Associate Vice President, Career Services

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Job ID: REQ20172013

The Opportunity

Reporting to the Vice President for Student Life, the Associate Vice President (AVP) for Career Services provides visionary and strategic leadership for the University's career development enterprise. This is a pivotal moment for the University and for Career Services, offering the opportunity to build on a strong foundation of impact, relationships, and reputation while expanding visibility, access, and engagement across the institution.

This position directly impacts student success, institutional reputation, alumni engagement, and employer partnerships with areas of focus spanning early career exploration, capacity building, improved communication and advising, alumni engagement, and technology and data utilization. This position also provides the strategic vision, centralized leadership, and operational oversight necessary to deliver a cohesive, high-quality career development experience for undergraduate, graduate, doctoral, postdoctoral, and alumni populations across multiple schools and campuses.

As Career Services' chief ambassador, the AVP collaborates with a broad range of internal and external stakeholders, including academic affairs, enrollment services, alumni relations, corporate partners, faculty, students, and employers, to foster meaningful partnerships that advance student success. The AVP leads a student-centered, forward-thinking operation, oversees assessment and outcomes reporting, and inspires innovation in response to evolving student and workforce needs. This role calls for a charismatic, collaborative, and communicative leader who thrives on connection, shared purpose, and authentic engagement.

Responsibilities

Strategy & Institutional Leadership

- Provide university-wide strategic vision and expert leadership for undergraduate, graduate, Ph.D., postdoctoral, and alumni career development through centralized leadership and multi-school collaboration.
- Serve as Career Services' chief ambassador by building partnerships with academic and administrative stakeholders, employers, and alumni to advance a shared career development strategy and expand national and international visibility.

- Drive innovation and adoption of best and emerging practices in career services, including program design, delivery, marketing, assessment, and continuous improvement.
- Identify, oversee, and optimize career-related business enterprise systems to support scalable, data-informed service delivery.
- Serve as a member of the Student Life Senior Leadership Team and contribute to overall Student Life strategy, vision, and policy; represent the University in regional and national career services associations and benchmarking groups.

Career Services Operations & Impact

- Expand employer outreach, including concierge coordination for globally recognized employers recruiting USC students and alumni.
- Advance career development experiences by recognizing that varied student populations approach career exploration and preparation differently.
- Oversee University Career Services operations across four functional teams: Career Engagement, Employer Engagement, Internship Engagement, and Operations.
- Ensure efficient, coordinated, and revenue-generating operations.

Team Management

- Lead and supervise approximately twenty professional staff, fostering a collaborative, high-performing, and student-centered culture.
- Direct managers in strategic planning, policies, procedures, budgeting, assessment, staffing, and professional development.
- Establish organizational structures, reporting relationships, and short- and long-term staffing plans aligned with institutional goals.

Operations & Services

- Lead and coordinate the university-wide network of school-based career services under the strategic direction of this office.
- Advance technology-enabled service delivery models, including the use of artificial intelligence and machine learning, to enhance efficiency and the student experience.
- Develop and administer departmental budgets and shared-service agreements across schools.
- Coordinate complex, multi-unit contracts and agreements in partnership with central offices.
- Carry out special projects as directed by the Vice President.

Performing other related responsibilities as requested and when necessary. The university reserves the right to add or change duties at any time.

Minimum Qualifications

- Master’s degree, preferably in higher education administration, college student personnel, counseling, or related field; equivalent combination of education and experience as substitute for minimum education.
- 15 years of progressively responsible experience in career services, advising, student life, or related field.
- Eight (8) years of management experience.
- Proven record of leadership and accomplishment in a complex higher education setting.
- Ability to manage multiple priorities and to work effectively under pressure.
- Proven ability to lead large-scale initiatives, manage complex operations, and drive institutional change.
- Track record of effective collaboration with executive leadership and external stakeholders.
- Exceptional communication, decision-making, and strategic planning skills.
- Deep commitment to student success, belonging, and community engagement.

Preferred Qualifications

- Doctorate In Higher Education or Counseling or in related field(s)
- Knowledge of USC students and academic programs, policies and procedures.
- Demonstrated experience influencing university policy and managing cross-campus collaborations.
- Experience overseeing budget planning, risk management, or crisis response.
- Familiarity with compliance areas (e.g., Clery Act, Title IX, FERPA).
- Fluency in one or more languages and/or strong community relations background.

Required Documents and Additional Information

Resume and cover letter required (may be uploaded as one file). Please do not submit your application without these documents.

The budgeted salary range for this position is $183,754 - $275,000. When extending an offer of employment, the University of Southern California considers factors such as the scope and responsibilities of the position, the candidate’s work experience, education/training, key skills, internal peer alignment, federal, state, and local laws, contractual stipulations, grant funding, as well as external market and organizational considerations.

To support faculty and staff well-being, USC provides benefits-eligible employees with a broad range of benefits and perks to help protect their and their dependents’ health, wealth, and future. These benefits are available as part of the overall compensation and total rewards package.