



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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News Release

Dwight C. Watson named new chancellor of UW-Whitewater

Appointment takes effect Aug. 1

MADISON, Wis.—**Dr. Dwight C. Watson**, Provost and Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs at Southwest Minnesota State University, has been named the 17th Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin–Whitewater.

The University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents today unanimously approved Watson's appointment, following the recommendation made by a selection committee. Watson will step into the leadership post on Aug. 1, 2019.

Watson has served since 2015 as the Provost and Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs at Southwest Minnesota State University, an institution serving about 7,300 students as part of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System. In this role, he has focused on student achievement and removing barriers to success. He designed and implemented policies and practices pertaining to diversity, inclusion, access, and equity. Watson helped build collaborative relationships with two-year community and technical colleges, including creating transfer pathways and place-bound 2+2 programs. Working collaboratively with shared governance, he has overseen successful accreditation, assessment, and strategic planning. He has fundraising and government relations expertise.

Previously, Watson served as Dean of the College of Education at the University of Northern Iowa (2010-2015); Associate Dean of the Teacher Education Program at the University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire (2007-2010); and Chair of the Department of Education at Hamline University (2002-2007). As a professor, his primary teaching focus was literacy development for young and adolescent readers. His scholarship has focused on applied research connected to the literacy and language acquisition of students of color and urban learners. His teaching experience also includes PK-12 classrooms.

"Dwight has demonstrated an ability to build meaningful relationships and to lead faculty and staff as a provost and dean. He is an accomplished faculty member," said UW System President Ray Cross. "He is approachable and authentic, and his references repeatedly described his leadership style as collaborative and engaging."

"I am inspired by UW-Whitewater's commitment to providing its students transformational and empowering education experiences," Watson said. "As a first-generation college attendee of modest means, I found that higher education provided me the functional, navigational skills that I needed to access future opportunities. With a focus on access, affordability, service, and success, my work now is to inspire learners to achieve and to remove barriers for students so they can have access to greater opportunities."

Watson holds an Ed.D. in Education (Curriculum and Instruction) from North Carolina State University. He earned his Master of Education degree, bachelor's degree in Elementary Education, and Associate of Arts degree in Liberal Arts Education from the University of South Carolina.



“Dr. Watson is a great fit for our campus,” said UW-Whitewater Associate Professor Eric Compas, who served as vice-chair of the 11-member [Search and Screen Committee](#) that recommended a list of finalists. “He wants to build on the strengths that we have, help us to better tell our story, and write UW-Whitewater’s next chapter.”

“We were very impressed with Dr. Watson as an educational leader who understands what it takes to help students succeed in college,” said Regent Tracey Klein, chair of the Special Regent Committee that interviewed the finalists with Cross. “Dr. Watson is a well-established scholar whose leadership and vision will complement UW-Whitewater. He will be a great asset to the university, the UW System, and the state.”

Other members of the Special Regent Committee are Regents Mike Jones, Regina Millner, Janice Mueller, and Drew Petersen.

In line with market-based compensation guidelines approved by the Board of Regents in 2018, Watson will earn \$240,000 as chancellor.

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Resources

- CV: <http://www.uww.edu/news/archive/2019-04-chancellor-finalists>
- Photo: <http://www.uww.edu/news/archive/2019-04-chancellor-finalists>
- Search process: <https://www.uww.edu/chancellor-search>
- UW-Whitewater: www.uww.edu

For more than 150 years, the University of Wisconsin–Whitewater has been inspiring, engaging, and transforming the lives of its students, faculty, and staff. Founded as a Normal School in 1868, UW-Whitewater is one of the oldest institutions in the University of Wisconsin System. Today the university serves more than 13,000 students at its Whitewater and Rock County campuses and offers an associate degree, 50 undergraduate majors, 13 master’s degree programs, a doctoral degree, and an education specialist degree. Degree programs are offered through the colleges of Arts and Communication, Business and Economics, Education and Professional Studies, Integrated Studies and Letters and Sciences.

The University of Wisconsin System serves more than 170,000 students. Awarding nearly 37,000 degrees annually, the UW System is Wisconsin’s talent pipeline, putting graduates in position to increase their earning power, contribute to their communities, and make Wisconsin a better place to live. More than 80 percent of in-state UW System graduates stay in Wisconsin five years after earning a degree. The UW System provides a 23:1 return on state investment. UW System institutions also contribute to the richness of Wisconsin’s culture and economy with groundbreaking research, new companies and patents, and boundless creative intellectual energy.

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