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Finalists Named for Southwest Minnesota State University Presidency

ST. PAUL, Minn., January 22, 2026 – Minnesota State has named three finalists in the search for the next president of Southwest Minnesota State University. The candidates are Amy Clark, David Jones, and Shadow Robinson.

The candidates were recommended by a search advisory committee that was comprised of students, faculty, staff, and community leaders, and was chaired by Ginny Arthur, president of Metropolitan State University. The candidates are scheduled to conduct campus visits the week of January 26. The campus visits provide an opportunity for students, faculty, staff, and members of the community to meet each of the candidates and offer feedback. Details of the candidates' campus visits and the process for providing feedback are available at

<https://www.smsu.edu/administration/presidentialsearch/nextpresident.html>.

Amy Clark most recently served as the provost and vice president for academic affairs at Nebraska Methodist College (NMC), a role she held from 2018 to October 2025. Previously, she served as dean of health professions at NMC from 2013 to 2015, as well as associate professor during that time. She also held roles as a clinical researcher at the University of Nebraska Medical Center between 2015 and 2018, a visiting professor at Nebraska Wesleyan University between 2015 and 2018, and an assistant and associate professor at Clarkson College in Nebraska from 2002 to 2013. She holds a bachelor's degree from Nebraska Wesleyan University, a master's from the University of Nebraska at Omaha, and a doctorate from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She is scheduled to visit Southwest Minnesota State University on Tuesday, January 27, 2026.

David Jones currently serves as the interim president for Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU), a position he has held since July 1, 2025. Prior to joining SMSU, he held several positions at Minnesota State University, Mankato between 2011 and 2025, including vice president for student affairs and enrollment management, associate vice president for student affairs and enrollment management, and interim vice president for information and technology services. Previous positions include various roles in student affairs and residential life at the University of Alabama and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He was an adjunct professor and adjunct assistant professor at North Carolina State University from 2003 to 2006 and North Carolina Central University between 2003 and 2004. He holds a bachelor's degree from State University of New York at Oswego, a master's from the University of Nebraska at Kearney, and a doctorate from the College of William & Mary. His campus visit is scheduled for Wednesday, January 28, 2026.

Shadow Robinson has served as provost and vice chancellor of academic affairs at the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith since 2022. Previously, he served as the dean of the college of engineering and natural sciences at the University of Tennessee at Martin between 2018 and 2022, and in various roles while a physics faculty member at Millsaps College in Mississippi, including director of the compass curriculum and director of the James Observatory from 2016 to 2018, faculty council president between 2013 and 2015, and chair of the physics department from 2011 to 2018. He holds two bachelor's degrees from the University of Kentucky and a doctorate from Rutgers University. He is scheduled to visit Southwest Minnesota State University on Thursday, January 29, 2026.

The Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities is expected to consider Chancellor Scott Olson's recommendation at its February 18, 2026, meeting. The anticipated start date of the new president is July 1, 2026.

About Southwest Minnesota State University

Southwest Minnesota State University is a four-year public university and a member of Minnesota State colleges and universities. The university prepares students to meet the complex challenges of this century as engaged citizens in their local and global communities. Comprehensive degree programs, taught in the liberal arts tradition, are dedicated to connecting students' academic and practical professional development experiences in southwest Minnesota to the wider world. For more information visit www.smsu.edu.

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Minnesota State includes 26 community and technical colleges and seven state universities serving approximately 270,000 students. It is the third-largest system of two-year colleges and four-year universities in the United States.