



COLUMBIA
COLLEGE

Vice President of Finance and Chief Financial Officer

LEADERSHIP PROFILE

The Opportunity

Columbia College seeks an accomplished, strategic, and collaborative financial leader to serve as its next **Vice President of Finance and Chief Financial Officer**.

Reporting directly to the President and serving as a member of the President's Executive Council, the Vice President and CFO will provide leadership for the College's financial strategy and stewardship at an important time of institutional planning and growth.



The Vice President and CFO will be a trusted advisor to the President, Executive Council, and Board of Trustees, bringing financial insight and disciplined analysis to decisions affecting the future of the College. The successful candidate will help ensure that institutional resources are aligned with strategic priorities, support enrollment and program growth strategies, strengthen data-informed decision-making, and position Columbia College for long-term financial sustainability. The role encompasses responsibility for financial reporting, budgeting and forecasting, financial modeling, treasury management, audit and compliance, financial analysis, and the systems and controls that support effective institutional stewardship.

An important dimension of the position will be translating complex financial information into clear, actionable guidance for both financial and non-financial audiences. The Vice President and CFO will lead multi-year financial planning and scenario analysis, evaluate the financial implications of enrollment strategies, academic programs, tuition and financial aid investments, partnerships, capital projects, and other major initiatives, and provide the President and Board with the information needed to make thoughtful, forward-looking decisions.

The portfolio currently also includes executive oversight of facilities management, capital planning, and auxiliary services. These responsibilities are expected to transition, in whole or in part, with the future establishment of a Chief Operating Officer role, allowing the Vice President and CFO's portfolio to evolve as Columbia College's administrative structure develops.

Columbia College



About Columbia College

Columbia College, founded in 1854, is a private, liberal arts college offering undergraduate and graduate programs on campus and online. The College is ranked among those highlighted by U.S. News & World Report as a Best Regional University in the South, Best Regional University for Veterans, Best Value School in the South, Top Performer on Social Mobility in the South, Best Regional University for Ethnic Diversity, and Best Regional University for Economic Diversity. Founded and rooted in the United Methodist Church, Columbia College advocates a holistic approach to education, emphasizing the importance of leadership, service, and social justice. The College enhances the personal education of every student with an additional focus on the “Four Cs”- Courage, Commitment, Confidence, and Competence.

Enrollment is over 1,900 throughout the intuition, representing a diverse student body. This is up from 1,500 three years ago. Degrees conferred include those at both baccalaureate and master’s levels in more than 40 different programs. A dedicated faculty and staff provide our students with the skills to be successful, noting a more than a 97% rate of placement in jobs and graduate schools within six months of graduation. The College’s programs continue to receive high accolades for innovation, student focus, and delivery. The student experience is enhanced through an intercollegiate athletic program, participating in the Appalachian Athletic Conference of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA). The College has repeatedly earned the top national award for the NAIA Champions of Character competition.

At A Glance

Founded: 1854

Location: Columbia, SC

Academics: Private Liberal Arts College

Religious Affiliation: United Methodist Church

Enrollment: 1,900+

President: Dr. John Dozier

Mascot: Koalas

Athletics Division: NAIA





Our Mission

Our mission is to prepare each student personally and professionally for success through liberal arts and professional programs that emphasize service, social justice, and leadership development.

The Columbia College of the future is a model of intentional liberal arts education, a champion of inquiry-based and experiential learning, and a catalyst for community transformation.

Core Values

Academic Excellence

High expectations for preparing our students for lifelong learning through a liberal arts education that promotes critical thinking and personal growth, and provides career preparation and mastery of a range of transferable skills.

Student Success

Creating innovative learning environments and providing support services that are nurturing and hold the students accountable for their success.

Engaged Campus Community

A diverse set of backgrounds and perspectives, a sense of belonging, and feeling welcomed.

Service to Community

Responsibility to give back to the community, to collaborate, and to seek meaningful experiences and opportunities for leadership for all.

Responsibilities



STRATEGIC FINANCIAL LEADERSHIP

- ▶ Serve as the College's senior executive responsible for financial strategy, institutional resource planning, and financial stewardship, ensuring alignment with the College's mission and strategic priorities.
- ▶ Partner with the President, Executive Council, and campus leadership to evaluate institutional priorities, assess financial implications, and align resources with strategic goals.
- ▶ Provide financial analysis and counsel to support institutional decisions related to enrollment strategies, academic programs, investments, partnerships, capital projects, and operational priorities.
- ▶ Establish and maintain financial policies, systems, and frameworks that promote accountability, transparency, effective decision-making, and responsible stewardship.
- ▶ Serve as the primary liaison to the Board of Trustees Finance and Operations Committee, providing financial reporting, strategic analysis, and guidance to support fiduciary oversight and informed decision-making.
- ▶ Identify and assess institutional financial risks, including enrollment volatility, liquidity needs, debt obligations, regulatory requirements, and long-term financial commitments.
- ▶ Represent the College in relevant higher education finance and administrative networks, strengthening institutional knowledge and advancing best practices.



Responsibilities



INSTITUTIONAL BUDGETING, FINANCIAL PLANNING, AND ANALYSIS

- ▶ Lead the development, coordination, and execution of the College's annual operating and capital budgets, ensuring alignment with strategic priorities and long-term financial sustainability.
- ▶ Develop and maintain multi-year financial models and forecasts that incorporate enrollment projections, revenue assumptions, operating costs, capital investments, and strategic initiatives.
- ▶ Provide scenario analysis and financial modeling to inform institutional decisions, including new academic programs, enrollment strategies, tuition pricing, financial aid investments, partnerships, and major initiatives.
- ▶ Monitor institutional financial performance and provide regular budget-to-actual analysis, forecasting updates, and variance reporting to senior leadership and the Board of Trustees.
- ▶ Evaluate capital investments and major commitments based on strategic value, financial feasibility, operating impact, and long-term sustainability.
- ▶ Track and analyze key financial indicators, including net tuition revenue, operating margin, liquidity, debt service, unrestricted reserves, and composite financial index (CFI), to inform institutional planning and performance improvement.
- ▶ Partner with campus leaders to improve financial literacy, strengthen budget management practices, and promote informed resource allocation.
- ▶ Provide financial insight and recommendations that support continuous improvement in institutional effectiveness and operational efficiency.



Responsibilities



FINANCIAL OPERATIONS AND ACCOUNTING

- ▶ Provide executive oversight of all accounting and financial operations, ensuring accuracy, integrity, compliance, and timely reporting.
- ▶ Oversee general accounting, accounts payable, student financial services, cash management, financial close processes, and internal controls.
- ▶ Ensure effective financial systems, processes, and controls that support accurate reporting, operational efficiency, and regulatory compliance.
- ▶ Oversee student financial services operations, including billing, collections, reconciliations, refunds, and compliance with institutional policies and federal regulations.
- ▶ Establish and maintain procurement policies and financial controls that promote transparency, accountability, cost effectiveness, and responsible institutional spending.
- ▶ Monitor the appropriate use of restricted funds, grants, endowment distributions, and other designated resources in accordance with donor intent and applicable requirements.
- ▶ Ensure accurate and timely financial reporting for institutional leadership, the Board of Trustees, auditors, and regulatory agencies.
- ▶ Lead annual audit preparation and serve as the primary institutional liaison with external auditors.
- ▶ Ensure compliance with applicable IRS, Department of Education, accreditation, and other regulatory requirements.



Responsibilities



FACILITIES MANAGEMENT AND CAPITAL PLANNING

- ▶ Until the establishment of a Chief Operating Officer role, provide executive oversight for facilities management and capital planning to ensure campus infrastructure supports institutional priorities.
- ▶ Partner with campus leadership to prioritize capital investments, deferred maintenance needs, and facility improvements based on institutional strategy, financial capacity, and operational requirements.
- ▶ Oversee the development and implementation of a multi-year deferred maintenance and capital improvement plan.
- ▶ Provide financial and strategic oversight for the planning, budgeting, and execution of capital projects, ensuring appropriate governance, cost management, and alignment with institutional priorities.
- ▶ Ensure effective systems for facility maintenance, campus safety, regulatory compliance, accessibility, and lifecycle planning.
- ▶ Oversee facilities-related contracts and vendor relationships to ensure quality performance, fiscal responsibility, and alignment with institutional standards.
- ▶ Collaborate with the President and senior leadership on campus planning initiatives, including long-term space utilization and institutional growth strategies.



Responsibilities



AUXILIARY SERVICES

- ▶ Until the establishment of a Chief Operating Officer role, provide executive oversight for auxiliary services, including dining, bookstore, mail services, event services, parking, vending, and other revenue-generating functions.
- ▶ Ensure auxiliary operations support the student experience while maintaining financially sustainable business models.
- ▶ Evaluate auxiliary service contracts, vendor relationships, pricing strategies, and operating models to maximize value and institutional benefit.
- ▶ Monitor financial and operational performance metrics to support accountability and continuous improvement.

DIVISION LEADERSHIP AND TEAM DEVELOPMENT

- ▶ Provide leadership and strategic direction for the Division of Finance and Administration, ensuring alignment across functional areas and institutional priorities.
- ▶ Develop and manage the division's budget and resources with a focus on effectiveness, accountability, and service excellence.
- ▶ Establish clear goals, performance expectations, and accountability measures for leaders within the division.
- ▶ Recruit, mentor, develop, and evaluate division leaders, fostering a culture of collaboration, continuous improvement, and professional growth.
- ▶ Promote effective communication and coordination across Finance and Administration to ensure integrated and responsive support for the College community.



Qualifications



Required Qualifications

- ▶ Bachelor's degree in finance, accounting, business administration, economics, or a related field.
- ▶ A minimum of seven years of progressively responsible financial leadership experience, including experience managing complex financial operations, budgets, and organizational resources.
- ▶ Demonstrated experience leading financial strategy, institutional budgeting, forecasting, financial modeling, and long-range planning.
- ▶ Experience translating financial data and analysis into actionable recommendations that support executive decision-making and organizational priorities.
- ▶ Demonstrated understanding of accounting principles, internal controls, financial reporting, audit processes, compliance requirements, and regulatory standards.
- ▶ Experience developing and managing multi-year financial models, scenario analyses, and forecasts to support strategic planning and resource allocation.
- ▶ Experience working collaboratively with executive leadership, boards of directors or trustees, and diverse institutional stakeholders.
- ▶ Demonstrated ability to lead organizational change, improve processes, and build systems that strengthen accountability, transparency, and operational effectiveness.
- ▶ Strong analytical, communication, and interpersonal skills, with the ability to explain complex financial concepts clearly to both financial and non-financial audiences.



Qualifications



Preferred Qualifications

- ▶ A master's degree in business administration, finance, accounting, higher education administration, or a related discipline is preferred.
- ▶ Certified Public Accountant (CPA) preferred.
- ▶ Experience serving as a chief financial officer, vice president for finance, controller, or comparable senior financial leadership role within a higher education institution.
- ▶ Experience working within a tuition-dependent private college or university, particularly a small or mid-sized institution facing enrollment, affordability, and financial sustainability challenges.
- ▶ Experience using financial modeling and scenario planning to evaluate enrollment strategies, academic program investments, tuition pricing, financial aid strategies, and institutional growth opportunities.
- ▶ Understanding of higher education financial metrics, including net tuition revenue, discount rate, liquidity management, debt capacity, composite financial index (CFI), borrowing and bonding, and financial responsibility requirements.
- ▶ Experience partnering with academic leadership to evaluate the financial implications of new programs, strategic initiatives, and institutional investments.
- ▶ Experience overseeing facilities, capital planning, auxiliary services, or other administrative functions within a higher education environment.
- ▶ Experience working with a Board of Trustees Finance Committee or similar governance structure.
- ▶ Commitment to the mission of a private liberal arts college and the role of higher education in preparing students for successful careers, meaningful lives, and contributions to their communities.



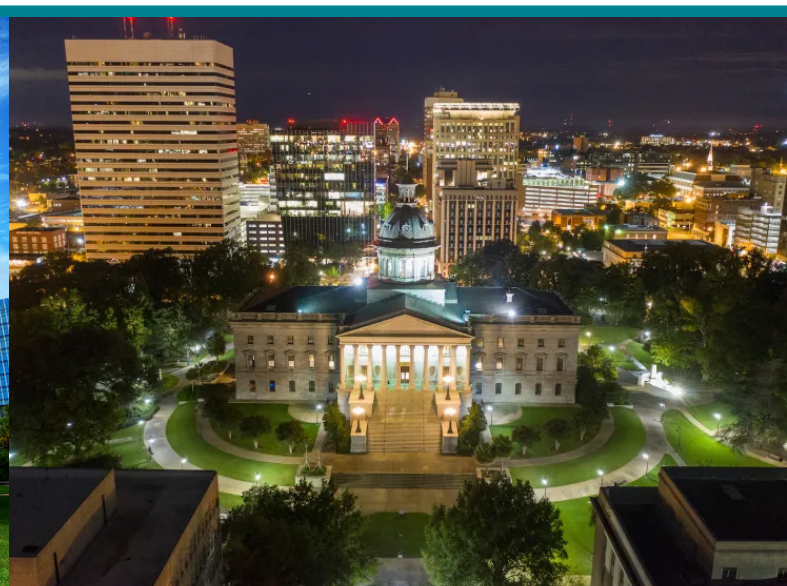
Columbia, SC



Located in the heart of South Carolina, Columbia offers the accessibility and sense of community of a manageable Southern city with the energy and amenities of a state capital. Home to state government, a major research university, and a diverse mix of higher education institutions, Columbia is an important center for education, healthcare, business, and public service. The city's concentration of colleges and universities contributes to an environment where learning, innovation, civic engagement, and leadership are an integral part of the community.

Columbia also offers a vibrant cultural and recreational landscape. Downtown districts including Main Street and The Vista feature locally owned restaurants, coffee shops, boutiques, galleries, entertainment venues, and gathering places. The weekly Soda City Market brings together local food, artisans, music, and community activity, while museums, performing arts venues, and a growing culinary scene provide year-round opportunities to explore the city. Columbia's riverfront, parks, and trails add an outdoor dimension to city life, and attractions such as Riverbanks Zoo and Botanical Garden offer additional opportunities for recreation and family activities.

For professionals and families considering a move, Columbia combines a relatively compact and connected urban environment with the resources of a larger metropolitan area. Higher education, healthcare, government, technology, insurance, and other industries contribute to the region's economic base, while the city's central location, transportation connections, and active arts and entrepreneurial communities add to its appeal as a place to live and work.



Application Process



Greenwood Asher & Associates®

Greenwood Asher & Associates (GA&A) is assisting Columbia College in this search.

Applications and nominations are now being accepted.

How to Apply:

Please submit application materials through the GA&A **Candidate Portal**.

Application materials should include:

- ▶ A letter of interest that clearly states the applicant's qualifications for the position
- ▶ A current resume/curriculum vitae

Submission of application materials as PDF attachments is strongly encouraged.

*For best consideration, please submit materials by **Monday, October 26, 2026***

The search will be conducted with a commitment to confidentiality for candidates until finalists are selected. Initial screening of applications will begin immediately and will continue until an appointment is made.

Inquiries and nominations should be directed to:

Jeremy Duff

Vice President of Executive Search

jeremyduff@greenwoodsearch.com



Abigail Maynard

Senior Executive Search Consultant

abigailmaynard@greenwoodsearch.com

Compensation

Salary will be competitive and commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Columbia College welcomes applications from candidates with disabilities. If you have any accommodation or access needs, we are happy to provide reasonable accommodations. Columbia College, an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer, is seeking candidates who will enhance its faculty, staff, and administration. Columbia College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ancestry, national origin, gender, identity sexual orientation, marital status, religion, age, disability, national origin, results of genetic testing or service in the military.