

June 3, 2015

Presidential Search Committee  
West Liberty University  
208 University Drive  
West Liberty, WV 26074

Dear Members of the Presidential Search Committee,

I grew up in Rome, Georgia where the old Rome High mascot was the Hilltopper. I never thought I would see that mascot name again. Yet having spent part of my career in northern Kentucky, I am well acquainted with West Liberty and its historic past, its vibrant campus community, and its commitment to innovative education. It has an excellent reputation as a high-quality institution with a commitment to student success, curricular innovation, and synthesizing liberal education with professional preparation. Its dedicated faculty and their commitment to fusing the traditional liberal arts and science with practical professional education provide West Liberty with the necessary components to ensure a bright future for its students, faculty, and staff as well as the local community and the state of West Virginia.

I would like to submit my letter of application and resume for the position of president of West Liberty University. I currently serve as Vice President for University Advancement at Southern Polytechnic State University, a comprehensive university with the University System of Georgia with an enrollment of over 7,000 students. I oversee the divisions of Development, Alumni and Governmental Relations, Public Relations, and Economic Development. SPSU has a statewide mission for science, engineering, and technology and we operate joint degree programs on campuses across Georgia. SPSU is ranked third in our system for incoming freshman SAT scores, behind the flagship institutions of Georgia Tech and the University of Georgia. I work closely with our system office and its staff on legislative, philanthropic, and economic development issues and have served on several system task forces. Southern Poly is currently in a consolidation phase with Kennesaw State University, another USG institution, which comes to completion this summer.

My background in higher education has afforded me the opportunity to gain experience in a wide range of institutional areas including academics, development, enrollment management, strategic planning, fiscal management, economic development, and community engagement. I am student-focused leader who thinks strategically and believes in collegiality, shared governance, and fiscal transparency.

**Academics:** I have been an active faculty member at all my institutions. As Associate Provost at Southern Seminary and as Associate Dean and Associate Professor of Sociology at Presbyterian College, I developed an understanding of the complexities of the academic program and I would

welcome the opportunity to work with the faculty in creating, developing, and sustaining a necessary balance between traditional inquiry, innovative instruction, and professional preparation. Our recruitment and branding efforts at SPSU have raised the institution's academic reputation and made us a first choice institution. During my time at Southern Polytechnic, we have developed an extensive on-line campus which offers degrees at both the undergraduate and graduate level. Our delivery method has enhanced both the quality of the on-line delivery as well as the financial efficiency and return on investment. We have developed articulation agreements with the entire technical college system in Georgia which has created an enrollment pipeline to on-campus and on-line courses.

**Development:** I have served in the development and fundraising role at three institutions where I oversaw all aspects of fund raising including annual giving, capital campaigns, planned giving, event planning, corporate and foundation relations, and endowment management. I have developed, implemented, and managed campaigns ranging from \$30 million to \$172 million, created new effective vehicles for engaging prospective donors, and moved Southern Polytechnic from being at the bottom of annual giving for the University System of Georgia to being number six out of 36 institutions, many of which are much larger universities.

**Enrollment Management:** Enrollment management is a complex issue that requires a multi-pronged strategic plan. At Southern Poly, our enrollment has grown 90% since my arrival. This enrollment growth has occurred due to many initiatives including a significant branding campaign, significant increases in strategic scholarships, new marketable degree programs, extensive retention efforts, the addition of key facilities (mainly new housing), an emphasis on athletics (I have worked with NCAA Div. I and II, and NAIA institutions), and recruitment penetration into new prospective student markets. As comprehensive universities, West Liberty and Southern Polytechnic value student success both during the educational process and beyond graduation. Retention, progression, and graduation are central tenets of our strategic plan and our institution works on RPG with the state through its Complete College Georgia plan.

**Strategic Planning and Fiscal Management:** I have led in the strategic planning efforts at all my institutions and continue to promote annual, purposeful operational planning at my current institution. My ten years at Southern Polytechnic has allowed me the opportunities to not only lead its fundraising efforts but to oversee the fiscal management of its foundation. As CEO of the foundation, I work with a 30 member board of trustees. These board members are involved in the management of endowed funds, campaign fundraising, student housing, and acquisition and development of properties on behalf of the university. We have purchase much-needed property contiguous to the University. Our foundation is currently engaged in public/private mixed-use develop project which will enhance the quality of life for our university as well as provide financial revenues for the foundation and the university. I practice fiscal responsibility, conservative budgeting, and ethical policies and procedures in handling the financial administration of the SPSU foundation.

**Economic Development:** Because of Southern Poly's unique connection with key industries, I have operated as economic development liaison between the university and these important industries. Through the management of our Industry Advisory Boards, we keep track of what knowledge and expertise our students need to succeed in an every changing technological

environment. I have served on workforce development committees within our state's industry associations. I work closely with the local and state Chambers of Commerce and their economic development divisions as liaison for the university. I consistently secure funds through the Georgia General Assembly for economic development projects between SPSU and companies such as Lockheed-Martin and Georgia Power. All universities must begin to recognize their role in the economic development of their states.

**Community Engagement:** Another major responsibility of a university president is to advance the institution both on campus and in the larger community. In my job as the primary external affairs officer of the university, I maneuver daily between civic groups, alumni events, chamber of commerce receptions, the system office, the Georgia General Assembly, industry associations, and community dinners, as attendee, lobbyist, and speaker. Though my job duties push me off campus, I routinely make a special effort to involve myself in the internal life of the university. Whether it is teaching a class in the sociology of science and technology, meeting regularly with deans and department chairs, serving as a faculty representative for a student group, or just walking around the campus and sticking my head in an office to say "hello," I find these efforts to be necessary, worthwhile, and rewarding.

West Liberty University has a great and historic reputation and I know that it has a bright future. Because of the institution's commitment to delivering a life-changing educational experience, to hiring and keeping excellent faculty members who are committed to maintaining a strong academic reputation, and to partnering with the local community and the state in community engagement and economic development, West Liberty does have a bright future and I would like to be a part of that future.

I thank you for your consideration of my application. I have enclosed a copy of my resume and references. If you need further information, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron D. Dempsey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "R".

Ron D. Dempsey

## **RON DWYATT DEMPSEY, PhD**

3916 Wild Blossom Court  
Acworth, Georgia 30101  
Phone: 404-771-5538 FAX: 678-915-7321  
Email: rondempsey@ymail.com

### **CAREER OBJECTIVE**

To be in an executive leadership role at a college or university where I can lead in the advancement of the institution and enhance the development of faculty, students, and the institution's constituents.

### **EDUCATION**

**Doctor of Philosophy**, Sociology of Science and Technology, Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, Georgia, To be completed 2015.

**Doctor of Philosophy**, Sociology of Religion, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky.

**Education Specialist**, Higher Education Administration, University of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky.

**Master of Science**, History and Sociology of Science and Technology, Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, Georgia.

**Master of Arts**, Sociology, University of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky.

**Bachelor of Arts**, Psychology, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

### **CAREER EXPERIENCE**

**Vice President for Advancement and University Development**, Southern Polytechnic State University, Marietta Georgia, 2005 –2015

As VP for Advancement, I coordinate the functions of the offices of Development, Alumni and Business Relations, Economic Development, Public Relations, and Governmental Relations for the university and serve on the president's executive senior staff. Southern Polytechnic has moved from being last in the University System of Georgia in annual giving to #5 out of 32 institutions. Our alumni program has created an outstanding career networking experience for our alumni. Our PR and Marketing offices' branding efforts have helped the university realize 90% enrollment growth over the past seven years. As the chief operating officer of the SPSU

Foundation, I manage over \$36M in assets. The housing enterprise generates substantial annual revenue for the university's auxiliary services and I am directing the foundation into undertaking more private/public entrepreneurial ventures. Southern Polytechnic is an institution dedicated to engineering, technology, and science and so I interact with industries across Georgia and the region to connect them to the economic development activities of the university such as work force development and technological expertise.

**Vice President for Institutional Advancement**, Shorter University, Rome, Georgia,  
2001 – 2004

As VP for Advancement, I coordinated the functions of the offices of Development, Public Relations, and Alumni and Friends Relations. During my time at Shorter, annual fund gifts rose over 140%. My office instituted five new annual fund campaigns to constituents not previously solicited, including the Hawks Club, Shorter's athletic fund raising arm. At Shorter, I developed the strategy and managed a successful \$70 million capital campaign. My most notable accomplishment was the initiation of the Success in Scholarships program which coupled annual scholarship donations with the university's tuition discounting program, resulting in a \$2 million increase in annual donations.

**Director of Foundation/Corporate Relations and Associate Professor of Sociology**,  
Presbyterian College, Clinton, South Carolina, 1999 – 2001

I directed Presbyterian College's development efforts in foundation and corporate fundraising. I managed the \$25 million capital campaign for the Bailey Family football stadium, part of PC's \$175 million comprehensive campaign. My job included developing and submitting all grant proposals and managing all active grants as well as cultivating and soliciting planned and major gifts from prospective donors.

**Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Associate Professor of Sociology**, Presbyterian  
College, Clinton, South Carolina, 1993 – 1999

As Associate Dean of the College, I directed a number of different academic programs including institutional research, the international education program, academic advising, and scholarships. I worked on faculty and student development, curricular and budgetary issues and served on the Budget Committee (the primary budgeting committee of the college). I handled probation and suspension issues and coordinated the Health Science Advising program from 1993-1997. I serve on numerous councils and committees, including the Academic Affairs Council, Financial Aid Committee, Admissions Committee, Student Retention Task Force, BANNER Computer System Task Force, as well as others. I managed the NCAA eligibility requirements and annual reports, served as the college's Executive Liaison with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and acted as Associate Director of the college's institutional Self Study and reaccreditation with SACS. As a tenured track member of the sociology department, I taught three - four courses per year for the department.

**Associate Provost for Academic Services**, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary,  
Louisville, Kentucky, 1991-1993

At Southern, I managed the offices of Academic Services, Registrar, Admission Decisions, and Orientation/Testing. I initiated and supervised the off campus and distance learning efforts of the seminary. I coordinated the institutional research function for the seminary, served on the Executive Council and the Dean's Council, and taught courses in Church and Community and Leadership.

**Director of Institutional Research**, Jefferson Community College, Louisville,  
Kentucky, 1989-1991

I coordinated the institutional research function for the 12,000 student community college, which included networking research functions between main campus and three other campuses. I also assisted faculty and other offices with research design and analysis.

## **FACULTY EXPERIENCE**

Faculty Member, Southern Polytechnic State University, Marietta, Georgia, 2010 – 2015.

Faculty Member, Georgia Highlands College, Rome, Georgia, 2001 – 2009.

Associate Professor of Religion and Sociology, Shorter University, Rome, Georgia, 2001-2005.

Associate Professor of Sociology, Presbyterian College, Clinton, South Carolina, 1999-2001  
Assistant Professor of Sociology, 1993 – 1998.

Assistant Professor, Southern Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, 1991 – 1993.

## **PUBLICATIONS/PRESENTATIONS/PANELS**

2015 National Science Foundation review panel for “Revolutionizing Engineering Education,”  
Washington, DC, March 2015.

2015 “History of Engineering Technology” presented at the National Academy for  
Engineering’s conference of Engineering Technology Education, Washington, DC,  
January 2015.

2014 “Socio-Historical Analysis of Engineering Technology and the Three-tiered Structure of  
Engineering in the United States” presented at the Society for the History of Technology,  
Detroit, MI, November 2014.

2013 “Boundary Work between Engineering Technology and Engineering: Knowledge,  
Expertise, and Power at SPSU” presented at the American Society for Engineering  
Education, Atlanta, Georgia, June 2013

- 2012 “Defending the Engineering Technology Walls: Boundary Work between Engineering and Engineering Technology” presented at the International Society for Engineering Studies, Copenhagen, Denmark, Oct 2012.
- 2012 “Fund Raising Variance between Polytechnics and Non-Polytechnics” presented at the Polytechnic Summit, Marietta, GA, June 2012.
- 2012 “Creating a more Robust Picture of Women and Engineering: Expanding the Research Framework to better address Gender Inequity” presented at the Gender, Bodies, and Technology conference, Roanoke, VA, April 2012.
- 2000 “Using Standardized Instruments for Accreditation, Accountability, and Assessment: Assembling Your Institutional Puzzle” presented at the American Association for Higher Education Assessment conference.
- 1998 “Assessing Student Achievement using Nationally Standardized Tests at a Liberal Arts College” presented at the South Carolina Higher Education Assessment conference.
- 1997 Faith Outside the Walls. Macon, Georgia: Smyth & Helwys Publishing.
- 1997 “Institutional Research in a Small College” presented at the Southern Association of Institutional Research conference.
- 1996 “Institutional Research’s Role in helping Institutions Increase their U.S. News Rankings A Case Study,” presented to the Association of Institutional Researchers.
- 1996 “Study Abroad Potpourri in a Small College” presented at the ASIANetwork Conference.
- 1994 “Sociology in Seminary Education” presented at the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion Conference.
- 1994 “Quality in Pastoral Ministry” presented at the Religious Research Association Conference.
- 1992 “The Religiosity of the Unchurched” presented at the Southern Baptist Research Conference.

## **AWARDS/CERTIFICATIONS**

IEDC – Basic Economic Development  
 IEDC – Business Retention and Expansion  
 The Gary Donhardt Fellowship Award for Empirical Research  
 Excellence in Research Award from the Southern Research Fellowship

## **PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES**

### Board/Committee Memberships:

USG Chief Advancement Officers Committee, Treasurer, 2008-2015.

Georgia Construction Aggregate Association Board of Directors, 2010-present

North Cobb Rotary Club, Board of Directors, Foundation Chair, 2012-2015.

Marietta Metro Rotary Club, Board of Directors, Educational Chair, 2008-2010.

Marietta Metro Rotary Club, Board of Directors, Treasurer, 2007.

Southern Polytechnic State University Foundation, Secretary, 2005-present.

USG Task Force on Philanthropy, 2008.

Shorter University Board of Trustees, Member of the Development Committee, 2001-2004.

### Professional Associations:

Council for the Advancement and Support of Education

International Economic Development Council

Reviewer for the International Journal for Engineering Studies

International Network for Engineering Studies

Society for the Social Studies of Science

American Sociological Association

Society for the Scientific Study of Religion

Religious Research Association

### Other Service Activities:

North Cobb Rotary Club, 2010 – present.

Marietta Metro Rotary Club, 2005-2010.

Seven Hills Rotary Club, 2001-2005.

Cobb County Chamber of Commerce Chairman's Club, 2007-present.

Bartow County Advocates for Children, 2010-present.

Westminster Presbyterian, Rome, Education Director, 2001-2006.

Floyd County Habitat for Humanity, 2001-2005.

## **REFERENCES**

Dr. Lisa A. Rossbacher  
President  
Humboldt State University  
Arcata, CA 95521  
(707) 826-3011  
[larossbacher@gmail.com](mailto:larossbacher@gmail.com)

Dr. Rossbacher was president of Southern Polytechnic State. She was my direct supervisor for 10 years.

Mr. Nick Pappleacos  
Partner  
Chamberlain Law Firm  
191 Peachtree Street, N.E.  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
(404) 588-3422  
[Nicholas.Pappleacos@Chamberlainlaw.com](mailto:Nicholas.Pappleacos@Chamberlainlaw.com)

Nick serves on the SPSU Foundation Board and has for the 10 years I have been at SPSU.

Dr. Ed Schrader  
President  
Brenau University  
500 Washington Street  
Gainesville, Georgia 30501  
(770) 534.6109  
[eschrader@brenau.edu](mailto:eschrader@brenau.edu)

I served as Dr. Schrader's VP for Advancement at Shorter University.

Mr. Clark Hungerford  
Senior Vice President  
Vinings Bank  
4135 Atlanta Road Smyrna  
Georgia 30080  
(678) 496-4642  
[chungerford@viningsbank.com](mailto:chungerford@viningsbank.com)

Clark serves as treasurer of the SPSU Foundation Board as has done so since I arrived in 2005.

Dr. Han Reichgelt  
Vice Chancellor  
University of South Florida  
St. Petersburg  
[reichgelt@usfsp.edu](mailto:reichgelt@usfsp.edu)  
(678) 314-4432

Dr. Reichgelt served as Dean of the School of Computing and Software Engineering at Southern Polytechnic.