



United States
International
University-Africa

United States International University-Africa Appointment of Deputy Vice Chancellor – Student Life

October 2026



An Invitation to Shape the Student Experience

Are you a visionary leader who believes that academic excellence is inseparable from student wellbeing and has the strategic drive to reshape the student experience for a changing world?

USIU-Africa seeks a transformative Deputy Vice Chancellor, Student Life to lead an integrated portfolio of student success, wellbeing and advocacy. This is an opportunity to create an environment where every student, regardless of background, has the emotional, mental and academic support needed to thrive.

The Vision

The landscape of higher education is changing, and students face pressures that affect their learning, wellbeing and sense of belonging. Academic support and student wellbeing must work together throughout the student journey. We seek a leader who understands that students' ability to realise their academic potential is closely connected to their mental health, resilience and the support around them.

Your mission will be to bring success and wellbeing together in a coherent student experience, connecting academic progression with personal development, inclusion and preparation for life beyond university.

Your Impact

You will shape an understanding of student success that embraces mental health, belonging and resilience alongside academic achievement. You will build a campus culture where diversity is valued and every student experiences psychological safety and connection.

Collaborating with academic units, you will ensure wellbeing informs the curriculum and classroom experience. You will provide strategic oversight of student support, housing and advocacy, placing students' needs and interests at the centre of administrative decisions. Technology and evidence will help you identify barriers, coordinate timely support and demonstrate improvements in retention, progression, graduation and employability.

Why Join Us

This role offers the opportunity to leave a lasting legacy through the lives and achievements of students. With a mandate to integrate student success and wellbeing, you will work with the University's leadership to align people, resources and systems around a model of student care that can set a strong example for the sector.

If you are ready to lead a generation of students towards a future where success is measured through both achievement and wellbeing, we welcome your application.

About USIU Africa

Our History

USIU-Africa was established in 1969 as the African campus of United States International University in San Diego, initially offering programmes not available in Kenya's public universities, such as Psychology and International Relations. The institution relocated to Kasarani in 1991 and expanded its land holdings in 1999, supporting its growth and development. Following a brief merger with the California School of Professional Psychology in 2001 to form Alliant International University, it regained independence in 2005 and secured U.S. accreditation from WASC in 2008.

In 2014, the university rebranded as United States International University-Africa. Today, it holds dual accreditation in Kenya and the United States and offers 38 programmes across diverse fields, including Humanities, Social Sciences, Health and Technology. Building on its history of responding to emerging educational needs, its strategic direction connects academic excellence with student success, research, innovation and preparation for a changing world.

Our Vision, Mission and Values

Our Vision: To be a premier institution of academic excellence with a global perspective.

USIU-Africa's mission is to promote the discovery and application of knowledge, the acquisition of skills and the development of intellect and character in a manner which

prepares students to contribute effectively and ethically as citizens of a changing and increasingly technological world.

This mission is achieved through a wide range of high quality undergraduate and graduate academic programs designed to result in the following outcomes: higher order thinking; scientific, quantitative and technical literacy; global understanding and multicultural perspective; career preparedness; community service and development; and ethical leadership.

We seek to create an environment that encourages rigorous intellectual and scholarly development; fosters openness to a wide range of ideas, cultures, and people; and enhances personal growth through social action projects.

Our core values include:

- **Life-long Learning:** Developing a learning culture that continues throughout a person's lifetime.
- **Integrity:** Ensuring the pursuit of excellence by upholding professional and ethical standards and being accountable.
- **Innovativeness:** Introducing new methods and strategies that ensure quality, efficiency, effectiveness and productivity.
- **Social Responsibility:** Providing leadership in responding to issues of national and global concern through collaborative efforts.
- **Academic Freedom:** Upholding the spirit of free and critical thought and enquiry, through the open exchange of ideas and knowledge.

Our Educational Approach

USIU-Africa's approach to education combines academic rigour with practical application, preparing students to respond to change and contribute meaningfully to society. Its learner-centred programmes develop critical and creative thinking, scientific and technological literacy, ethical judgement and a global perspective. Research, writing-intensive courses, applied projects, internships, community service and co-curricular experiences enable students to translate knowledge into practice, develop leadership and strengthen their readiness for professional life. By aligning teaching, research and innovation with the evolving needs of industry and society, the University gives practical expression to education for the future.

This approach is complemented by an integrated student journey in which academic progression, wellbeing, inclusion and belonging reinforce one another. Connecting teaching and learning with responsive support and career readiness helps students develop the adaptability, resilience and capacity for lifelong learning needed to contribute effectively to their professions and communities. Together, these priorities give substance to the University's development as a university of the future. Grounded in Africa and connected to the world, USIU-Africa seeks to equip graduates to address emerging challenges and shape the societies in which they live and work.





Deputy Vice Chancellor – Student Life

USIU-Africa seeks a strategic, compassionate Deputy Vice Chancellor, Student Life to provide strategic direction, oversight, coordination and leadership for an integrated student experience that enables every student to thrive academically, personally and socially. The mandate brings together student success, wellbeing, advocacy, engagement, inclusion and development, recognising that academic achievement is closely connected to mental health, belonging and resilience.

The Deputy Vice Chancellor will lead the student success lifecycle, from enrolment and transition into University through academic progression, completion and preparation for life beyond graduation. Working across academic and administrative divisions, the role will remove barriers to achievement, champion student voice and advocacy and strengthen accessible, proactive and preventive support. The role combines strategic oversight with active participation in student life, including the planning,

organisation and implementation of policies and procedures governing extracurricular activities.

The mandate is to translate an integrated student experience into demonstrable improvements in retention, academic progression, timely graduation and employability. This includes strengthening engagement and campus participation, improving enrolment and the responsiveness of student support, and sustaining students' lifelong connection to USIU-Africa. The Deputy Vice Chancellor will work with academic and professional teams to establish baselines, agree on measurable targets and use evidence to assess progress and direct resources where they will have the greatest effect. Technology will underpin this approach through student success dashboards, progress tracking and coordinated interventions, enabling the University to identify emerging needs, act early and evaluate the effectiveness of support.

The Role

Role:

Deputy Vice Chancellor – Student Life

Location:

Nairobi, Kenya

Salary:

Competitive with comprehensive benefits

Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership and Accountability

- Translate the University's Strategic Plan into measurable student success outcomes, implementation plans and performance targets across the student lifecycle. Lead an integrated approach that connects academic achievement with wellbeing, inclusion, engagement and personal development.
- Serve as the Vice Chancellor's chief advisor on student success, wellbeing, advocacy and the wider student experience, keeping the Vice Chancellor informed. Participate in the Management Board, contribute to institutional goals and represent the student success, wellbeing and advocacy portfolio on University committees and community groups.
- Lead the planning, implementation and review of policies, standards, programmes and services for student success, wellbeing and advocacy. Guide the transition from reactive services to proactive, coordinated and preventive support, with clear responsibilities and accountability for delivery.

Academic Progression and Completion

- Collaborate with academic schools and administrative divisions to identify and remove barriers to retention, academic progression and timely graduation. Coordinate academic advising, mentoring and early interventions for students who need additional support.
- Oversee enrolment and retention, financial aid and orientation, working across the University to support new, transfer and re-entry students, including those transitioning from high school. Connect these services to continued engagement and successful progression.
- Work with academic leaders to ensure wellbeing informs the curriculum and classroom experience. Collaborate with the Deputy Vice Chancellor

responsible for Academics, Transformative Teaching, Learning and Research to plan and direct graduation ceremonies.

Student Wellbeing and Inclusion

- Provide strategic oversight of counselling, wellness, student advocacy and services that meet students' daily needs. Ensure support is accessible, inclusive and responsive, and strengthens mental health, resilience and psychological safety.
- Oversee international student services, study abroad and multicultural programmes. Recognise the needs of students from different backgrounds and coordinate support that enables equitable participation and achievement.
- Manage facilities and services that enhance students' quality of life and learning. Use student feedback and service evidence to improve access, response times and the coordination of support.

Student Engagement and Experience

- Champion student voice and advocacy and serve as a liaison between students and University administration. Listen actively to student concerns, involve students in decisions affecting their experience and use feedback to guide improvements. Ensure student interests inform policies, support decisions and the removal of barriers to achievement.
- Lead the planning, organisation and implementation of policies and procedures for extracurricular activities across the University. Provide oversight and participate actively in initiatives that promote a positive, high-quality student experience.

- Increase engagement and campus participation through relevant co-curricular opportunities. Work with Marketing to promote these programmes and support branding, communications, public relations, media relations and sports information.

Career Readiness and Transition

- Oversee career services, internships and job placement, connecting these functions with academic and co-curricular development to strengthen employability and students' transition beyond university.
- Work with academic units, employers and relevant partners to connect students' learning and development with career opportunities. Support lifelong engagement and connection to USIU-Africa.
- Represent the University to government bodies and agencies providing benefits, resources and services for students and, when requested, to educational institutions, businesses and community organisations.

Student Development and Belonging

- Provide leadership and oversight for student associations, councils, clubs and the Student Centre. Support student leadership, confidence, resilience and personal development through sports, community service and other extracurricular activities.
- Build a campus culture that values diversity and strengthens belonging, connection and psychological safety. Develop institutional traditions and lifelong affiliations through vibrant student organisations and a living and learning environment grounded in the University's values.

Responsibilities

People, Resources and Service Improvement

- Develop and manage the Student Life Division's budget and oversee relevant funding processes and policies. Achieve divisional goals through effective financial and human resource management and align resources with student needs and agreed outcomes.
- Lead and develop diverse teams, evaluating personnel, programmes and services against student success outcomes and support responsiveness. Introduce additional services that respond efficiently and effectively to emerging student needs.
- Use technology as a core tool for tracking and supporting student success. Work with IT Services and academic teams to connect student information, academic progress, engagement and support records so that staff can identify emerging concerns, coordinate timely interventions and follow up on their effectiveness. Develop accessible digital support channels and dashboards that track retention, academic progression, graduation, employability and service responsiveness, with appropriate access controls, confidentiality and data protection.

Governance Ethics and Risk Management

- Collaborate with the Legal and Quality Assurance Offices to ensure compliance with applicable laws, regulations, codes and University requirements. Maintain and clearly communicate high legal and ethical standards across student services, programmes and activities.
- Oversee student judicial services and fair disciplinary procedures. Uphold safeguarding responsibilities, confidentiality and sound management of student-related institutional risks, ensuring sensitive concerns are handled appropriately.
- Undertake other duties commensurate with the role as assigned by the Vice Chancellor.





Candidate Profile

The successful candidate will be a seasoned higher education leader who combines strategic judgement with compassion and a strong commitment to holistic student success. They will be able to interpret student data, listen carefully to student concerns and bring academic and professional teams together to deliver lasting improvements.

Academic Qualifications

- Doctor of Philosophy in the field of specialisation from a recognised University or equivalent.
- Membership of a relevant professional body.

Experience and Knowledge

- At least seven years of relevant experience in a university student success, wellbeing, advocacy or related student experience function at a senior level.
- At least five years of teaching experience or experience in the management of student life-related activities.
- Thorough knowledge of university administration and practices, including policy implementation, funding and budget processes.
- Proven ability to bring together faculty, staff, academic administration and campus administrators across the University to address complex student-oriented issues and build consensus on solutions.
- Experience in student matters within and beyond the classroom, including student government, and the ability to connect service delivery with student achievement, wellbeing and engagement.

Skills and Competencies

- **Strategic leadership and execution:** Translate the University's Strategic Plan into measurable student success outcomes, implementation plans and performance targets, and sustain accountability for results.
- **Data analytics and evidence-based decision making:** Interpret retention, attrition, progression, graduation, engagement and wellbeing data to identify trends and direct interventions. Analyse complex situations, solve problems and exercise prudent judgement.
- **Collaborative and cross-functional leadership:** Bring academic and administrative teams together around the student journey, clarify shared responsibilities and build consensus on complex issues.
- **Change management:** Lead the transition from reactive student services to proactive, integrated and preventive support. Engage diverse teams in change, challenge practices that impede student success and embed continuous improvement.
- **Governance, ethics and risk management:** Understand student policies, safeguarding, confidentiality, disciplinary procedures, institutional risk and regulatory obligations. Demonstrate integrity and sound ethical judgement when handling sensitive matters.
- **Emotional and social intelligence:** Listen with empathy, respond constructively to student concerns and lead diverse teams with self-awareness. Build trust while making fair and sometimes difficult decisions.
- **Cultural intelligence and inclusion:** Work effectively across cultures and backgrounds, recognise barriers to participation and create an environment of belonging, respect and psychological safety.
- **Stakeholder engagement and communication:** Communicate clearly with students, colleagues and external stakeholders; champion student voice; negotiate effectively and resolve conflict.
- **Financial and resource management:** Oversee budgets and business functions supported by multiple funding sources, prioritise resources and align expenditure with student needs and agreed outcomes.
- **Technology-enabled student success:** Use student information systems, analytics and digital support tools to monitor the student journey, identify students who may need support and coordinate proactive interventions. Translate dashboard findings into action, assess intervention effectiveness and maintain reliable records, appropriate access controls and confidentiality. Use financial and data management software and learn new systems as needs evolve.

How to Apply

All correspondence, at this stage, should be via Oxford HR. To apply for this post, click on the “Apply” button on the job advert page, complete the online application form, and submit your CV and cover letter as two different documents, which should be prepared before applying as they will be considered in the application process.

The cover letter should be no more than two pages long and explain why you are interested in this post and how your skills and experience make you a good fit.

The document should be saved in PDF in the following format: Your First Name-Your Last Name-Document Name-Date (mmyy)-Organisation e.g., Pat-Jones-CV-1026-USIU-Africa or Pat-Jones-CoverLetter-1026-USIU-Africa.

Timeline

- **Closing Date:** 27th November 2026
- **First stage interviews:** TBC
- **Final interviews:** TBC

Selection Process

All candidates will receive an update regarding their application after the closing date. We advise candidates to add the Oxford HR Consultant email address (see below) to their safe senders list and regularly check their spam folder.

Equality Statement

Equality and diversity are at the core of USIU Africa’s values. Staff are expected to work collectively and individually to promote a constructive and sensitive approach to others from a variety of backgrounds, where the work of others is valued and respected.

Queries

If you have any queries on any aspect of the appointment process, need additional information, or would like to have an informal discussion, please email at pirungu@oxfordhr.com in the first instance.



About Oxford HR

Oxford HR is a B Corp certified leadership consultancy. Having worked within a diverse range of institutions, from not-for-profits and charities to governments and corporate environments, we've seen the powerful impact that the perfect team can have. Finding innovative leaders can be a challenge; and yet their transition into leadership is vital to an organisation's mission and success.

We work across the globe to search for and support remarkable leaders and teams, improve their board effectiveness and support on a range of leadership functions.

Learn more at: oxfordhr.com





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