



## Vice President and Secretary for the University



## Position Description

November 2023

## **Job Summary**

The University of Michigan (U-M), one of the world's preeminent research universities, is seeking its next vice president and secretary (hereafter referred to as VPS). The VPS is the liaison officer for the Board of Regents, responsible for facilitation, coordination and management of policy matters and governance pertaining to the business of the Board of Regents.

Now operating in its third century, U-M continues its mission to serve the public through preeminence in creating, communicating, preserving, and applying knowledge, art and academic values. Currently, the main campus in Ann Arbor, comprising 3,200 acres, has approximately 50,000 faculty and staff and an enrollment of more than 50,000 students, about a third of whom are in graduate and professional studies. U-M is consistently ranked among the top institutions of higher education globally with 110 graduate programs ranked in the top 10 nationally.

The VPS is a position of broad leadership for U-M, serving as an executive officer of the university working at the direction of the university's president with responsibility to the Board of Regents. U-M seeks an outstanding, seasoned professional who can represent the values of the university and work deftly and collaboratively with the many constituencies of U-M.

## **The University of Michigan: An Overview**

U-M is one of the great public research universities in the nation and the world. Since the nineteenth century, it has served as a national model of a complex, diverse, and comprehensive public institution of higher learning that supports excellence in research, provides outstanding undergraduate, graduate, and professional education, and demonstrates commitment to public service and engagement.

The university is governed by the [Board of Regents](#) of the university, consisting of eight members elected at large in biennial state elections. The regents serve without compensation for overlapping terms of eight years. According to the Michigan Constitution of 1963, the regents are responsible for "general supervision" of the institution and "the control and direction of all expenditures from the institution's funds." The regents meet periodically in formal public sessions as well as in informal sessions.

Santa J. Ono became the University's 15<sup>th</sup> president on October 14, 2022. Dr. Ono was previously president and vice chancellor of the University of British Columbia, and before that served as president of the University of Cincinnati and senior vice provost and deputy to the provost at Emory University. Dr. Ono is an experienced vision researcher whose pioneering work in experimental medicine focuses on the immune system and eye disease.

U-M's position of excellence in higher education rests on the outstanding scholarly and creative contributions of its faculty and on the intellectual quality, vitality, and passion of its students — undergraduate, graduate, and professional. Its 19 schools and colleges, as well as its centers, institutes, and libraries, are nationally and internationally recognized. U-M is a founding member of the Association of American Universities (AAU).

## **The Position**

The VPS is an executive officer of the institution, reporting to and serving under the direction of the president with responsibility to the Board of Regents. They are the liaison officer for the Board of Regents, responsible for facilitation, coordination and management of policy matters and governance pertaining to the business of the Board and the execution of official Board meetings. This role is on-site, five days a week and may require work outside of regular business hours.

## **Responsibilities**

- Representing the President, serve as a liaison when appropriate between the Board of Regents and the University community.
- Ensure Board members are fully informed on matters of university policy and are prepared to act on them.
- Serve as a strategic advisor to the president and the university's leadership team, helping to advance the institution's priorities.
- Plan and implement activities and processes in support of the Board's authority for the governance of the University.
- Execute documents that are usual of this office, including those that are presented to the Board of Regents for their approval at regular meeting sessions.
- Official custodian of meeting minutes and all supporting documents of the Board of Regents.
- Determine the appropriate use of the Seal of the University of Michigan by parties both within and outside of the university.
- Plan and oversees the orientation of incoming Regents.
- Supervise a staff and budget commensurate with the duties of the office.
- Perform other duties as the University President assigns.

## **Required Qualifications**

Given the breadth of the VPS's role, this challenging position requires visionary leadership, exceptional judgment, strong management skills and a deep understanding of and commitment to the academic, research and service and health care missions of the University of Michigan.

Strong candidates will have a familiarity with the depth and complexity of a large public university and its responsibility to the public. Demonstrated awareness of and appreciation for the varied and sometimes conflicting interests facing a large, public research university and a keen ability to analyze situations and to articulate differing points of view is critical. An understanding and appreciation for the legal accountability, and the roles and responsibilities held by the Board of Regents for U-M governance, is necessary.

The successful candidate will also possess the following qualities and competencies:

- Personal and professional ethics and integrity to the highest degree.
- Demonstrated understanding of and commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- Ability to lead effectively within a non-hierarchical, de-centralized, and highly collaborative campus community.
- Good political acumen with a keen sense of how and when to engage the participation of different constituencies.
- Skill in working with all campus stakeholders in a climate of openness and transparency, integrity, trust, mutual respect, and collaborative problem solving.
- Understanding of and commitment to the academic, research, and service and health care missions of a leading residential public university.
- Demonstrated ability to lead, manage and develop a high-functioning team.
- Outstanding oral and written communications skills with an ability to speak to a variety of audiences, transform ambiguity into clarity, and articulate the President's priorities with persuasiveness and conviction; excellent listening skills; and the capacity and willingness to engage in intellectual debate and discussion.
- Demonstrated ability to work alongside colleagues, at all levels, respectfully and inclusively to foster a positive environment that promotes employee engagement and recognizes their contributions.
- Ability to model a commitment to personal growth and development, and to nurturing the talents of others through strong mentoring, coaching, and team building.
- Approachable, optimistic, and intellectually curious with personal warmth, generosity of spirit, a can-do attitude, and strong resilience in the face of criticism.

### **How to Apply**

Inquiries, nominations, and applications are invited. Review of applications will continue until the position is filled, but for fullest consideration, applicant materials are encouraged to be submitted by Sunday, December 3, 2023. Candidates should provide a resume or curriculum vitae and a letter of application that addresses the candidate's experience and qualifications relative to the responsibilities and requirements described. Candidate confidentiality will be respected to the highest degree allowable under the laws of the State of Michigan. Confidential inquiries, nominations, and applications may be directed to Storbeck Search.

### **U-M EEO/AA Statement**

The University of Michigan is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer.