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## Search for new WKU leaders advances

AARON MUDD [amudd@bgdailynews.com](mailto:amudd@bgdailynews.com) 33 min ago

National searches are underway to replace Western Kentucky University's outgoing provost and dean of the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences.

Both vacancies have been advertised online since Dec. 21 and call for interested applicants to apply by Feb. 16, according to postings on [chroniclevitae.com](http://chroniclevitae.com).

Search committees are working with search firm Greenwood/Asher and Associates to find replacements for Provost David Lee and Sam Evans, the dean of WKU's College of Education and Behavioral Sciences. Both administrators plan to retire effective June 30.

Lee, who has served as WKU's provost since August 2015, said search firms are adept at networking and reaching out to candidates with leadership experience who might not be aware of the job opening.

"They're constantly in touch with folks who want to be provosts or who have some interest in the job," he said.

Additionally, Lee said WKU has only conducted one provost search in the last 20 years.

“We just have not been active in the provost market in a very long time,” he said.

WKU’s provost also serves as the vice president for Academic Affairs and as the university’s chief academic officer.

A search is also underway to replace Evans, who has served as dean of the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences since 2003, according to his resume.

Jeffrey Katz, dean of the Gordon Ford College of Business, is one of three co-chairs leading the search committee.



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After applications are received, Katz said the search firm will identify candidates that have met qualifications and forward them to the committee, which can begin evaluating and contacting candidates.

“We want to have a face-to-face meeting with some semi-final group,” Katz said, estimating the committee will review 10 to 12 candidates at that point depending on applications.

Ultimately, Katz said the search committee’s task is to whittle down the list to a group of finalists for recommendations to the provost, who will make the final call.

Both online job postings note that applications will be considered secretly, but “the name and curriculum vitae of finalists will be released prior to on-campus meetings with key constituency groups as part of the final interview process.”

Regardless of who becomes WKU’s next provost, Lee said they’ll have to help the university navigate significant financial challenges and other hurdles. Lee said the nature of comprehensive universities is changing within the higher education landscape, with an increasingly important focus on economic and workforce development.

“I think WKU is well positioned to be a model for the new kind of comprehensive university that I think we’re going to see emerge over the next decade,” he said.

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## **Aaron Mudd**

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