

Michelle Gates



SUMMARY

- Financial executive with 17+ years of higher education experience and broad knowledge in administration, finance and operations.
- Results-driven, strategic thinker with demonstrated ability to execute innovative solutions.
- Respected as a trusted advisor, leader, and collaborator across wide constituencies.
- Expert in identifying and developing high performing leadership teams.
- Ability to adapt and assimilate quickly with diverse peoples and organizations.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO, Chicago, IL

2014 – 2016

Not-for-profit creative arts and media college with 9,000 students. \$435M assets, \$200M operating budget, \$145M endowment and 4,700 faculty and staff.

Chief Financial Officer and VP for Business Affairs

Reporting to the President, member of senior leadership team, responsible to provide institution-wide leadership with broad and strategic oversight of finance, administration and operations. Responsibility scope includes Finance, Budget, Student Financial Services, Information Technology, Human Resources, Facilities, Capital Projects, Space and Campus Planning, Real Estate, and Procurement. 6 direct reports, total staff of 150. New president and senior leadership team. Key challenges included enrollment declines, lack of enrollment strategy, operating expenses exceeded revenues, shrinking margins, lack of policy, procedures or investments in programs/infrastructure.

- Built strong working relationships with president, provost, senior leadership, direct reports.
- Hired and led high performing, cross functional leadership teams.
- Led transformative change in financial decision making and planning processes.
- Developed comprehensive long term financial, budgeting and capital planning model.
- Established budget, planning and analysis functions; initiated processes; hired AVP lead.
- Transformed finance and administration functions through the use of technology, process development, re-engineering, and policy.
- Launched campus-wide technology plan to upgrade IT infrastructure and services.
- Executed financial strategy to stabilize long term finances and balance deficit budgets using variety of methods.
- Executed real estate strategy for campus planning, identified opportunities, positioned partnership exploration, restructured debt and mortgages to ensure long range flexibility.
- Introduced metric driven allocation methods; launched CFO-Provost co-sponsored RCM task force; wrote “guiding principles” for model deliverable.
- Built strong Board relationships, staffed finance related committees (finance, investment, audit, real estate) with preparation, pre-meetings and materials and presentations.

EMERSON COLLEGE, Boston, MA

2012 – 2014

Premier private, not-for-profit college focusing on communication and liberal arts. 4,500 students, \$685M assets, \$200M operating budget, \$150M endowment and 3,200 faculty and staff.

Sr. Associate Vice President for Financial Affairs

Reported to CFO/VP Administration and Finance, member VP leadership team, frequent attendee at Cabinet meetings. Responsible to lead and develop Finance, Budget, Investment, Procurement, Risk Management, and Business Intelligence (BI) functions. Staffed Board committee meetings for Finance, Audit, Investment and Capital. Member of Emergency Management Team. 5 direct reports, 15 total staff. Newly created, limited duration position of 2-3 years to deliver change management, implement operational improvements, systemize process and develop policy.

- Transformed focus from data entry to financial oversight, analysis, and decision support.
- Assembled and led high performing teams and delivered higher quality services.
- Restructured to create and staff Budget, Treasury, Risk Management, and BI.
- Improved comprehensive long term financial, budget and capital planning model.
- Developed and improved planning processes and launched multi-year budget planning.
- Implemented new chart of accounts to support financial oversight, planning and reporting.
- Developed all funds financial management reporting where none had existed.
- Implemented operational efficiencies by integrating and systematizing processes.

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY, Abu Dhabi, UAE

2010 – 2012

Global liberal arts and research university with 750 students, part of NYU's Global University Network with the academic program commencing in 2010, member AAU. \$69M assets, \$117M operating budget, and 300 faculty and staff. 2 year assignment.

Director, Budget and Planning

Reporting to CFO, member of senior leadership team and core NYUAD campus start-up team. Position responsible to establish and lead budget and planning functions. 4 direct reports.

- Developed and delivered budget and planning functions and processes for new campus.
- Hired diverse international and cross cultural team.
- Engaged regularly with NYU counterparts, leadership and Abu Dhabi government team.
- Member leadership team for budget deliberations with government, presentations to joint governing board.
- Co-created all MIS reports required for joint oversight by NYU and Abu Dhabi government.

NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY, Flagstaff, AZ

2005 – 2010

Public high research university with satellite campuses and 28,000 students. \$1.1B in assets, \$491M operating budget, 4,700 faculty and staff.

Director, University Budget Operations

2007 – 2010

Associate Budget Director

2005 – 2007

Management responsibility included university-wide all funds budget planning, oversight and administration; research administration; personnel position management; faculty and staff personnel contract administration; fiscal analysis and reporting functions. Member of VP leadership team, member of university Information Technology Steering Committee. Prepared materials and staffed Board meetings for Budget. 3 direct reports, 8 total staff.

- Transformed focus from data entry to analysis through business process streamlining, technology integration, and web based budgeting.
- Developed university-wide budget and planning process, and related training programs to roll out integrated technology to various constituents.
- Assembled team to provide complex analysis, timely and credible information and analysis to support leadership strategy, planning and decision-making.
- Instrumental in launching capital projects review committee and capital project audits.
- Led implementation of new enterprise-wide budgeting and reporting system (SAP/BPC) with cross function team of 25+, on time and under budget.
- Developed and refined financial modeling and reporting for key revenue and expense indicators including tuition, salaries and employee related costs.

CITY OF ROSEBURG, OREGON

2003 – 2004

Population of 22,500, \$58M budget, 165 FTE employees.

Finance Director

Represented city as Chief Financial and Budget Officer. Responsible for financial and business operations, fiscal oversight and investment related activities. Led strategic planning, budget and resource allocation planning. Active member of the city’s management team and regularly engaged with and presented financial information to City Council. Participated in team implementation of GASB 34. 5 direct reports, 11 FTE total staff.

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON, Eugene, OR

1998 – 2003

\$580M flagship public university, member of AAU. 24,000 students.

Budget and Financial Analyst, Budget Office

2000 – 2003

Interim Business Manager, School of Law (concurrent)

2002 – 2003

Fiscal Coordinator, College of Arts & Sciences

1998 – 2000

EDUCATION

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY, Tempe AZ, M.B.A.

2010

PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY, Portland, OR, B.A, Business Administration

1992

PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY, Portland, OR, International Business Cert.

1992