability is attention to the demographic changes ahead, AU must engage in strategic enrollment management to optimize enrollment in all programs at all degree levels and in multiple modalities.



LEADERSHIP AGENDA AND PRESIDENTIAL PRIORITIES (CONT.)

- The next president will begin planning for the next comprehensive campaign in conjunction with the University's sesquicentennial in 2028 and will grow and expand our donor base and outcomes, while continuing to honor and steward those who have been so generous to AU.
- Ashland has made significant strides in redefining shared governance and implementing new forms of shared governance. The next president will oversee the continual improvement of shared governance -to live out our commitment, including ways to involve the University staff appropriately and meaningfully.
- Ashland lives its promise to be a place known for its "Accent on the Individual" and to "Teaching Students How to Think Not What to Think." It is also a campus culture that is deeply influenced by the openness and nurturing spirit of its Brethren faith. The president must lead the campus by personifying these values.
- Ashland -- like other comprehensive private institutions -- cannot continue to be all things to all people. The next president must lead the Board and the campus in discerning the University's distinguishing characteristics and niche market and make the changes necessary to strengthen this identity.



DESIRED EXPERIENCES, ATTRIBUTES AND CHARACTERISTICS

Ashland will seek the following qualities in its next president:

- Creative, innovative leader, who has been successful in leading change and delegating with authority and accountability.
- Someone with substantial, demonstrated financial, business and entrepreneurial acumen.
- Unifier, with profound emotional intelligence, who builds relationships collaboratively and transparently across the campus and in the local community; a person who will engage with leaders at state, regional and national levels to influence important higher education issues.
- Passionate servant-leader, with the energy and commitment to achieve the many and complex responsibilities of the presidency.

- Mission-oriented person who loves students and will derive joy from being present with them.
- Team builder who recognizes the talents and contributions of others and accords them appropriate responsibility.
- Person with extensive knowledge of the challenges of higher education today, or the demonstrated ability to acquire such knowledge.
- Person of Christian faith and life, who will recognize and honor Ashland's Brethren roots and has the capacity to coalesce constituents around a common understanding of AU's Brethren values and identity.



PROCESS OF APPLICATION AND NOMINATION

The search committee for Ashland's next president is being assisted by Academic Search. Applications, nominations and expressions of interest can be submitted in confidence to AshlandPresident@academicsearch.
org. Applications should consist of a substantive cover letter addressing the qualifications and expectations listed above and a curriculum vitae, both submitted as PDFs. A list of professional references will be required later in the process. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled; those received by noon on Jan. 27, 2024 can be assured full consideration.

Confidential conversations about this opportunity may be arranged by contacting Senior Consultants <u>Dan DiBiasio</u> or <u>Sharon Herzberger</u> through their calendars.

The president of Ashland must be a Christian. For all other positions the University provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or genetics. In addition to federal law requirements, the University complies with applicable state and local laws governing nondiscrimination in employment in every location in which the University has facilities. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation and training. Employment with the University will require a criminal background check.

ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting Ashland University 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.



Committed to IDENTIFYING
AND DEVELOPING LEADERS
by providing the highest
level of EXECUTIVE
SEARCH to our
higher education
partners.





