

Maricopa County Community College District (MCCCD)  
Estrella Mountain Community College (EMCC)  
Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA)  
Position Profile

**Position Overview:**

The Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA) is the College's chief academic officer. Reporting to the President, the VPAA will work closely with Executive Leadership, Deans, Faculty Chairs, Faculty Senate, and Staff Representatives. The VPAA promotes academic quality and excellence, partners with Student Affairs and Administrative Services to support students holistically, and supports faculty in developing new and innovative academic and CTE programs to meet the needs of the communities EMCC serves.

The VPAA provides leadership to Academic Affairs to fulfill the college mission, which states the College "provides a quality higher education for our diverse community." With a broad understanding of local, state, regional, and national trends, the VPAA will help guide the college's efforts toward quality and innovation. The VPAA works collaboratively with faculty, students, staff, and the community through shared governance to further the college mission with attention to sustainable strategies to move EMCC forward and foster transparency and trust. In addition, the VPAA ensures EMCC's voice is represented in District councils and committees.

VPAA seeks to make a difference in student lives by working collaboratively with the college community to create engaging learning experiences and programs. They utilize proven technology for instruction and student support services and build on open resources and library offerings. The VPAA promotes a positive student-centric culture and climate, fostering trust and advocacy for excellence and quality.

**The District**

Maricopa Community Colleges District (popularly referenced) is one of the nation's largest and most innovative community college systems. The Maricopa County Community College District is comprised of 10 individually accredited colleges and 31 satellite locations serving approximately 100,000 students and employing over 10,000 faculty and staff. Since its founding in 1962, the Maricopa Community Colleges system has continued to be a critical resource for local communities in the Greater Phoenix Metro Area and a gateway to affordable higher education, particularly for diverse and first-generation students. It offers over 600 associate degree and certificate programs and will be offering baccalaureate degrees beginning in the Fall 2023 semester. Its transfer agreements with more than 40 university partners, including Arizona's public state universities, simplify the process for students wishing to continue their education at a four-year institution, making it an economical and realistic option.

Local and state business leaders and Fortune 500 companies partner with Maricopa Community Colleges as a driving force for economic development and prosperity in Arizona. The leader in Arizona career training, Maricopa Community Colleges, continues to add new programs to reflect the changing industry landscape and create new opportunities for students. It recently added in-demand career programs like artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, cannabis business training, and unstaffed aircraft systems.

With an operating budget exceeding \$1 billion, the district continues to have an enormous

impact. After graduation, most of its alums remain in the county and, collectively with the district, infuse \$7.2 billion into the local economy.

### **The College**

Estrella Mountain Community College (EMCC) is one of ten Maricopa County Community Colleges (MCCCD) and is the newest in the district. MCCCD is one of the largest and oldest community college districts in the United States.

Since opening in 1992, EMCC has worked to create a “sense of place” with a beautiful campus that expresses the historical and cultural values of the surrounding communities while providing students with meaningful and engaging learning environments. Located in the fastest-growing region of the county, EMCC enrolls approximately 18,000 students annually and is planned to be a large comprehensive learning college of more than 40,000 students. EMCC is working diligently to respond to the West Valley’s explosive community and industry growth. EMCC has a Western Maricopa Education Center (West-MEC) Southwest Campus that is guided by major industry partners and focuses on providing students with career pathways into the energy and manufacturing industries.

Estrella Mountain Community College is an innovative higher-learning organization with dynamic, dedicated, and engaged faculty and staff responding to the diverse needs of West Valley communities. The U.S. Department of Education has designated EMCC as a Hispanic Serving Institution and a Majority-Minority Serving Institution. Learners have an opportunity to successfully accomplish their educational and personal goals through the following college purposes: developmental education, general education, transfer education, learner support services, workforce development, community education, civic responsibility, and global engagement.

Some recent accomplishments include being named the 2023 Best of the West Excellence in Education and Workforce Development Award Winner with the City of Avondale and receiving the Governor’s Innovator of the Year - Academia award for the Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning programs, which launched in 2020 in partnership with Intel and the Arizona Commerce Authority. It is the country’s first Intel-designed artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning associate degree and certificate of completion program. EMCC’s President co-founded the AZ HSI Consortium, and the College hosted the inaugural AZ HSI Summit in 2022— registration for the highly anticipated summit filled nearly 30 days before the event. In addition, the EMCC nursing program is ranked second in the state, and the nursing class of Spring 2023 achieved a 100% pass rate on the NCLEX exams.

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states the College “provides a quality higher education for our diverse community.” With a broad understanding of local, state, regional, and national trends, the VPAA will help guide the college’s efforts toward quality and innovation. The VPAA works collaboratively with faculty, students, staff, and the community through shared governance to further the college mission with attention to sustainable strategies to move EMCC forward and foster transparency and trust. In addition, the VPAA represents EMCC on councils and committees at the district level to advocate for college needs.

The VPAA seeks to make a difference in student lives by budgeting effectively to develop and implement programs in partnership with Student Affairs and the community. They support the use of proven technology for instruction and student support services and build on open resources and Library offerings. The VPAA promotes a positive student-centric culture and climate and resolves conflict to build trust and advocacy for excellence and quality.

## **Challenges and Opportunities**

### **Leadership**

- Provide stability in academic leadership for the growth, development, and well-being of the college.
- Utilize the expertise and commitment of EMCC faculty and staff—unifying them to build enthusiasm, trust, and success, and contribute to meeting EMCC’s vision and mission.
- Promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and access among students, faculty, and staff to foster a sense of EMCC culture and community to maximize collaboration and focus on encouraging open and transparent communication across EMCC, especially among Academic Affairs departments.
- Continue striving to be the very best college by having a strong understanding of the surrounding communities to offer relevant learning opportunities to meet the needs of EMCC’s students and the West Valley.
- Support employee development to maximize their energy, commitment, creativity, and well-being as they contribute to continuous improvement at EMCC.

### **Communication**

- Strengthen partnerships by working with K-12 partners, as well as other community members, to ensure that they are familiar with EMCC programs such as Honors, ACE (Achieving a College Education), Hoop of Learning, STEM Center of Excellence, and Dual Enrollment.
- Meet EMCC students’ educational needs with in-person, hybrid, and online

modalities and build EMCC's community connections among its students, faculty, and staff by reinforcing relationships to increase student recruitment, enrollment, retention, completion, and success.

- Collaborate with industry partners, surrounding cities, and occupational faculty to provide resources and programs (Nursing, Occupational Education, Instructional Computing) to support the growing workforce needs of the West Valley.

### **Budget**

- There is huge growth potential in the West Valley, and the VPAA must clarify the academic program's direction, including meeting the needs of business and industry and the surrounding community while efficiently using available college resources.
- Utilize data-informed strategic scheduling within budget parameters dedicated to fostering an engaging student experience responsive to students' needs and accommodating learning preferences and modalities.

### **Futurecasting and Strategic Planning**

- Develop and implement an academic plan that provides a clear vision and direction for Academic Affairs that encourages faculty and staff to work together to grow, develop, and contribute to making the vision a reality.
- Prepare students for university transfer and future employment by ensuring curriculum, academic offerings, programs, and corresponding support align to and advance the Academic Plan.
- Create a comprehensive plan to address equity gaps that impact students' ability to learn, persist, and succeed at EMCC with a sense of belonging.
- Work with faculty and staff to improve and enhance technology via the EMCC Technology Plan.
- Evaluate and analyze the need for new programs and pathways considering sustainability and industry demands.
- Understands emerging trends and challenges within higher education to develop action plans that offer students short-term certificates and micro-credentials.

### **Ideal Characteristics of the VPAA**

#### **Leadership**

- An experienced academic leader who champions the teaching/learning process with a clear sense of direction for EMCC's academic future.
- An empathetic, compassionate, and accessible leader who works to understand EMCC's culture by building relationships, spending time in classrooms, in faculty/staff offices, and being actively present throughout the campus, making connections with all stakeholders, and collaborating with EMCC divisions and departments.
- An honest, transparent, collaborative, and inclusive leader who values faculty and staff, provides sufficient time for input, and encourages employee ideas within a shared governance framework before making decisions.
- A decisive, courageous, and accountable decision-maker who utilizes data, listens, considers faculty/staff input, openly communicates expectations, accepts responsibility for their actions, and communicates decisions along with the rationale for making them.
- A strong advocate for students, faculty, and staff who understands their needs to successfully contribute, support, and act upon positive student learning conditions and outcomes.
- Relevant classroom teaching experience to understand the roles and responsibilities of faculty in the classroom, as well as their additional duties including committee work.

### **Communication**

- An active listener with strong communication skills who regularly reaches out to faculty and staff to connect and learn about Academic Affairs' team's strengths, as well as to provide needed support.
- An ethical and equitable administrator who leads with integrity and values communication and diverse perspectives and considers all factors in the decision-making process.
- An academic leader who works closely with the campus community to assess the needs of students to ensure that students are retained and successfully accomplish their educational and training goals.
- A person who can, through shared governance, collaboratively problem-solve, make a decision (no matter how unpopular the decision may be), effectively communicate the decision, and bring the college together to move forward as a whole.

## **Budget**

- An experienced and pragmatic leader who is knowledgeable about college budget processes and their alignment with the Academic Plan and College goals.

## **Futurecasting and Strategic Planning**

- A strategic and focused leader who will guide and support EMCC in establishing a long-term comprehensive academic plan, including transfer pathways, as well as career training that provides a balance between in-person instructional offerings, as well as online options.

## **Minimum Qualifications**

### **Minimum Qualifications for Academic pathway:**

Master's Degree in a teaching field related to area(s) of assignment and four years of experience in an academic leadership and/or supervisory role in higher education, and three years of teaching that includes curriculum/coursework development. Examples of academic leadership/supervisory experience includes: division/department chair, project management, policy development, administration, evaluation and compliance, committee leadership, program director, and shared governance.

OR

### **Minimum Qualifications for non-academic pathway:**

Master's Degree from a regionally accredited institution in education or field related to area of assignment and four years of progressively responsible management and/or leadership experience in the field of assignment that includes two years of supervisory experience. Examples of student affairs academic support management/leadership experience includes: program management, project management, budget development and management related to programs or projects, staff supervision, policy development, administration, evaluation and compliance. Equivalency allowed for Non-Academic areas.

## **Desired Qualifications**

- Earned Doctorate degree from a regionally accredited post-secondary institution.
- Three years teaching experience at a comprehensive higher education institution to effectively support and advocate for faculty.
- Four years experience leading academic and occupational programming in a two-year and/or other higher education institutions.
- Experience leading in a shared governance environment.
- Successful experience leading in a college that embraces diversity, equity, inclusion, and access in its programs and services.
- Experience working at a Hispanic-Serving Institution(HSI) or Minority-Serving Institution (MSI) in a multi-college community college District
- Experience with budget development and allocation of funds.
- Experience with the equitable application of processes and procedures involving the evaluation of probationary faculty, instructional grievances, and personnel management
- Experience working with faculty to develop an assessment of student learning model, which informs budget development and allocation of funds.
- Experience with accreditation (reaffirmation) agency, planning, preparation, and implementation (e.g., Accreditation Liaison Officer, Peer Reviewer, etc.)
- Experience developing strong partnerships and responsiveness within a

community and commitment and delivery of student success programs and enrollment initiatives.