University Administrator (Chief Legal Officer)
Valdosta State University

FLSA Status: Exempt (Executive)
Job Type: Full Time
Application Due: Immediately

SUMMARY:
Valdosta State University seeks a highly qualified Chief Legal Officer (CLO) to oversee and manage the delivery of legal services for Valdosta State University. The Chief Legal Officer represents the University in a broad range of complex matters, advising the President, senior administrators, faculty and staff members with respect to federal and state laws, policies of the Board of Regents, and institutional statutes and policies related to the operation of Valdosta State University. The responsibilities include, but are not limited to, contracts, discrimination, conflicts of interest, student affairs, intellectual property, personnel and employment concerns and academic freedom. The CLO supports the mission of the University through provision of timely, accurate and concise legal advice to minimize exposure to risk, ensure compliance with all laws and regulations and to assist the senior leadership in achieving strategic goals.

PRIMARY DUTIES AND RELATED RESPONSIBILITIES:
May serve on the President's cabinet in order to represent a major division of the university, provide information and advice, and participate in university decision-making processes. Support Academic Affairs as request by the Provost or his/her designee in processing visas and work authorization for international faculty. Provide support with athletic sponsorships, contracts, single source procurement, NCAA rules compliance, etc. on an as needed basis when requested by the Athletic Director. Provide legal guidance and support to the VSU Foundation and VSU Real Estate Foundation as needed and when requested by the CEOs of those related entities. Support the Chief Officer to the President as needed with her/his work with local governments. Provide guidance as needed to the Director of Institutional Effectiveness and the University Council on matters related to policy revision and/or adoption. Serve on the University Council (the university’s senior policy and strategic planning council) and other university committees.

Develop and implement goals, policies, and procedures
Draft, review, and approve policies and procedures, regulations, bylaws, and other legal documents. Plan, develop, and implement University objectives, goals, and strategic initiatives as they relate to making informed decisions on legal issues and ensuring that VSU is operating within the limits prescribed the law. Review and advise on all legal matters relevant to the University, including employment law, policies, procedures, rules, and regulations. Conduct research on legal matters, codes, statutes, judicial decisions, etc. on behalf of the institution.

Provide leadership
Provide legal counsel and guidance on a variety of legal and policy matters relevant to the University, including, but not limited to, those relating to students, faculty, and staff. Anticipate and identify legal issues and risks, and recommend viable legal strategies and solutions. Review, research, interpret, and prepare both written and oral opinions on a wide variety of legal issues. Responsible for planning, directing, coordinating, and managing daily operations of the Office of Legal Affairs. Provide training to the campus community on various legal issues through seminars and meetings.

Manage personnel
Oversee recruitment, training, supervision, and evaluation of unit staff. Organize, prioritize, and schedule work assignments. Design, establish, and maintain the departmental structure and staffing level needed to effectively accomplish the goals and objectives for the Office of Legal Affairs. Provide general oversight to legal work of other university attorneys and outside counsel; consults on difficult or sensitive issues.
**University representative**
Represent the legal position of the University to internal and external groups and individuals. Respond to questions, concerns from the system office on all legal matters and attend judicial and administrative proceedings as required. Establish, foster and promote effective collaborations with the community, local governments, the system office, and state government. Maintain confidentiality of privileged information and performs a wide range of duties that require sensitivity, independent judgment, diplomacy, discretion, and flexibility.

**Manage budget**
Manage the department’s budget. Anticipate departmental needs and track expenses. Make appropriate recommendations that impact resource allocation. Operate within established budgets and effectively manage capital and operating budgets.

**Participate in university decision-making**
Advise the President, Cabinet, and University leadership on potential issues and recommend appropriate follow up responses or actions. Review, research, interpret, and provide advice on a wide variety of legal issues to members of the campus community as requested. Draft and review contracts, MOUs, leases and other documents as well as lead review, evaluation, and changes to institutional and departmental policies. Organize and prioritize critical issues and required information to facilitate efficient decision making. Provide information, advice, and participate in university decision-making groups.

**COMPENSABLE FACTORS:**
Position duties and responsibilities require exceptionally well-developed communication and interpersonal skills in order to successfully handle problems or situations, which are critical to the success of services, operations, and/or projects. Positive or negative impact on public relations or the University's public image is considered to be major. Issues or problems would require the attention of the President/Board and would typically require formal actions or decisions. The reputation of the University would be greatly enhanced or jeopardized. Decisions made affect the long range future of the University. Decisions determine the scope, direction and goals of the University. Complexity & Work requires considerable judgment, initiative, and ingenuity. Work requires the ability to formulate and administrate policies and programs for major divisions or University functions. Nature of work regularly requires hours over and above 40 per week. High volume and variable work demands and deadlines impose a strain on a routine basis or considerable stress intermittently; OR regular direct contacts with distressed individuals within the immediate work environment; AND/OR exposure to demands and pressures from persons other than immediate supervisor. Involves scheduling, supervision, and evaluation of work as superior of directors and managers.

**REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS:**
Juris Doctorate and nine years related legal experience, with particular emphasis on experience as general counsel or equivalent for governmental, higher education, corporate or other complex organizations. Must be either (i) an Active Member of the State Bar of Georgia, or (i) be capable and committed to achieving Active Member Status with the State Bar of Georgia within one year of the date of hire.

Position Requires completion of VSU’s Annual Compliance Training course
Position Requires a Criminal Background Check
Position Requires a Credit Check

**PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:** Knowledge of University System of Georgia Board of Regents policies, procedures, and practices or similar experience within a comparable state system preferred. Professional experience working in a higher education setting also preferred.
ESSENTIAL KSAs:

Knowledge: Knowledge of federal and state laws, rules and regulations impacting higher education including Copyright and Fair Use, TEACH Act, and HIPPA. Knowledge of state and federal employment and discrimination law, in particular, the provisions of Title IX. Knowledge of Board of Regents policies and procedures. Knowledge of state ethics and government transparency regulations. Knowledge of the Georgia Open Records Act and the Georgia Open Meetings Act. Knowledge of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”). Knowledge of the Georgia Tort Claims Act. Knowledge of the Georgia State Purchasing Act and other laws governing public procurement. Knowledge of faculty-related employment standards, such as those set forth by the American Association of University Professors.

Skills: Judgment, tact, and diplomacy to provide legal counsel and advice assisting senior administrators to achieve their strategic goals and objectives. Outstanding interpersonal skills to interact effectively and develop and maintain productive working relationships with an array of individuals, departments, programs, diverse interests, and constituencies. Outstanding verbal and presentation skills, including the ability to communicate clearly, logically, and persuasively during interactions. Outstanding communication skills, including active listening skills.

Abilities: Exceptional ability to draft accurate, complete, and persuasive legal documents. Intellectual and conceptual flexibility to analyze, interpret, present, and write about complex problems, issues, and concepts in a clear, concise, timely fashion and to respond diplomatically to sensitive and critical issues. Strong computer fluency skills including the ability to conduct legal and other research. Excellent negotiating skills. High level of ethics and professionalism. Must be in good standing with the State Bar of Georgia or, if licensed in another state, with the mandatory bar association of that state. Commitment to train/educate the campus on legal issues. Ability to manage employees/office. Provide guidance on internal investigations and audits. Ability to effectively prioritize and multi-task.

CANDIDACY: The ideal candidate will have:

- A proven track as an experienced, competent, progressive, and visionary leader who will assess, improve, and lead all legal affairs for the institution.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills including demonstrated ability to develop and maintain constructive and professional relationships with University administrators and staff, campus leadership, constituents at all levels and industry partners.
- Proven experience in the judicial system and procedures, institutional policies and procedures and general governance matters, handling current and developing legal issues and trends in educational law and related areas.
- Must be comfortable providing competent legal advice and guidance to senior university officials on a wide range of legal and policy issues.
- Exceptional interpersonal skills for navigating and influencing within a complex environment with varying demands and considerations.
- Highly efficient in research and analysis of the law as well as risk management and compliance.

Valdosta State University is an Equal Opportunity educational institution and has a strong institutional commitment to diversity. In that spirit, we are particularly interested in receiving applications from a broad spectrum of people, including, but not limited to minorities and individuals with disabilities. Valdosta State University has a non-discrimination policy that includes sex, race, color, sexual orientation, religion, age, marital status, national origin, disability, and veteran status.