

Sauk Valley Community College
July 27, 2026

Action Item 4.5

Topic: **Administrator Appointment – Dean of Business, Career, and Technical Programs**

Mission: **Sauk Valley Community College is dedicated to teaching and scholarship while engaging the community in lifelong learning, public service, and economic development.**

Presented by: **Dr. Jon Mandrell**

Presentation:

The administration has been in the process of hiring the Dean of Business, Career, and Technical Programs. The position was advertised on Sauk Valley Community College's website and we received twenty-six applicants. Seven of the twenty-six were invited to submit recorded interviews. Three candidates were invited for an on-campus interview and open forum. A committee was composed of Beth Smaka, Dana Chacon, Jason LaMendola, Jeff Johnson, and Sarah McFarlane. Sasha Logan, Vice President of Academics, served as Chair.

Academic Background: Dr. Emily Zimmerman earned her Associate of Arts from Sauk and her Bachelors in Accounting and her Master of Business Administration from Aurora University. Emily earned her Doctorate of Adult Learning and Higher Education from Aurora University.

Professional Background: Emily Zimmerman has worked at Sauk as an Advisor for the Small Business Development Center, an Adjunct Instructor and since 2019 has been a Professor for our Business Department. Prior to that she was a Senior Accountant for Sewer Equipment and a Cost Accountant for Plews.

Recommendation:

The administration recommends the Board approve the appointment of Emily Zimmerman as the Dean of Business, Career, and Technical Programs beginning August, 3rd 2026 at an annual base salary of \$97,094.40.

Dr. Emily Zimmerman

[REDACTED]
Email: emily.j.zimmerman@svcc.edu
[REDACTED]

May 27, 2026

Dear Search Committee Members,

I am writing to express my interest in the Dean of Business, Career, and Technical Programs position at Sauk Valley Community College and to submit my application materials for your consideration. After twelve incredible years of teaching, I have started to reflect on my time at this Institution as a student, staff member, and now faculty member, and all the mentors I have had along the way that have prepared me for this position. As a proud graduate of SVCC, I credit my love for Higher Education to the Sauk professors who challenged me to think beyond formulas and key terms.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

After completing my undergraduate degree from Aurora University in 2009, I spent the first decade of my career as an accountant, primarily in the Sauk Valley area. I had various roles that included overseeing departmental budgets, maintaining compliance with state and federal regulations, communicating effectively across the globe, and working with senior management, including the CFO and CEO, on monthly reports. I remained successful in this while growing my family and returning to Aurora University for in-person coursework to earn my MBA. My goal at the time was to obtain my graduate degree and begin preparing for the CPA exams. That goal changed in 2014 when I met Dr. Jon Mandrell, who at the time, was Dean of Instructional Services and looking for an adjunct accounting professor. I applied for the position to teach managerial accounting on Monday evenings, which inevitably changed the trajectory of my life. I knew I always loved higher education from a student perspective, but I had no idea how much I would love it from a pedagogical standpoint. For the first time in my career, I felt as if what I was doing was meaningful and had purpose. In addition, I was also experiencing a positive workplace culture, supportive colleagues, and a sense of fulfillment beyond what I received in the form of a paycheck. I did not know it at the time, but taking that adjunct position was the greatest decision I made in my professional career.

By 2017, I left the accounting world and accepted a full-time position with Sauk's newly created Small Business Development Center. It was this position that granted me the opportunity to network with community leaders, small business owners, and non-profit organizations. In the two years that followed, the SBDC Director assigned me grant writing responsibilities, as well as taking in my own clients to guide them through the business plan process, budgeting, forecasting, and meeting with lenders for business loans. Three notable businesses that are still operating today that I am so proud to have been a part of their start-up success include Value Lab, Stone Bridge

Dr. Emily Zimmerman

[REDACTED]
Email: emily.j.zimmerman@svcc.edu
[REDACTED]

EXECUTIVE PROFILE

Performance-driven educator with vast experience in business, accounting, public relations, and marketing. Demonstrates a deep commitment to equitable student success through data-informed decision-making, collaborative leadership, and community engagement. Dedicated to fostering a culture of transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement that will strengthen SVCC's role as a hub for lifelong learning and opportunity.

EDUCATION

Doctor of Education, 2024

Adult Learning and Higher Education, Aurora University

Dissertation: "An Examination of Compassion Fatigue and Burnout Among Full-Time Faculty in a Rural Community College Setting"

Master of Business Administration, 2013

Business Administration: Accounting Concentration, Aurora University

Bachelor of Science, 2009

Accounting, Aurora University

Associate of Arts, 2007

Business, Sauk Valley Community College

RELEVANT DOCTORAL COURSES

- | | |
|--|--|
| ● Historical Foundations of Higher Education | ● Seminar in Higher Education Admin |
| ● Equity, Diversity, & Justice in Education | ● Philosophies of Adult Learning |
| ● Strategic Planning | ● Ethical & Legal Issues of Adult Learning |
| ● Organizational Theory & Change Management | ● Instructional Coaching & Adult Learning in Professions |

EXPERIENCE

Sauk Valley Community College, Dixon, IL

Professor II – Business

May 2019 - Present

- Facilitated the Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities (CEO) Program East class through Whiteside Area Career Center from 2019 to 2025.
- Instruct courses in a variety of areas in business, including management, marketing, human relations, entrepreneurship, and e-commerce.
- Recruit prospective high school students through speaking engagements such as Explore Sauk.
- Member of the assessment core team.
- Serve as the internship coordinator for AAS marketing and management majors.
- Created SVCC's first business club, and currently serve as the faculty advisor.
- Serve as the co-director of the Honors Program.
- Member of the Sauk Valley Community College Faculty Association.

Sauk Valley Community College, Dixon, IL

Advisor – Small Business Development Center

March 2017 -May 2019

- Worked alongside the previous Center director to develop the new SBDC Center and resources.
- Developed and submitted the 2018 and 2019 federal SBDC grant proposal narrative.
- Coordinated and provided individualized consultations and guidance to prospective and active small business owners.
- Assisted small business clients with the development of business plans, financial guidance, form of business setup, and marketing recommendations.
- Actively promoted the SBDC through public presentations and maintained effective working relations with media outlets.
- Implemented and facilitated targeted educational workshops for the public.
- Maintained effective working relationships with internal departments within Sauk Valley Community College, along with external organizations, including financial institutions, economic development entities, governmental agencies, and community organizations.
- Worked in partnership with external establishments for client outreach and training activities.
- Collaborated with local business organizations and support groups in Lee, Whiteside, and Ogle Counties.

Sauk Valley Community College, Dixon, IL

Adjunct Instructor

August 2014 - August 2019

- Instructed courses (Financial Accounting, Introduction to Business, Entrepreneurship Principles) both in an online and in-person format.
- Created the first-ever Entrepreneurship Principles course and have been the sole instructor since its inception.
- Assisted students with honors projects.

Sewer Equipment Co of America, Dixon, IL

Senior Accountant

Oct 2014-Nov 2016

- Reported monthly, quarterly, and annual sales and use tax for 21 states.
- Reported Federal Excise Tax for big equipment sales for all companies.

- Worked with area managers to create and keep track of annual budgets for Production, Engineering, Research & Development, Marketing, Sales, and Purchasing departments.
- Monitored AR aging reports and reserved bad debt for all companies.
- Maintained all additions and disposals of fixed assets for five Sewer Companies.
- Ensured that the intercompany balances between all seven Sewer entities were in balance.
- Took full ownership of Sewer's Canadian company with respect to GST/HST tax, employee payroll, expense reports, and all monthly activity that required month-end journalizing for reconciliation and consolidation reports.
- Performed monthly journal entries in all Sewer companies, including but not limited to prepaids, bonus and commission accruals, vacation accrual, warranty reserves, field service inventory, salesman consignment inventory, and AR, AP, and Inventory true-up from our GL to perpetual.
- Assisted the controller and Vice President of Finance in filling out credit applications, invoicing, MSO and title completions, sending out W9 and tax-exempt certificates, bid bonds, filing for unemployment tax, vehicle sales tax, Sales/Use tax, withholding tax, and any additional projects they request of me on time.
- Performed daily invoicing for all Sewer entities due to the layoff of our Accounts Receivable clerk in May 2016.

Plews, Dixon, IL

Cost Accountant

Mar 2013-Oct 2014

- Ensured standard pricing was accurate for all buy items and outside processing (OSP) items.
- Maintained inventory levels in five warehouses throughout the United States.
- Worked with sourcing, purchasing, and engineering to verify accurate data was in our AS400 system.
- Assisted in the month-end close processes for all inventory and fixed asset accounts.
- Established new procedures and executed those procedures to confirm that domestic and international wires were completed accurately.

Clover Technologies Group, Ottawa, IL

Staff Accountant: Global Financial Reporting

Sept 2011-Mar 2013

- Presented monthly consolidated financial statements for forty trial balances in 13 currencies in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).
- Captured and reported transaction result information (i.e., sales, inventory) using business intelligence software (InforPM).
- Assisted in various month-end processes, including balance sheet reconciliations, providing exchange rates, Accounts Receivable/Payable Aging reports, and Sub Consolidations for 4 regions of the globe.

Wahl Clipper Corporation, Sterling, IL

Provisional Finance Partner

Jan 2011-July 2011

(Temporary position to help the corporation rearrange its business model to value streams)

- Managed the supplies and expense reports in accordance with the newly created annual budget.
- Handled all the prepaid accounts for any purchase over \$10,000.
- Administered month-end closings on new and obsolete components and purchase orders.

IL State Board of Education, Springfield, IL

External Assurance Auditor

Aug 2009-April 2010

- Monitored and reviewed in-depth documentation to ensure compliance was met.
- Performed a wide range of duties, including compiling and writing detailed documentation for school administrative work performed, which consisted of findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

ACCOLADES

2024 Lee County United Way “Rising Star” Award

2024 YWCA Women of Achievement “Pearl Woods” Award

2022 Dixon Chamber of Commerce and Main Street “Best of Dixon 4 Under 40” Award

VOLUNTEER AND COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE

Years	Role/Organization
2025 - Present	Community Champion, Clippers Campaign (Impact)
2025 - Present	Member, Amboy Education Foundation
2024 - Present	Campaign Volunteer, Lee County United Way
2021 - Present	Finance Committee, Dixon YMCA
2021 - Present	Board Member, University of IL Extension
2019 - Present	Committee Member, SVCC Accounting Program Review
2018 - 2019	Advisory Board Member, Rochelle Commercial & Retail
2017 - 2019	Board Member and Mentor, WACC CEO
2017 - 2020	Charter Member, Sauk Valley Women in Leadership
2017 - 2020	Board Member, Blackhawk Hills Regional Council
2018 - 2019	Member, IL State SBDC Strategic Planning Committee
2018 - 2019	Member, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for Northwest, IL
2018 - 2019	Member, IL Entrepreneurship and Small Business Growth Association (IESBGA) conference planning committee.

Running, and Revive Boutique; all female-owned small businesses that survived the pandemic and are still thriving.

In 2019, a business faculty position became available, alongside the opportunity to teach the Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities (CEO) East class through the Whiteside Area Career Center, aiming to gain better traction in Lee and Ogle Counties. For six years, I worked with high school juniors and seniors from Amboy, Dixon, AFC, Oregon, Polo, Forreston, Milledgeville, Eastland, and Faith Christian as a facilitator, guiding them on how to think critically, ask questions, gain mentorship, and eventually create their own small business from scratch. I am still teaching full-time as a Professor of Business, teaching a variety of courses within the business curriculum. I also created the Business Club and serve as its primary advisor, as well as co-chair the Honors program and serve as a core member of the Assessment Committee.

NOTABLE CHARACTERISTICS AND ACHIEVEMENTS THAT MEET THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE DEAN OF BUSINESS, CAREER, AND TECHNICAL PROGRAMS POSITION AT SAUK VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE.

After reviewing the job description, I would like to bring up three key requirements that stood out to me and explain how my background aligns with the qualifications for this role.

1. Strategic Leadership & Academic Excellence

As a community college professor, student access and achievement are at the forefront of every decision I make, both inside and outside of the classroom. My leadership style aligns directly with the college's mission, vision, and strategic direction. I go above and beyond for students who approach me with academic, mental, and financial hardships, working collaboratively with various departments across campus to make sure they are set up for success. Below are a few examples:

- I have brought various departments such as marketing and the learning commons into the classroom to enhance learning.
- I have connected students with financial struggles with the foundation to ensure commitment to their education, regardless of affordability.

Something else I am very proud of is after stepping into a full-time faculty position in the Business Department, I led a comprehensive revision of the business courses to better serve today's students and employers. This work included updating curriculum to reflect current industry practices, expanding accessible course modalities, and aligning learning outcomes with workforce and transfer expectations. Throughout this process, I relied on assessment data and program reviews, as well as collaborating with my Dean and advisory board to ensure the AAS, AS, and certificate programs in business have evolved to meet professional standards. If chosen for this position, I would continue to do that for faculty and staff under the CTE umbrella. Supporting them, mentoring them, and helping them develop exceptional coursework through curriculum and program updates would be a key focus, to ensure their job satisfaction both in and out of the classroom.

2. Fiscal Stewardship & Grant Management

My time as both an accountant, as well as an advisor in the Small Business Development Center has prepared me for these particular duties. As stated above, I oversaw departmental budgets at Sewer Equipment Co. Of America, as well as helped aspiring entrepreneurs with their budgets when writing business plans.

3. Economic Impact & Workforce Innovation

I attribute a lot of my experience in economic impact and workforce innovation to my time as the facilitator for the WACC CEO program. I have strong established connections with K-12 administration, city officials, chambers of commerce, civic organizations such as Rotary, local legislators, business owners, non- profit organizations, and community leaders. These connections are a crucial part of the thriving partnerships we have at Sauk Valley Community College, and their contribution to our mission of lifelong learning, public service, and economic development. Below are a few notable successes:

- I have had students who are aspiring entrepreneurs meet with the Small Business Development Center to kickstart their small business venture.
- I've assisted dozens of students with internship opportunities, many of which have landed full-time job offerings afterwards.

IN CLOSING

My career thus far reflects a strong commitment to instructional vitality, teamwork, and mission alignment central to Sauk Valley Community College. I have intentionally built partnerships that advance institutional goals and community impact. I maintain strong rapport with students, staff, and faculty, enabling effective collaboration and shared leadership. Externally, I have cultivated relationships with business owners, chambers of commerce, city officials, and senior administrators to support workforce development, program relevance, and regional economic growth. These experiences reflect the collaborative, outward-facing leadership required of a Dean position. I am more than ready to step into an administrative role at the very college that has prepared me for this opportunity. I have a lot more to offer, and more importantly a lot more to learn, but I am ready and hope to have the opportunity to discuss my qualifications further with the search committee.

Kind Regards,

Emily J. Zimmerman

Emily Zimmerman