

POSITION DESCRIPTION

PRESIDENT

SEMINARY CONSORTIUM FOR URBAN PASTORAL EDUCATION

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

The Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education (SCUPE) was organized in 1976 to provide a comprehensive pastoral education model to address the challenging issues of urban ministry. Based in Chicago, it is broadly ecumenical, beginning as a project of 5 member seminaries that has now grown to 11 seminaries and multiple programs. Just as the world and the church have continued to change, SCUPE has been a dynamic leader in the field of urban ministry throughout its history.

Utilizing the educational and training theories of adult experiential education, SCUPE provides both academically accredited courses and non-academic programs. Its programs are designed for individuals interested in pastoral ministry, community leadership and social justice, both engaging the urban environment and providing leadership development for urban ministers. Programs include Graduate Theological Urban Studies (GTUS), Center for African American Theological Studies (CAATS), Nurturing the Call (NTC), Master of Arts in Social Justice and Community Development (MASJCD), and Advanced Latin@ Theological Education (ALTE). Graduates from these programs have assumed numerous leadership positions in local churches and community organizations.

Over the past 30 years, SCUPE has provided not only training for thousands of seminarians and other urban church leaders, but has pioneered new thinking regarding the church and the city, in terms of Biblical interpretation, theological reflection and ministry models. Founded by evangelical church leaders who were concerned about bridging the gap between the acute social and spiritual needs of cities and the need for real change in the lives of individuals, SCUPE has provided a unique space that brings together a broad range of theological perspectives including both evangelical and mainline churches, even as it works to bridge racial and cultural divides within the American church.

In addition to the academic programs, SCUPE sponsors a biennial Urban Congress that brings together urban church leaders nationally and internationally for 3 days of reflection, inspiration and fellowship.

To carry out this important work, SCUPE works with many partners, including member seminaries that range from Mennonite to Lutheran to Baptist to Reformed, and with local field placements that include local churches throughout Chicago as well as other service organizations.

CURRENT SITUATION

SCUPE's founding President, David Frenchak, will be retiring in 2010, after 34 years of outstanding leadership for the organization. Consequently, the Board of Directors has launched a national search for a new chief executive officer for the organization. The Board recognizes this as a time of major adjustment for the organization, so it is working diligently with both Dr. Frenchak and a consultant to prepare itself for the changes it will face in organizational culture, programs and relationships that have been linked to the outgoing President.

Despite the challenges that such a transition represents for every organization at some point in its life cycle, SCUPE is entering this process in a sound position. It has earned a very positive reputation within the world of theological education, has a committed Board, a strong alumni base and experienced faculty and staff. In a time of challenge to all nonprofit organizations, it has retained a strong programmatic base and a relatively solid financial base of support.

Even so, the recession of the past year has only added to the challenges that our society, faith communities, and theological education programs are facing. Increasing financial pressures on institutions and students, changing educational models and technology, and changing relationships between congregations and denominations raise many questions for the Church in general and for SCUPE and other organizations in particular. After becoming acquainted with SCUPE's current program and resources, the new President will need to lead a discernment process to forge vision and revision for the coming years to keep the program dynamic for changing times.

SCUPE is governed by a broadly ecumenical 12 member Board of Directors, ranging from Christian Reformed and Southern Baptist to Lutheran, United Church of Christ and Mennonite. Board members are generally professionals who are active in their own churches and denominations. The Board completed a strategic planning process in 2008 to clarify priority issues for the organization and to prepare for this transition process, but will need to regularly revisit its plans as conditions, opportunities and needs change.

SCUPE works in partnership with many organizations, including seminaries, local churches and agencies. Its member seminaries currently include Garrett-Evangelical, Luther, Louisville Presbyterian, Associated Mennonite, Christian, LSTC, Payne, Pittsburgh, Western and the Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University. The latter school, Virginia Union, is a close partner in the Center for African-American Theological Studies which is now in its 5th year. Another important new partner in 2010 is the Institute of Pastoral Studies at Loyola University, SCUPE's new partner with the 10 year old MA in Social Justice and Community Development program.

SCUPE operates with a relatively small staff of nine full time and five part time employees and an adjunct faculty of 40. Key positions that report to the President

include the Academic Dean, Director of Operations/Director of Development, Communications Director and the Directors of the Center for African American Theological Studies, the ALTE and Nurturing the Call programs. Other full time positions include an administrative assistant and a recruiter for the CAATS and NtC programs.

The operating budget for 2009-2010 is approximately \$750,000, with funds coming from four primary sources: tuition and fees, foundation grants, member contributions, and income from the related SCUPE Foundation that provides substantial annual support.

SPECIFIC ROLE

The President is the chief executive officer for SCUPE, and carries the full range of responsibilities usually associated with such a position. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the President's responsibilities can be grouped into four major areas: external relations, strategic planning, resource development and organizational management.

The President is the **primary spokesperson** for the organization and represents SCUPE to the broad range of publics it touches, both in the Chicago metropolitan area and nationally and internationally. These publics include the theological education community, ranging from current member seminaries and potential seminaries which might consider membership at some time, to the Association of Theological Schools, and the Association of Chicago Theological Schools. The ecclesiastical community includes a variety of denominations and churches, the local Chicago churches that serve either/both as field placements for SCUPE students or sources of potential participants in SCUPE's various programs, and urban ministry practitioners throughout the country who have come to value the Urban Congress and SCUPE's leadership in the practice of and reflection about different urban ministry models. Other publics include denominational leaders, as well as leaders of other organizations such as the Christian Community Development Association. Another public, essential to the success of SCUPE, is the funding sources that support the programs of SCUPE which include foundation executives and program officers, individuals and suburban churches. SCUPE's constituency represents a very broad spectrum and because of the theological, social and political diversity of SCUPE's constituency, it is essential for the President to have the capacity for excellent relational and political communication.

In the area of **strategic planning**, the President will work closely with the Board to shape the organization's direction. This includes both the identification and assessment of new programs and initiatives, and the regular evaluation of existing programs and activities. As social changes occur and forms of theological education change within the larger church in America, strategies for addressing SCUPE's core mission of leadership development for the urban church and its related ministries also change. The President will play a key role in creating a vision for effective channels for SCUPE's mission and in planning and organizing to realize that vision. In addition, annual program and financial plans need to be developed and implemented, with an eye toward not only

carrying out SCUPE's mission objectives, but to strengthening its own capacity to sustain itself.

A third major responsibility for the President is that of **developing resources** for the organization. In this role, he/she will work closely with the Board and initially, with the outgoing President, to both maintain positive relations with current donors and funders, and to identify and develop new sources of revenue and support. This can include foundation and individual donors, as well as tuition and fee revenue from programs that attract an increasing number of students, both traditional and nontraditional. Creative partnerships with churches, denominations and other institutions that place a priority on urban ministry may lead to the development of other resources.

Finally, the President is SCUPE's **chief administrator**, with oversight responsibility for both academic programs and support systems. Central to that effort is assuring the continuing presence of capable staff and quality systems. Working closely with the Director of Operations and the Academic Dean, the President must maintain a solid understanding of the financial condition of both the diverse individual programs that comprise SCUPE and the organization as a whole. She/he must then have the ability to communicate that condition clearly to the Board both through financial reports and appropriate commentary. Finally, and by no means least important, the President is responsible for creating a work environment that challenges and encourages staff and enables them to achieve their greatest level of effectiveness and develop professionally.

In addition to these major areas of responsibilities, the President may, from time to time, serve as a guest lecturer or teacher in any of the programs.

MAJOR OBJECTIVES

During the first year, the new President will be asked to do the following:

- Develop and maintain healthy relationships with the Board and SCUPE's various constituencies and partners, meeting one on one with all the key leaders;
- Maintain SCUPE's financial stability, while broadening its revenue base to include several new funding sources;
- Develop and oversee ongoing program evaluation process for existing programs;
- Generate an increased level of visibility and enthusiasm for SCUPE's ongoing mission in the community;
- Work closely with the Board of Directors to enhance its capacity to recruit appropriately skilled members as long-time members cycle off the Board;
- Provide thought and programmatic leadership in adapting to changes in theological education models to broaden SCUPE's reach toward its mission of urban church leadership development;
- Begin the process of rethinking/revitalizing Urban Congress;
- Solidify partnership with Loyola University for the MA in Social Justice and Community Development.

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

The ideal candidate will demonstrate the following professional qualifications:

- ◆ At least five years of senior management experience in an academic, ministry or other nonprofit organization, (including budgetary responsibility).
- ◆ Demonstrated effectiveness as a manager, including organizational and programmatic marketing.
- ◆ Demonstrated record of successful financial management.
- ◆ Graduate degree in theology or educational administration. Ph.D. preferred.
- ◆ Demonstrated track record of organizational fundraising.
- ◆ Demonstrated strong strategic thinking and problem solving skills.
- ◆ A history of involvement with urban ministry and/or urban theological education.
- ◆ Significant history of ecumenical involvement and a solid network of relationships in seminaries and ministries around the country.
- ◆ Outstanding skills in verbal and written communication.
- ◆ History demonstrating collaboration.
- ◆ Skills working with and across cultural, social and theological diversity.
- ◆ Ability to preach and teach.
- ◆ Political skills to keep diverse consortium working together.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

In addition, the ideal candidate will exhibit the following personal characteristics:

- ◆ Understanding of and commitment to SCUPE's mission.
- ◆ A strong and clearly articulated personal faith in the triune God, and a deep commitment to heeding God's call to justice and concerns for overcoming poverty.
- ◆ Demonstrated vision, creativity and imagination – the ability to dream dreams, see new possibilities, and inspire others.
- ◆ Ability to motivate others and to communicate enthusiasm for the shared goal.
- ◆ Widely recognized leadership and personnel management skills.
- ◆ A keen intellect that allows the person to grasp both the substantive Biblical and theological issues involved in urban theological education, and the social, political and cultural contexts in which urban churches work.
- ◆ Personal flexibility to work effectively both ecumenically and with low-income church, seminary education and funding partners.

COMPENSATION

The salary will be commensurate with experience, plus fringe benefits.

For further information, or to apply, contact David Erickson-Pearson, Erickson-Pearson Search, 8008 S. Madison Way, Centennial, CO 80122. Phone: (303) 703-6165. Email: epdavid@earthlink.net.