



FLORIDA POLYTECHNIC  
UNIVERSITY



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*Inviting Applications and Nominations for*

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Chief Financial  
Officer



*Your Pursuit. Our Priority.*



Florida Polytechnic University in Lakeland, Florida, seeks a highly engaged, collaborative, and solutions-oriented Chief Financial Officer who pairs exceptional financial stewardship with a strong commitment to advancing the University's mission and strategic priorities.



The mission of **Florida Polytechnic University** is to serve students and industry through educational excellence and the discovery, advancement, and application of knowledge in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

## About Florida Polytechnic

After several years of aggressively achieving critical milestones and accreditations, the University began building its reputation as a remarkable provider of STEM degrees. It rapidly proved its value to the state with the success of its very first graduating class and has been growing since into a solid producer of highly skilled graduates.

Today, Florida Poly is nationally ranked and recognized for its top-quality education, career outcomes, and outstanding affordability. It has over 2,300 high-achieving students working toward degrees in

**Florida Polytechnic University was created by the state in 2012 as its only all-STEM public university and welcomed its first class of students in the fall of 2014. The University's goal is to provide an excellent STEM-focused education preparing high-ability students to meet the mounting statewide demand for the high-skill professionals industry needs to thrive.**

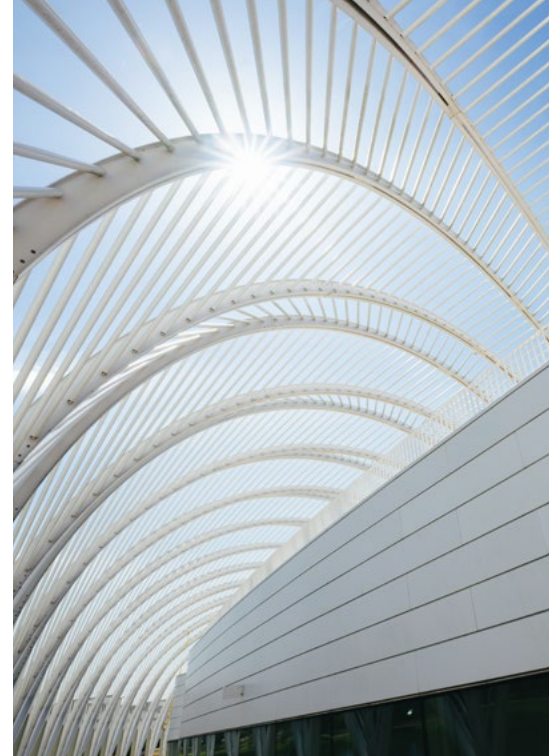
18 undergraduate and five graduate programs. Each program is designed to be responsive to the evolving needs of industry as technology and scientific advances develop. With an emphasis on hands-on education and small class sizes, the University provides students with real-world industry experience through internships, capstone design projects, and employment opportunities with high-tech employers throughout the state.

Over its first 12 years, Florida Poly has deliberately and substantially grown essential aspects of the institution,

including student enrollment, research faculty, academic programs, industry partnerships and campus facilities. Its iconic campus in Lakeland boasts award-winning and architecturally stunning buildings. Its student body has grown significantly, sparking the need to build a fourth residence hall and new dining facility scheduled to open in fall 2028, and a Student Achievement Center to serve as the hub for student life and success.

Florida Poly stands as a beacon of discovery and cutting-edge education in the state of Florida.

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With its distinctive focus on core STEM disciplines, state-of-the-art infrastructure and a commitment to research and industry collaboration, the University has successfully created an environment that fosters creativity, critical thinking and hands-on learning. As it continues to evolve, Florida Poly remains dedicated to shaping the future of its students and making impactful contributions to the fields of engineering and applied sciences, as well as to the state's economy.

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## OUR MISSION

We serve students and industry through educational excellence and the discovery, advancement, and application of knowledge in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

## OUR VISION

Highly desirable graduates and solutions for a resilient high-tech economy.

## ENVISIONED FUTURE

Florida Poly will be ranked as the top STEM university in the Southeast and widely recognized for producing in-demand graduates who are well-rounded and prepared to be the leaders in industry. Attracted by this pipeline of remarkable talent, industry will seek strong collaboration with the University. Through substantial engagement with our students and faculty, this will expand Florida Poly's research influence in critical fields.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### **Excellence & Opportunity:**

To pursue the highest quality of academic and institutional success while ensuring access to opportunities for all students.

**Student Focused:** To prioritize the needs, success, and well-being of students in every aspect of the institution.

**Steadfast Integrity:** To demonstrate an unwavering dedication to honesty, ethical behavior, and transparency in all aspects of the institution

**Community Collaboration:** To work together within and beyond the institution to create mutual support, leverage strengths, and achieve collective success.

**Fearless Curiosity:** To inspire a relentless drive to explore new ideas and take bold, innovative steps, particularly in areas of uncertainty.

**Forward Thinking:** To prioritize a deep commitment to innovation, growth, and readiness for the future



# The Opportunity

Reporting directly to President Dr. Devin Stephenson, the Chief Financial Officer will serve as a key member of Florida Polytechnic University's executive leadership team, helping guide the institution through a period of significant growth and opportunity. The CFO will be a highly engaged, collaborative and solutions-oriented leader who pairs exceptional financial stewardship with a strong commitment to advancing the University's mission and strategic priorities.

This is an on-campus leadership position requiring a consistent and visible presence at Florida Poly. The CFO must be accessible and actively engaged with University leadership, faculty, staff, students and external stakeholders, recognizing that regular in-person interaction is essential to effective leadership and institutional success.

The ideal candidate will demonstrate a high degree of emotional intelligence, sound judgment and interpersonal effectiveness, with the ability to build trust and productive working relationships across all areas of the University. The CFO is expected to foster

respectful, constructive and collaborative relationships with colleagues, understanding that effective financial leadership requires a strong awareness of institutional needs, open communication, thoughtful listening and a commitment to achieving shared objectives.

Florida Poly seeks a proactive problem-solver who approaches challenges with a constructive, solutions-focused mindset. The CFO will go beyond identifying obstacles to help develop practical, timely and sustainable solutions. The successful candidate will contribute to the University's culture by being responsive, approachable and committed to empowering colleagues and enabling their success.

As a member of the executive leadership team, the CFO is expected to actively promote an environment of accountability, support and collaboration while advancing the University's success. The role requires a leader who can navigate complex issues and engage in difficult conversations when necessary while maintaining respect, professionalism, and positive working relationships. Above all, the CFO will model Florida Poly's Guiding Principles and understand that effective financial stewardship and operational excellence are achieved when carried out in partnership with the broader University community.

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# The Opportunity CONTINUED

## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Finance & Accounting:** Provides central financial services, including budget analysis and planning, cash and investment management, collection and recording of revenues, disbursement of funds, financial reporting, fixed asset accountability and control, student financial services, and tax compliance.
- **Facilities & Safety Services:** Supports facilities operations, master planning and construction, engineering, landscape and natural resources, resource management, utilities and energy services, sustainability initiatives, and environmental health and safety across University facilities.
- **Procurement:** Promotes a procurement culture that balances regulatory compliance and appropriate controls with excellent customer service, timely decision-making and practical solutions that support the University's educational and operational mission. Continually evaluates procurement practices, including the University's p-card program, to identify opportunities to improve efficiency, value, vendor relationships and institutional outcomes.
- **Auxiliary Enterprises:** Oversees the operations of auxiliary enterprises, business partnerships and contracts, including parking and transportation services, dining and vending, campus bookstores, retail operations and card services.
- **Risk Management:** Manages a strategic and comprehensive University-wide risk management and insurance program, serving as a key partner across the institution and bringing an informed perspective to improve institutional practices and advance the University's mission.
- Leads the development, implementation and ongoing administration of all insurance-related forecasting, negotiations, program implementation and administrative oversight.
- Brings together units committed to supporting the University's mission with a strong focus on operational excellence and service.
- Provides direct oversight of enterprise-wide projects and monitors their effectiveness and success. This could include public-private partnerships for housing, dining, parking, etc., as well as other construction-related projects associated with the University's growth. This may also include areas such as new internal business process development.
- Partners with and effectively supports senior leaders across the University, thinking creatively to identify opportunities that maximize the financial and operational efficiencies of programs and services. Provides analysis of strategic initiatives and helps lead the organizational change required to realize these efficiencies.
- Leads the budget management process in conjunction with the President, identifying best practices for policies, procedures and organizational structures that promote operational excellence and the effective stewardship of University resources across all functional areas of the institution.
- Serves as the executive liaison to the Finance and Facilities Committee of the Florida Poly Board of Trustees, providing transparent and timely information to support the Board in fulfilling its fiduciary responsibilities. Builds strong relationships with the Florida Board of Governors staff and effectively communicates information related to the University's finances, management of capital assets and strategic initiatives that add value to the institution, community and state.
- Analyzes all aspects of the University operations and synthesizes creative solutions. Ensures employment benefits are administered consistently across the University and promotes a "can-do" attitude centered on collaboration and shared success.



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# The Opportunity

CONTINUED

## REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

- Commitment to high standards of ethical conduct, transparency and accountability, particularly in financial and administrative reporting within a complex institution.
- Ability to formulate and articulate sound policies and to identify, resolve and consult on a wide range of administrative and financial issues with a clear understanding of institutional needs and priorities.
- Ability to identify complex problems, review related information, evaluate options and develop and implement solutions across a large, complex organization.
- Ability to build effective teams, develop and retain talented staff, and lead a large multi-unit organization.
- Ability to successfully implement change across an organization with a broad range of stakeholders, including institutional and state-level governing boards.
- Ability to leverage enterprise systems and technology to provide accurate, timely and relevant information to decision-makers.
- Experience leading financial planning and reporting, as well as budget appropriation and allocation processes, for a public organization with multiple revenue streams and auxiliary enterprises.
- Experience working within a system of shared governance that encourages participation in the decision-making process and promotes administrative accountability.
- Experience facilitating enterprise-wide planning, business prioritization and resource allocation processes that result in increased effectiveness or efficiency.
- Experience working closely with an organization's governing board and presenting financial and operational reports and strategic recommendations.
- Experience ensuring compliance within an environment with complex federal and state laws and regulations, as well as managing audits of an organization's financial operations.
- Experience working with external entities to identify mutually beneficial partnerships to advance the University's academic mission and operational excellence.
- Knowledge of the 4 Disciplines of Execution (4DX) and their application to financial planning, budgeting, and division-wide performance management.
- Excellent verbal, written and interpersonal communication skills.
- Ability to thrive in a dynamic, fast-paced environment.

## PROXIMITY OF RESIDENCE

This position requires the selected candidate to establish permanent residency within **Polk County** on the first day of duty and maintain that residency throughout their entire tenure in this position.

## MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

- Master's degree or higher in a business-related discipline.
- At least 10 years of progressively responsible administrative and financial experience, including executive leadership roles in large, complex organizations, preferably within a higher education institution or other state or governmental agency.
- In lieu of a degree, any appropriate combination of relevant education, experience, and/or certifications may be considered.

## PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Master's degree in business administration
- Doctoral degree in higher education administration, business or a related field

# President Devin Stephenson

Dr. Devin Stephenson became the second president of Florida Polytechnic University in July 2024, bringing more than 30 years of higher education experience, including 17 years as a president and CEO. His extensive experience spans academic affairs, student success, enrollment, athletics, external relations, institutional operations, communications and accreditation, providing him with a broad perspective on the interconnected work required to achieve lasting institutional success.

Prior to Florida Poly, Dr. Stephenson served as president of Northwest Florida State College, where he led sustained enrollment growth, expanded campus facilities and student housing, and strengthened the institution's financial and resource base through increased foundation assets, significant grant acquisition and legislative investments.

Dr. Stephenson's leadership philosophy is grounded in collaboration, accountability and bold thinking. He brings people together around shared goals, challenges teams to continuously improve and empowers leaders to turn institutional priorities into meaningful results. This approach has helped drive significant growth and transformation at Florida Poly.

Under his leadership, enrollment has increased 35% in two years, alongside the addition of new in-demand academic and graduate programs, continued growth of faculty and research enterprise, and strengthened partnerships with industry, higher education and international organizations.

Additionally, Dr. Stephenson has championed significant investments in the student experience and campus infrastructure. This includes the opening of the Gary C. Wendt Engineering Center, the University's third academic building, as well as a state-of-the-art esports arena, a new campus store and the historic launch of Florida Poly's first intercollegiate athletics program. The momentum continues with upcoming construction of a new Student Achievement Center (StAC) and a fourth residence and dining hall to accommodate the University's enrollment growth.



These efforts are expanding Florida Poly's reach, capacity and statewide impact, positioning the University for its next era of advancement and strengthening its distinctive STEM-focused mission.

Dr. Stephenson holds a doctorate and master's degree in administration of higher education from the University of Alabama, a bachelor's degree in business administration from Birmingham-Southern College, and an associate of science degree from Walker Junior College. In 2025, he was appointed to the Royal European Academy of Doctors, an international distinction recognizing his contributions to higher education and leadership.



# About Lakeland, FL

Nestled in the heart of Central Florida between Tampa and Orlando, Lakeland offers an exceptional quality of life in one of the state's most dynamic and rapidly growing regions. Home to more than 125,000 residents, the city combines the warmth and accessibility of a close-knit community with the amenities, culture and opportunities of a larger metropolitan area.

True to its name, Lakeland is known for its natural beauty and more than three dozen lakes woven throughout the community. Lake Morton, famous for its iconic swans, and the historic Lake Mirror Promenade are among the city's signature destinations, offering scenic spaces for walking, running, cycling, picnicking and community events.

Lakeland boasts a dynamic mix of recreation, dining and entertainment. Its vibrant downtown centers on the historic Munn Park district, where locally owned shops, restaurants and gathering spaces create an active community atmosphere. Nearby, the award-winning Bonnet Springs Park blends urban amenities with natural beauty across 168 acres, while Circle B Bar Reserve offers miles of trails through restored wetlands and some of Central Florida's most impressive wildlife viewing. On Saturdays, the Downtown Farmers Curb Market brings residents together for local food, handmade goods and unique finds.

The city also offers a growing culinary and cultural scene, with options ranging from casual local favorites to fine dining. The historic Polk Theatre and Lakeland Community

Theatre offer live performances throughout the year, while the Lakeland Symphony Orchestra has been part of the region's cultural landscape for generations.

With warm, sunny weather throughout much of the year, Lakeland makes it easy to enjoy an active lifestyle year-round. Sports are also an important part of the community. Lakeland has been the spring training home of the Detroit Tigers for decades, and its central location puts residents within easy reach of major professional sports, including the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, Tampa Bay Lightning, Tampa Bay Rays, Orlando Magic and Orlando City SC.

One of Lakeland's greatest advantages is its location. Tampa and Orlando are both within convenient driving distance, providing access to world-class entertainment, professional sports, international airports and some of Florida's most popular destinations. Head west for Busch Gardens and the beaches of the Gulf of America, or east for Walt Disney World, Universal Orlando and SeaWorld.

Above all, Lakeland is defined by its strong sense of community. Generational Lakelanders and newcomers alike contribute to a welcoming city that continues to grow while maintaining its distinctive character. From historic neighborhoods and established communities to new developments, Lakeland offers a range of places to call home. Its combination of natural beauty, cultural amenities, central location and relaxed Florida lifestyle makes Lakeland an exceptional place to live, work and build a future.

# Application & Nomination Process

*Confidential inquiries are welcomed, and nominations are invited.*

## APPLICATIONS

Application materials should be submitted as a .PDF. Materials should include:

1. A letter of interest addressing your experience and qualifications as it relates to this opportunity
2. A current resume

Initial screening of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. Candidates selected for interviews will be asked to provide a minimum of three (3) personal/professional references.

For best consideration, application materials should be provided by **November 16, 2026**.

Further information about Florida Polytechnic University may be found at: [www.floridapoly.edu](http://www.floridapoly.edu)

## NOMINATIONS

If you know someone who would be an outstanding candidate for this opportunity, we encourage you to share this profile and invite them to apply through the outlined process.

## CONSULTANT

Florida Polytechnic University has retained **Daugherty Search Group** to assist the Search Committee in its identification and review of candidates. Kenny Daugherty, President of Daugherty Search Group, is the lead consultant for this search. Request a confidential conversation regarding this search by emailing [kenny@daughertysearch.com](mailto:kenny@daughertysearch.com).



*The search will be conducted with a commitment to confidentiality. Pursuant to section 1004.098, Florida Statutes, applicants' personal identifying information is confidential and exempt from public disclosure*

*requirements. Personal identifying information of applicants selected for the final group who will be interviewing on campus will be made public pursuant to section 119.071, Florida Statutes.*