

Peter C. Fackler, former v.p., selected Clarion University's interim president

Harrisburg – The Board of Governors of Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education today selected Peter C. Fackler to serve as interim president of Clarion University of Pennsylvania. Mr. Fackler previously served as the university's interim vice president for finance and administration from 2012 to 2015.

"It is important that we maintain strong leadership during the search for a new, permanent president for Clarion University; someone who can keep the university moving forward during this period of transition," said Board of Governors Chairwoman Cynthia D. Shapira. "Mr. Fackler has demonstrated his leadership throughout his career, including during his previous tenure at Clarion. His familiarity with the university and the State System should be of further benefit as he assumes this new role."

"Peter already has provided enormous contributions to Clarion University," said State System Interim Chancellor Karen M. Whitney, who, prior to being selected by the Board earlier this year to serve in her current position, was Clarion's president for seven years. "As a member of the administrative team, he worked closely with the university's top leadership in developing key initiatives. That experience will be important as he takes on this new role, and guides the university during this time of transition."

Mr. Fackler, a native of Unionville, Pa., in Chester County, holds a bachelor's degree in economics from Duke University and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Michigan. He also studied at both Harvard University's Institute for Educational Management and Columbia University's Teachers College.

He has more than 30 years' experience in higher education, after beginning his career as an accountant with Price Waterhouse (now PricewaterhouseCoopers) in New York. He most recently served as interim vice president of finance and administration at Misericordia University.

"I am looking forward to reuniting with friends and colleagues at Clarion University during the transition to a new president and to working with faculty and staff in service to the university's students and the local Clarion and wider Pennsylvania communities," Mr. Fackler said.

Mr. Fackler will serve as interim president at Clarion until the successful conclusion of a national search for a permanent president.

The Board of Governors is responsible for hiring university presidents within the State System. When the need for temporary leadership at a university occurs, the chancellor—in consultation with the chair of the Council of Trustees—makes a recommendation to the Board of Governors, which then meets to ratify the selection. An interim president serves as the university's chief executive officer, with the same responsibilities and authority as a permanent president.

“On behalf of the Clarion University Council of Trustees, I am delighted with the appointment of Peter Fackler as the university’s interim president,” said Council of Trustees Chairwoman JD Dunbar. “Many on campus know Peter as a collaborative leader from his tenure as interim vice president for finance and administration. His passion for and familiarity with Clarion make him an ideal choice.

“I’d like to express my appreciation to acting President Todd Pfannestiel for his energy and leadership as acting president. Finally, thank you to trustee Milissa Bauer, chair of the presidential search committee, and the entire search committee for their work during the search for an interim president, as well as their service as the search for the 17th president of Clarion University commences.”

Mr. Fackler was hired as interim vice president for administration and finance at Clarion University in 2012. He worked with the president and others to align staffing with the university’s strategic direction and to address a significant structural budget deficit. He also worked with the provost on strategic changes to the university’s financial aid program to utilize it as a means of helping to grow enrollment in targeted ways and with the vice president for student affairs to put in place a plan to expand athletics offerings and athletics scholarships for women.

He previously was vice president for financial affairs and treasurer at Bates College in Lewiston, Maine, for six years, where he served as the college’s chief financial officer and senior adviser to the president and Board of Trustees on matters of fiscal and budgetary policy. He served as vice president for business and finance and treasurer at Alfred University in New York for more than a decade, beginning in 1986.

Mr. Fackler first served as an assistant professor of accounting, then as associate vice president for finance at West Chester University of Pennsylvania from 1980 to 1986 and as vice president for administration and comptroller for the School of Visual Arts in New York from 1974 to 1982.

Pennsylvania’s State System of Higher Education is the largest provider of higher education in the Commonwealth, enrolling more than 100,000 degree-seeking students and thousands more in certificate and other career-development programs. Collectively, the 14 universities that comprise the State System offer more than 2,300 degree and certificate programs in more than 530 academic areas. Nearly 520,000 State System university alumni live in Pennsylvania.

The State System universities are Bloomsburg, California, Cheyney, Clarion, East Stroudsburg, Edinboro, Indiana, Kutztown, Lock Haven, Mansfield, Millersville, Shippensburg, Slippery Rock and West Chester Universities of Pennsylvania. The universities also operate branch campuses in Oil City (Clarion), Freeport and Punxsutawney (IUP), and Clearfield (Lock Haven), and offer classes and programs at several regional centers, including the Dixon University Center in Harrisburg and in Center City in Philadelphia.