



# Director of Athletics

Leadership Profile

August 2021



**NORTHERN**  
STATE UNIVERSITY

*Aberdeen, South Dakota*

## The Opportunity

Northern State University invites nominations and expressions of interest for the position of Director of Athletics. Northern seeks a dynamic, visionary leader and experienced professional who can advance the significant achievements of Wolves Athletics. The Director of Athletics reports directly to the President, is a member of the Senior Cabinet, and is a visible public representative of the university. The Director of Athletics will advance a competitive and respected Division II intercollegiate sports program and a quality athletic experience, academic achievement, and graduation for student-athletes.

The next Director of Athletics at Northern will be only the fifth since 1956, joining a solid program with a rich, established history of success. Northern's athletic teams boast a long and proud tradition of competition in the Upper Midwest, garnering national attention through the years, including five individual national champions, two national championship teams and numerous All-America and Academic All-America athletes. The university has 420 student-athletes in 15 intercollegiate sports (seven for men and eight for women): men's and women's cross country, men's and women's basketball, men's and women's indoor and outdoor track, women's soccer, women's softball, women's swimming, volleyball, baseball, football, and wrestling. Northern's student-athletes also excel in the classroom, with 22 straight semesters over a 3.0 department GPA, 13 programs above a 3.0 for the 2020-21 academic year, and six programs above a 3.5 for the 2020-21 academic year.

Northern is one of 16-member institutions of the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference (NSIC) including: Augustana (S.D.); Bemidji State (Minn.); Concordia-St. Paul (Minn.); Minnesota, Crookston; Minnesota-Duluth; Minnesota State Mankato; Minnesota State Moorhead; University of Mary (N.D.); Minot State (N.D.); Sioux Falls (S.D.); Southwest Minnesota State; St. Cloud State (Minn.); Upper Iowa; Wayne State (Neb.) and Winona State (Minn.). In fall 1995, Northern State and all NSIC teams received full membership in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) at the Division II level.

Through generous donor support, Northern has transformed its athletic facilities in recent years. As of July 2021, more than \$60 million has been raised for the Educational Impact Campaign, a transformational project that has resulted in a \$40 million on-campus regional sports complex, including the new Dacotah Bank Stadium for football and Koehler Hall of Fame softball field, opening in August 2021. It has also resulted in a state-of-the-art football practice and soccer competition facility, the \$6.5 million Athletic and Recreation Fields, which was completed in October 2018.

Numerous facility improvements have also been made to the Barnett Center, including a \$525,000 renovation to Wachs Arena and Don Meyer Court in 2019, which involved removing the entire concrete floor of the arena and replacing with a new maple, Robbins MVP parquet style floor that is level with the track surface. Also, \$800,000 in technology upgrades were finished in 2019, including a new center-hung Daktronics 4-sided videoboard display, the largest collegiate center-hung in the state of South Dakota.

The entire Northern campus has experienced transformational change in recent years, with the addition of three new, modern residence halls; enhancements to the performing arts center; and the construction of a state-of-the-art science education center.

More information about Northern Athletics can be found at [nsuwolves.com](http://nsuwolves.com). For more information about the university, visit [northern.edu](http://northern.edu).

## The Role of the Director of Athletics

The Northern Director of Athletics oversees all aspects of the athletics program, ensures compliance with conference and NCAA policies and guidelines, and must be committed to the NCAA Division II student athlete philosophy and serving all Wolves athletes. He/She must have high standards of integrity and support the personal development and educational goals of student-athletes. The director oversees/manages administrative, financial, communications, recruitment, intramurals, fitness center operation and compliance activities for the department. The director will also collaborate with the Northern Foundation in the area of donor relations and scholarship funding.

## Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

Northern's new Director of Athletics will empower coaches and staff to continue a proud tradition of enhancing the student-athlete experience and establishing a culture of excellence throughout the department.

### Enrollment

Enrollment and retention remain key areas of focus for Northern Athletics and the entire university. South Dakota high schools will see an increase in a diverse group of graduates through 2026, as reported by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE). Northern must be poised to capture this enrollment growth opportunity. The university has made strides to develop new academic programming and increase its graduate program offerings in order to generate new credit hours. Additional efforts to grow sustainable enrollment must be framed by strengthening the university's overall curriculum through strategic planning and creating an optimal academic learning and social environment to ensure life-long student success.



### Community and Fan Relations

Northern's NCAA Division II athletics program has one of the strongest community and regional fan bases in the country. Northern consistently leads the conference in attendance at football and both men's and women's basketball games. The Northern men's and women's basketball teams are mainstays in the Division II Top 10 attendance list, and have led the nation in attendance for more than a decade. Northern Athletics has also established a culture of giving back to the community, with student-athletes volunteering approximately 3,000 hours a year. That includes the annual Day of Champions event, where the Wolves partner with the United Way of Northeastern South Dakota to volunteer at nonprofit organizations around the region. The Director of Athletics will have ample opportunity to build on that community support and continue to engage the Wolves' fan base and strengthen those relationships.



## Fundraising

Paramount to the position of Director of Athletics, is the ability to fundraise as 100% of scholarship dollars are privately funded. Within the Northern Foundation, the Wolves Club with more than 1,000 members, leads the way in annual giving. In addition to the Wolves Club, the department has many partnerships that account for a significant portion of athletic support. In recent years, the department has significantly invested in scholarships, facility improvements, staffing, and increased annual Wolves Club revenues by over 75 percent.



In August 2015, Northern announced a transformational 10-year partnership with Sanford Health that included a \$2 million gift, which at the time was the largest corporate gift in Northern history. This partnership also provides annual financial support for marketing, and provides athletic training, physician, and orthopedic services.

The next Director of Athletics will be called upon to collaborate with the Northern President and the President/CEO of the Northern Foundation in order to further develop these partnerships and cultivate additional relationships.

## Qualifications and Personal Qualities

Northern's Director of Athletics will be committed to the NCAA Division II student athlete philosophy and will:

- Develop and promote the departmental mission, implement policies and procedures to ensure the academic success and general welfare of student-athletes, and develop a long-term vision for the Athletic Department.
- Implement, monitor and enforce policies and procedures to ensure compliance with institutional, NSIC, NCAA, state, and federal rules, regulations and laws (i.e., Title IX).
- Embrace and assume ultimate accountability for sound business practices as well as budgetary and financial responsibility for the Northern athletics program.
- Develop long term plans for responsible and sustainable management of operations, capital improvements, and program development in collaboration with the President and the Vice President for Finance and Administration.
- Approve departmental employee appointments, establish effective personnel evaluation processes, and supervise and evaluate the performance of all coaches and personnel within the Department of Athletics.
- Review and periodically refine departmental organizational structure.
- Ensure procedures are in place to monitor admissions, academic standing and academic progress of student-athletes, and monitor equitable awarding of athletic grant-in-aid to student-athletes.
- Responsibly steward an athletic fundraising program in collaboration with the Northern Foundation.
- Collaborate with facilities management to evaluate and enhance the condition of all athletic facilities.
- Communicate effectively with Northern's President, Senior Cabinet, Foundation leadership, students, faculty, staff, alumni, donors and the public.
- Serve as the primary spokesperson for the Department of Athletics and promote the mission and philosophy of intercollegiate athletics to on- and off-campus constituents.
- Positively represent the Department of Athletics at university, community, NSIC, NCAA and other related meetings.
- Hire, supervise, and develop a strong staff of coaches, assistant coaches and support staff.
- Enhance existing and build new community relations and partnerships which includes business and corporate alliances.
- Develop effective relationships with donors, in partnership with the Northern Foundation with particular emphasis upon the cultivation and stewardship of those relationships.
- Contribute to fostering an equitable, diverse and inclusive environment for all students and staff.

### Minimum Qualifications:

- Master's degree in athletics administration or a closely related field.
- Five years of progressive, successful experience in athletics administration and compliance.
- Experience in creating a championship experience for all student-athletes academically, athletically and socially.
- Strong interpersonal, supervisory, planning, and budget management skills.
- Measurable successful fundraising and marketing in positions with increasing levels of responsibility.
- Demonstrated commitment to adhere to NCAA and other relevant compliance regulations.
- Collegial management style and ability to effectively delegate authority.
- Demonstrated commitment to NCAA equity standards.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.

### Preferred Qualifications:

A record of achievement in NCAA Division I, II, III or NAIA athletics administration with a minimum of five years of experience leading a successful comprehensive intercollegiate athletics program, including:

- Demonstrated experience with brand marketing, public relations, media, fundraising and budget/finance.
- Demonstrated ability to effectively develop and administer successful athletic programs that excel both in competition and academics.
- Demonstrated ability in development, fundraising and external relations with the ability to easily develop rapport and establish networks of motivated benefactors.
- Collegiate coaching experience.

## About Northern State University

### History

Since the university was established as the Northern Normal and Industrial School in 1901, progress has been a constant in curriculum and life at Northern. In its 120-year history, Northern's faculty and staff have continued to meet the needs of students at the university level and those in K-12 education through traditional, distance delivery and online teaching. As time passes and technology advances, Northern remains dedicated to providing superior and affordable education to students. Today, Northern fosters personalized attention to students similar to that found in small, independent college settings at an affordable public university tuition cost. Students praise its capacity to encourage their positive intellectual, social and personal growth during their formative years.



### Academics

Northern maintains the highest standards of excellence in academic rigor and fosters engaged learning through both traditional and nontraditional teaching opportunities. The university offers a comprehensive curriculum featuring more than 50 academic programs. Northern offers associate, baccalaureate and graduate degrees. While the university has always been known for graduating a superior level of teachers in South Dakota, today it is also known for superb instruction in fine arts, business, and arts and sciences. Students are enrolled in programs in the Northern College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Professional Studies which includes the School of Business and the Millicent Atkins School of Education, the School of Fine Arts and the Graduate School. Northern also has an accelerated nursing program offered in partnership with South Dakota State University, and collaborative programs in pre-engineering with SDSU, and in pre-law with the University of South Dakota.

Northern State holds accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission. Northern teacher education programs are accredited by CAEP, and they comply with South Dakota Department of Education guidelines. Music programs are accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music. The art program is accredited by National



Association of Schools of Art and Design. The school's theatrical and musical offerings consistently attract large audiences from around the region. Northern is also accredited by the ACBSP, CACREP and NACEP. The university is in the process of achieving full membership in COPLAC.

Since 2001, Northern's Center for Statewide E-learning, unique to South Dakota and the Midwest, has provided small, rural high school students across South Dakota with high school coursework in areas of teacher scarcity. As of January 2021, there were 2,954 total student registrations for E-learning, an increase of nearly 15 percent year-over-year.

## Campus

Several major campus improvement projects have been completed in recent years at Northern. New and renovated facilities on campus since 2016-17 have an added value of over \$110 million. Those include the expansion of the Johnson Fine Arts Center, Northern's main performance facility; construction of three new residence halls offering suite-style living; addition of the Athletic and Recreation Fields project, which includes a soccer competition field, football practice field and pavilion; and the opening of the state-of-the-art Harvey C. Jewett IV Regional Science Education Center, which enhanced research and science education for Northern students as well as K-12 students around the region. In fall 2021, an on-campus regional sports complex will open, including a new football stadium and softball field. Through a unique, collaborative partnership between Northern and the School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, a new SDSBVI facility was constructed near the Northern campus, which will be instrumental in the success of Northern's new M.S.Ed. in Special Education with a specialization in Visual Impairment.



## Students

In fall 2020, Northern State University enrolled 3,431 students and saw slight growth in headcount for the year. The university particularly saw growth in graduate students, and it experienced its fifth consecutive year with a freshman to sophomore retention rate above 73 percent. While most Northern students are from South Dakota and surrounding states, Northern draws students from all over the country and the world.

Northern continues to attract an increasing number of high-achieving students, particularly to its growing honors program. Students have numerous opportunities to work side by side with faculty on undergraduate research projects. Northern is also committed to non-traditional and first-generation student success. Students see Northern as a nurturing university with low student/faculty ratios (average class size of 17) and personalized student/faculty interactions. Students see Northern as a welcoming campus community, with dedicated professors who care about their ability to succeed in life.

Students are hard-working in the classroom and beyond, as opportunities abound for campus involvement in organizations such as student government, student newspaper, band and choral groups, theater productions and intramural sports. They are enthusiastic about outdoor activities including hiking, fishing, hunting, and enjoying a snowy day in winter.

One vital component of enrollment success at Northern is the WolfPACT, the highest guaranteed scholarship program in South Dakota. A student's award amount is based on ACT score as well as high school GPA, with the highest award being \$12,000 over four years. These are significant scholarships at a university whose annual tuition, room and board costs total approximately \$17,000.

## Faculty

Northern's vibrant campus community thrives on teamwork, cooperation and mutual respect in an environment that is diverse in knowledge, culture and worldview. Faculty members take deep pride in their teaching and in student development. There is opportunity to expand research and grant-related activity on campus. Northern faculty believe in the academic strength of their work and seek greater visibility and recognition of the quality academic environment they have worked so hard to create over many years. Faculty enrichments have been made in support of this expanded role and include a new science center, research greenhouse, a completely remodeled performing arts center, and upgraded technology in many instructional classrooms.

## Resources and alumni

The Northern State University Foundation, campaign committee and the leadership team of Northern have recently completed the Educational Impact Campaign, which raised more than \$60 million for a new South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, new athletic and recreation fields, and an on-campus regional sports complex.

## About Aberdeen

Aberdeen is a vibrant community that offers the welcoming atmosphere of a small town while boasting big-city amenities. The city features a thriving arts scene, excellent schools, and abundant recreational and outdoor activities. The university enjoys a positive and strong relationship with the community and region. Located in the northeastern section of South Dakota, Aberdeen is the business, medical and cultural center for the region.

Along with serving as a hub for smaller communities in the region, Aberdeen is also an attractive tourist destination. The city is a prime destination for pheasant hunters and anglers. The well-known Wylie Park and Storybook Land are popular draws for families, both local and visiting. Downtown Aberdeen is home to the historic Capitol Theatre, hosting numerous live and film productions year-round, as well as the annual South Dakota Film Festival. Local performance venues range from an outdoor summer concert series to large-scale indoor spaces such as the Dakota Event Center.

Northern is a highly valued asset of this growing community and key to its economic development, generating about \$181 million of annual economic impact to South Dakota. There is extraordinary community support for Northern, with plentiful employment opportunities for students and active engagement among community members in the cultural and athletic activities of the campus.





## **South Dakota Board of Regents**

Northern's governance structure exemplifies the collaborative principles set forth by the South Dakota Board of Regents. Northern is one of six universities in an integrated system of higher education in South Dakota governed by a single nine-member board of regents. Eight members are appointed by the Governor for six- year terms; one student regent is appointed for a term of two years coinciding with enrollment at a postsecondary educational institution under the control of the board. The Board of Regents has constitutional authority to govern the system of public higher education in the state. Supported by an executive director and staff, the board provides leadership and sets policies for the programs and services delivered through its six universities and two special schools.

*(The above language regarding the student regent is taken from the statute that authorizes the position: SDCL § 13-49-6.1)*

## **Procedure for Candidacy**

Confidential inquiries should be directed to:  
Jeff Schemmel, President, College Sports Solutions  
Jschemmel@collegesportssolutions.com  
678.383.4541

All applications should include a letter of application, resume and three references, and should be sent electronically to Mr. Schemmel at the email address above.

*Northern State University is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer and encourages the nominations and candidacies of individuals from underrepresented groups. Applicants with disabilities are invited to identify any necessary accommodations required in the application process.*

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