

Morton College, the second oldest community college in Illinois, has selected accomplished academic professional Dr. Sheldon Walcher, PhD, MS, MFA as the next Vice President of Academic Affairs.

Reporting to Morton College's President Dr. Keith McLaughlin, Walcher will provide oversight to a team of professionals who work collaboratively to enhance the student experience and provide inspirational leadership, ensure quality and effectiveness, and provide strategic guidance for all Academic Affairs-related work at Morton College. His appointment takes effect on August 1, 2024.

Most recently, Walcher served as the Dean of Communication Arts, Humanities and Fine Arts at the College of Lake County, where he provided strategic direction and oversaw a diverse team of 350 full and part-time faculty and staff across 15 departments. He also managed the Wright Community Gallery and the college's extensive permanent art collection.

Previously, Walcher held leadership positions at Kankakee Community College and the College of DuPage. Before he transitioned to community college leadership, he was also a tenure-track faculty member and director of composition at Roosevelt University, with additional tenure-track positions at the University of Tennessee and the University of Southern Mississippi.

"I am thrilled to join the leadership team at Morton College in support of our vital mission," said Walcher. "Throughout my career, I have aimed to inspire creativity and excellence through calculated risk-taking and innovation. My diverse background has shaped my appreciation for various perspectives, and I look forward to bringing this optimism and energy to our community as we work together to enhance educational opportunities for all."

"With over 25 years of experience in higher education, Dr. Walcher is a dynamic leader committed to building inclusive and innovative teams," McLaughlin said. "His proven track record in implementing large-scale student success initiatives and addressing racial, social and economic disparities aligns perfectly with our mission. Dr. Walcher's expertise will be invaluable as he provides strategic guidance for all Academic Affairs-related work at Morton College. We are delighted to officially welcome Dr. Sheldon Walcher as the new Vice President of Academic Affairs at Morton College."

Morton College retained KEES, a national executive search firm, as its executive search partner earlier in 2024. A comprehensive, national search was launched, and Walcher was selected from a talented pool of diverse top finalists.

Leading the search efforts were McLaughlin and Morton College Search Committee members: Laurie Cashman (Dean of Adult, Career and Technical Education), Janet Crockett (Instructor), Murneka Davis (Executive Director of Human Resources), Anayeli Fuentes (Senior Human Resources Generalist), Dr. Brian Gilligan (Department Chair / Instructor), Joanna Martin (Executive Assistant to the President/Board Professional), Eric Porod (Testing & Assessment Specialist) and Brandie Windham (Dean of Arts & Sciences/Director of Guided Pathways).

Walcher holds an MS in Higher Education Administration and Policy from Northwestern University, a PhD in English from the University of Utah, an MFA in English from Penn State University, and a BA in Literature and Philosophy from the University of California at Santa Cruz.