

Christopher J. Cowen,
Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer



As the Executive Vice President (EVP) and Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Cowen is the most senior non-academic officer for the university and is responsible for directing the financial and administrative services in support of university activities. As part of this responsibility, he has custody and control of the university's funds and facilities and has general responsibility for the maintenance of financial records and the safety and security of the university.

Cowen's executive vice presidential duties include responsibility for the divisions of Financial Services (DFS), Facilities and Campus Services (FCS), Public Safety, the offices of University Investments, and the Chief Risk Officer, along with co-responsibility together with the Provost for the Division of Budget and Planning. Units within DFS, which report to the Vice President for Finance and Chief Financial Officer (Ithaca), are the Office of the University Controller, including Accounting, Financial Information Services, Financial Research Administration, and the Shared Services Center; Financial Administration, including Payroll, Tax, Procurement, and Contract Management; Asset Management; the offices of the University Treasurer and Bursar, including cash and debt management; Insurance and Risk Services, including Risk Management and Insurance and Student Health Benefits; and the Office of Cornell University Real Estate, and Financial Communications. In addition, the Chief Investment Officer and the Chief Risk Officer report administratively to Cowen (although functionally to the Investment and Audit, Risk, Compliance Committees, respectively). The Vice President for Budget and Planning co-reports to the Provost and the EVP. The Vice President for Finance and Chief Financial Officer (WCM) also co-reports to the EVP along with the Provost and Dean of the Medical College.

Cowen holds a B.S. in economics from The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania and an MBA from the University of California, Berkeley, Haas School of Business. Cowen began his tenure at Cornell on June 1, 2023, and most recently served as the Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer at the University of Florida in Gainesville. Prior to that, Cowen spent six years at Bank of America and four years at Goldman Sachs & Co., serving as managing director and co-head of the higher education finance group. From 1992 to 2010, he was managing director and head of the national higher education consulting practice for Prager, Sealy & Co., and from 1990 to 1992, he was a financial analyst for Merrill Lynch & Co.