Position Overview

Clemson University invites nominations and applications for the role of Vice President of Finance and Chief Financial Officer (CFO). The CFO provides leadership, management, and oversight of the University's Division of Finance, an enterprise portfolio that includes financial operations, budget and financial planning, capital planning, facilities, university real estate, insurance and risk services, environmental health and safety, and the municipal court, among other areas. This leader identifies strategic financial opportunities and challenges, advises the President on financial strategy, and puts those strategies into practice across the University and its related organizations.

The CFO plays a vital role in safeguarding Clemson's financial health and positioning the University for long-term success. Core responsibilities include setting financial policies, accounting standards, and internal controls; providing executive oversight of audited financial statements, the annual budget, and required federal and state submissions; and ensuring the efficient operation of the University's accounting, budgeting, and procurement systems. The CFO also leads the strategy for long-range operating and capital financial planning across the enterprise, ensuring financial strategies align with institutional strategic plans and guide strategic decision-making by the President and senior administrators.

The CFO reports to the President and serves as a key member of the senior leadership team. The CFO is the financial executive liaison to the Board of Trustees and its relevant committees, serves on key University committees at the President's direction, and represents the University as a financial spokesperson with internal and external stakeholders, including rating agencies, financial advisors, and the University's related organizations.

Key Responsibilities

Financial Operations & Compliance

- Formulate and implement enterprise financial policies and procedures, accounting standards, and a strong system of internal controls.
- Hold responsibility for all University financings.
- Monitor the enterprise's financial health, including the University and its related organizations, and keep the President informed of challenges and opportunities.
- Provide executive oversight of annual financial reports, including audited financial statements, the annual budget documentation, and required federal and state submissions, prepared by the University Controller and financial operations teams.
- Ensure the efficient and accurate operation of the University's accounting, budgeting, and procurement systems.
- Ensure compliance with accounting standards, applicable laws and regulations, and University financial policies.
- Provide executive-level oversight of student financial services and associated systems, which are managed within the Office of the University Controller.

Financial Planning & Analysis

- Lead the strategy for long-range operating and capital financial planning, coordinating the collective work of the budget, financial planning and analysis (FP&A), and business intelligence (BI) teams.
- Evaluate and analyze partnerships and strategic initiatives, including those involving related organizations.
- Guide the development of analytical frameworks and models that inform decision-making by the President and senior administrators.
- Lead comprehensive, efficient resource planning to effectively maximize the University's financial resources across all fund types.

- Direct the analysis of metrics and financial indicators, assess their impact on the enterprise balance sheet, and make recommendations to the President.

Enterprise Finance & Related Organizations

- Provide leadership and a comprehensive understanding of the full enterprise financial portfolio, including Education and General (E&G), auxiliary, restricted, grants, contracts, philanthropic, and other related organization finances.
- Engage with the boards and leadership of the University's related organizations to align financial strategy, reporting, agreements, and risk management with University priorities.
- Develop a consolidated view of enterprise financial performance to support informed decisions by the President and the Board of Trustees.

Debt Management & University Financing

- Lead the University's debt strategy and financing program, including bond issuances, refinancing opportunities, and debt capacity planning.
- Serve as the University's lead with rating agencies, financial advisors, bond counsel, underwriters, and banking partners, and manage these external advisory relationships.
- Maintain debt management policies and ensure compliance with bond covenants, disclosure requirements, and approvals from the Board of Trustees and applicable state oversight bodies.

Capital Planning, Facilities & Operations

- Lead the strategy for capital planning and budgeting, aligning the multi-year capital plan with institutional priorities, campus master planning, and available funding sources.
- Provide executive leadership for facilities and university real estate, ensuring the leaders of these functions have clear direction, resources, and accountability for stewarding the University's physical assets.
- Provide executive leadership for insurance and risk services, environmental health and safety, the municipal court, and other operational units within the division, fostering a culture of safety, compliance, and service.

Technology, Data & Business Modernization

- Advance Clemson's digital transformation by leveraging enterprise resource planning (ERP) capabilities to modernize financial and administrative business processes.
- Champion data analytics and business intelligence to strengthen financial stewardship, transparency, and institutional decision-making.
- Drive continuous process improvement and automation across the division to improve service, efficiency, and internal controls.

Strategy, Vision & Leadership

- Advise the Board of Trustees and the President on financial planning, budgeting, cash flow, investment, and other financial priorities and policy matters.
- Take a leadership role in the University's strategic planning process, ensuring the University's financial strategies are closely aligned with strategic institutional goals, leading change, and building financial capability across the enterprise.
- Serve as an adviser to the President and as a liaison and leader on key University committees.
- Serve as the financial executive liaison to the Board of Trustees and its relevant committees.

Team Development & Leadership

- Lead the Division of Finance and its direct reports, including hiring, training, development, and performance management.
- Plan organizational structure and job content to build a high-performing division.
- Promote financial and institutional integrity and accountability.

- Encourage strong collaboration among professionals in the Division of Finance and support their professional development.

Qualifications

Required

- Master's degree.
- A record of increasing leadership responsibility in budget and finance, with demonstrated success developing and managing complex budgets.
- Comprehensive knowledge of financial theories, concepts, and practices, with the ability to apply them in complex, difficult, or unprecedented situations.
- Experience managing the work of others, including hiring, training, development, and organizational planning.

Preferred

- Certified Public Accountant (CPA).

Leadership Attributes

- Deep technical expertise, with a commitment to learning new skills as the University's needs evolve.
- A forward thinker who anticipates challenges and opportunities and recommends solutions and approaches to place the institution in a position of strength.
- A sound, decisive decisionmaker who exercises good judgment.
- A skilled problem solver who identifies issues early and drives effective solutions.
- A leader who guides others to accomplish objectives, promotes teamwork, and resolves challenges.
- A manager who coaches, develops, and evaluates staff, and who is committed to equal opportunity in hiring, promotion, and placement.

Applications and Nominations

The Vice President of Finance and Chief Financial Officer Search Committee invites confidential inquiries, nominations, and applications (letter of interest, resume/CV, and contact information for at least five professional references) to be submitted to Parker Executive Search. Confidential review of materials will begin immediately and continue until the appointment is made. It is preferred, however, that all nominations and applications be submitted prior to Monday, January 18, 2027.

Laurie C. Wilder, President
Porsha L. Williams, Vice President & Managing Director, Higher Education
Hamilton Mason, Executive Recruiting Coordinator
Parker Executive Search
Five Concourse Parkway, Suite 2875
Atlanta, Georgia 30328
770-804-1996 ext. 117

lwilder@parkersearch.com | pwilliams@parkersearch.com | hmason@parkersearch.com

Clemson University is an EEO/AA employer. Employment decisions are made without regard to characteristics protected by applicable law including disability and protected veteran status.