SOUTHEAST MISSOURI
University Foundation



Associate Vice President, University Advancement

Position Overview

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About Southeast Missouri State University

Founded in 1873, Southeast Missouri State University (SEMO) is a comprehensive public university located in Cape Girardeau, Missouri. With a longstanding commitment to academic excellence, student success, and regional engagement, SEMO provides an educational experience that combines rigorous academics with hands-on learning, professional preparation, and meaningful connections to the communities it serves.

Today, the University serves approximately 9,000 students through a diverse range of undergraduate and graduate programs. Its academic strengths span business, education, agriculture, cybersecurity, aviation, health-related disciplines, and the fine and performing arts. SEMO also competes at the NCAA Division I level, providing student-athletes with opportunities to excel academically and athletically.

The University's River Campus is a distinctive destination for arts education, offering specialized facilities and programming in music, theater, dance, and the visual arts. Alongside its established academic programs, SEMO continues to explore opportunities to expand its reach through industry partnerships, experiential learning, and emerging fields of study.

Guided by its Fearlessly Forward strategic plan, SEMO is focused on strengthening its role as a regional educational and economic resource while preparing students to succeed in a rapidly changing world. This includes expanding partnerships with employers, creating innovative educational pathways, and connecting classroom learning with practical experience.

As the higher education landscape continues to evolve, SEMO is pursuing new approaches to academic programming, student engagement, and institutional sustainability. Philanthropy and alumni engagement will play an increasingly important role in supporting these ambitions and positioning the University for continued success.



About the Southeast Missouri State University Foundation

Established in 1983, the Southeast Missouri University Foundation serves as the University's primary philanthropic partner, connecting alumni, donors, corporations, foundations, and community leaders with opportunities to invest in the future of Southeast Missouri State University.

Historically, the Foundation's fundraising efforts have centered on scholarships and financial support for students. Today, its philanthropic priorities continue to expand, encompassing academic innovation, faculty support, student experiences, athletics, facilities, and strategic initiatives that advance the University's mission.

The Foundation has experienced substantial financial growth in recent years, with assets increasing from approximately $122 million to $188 million. This progress reflects the generosity of its supporters, stronger financial management practices, and an increasingly strategic approach to institutional advancement.



With nearly 90,000 alumni, an engaged Foundation Board of Directors, and an expanding advancement operation, SEMO has a significant opportunity to broaden its base of support, deepen relationships with donors, and strengthen its culture of philanthropy.

As the Foundation prepares for its next comprehensive fundraising campaign, University Advancement is focused on expanding its fundraising capacity, strengthening internal systems, and building a more coordinated and accountable approach to donor engagement.

The Opportunity

Southeast Missouri State University seeks an accomplished, collaborative, and results-oriented advancement professional to serve as its next Associate Vice President, University Advancement.

Reporting to the Vice President of Advancement, the Associate Vice President, University Advancement will serve as a key member of the advancement leadership team and the principal operational partner to the Vice President. This individual will play an essential role in translating institutional priorities into actionable strategies, strengthening departmental operations, and leading a team of advancement professionals toward measurable results.

The Associate Vice President will oversee the daily operations of University Advancement, helping ensure that fundraising, alumni engagement, donor stewardship, and supporting functions work collaboratively toward shared goals. The successful candidate will bring the organizational discipline necessary to establish clear priorities, improve processes, develop staff, and create a culture of accountability and continuous improvement.

Equally important, this individual will remain an active and effective fundraiser, managing a portfolio of approximately 50 donors and prospects while partnering with the Vice President on significant philanthropic opportunities and preparations for the University's next comprehensive campaign.

This is an opportunity for a proven advancement leader who enjoys both strategy and execution. The ideal candidate will be comfortable moving between high-level institutional priorities and the practical details required to achieve them, bringing sound judgment, initiative, and a genuine commitment to the University's mission.

Key Leadership Priorities

Strengthen Advancement Operations and Organizational Effectiveness
Provide day-to-day leadership for University Advancement, ensuring that departmental activities, resources, and personnel are effectively aligned with institutional and philanthropic priorities. Evaluate existing processes, identify opportunities for improvement, and implement systems that support greater coordination, efficiency, and accountability.

Lead, Develop, and Empower a High-Performing Team
Establish clear performance expectations and measurable goals while fostering a collaborative and supportive working environment. Provide coaching, professional development, and constructive feedback to advancement personnel, building a culture in which employees understand their responsibilities, take ownership of results, and are encouraged to grow professionally.

Advance Fundraising Strategy and Donor Engagement
Maintain an active portfolio of major gift prospects and donors, leading cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship efforts that produce meaningful philanthropic commitments. Partner with the Vice President and other institutional leaders to identify new prospects, deepen existing relationships, and broaden the University's philanthropic support beyond its traditional donor base.

Prepare for the Next Comprehensive Campaign
Help lead the planning and organizational preparation for the Foundation's next comprehensive fundraising campaign. Support the development of campaign priorities, prospect strategies, staffing plans, and performance measures while ensuring the advancement operation has the infrastructure and capacity necessary to execute a successful campaign.

Expand Alumni Engagement and Philanthropic Participation
Provide leadership and strategic direction for alumni relations, developing approaches that strengthen connections with SEMO's nearly 90,000 alumni. Encourage greater alumni involvement through philanthropy, student recruitment, internships, professional opportunities, and meaningful engagement with the University.

Build a Culture of Data-Informed Performance and Accountability
Strengthen the use of fundraising metrics, donor pipeline management, and departmental performance indicators to inform decision-making and improve results. Ensure that advancement professionals have clear goals, defined strategies, and consistent accountability for prospect development, relationship management, and fundraising outcomes.

Cultivate Strong Relationships Across the University
Develop trusted partnerships with University leadership, academic deans, faculty, staff, Foundation board members, and other stakeholders. Serve as an effective advocate for University Advancement, helping connect academic and institutional priorities with philanthropic opportunities while navigating the competing needs of a complex university environment.

The Ideal Candidate

The successful candidate will be an experienced advancement professional who combines demonstrated fundraising success with strong operational leadership, sound judgment, and the ability to lead people through organizational growth and change.

SEMO seeks a leader who understands that effective advancement requires more than securing philanthropic commitments. It requires disciplined planning, collaborative relationships, strong management practices, and the ability to create an environment in which fundraising professionals and institutional partners can succeed.



Candidate Qualifications

The candidate of choice will bring these required qualifications:

- Approximately 8–10 years of progressively responsible experience in fundraising, advancement, or a related field, including meaningful leadership and management responsibilities.
- Demonstrated success cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding major gift donors, with the ability to manage an active portfolio while supporting broader institutional fundraising strategies.
- Experience supervising and developing professional staff, establishing performance expectations, and holding team members accountable for measurable outcomes.
- Knowledge of comprehensive fundraising campaigns, including campaign planning, donor strategy, prospect development, and organizational preparation.
- Strong organizational and operational management skills, with a demonstrated ability to translate strategic priorities into practical plans and measurable results.
- Experience using fundraising technology, donor databases, performance metrics, and reporting systems to improve effectiveness and inform decision-making.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, including the ability to build productive relationships with donors, board members, academic leaders, colleagues, and other institutional stakeholders.
- A collaborative, confident, and adaptable leadership style, with the willingness to offer thoughtful recommendations, challenge existing practices constructively, and take ownership of implementation.
- A commitment to professional development, continuous improvement, and fostering a positive, accountable, and mission-focused organizational culture.

Experience in higher education advancement is preferred, particularly within a university foundation or similarly complex fundraising environment. However, candidates from other mission-driven organizations who possess strong fundraising, leadership, and operational experience are encouraged to be considered.

A bachelor's degree is required; an advanced degree is preferred.

Compensation and Benefits

Southeast Missouri State University anticipates a base salary of $115,000–$130,000, commensurate with qualifications and experience.

The position includes a comprehensive employee benefits package and opportunities for professional development. Relocation assistance may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The Associate Vice President will be based in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, with a substantial on-campus presence expected to support departmental leadership, collaboration, and engagement with University stakeholders.

About Cape Girardeau, Missouri

Located along the Mississippi River in southeastern Missouri, Cape Girardeau offers a distinctive combination of historic character, community amenities, and access to outdoor recreation. As the home of Southeast Missouri State University, the city benefits from a vibrant university community, cultural and athletic events, and a strong connection between the institution and the surrounding region.

Cape Girardeau provides an appealing setting for professionals seeking the opportunity to contribute to a meaningful educational mission while enjoying the character and accessibility of a regional community.

How to Apply

Southeast Missouri State University has retained The Batten Group, a national executive search firm specializing in nonprofit, higher education, healthcare, and mission-based philanthropy to assist in the recruitment of its next Associate Vice President, University Advancement.

Interested candidates are encouraged to submit a resume and cover letter for consideration.

All inquiries and candidate communications will be handled with appropriate confidentiality throughout the search process.

Please contact Robert Driver, Senior Executive Recruiter:
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(217) 418-7345

POLICY ON PLACEMENT AND RECRUITING

The Batten Group and Southeast Missouri State University are equal opportunity employers committed to the principles of non-discrimination in the workplace. Candidates will not be discriminated against on the basis of age, race, creed, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, disability, marital status, veteran status, genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by federal, state, or local law.

