Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

The Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs (“SVPAA”) of Fairfield University reports directly to the President, the Rev. Jeffrey von Arx, S.J., and is the chief academic officer of the University and a member of the President’s senior leadership team. The successful candidate for this position will lead Fairfield in the strategic growth and development of its academic programs, empower faculty in pursuing innovative approaches to teaching and scholarship, and sustain the University’s commitment within the Jesuit tradition to preparing liberally-educated students for lives of leadership, intellectual excellence, and service.

Institutional Overview
Fairfield University, founded by the Society of Jesus in 1942 in the town of Fairfield, Connecticut, is a coeducational institution whose primary objectives are to develop students’ creative and intellectual potential, and ethical and religious values, and a sense of social responsibility. The third youngest of the 28 Jesuit institutions of higher learning in this country, the University’s roots and values nevertheless reach back nearly 500 years to the life and teachings of Saint Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus.

Fairfield is consistently recognized as one of the top comprehensive universities in the Northeast, offering academic programs in five schools: the College of Arts and Sciences; the Charles F. Dolan School of Business; the School of Engineering; the School of Nursing; and the Graduate School of Education and Allied Professions. Undergraduates may choose from majors in all the traditional fields and a wide array of interdisciplinary minors. Graduate programs are offered in education and allied professions, nursing, engineering, communication, creative writing, mathematics, American studies, and business, including the MBA and the Masters of Science in Finance and Accounting. A Master of Public Administration program began in the fall of 2013.

Fairfield is blessed with a magnificent location overlooking the waters of Long Island Sound. Just an hour from New York City and a mile from the Metro North commuter line, the campus lies in a setting of rolling hills, picturesque ponds, and wooded areas and is close to world-class cultural organizations, multinational corporations, and outdoor recreational opportunities. The campus sits on 200 acres and includes major buildings, including two new student residences and a recently renovated science center and library.

Fairfield has experienced sustained growth and financial stability throughout its history. For the past 35 years, the institution has operated with a balanced budget. As of December 31, 2013, the endowment is valued at $294 million. Currently, the University is in the quiet phase of a capital campaign, intended to conclude when Fairfield celebrates its 75th anniversary in 2017. The working goal of the campaign is $160 million.

Mission
Fairfield is Catholic in both tradition and spirit. It celebrates the God-given dignity of every human person. As a Jesuit institution, it welcomes those of all beliefs and traditions who share its concerns for scholarship, justice, truth, and freedom and it values the diversity which their membership brings to the University community.
Fairfield educates its students in a variety of scholarly and professional disciplines, but all of its schools share a liberal and humanistic perspective and a commitment to excellence. Fairfield provides all undergraduate students with a broadly-based general education curriculum with a special emphasis on the traditional humanities as a complement to the more specialized preparation in areas provided by the major programs. The University provides every student with opportunities for individual and common reflection and training in such essential human skills as analysis, synthesis, and communication. Fairfield recognizes that learning is a life-long process and seeks to foster in its students a continuing intellectual curiosity and a desire for self-education across the broad range of areas to which they have been introduced in their studies.

As a community of scholars, Fairfield gladly joins in the broader task of expanding human knowledge and deepening human understanding, and to this end it encourages and supports the scholarly research and artistic production of its faculty and students. The institution acknowledges a further obligation to the wider community of which it is a part: to share its resources and its special expertise for the betterment of its neighbors and the community as a whole. Faculty and students are encouraged to participate in the larger community through service and academic activities. But most of all, Fairfield serves the wider community by educating its students to be socially aware and morally responsible persons.

**Students**
Fairfield enrolls more than 3,300 full-time undergraduate students, 400 part-time undergraduates, and 1,200 graduate students, one quarter of whom are full-time. Half of the full-time freshmen class entering in Fall 2013 graduated in the top 20 percent of their high school class and 12 percent are students of color. Students hail from more than 30 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, and 30 countries. While the majority of Fairfield undergraduates self-identify as Roman Catholic, significant religious diversity is represented among the student body.

In the past decade, nearly three dozen Fairfield students have been named Fulbright scholars. The University is among the 12 percent of four-year colleges and universities with membership in Phi Beta Kappa and the second youngest school to receive this honor. During the 2012-13 academic year, Fairfield awarded more than $55 million in scholarships and financial aid. Approximately 75 percent of full-time undergraduate students received financial aid and 55 percent received need-based aid.

Undergraduate students are guaranteed campus housing for all four years and more than eighty percent live on campus in residence halls, townhouses, and apartments. Faculty, staff, and administrators intentionally create opportunities for students to engage in community life that enriches curricular offerings with co-curricular experiences. The residential character of the campus promotes collaboration between academic and student affairs to integrate living and learning for the development of the whole student, including their intellectual, spiritual, cultural and social identities. While Fairfield has a relatively small number of traditional commuting undergraduate students, the majority of students not living on campus reside in the town of Fairfield’s beach area, which is approximately two miles from campus. The tradition of Fairfield students living “on the beach” is important to students and alumni.
Fairfield has an active student government and clubs for a wide range of social and intellectual interests. Nearly one-third of students are engaged in volunteer programs, serving in communities in nearby cities and abroad. More than 400 students participate in intercollegiate varsity athletics at the University; 600 participate in intercollegiate club sports; and 1,500 are active in intramural sports. Fairfield varsity teams play at the Division I level and compete as charter members of the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference, with the exception of men’s lacrosse, which is a member of the Colonial Athletic Association.

In recent years, greater attention has been focused on enhancing graduate student life, including the formation of a cross-school Graduate Student Assembly, programs and activities to encourage and facilitate graduate students being more fully engaged at the University, a common orientation program for all graduate students, and year-end awards specific to graduate student achievements.

**Faculty**

Fairfield’s faculty includes approximately 260 full-time members, 90 percent of whom hold the highest degree in their field. The University’s teacher/scholars place great emphasis on student learning, are good university citizens, and genuinely value service, both on and off campus. While the faculty has maintained its focus on effective teaching and learning, its scholarship has increased sharply in recent years. Since 2008, the faculty have published 58 books and produced more than 425 scholarly articles, presentations, artistic performances, and other accomplishments. The University received $4.3 million in funded grants in FY12. Owing to recent hiring successes and anticipated new faculty lines, this trend toward increased faculty productivity is expected to continue for the foreseeable future.

Fairfield University has a record of progressive and innovative pedagogy across all five schools, continuously fostering more efficient and effective teaching methods, identifying learning outcomes, and exploring the role of online and blended courses. The Center for Academic Excellence provides a central place on campus dedicated to supporting the development of the best in new teaching methodologies, the expansion of student-faculty research opportunities, the ongoing support for continuous reflection on teaching, and the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Through a series of committees on which faculty from across the various schools and disciplines work with University administrators, faculty have voice in almost every aspect of the institution. Fairfield’s faculty takes these responsibilities seriously, with most participating in governance at the department, school, or University level. The Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs sits ex officio on a number of faculty committees, including the Academic Council, the Research Committee, the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, the Rank and Tenure Committee, and the Faculty Committee on Sustainability.

**Strategic Planning and Priorities**

In July 2004, the Rev. Jeffrey von Arx, S.J., became the eighth Jesuit to be named President of Fairfield University. A historian by discipline, Fr. von Arx earned degrees at Princeton and Yale and began his academic career at Georgetown University, where he taught in and ultimately
chaired the History Department, until he moved into administration at Fordham University, serving as Dean of Fordham College at Rose Hill from 1998 until 2004.

A strategic planning process led by Fr. von Arx has led the University to identify the three following key goals:

- The development of a strongly integrated core curriculum that encourages students to make connections across the disciplines and into a more specifically focused major;
- The cultivation of a systemic, campus-wide ethos that integrates living and learning in the academic, social, spiritual, athletic and aesthetic aspects of life; and
- The integration of Jesuit values into the University's offerings in graduate and professional studies.

Since the adoption of the above goals, a great deal has been accomplished in support of them, including:

- A faculty-driven effort known as “Core Pathways,” which enables students to undertake a process of self-discovery while completing core curriculum requirements and encourages faculty teaching core courses to make explicit connections across disciplines;
- “Cornerstone” courses involving all first-year undergraduates, which bring students together by residential location and facilitate high levels of student and faculty interaction outside of the classroom;
- Residential colleges for sophomores in which approximately 60 percent of students choose to live; and
- The infusion of ethical theory and practice across professional and graduate programs.

Fr. von Arx recently announced in January, 2014, the launch of Fairfield’s next strategic planning process. *Fairfield 2020: Building a More Sustainable Future* will be led by a steering committee co-chaired by the Executive Vice President and the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. Among the guiding principles of the process are the following:

- To build and implement a new business model that broadens our revenue streams and makes our costs more responsive to our articulated priorities;
- To lead in transformational education and pedagogical innovation and research that makes a difference, and to ensure we have an active and engaged faculty of teacher-scholars who make mentoring and advising a priority;
- To find ways to keep a Fairfield education within the financial reach of the average student so as to avoid the crushing burden of excessive student debt;
- To focus on outcomes and ensure our students are well prepared and positioned to fulfill their aspirations in the workplace, graduate school, or public service;
- To dedicate ourselves to the delivery of a more agile and integrated core curriculum in the Jesuit and Catholic tradition, one that builds key competencies as it foregrounds the breadth of the intellectual life with an interdisciplinary focus;
• To leverage best practices and technologies to streamline and modernize our back office operations and lower our costs;
• To re-launch our continuing education and non-degree based programs to address more fully that underserved need;
• To grow and enhance the quality, stature, and identity of our graduate and professional schools;
• To create an environment that reaches out to and welcomes diverse students, faculty, and staff in a way that recognizes the changing demographics of our candidate pools and critically engages the social, racial, ethnic, religious, and economic diversity that is necessary for a community that calls itself "catholic," and to become an employer of choice; and
• To renew and invigorate the total school experience for undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education students in order to ensure our students have access to state-of-the-art facilities, a complete suite of support services, and welcoming living and learning communities.

As co-chair of the steering committee, the new SVPAA is expected to provide substantial leadership on this initiative. The resulting “refreshed” plan will continue to draw upon the goals articulated by Fr. von Arx at the start of his presidency while importantly reflecting the changing needs and opportunities in higher education today. Some of the priorities and projects that have already emerged from the lead-up to this process include the following:

• Creating programs and initiatives to enhance career-preparedness and career-readiness;
• Building upon the strength of Fairfield’s nursing, science, business, and engineering programs to re-imagine truly integrated Health Sciences education; and
• Assessing the overall college experience in order to articulate clearly the value-proposition of a Fairfield education.

Academic Division and Scope of Responsibility

The Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs is responsible for the leadership of Fairfield’s academic programs and manages the academic division of the University, which comprises five schools and colleges and a number of additional academic support resources, centers, and programs. The academic division’s operating budget is $61.5 million, of which close to $10 million is for operations, $1.1 million is for travel, and $50.6 million is for salary and benefits.

The College of Arts and Sciences is the oldest and largest of Fairfield’s five schools with 2,000 students. Its 170 full-time and more than 100 adjunct faculty members are organized in 15 departments offering 15 majors and numerous interdisciplinary minors and programs. The College houses master’s programs in American Studies, Mathematics, Communication, Public Administration, and Creative Writing. It is also charged with delivering the extensive core curriculum that is so central to the twin purposes of helping students to understand the world and to recognize where their constructive role within it lies. Reinforcing this intention, the College also offers opportunities for student service, internships, research, and learning abroad.
The School of Nursing prepares future nurses at the baccalaureate and master's level in an environment that includes classroom learning, clinical laboratory experiences, and opportunities to care for patients. The Robin Kanarek Learning Resource Center provides a simulated hospital environment where students learn and practice basic to advanced nursing skills. Housing state-of-the-art medical equipment, simulators, and practice modules, it includes a fully equipped intensive care area complete with cardiac monitoring devices, a defibrillator, a ventilator, and a code cart. Undergraduate students start caring for patients at a variety of clinical sites during the second semester of the sophomore year. The school's graduate programs offer the Doctor of Nursing Practice in Nurse Anesthesia, Nurse Practitioner and Executive Doctor of Nursing Practice, and the Master of Science degree in Nurse Practitioner and Nursing Leadership. All specialties fulfill academic requirements toward certification as a nurse leader, nurse anesthetist, and family or adult psychiatric nurse practitioner.

The Charles F. Dolan School of Business was established in 1978, having been a Department of Business Administration for 31 years within the College of Arts and Sciences. In 2000, the School was named in response to a very generous gift of $25 million from Charles F. Dolan, founder and chairman of Cablevision Systems Corporation and long-time friend and trustee of the University. The Dolan School offers a range of academic programs: Master of Business Administration; Master of Science programs in finance, accounting, and taxation; certificate programs for advanced study; Bachelor of Science majors in accounting, finance, information systems and operations management, international business, management, and marketing. The School is housed in a state-of-the-art facility with eleven classrooms, three computer labs, eight group workrooms and outstanding media and technology equipment. Beyond the traditional daytime classes for full-time undergraduate students, it offers classes at night and on weekends to serve the needs of full- and part-time graduate students from the regional business community.

The School of Engineering, Fairfield’s newest school, offers Bachelor of Science degrees, Master of Science degrees, and Certificate programs on a full-time or part-time basis. The undergraduate program offers engineering baccalaureates in four areas: Computer Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, and Software Engineering. Students can choose a part-time evening program, a full-time four-year program, or a full-time five-year cooperative engineering program with one of four partner institutions: Columbia University, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, the University of Connecticut, or Stevens Institute of Technology. Upon graduation they receive two degrees, a Bachelor of Arts from Fairfield University and a Bachelor of Science in Engineering from the partner institution. The graduate program offers four Master of Science degrees: Software Engineering, Management of Technology, Electrical and Computer Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering. Electrical and Computer Engineering and Mechanical Engineering graduate degrees can be completed as a five-year BS/MS degree.

The Graduate School of Education and Allied Professions ("GSEAP") prepares candidates for professional roles in public and private schools and allied health and human service organizations and agencies. GSEAP is unique at Fairfield in its concentration on graduate education. GSEAP has four departments housing 17 distinct programs and tracks of study that hold state and national accreditation: Applied Psychology, Human Services Psychology, Industrial/Organizational Psychology, Foundations of Advanced Psychology, Clinical Mental

The academic division also houses a variety of additional educational programs and resources, including the Center for Faith and Public Life, the Center for Catholic Studies, the Carl and Dorothy Bennett Center for Judaic Studies, the Center for Academic Excellence, the University Honors Program, the University Registrar, the DiMenna-Nyselius Library, the Office of International Programs, the Media Center, the Office of Government Grants, the Bellarmine Museum of Art, the Program in Applied Ethics and all academic advising and support functions.

The deans of the schools and colleges report to the SVPAA, as do the University Librarian, directors of the Centers, the registrar, the office of graduate admission, and academic advising and support services. The office of the SVPAA also includes three Associate/Assistant Vice Presidents, the Director of Government Grants, Manager of Academic Operations, and administrative support staff.

Opportunities and Challenges

Rooted in the Jesuit tradition, Fairfield University’s mission calls the institution to meet emerging educational needs, to anticipate transformations in society, and to educate persons so that they possess the tools to thrive and to provide creative, ethical, engaged leadership in the midst of those transformations. As Fairfield seeks to provide a vital and dynamic education to its students, it seeks also to continually renew Jesuit higher education for the future.

The University is looking for a Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs who will provide intellectual and pragmatic direction to its pursuit of these goals and who can sustain a collaborative, supportive partnership with and among Fairfield’s faculty, rooted in an active commitment to shared governance that recognizes the faculty’s investment in the educational and academic excellence of the institution. Specifically, the next Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs will be expected to excel at the following:

- Engage in careful and farsighted strategic planning to ensure the relevance, viability, and excellence of a Fairfield education and articulate the value of that education persuasively to a broad range of audiences;
- Empower faculty to take innovative approaches to curriculum development and scholarship, create new opportunities for partnerships across disciplinary, divisional and school boundaries, grow the faculty in a strategic way, and work to promote a collective and inclusive sense of Fairfield’s mission;
- Articulate the importance and centrality of Fairfield’s academic mission; collaborate, establish effective working relationships, and contribute to a high-functioning team with the President and other senior leaders of the University;
- Strengthen Fairfield’s academic position through ongoing assessment and the development of an effective and efficient system for measuring and improving educational outcomes; and
• Demonstrate a firm commitment to inclusiveness and diversity, working to build greater diversity and interdisciplinary and global learning in the curriculum and among faculty and students.

Desired Qualifications and Characteristics

The SVPAA will be the chief academic officer of Fairfield University. Accordingly, s/he must be a teacher and scholar who qualifies for appointment at the rank of full professor in one of the departments of the University and has the capacity to work with senior administrative colleagues as a key member of the President’s senior management team. The ideal candidate will also possess the following:

• A track record of successful senior-level administrative work, including experience making difficult decisions, managing budgets, and implementing change in a complex academic environment;
• Outstanding strategic thinking and planning skills, and the ability to build support for a shared institutional agenda through open and respectful dialogue with a broad range of constituencies;
• Knowledge of cutting-edge trends and a strong sense of the current landscape in higher education;
• Excellent interpersonal and communications skills; an open, collaborative, and transparent leadership style; and the ability to promote discussion and resolve conflict;
• A broadly curious intellect, empathic spirit, and firm commitment to inclusiveness and diversity; and
• Ability and willingness to support and contribute to the Jesuit, Catholic dimensions of Fairfield University and its institutional mission.

Contact
Nominations, inquiries and expressions of interest should be submitted in confidence to FairfieldSVPAA@storbeckpimentel.com.

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