David’s official title is Vice Chancellor for University Affairs and Athletics & Athletics Director and Professor of Law.

David Williams II
Vice Chancellor for Athletics and University Affairs and Athletics Director

Vanderbilt Expands David Williams’ Role in Athletics | The Williams Report

David Williams II is vice chancellor for athletics and university affairs and athletics director. He guides the Vanderbilt Athletics, Recreation, Intramural and Club Sports programs.

Williams has firmly placed his stamp on Vanderbilt Athletics and has positioned the program among the most innovative in the nation. The university's increased athletic success and investment in its athletics and recreation programs resulted in Chancellor Nicholas S. Zeppos asking Williams in July 2012 to take on a larger role in shaping these areas of the university - allowing for Williams to focus on maintaining and building on this momentum after previously also holding the positions of general counsel for the university and secretary for the university and Vanderbilt University Medical Center while guiding the athletics program.

Williams’ key leadership role in the administration of Vanderbilt Athletics since 2003 has led to a bold new direction. Under Williams, the Vanderbilt program has had many successes on and off the field of competition, including an initiative to more fully integrate Commodore athletics into the total Vanderbilt student life experience.

The model has been successful. Under his guidance, a program was started to allow more overseas travel and study for student athletes and the cumulative grade point for Vanderbilt student-athletes has continued to improve, reaching its highest level in more than two decades. Competitive success, such as all four revenue sports (men’s and women's basketball, football and baseball) participating in post-season play, is becoming an expectation on campus and beyond. Under Williams’ tenure, Vanderbilt won the SEC tournament and regular season baseball championships and made its first appearance in the College World Series. Vanderbilt captured its first national championship (in women’s bowling), went to four bowl games, including three years in a row, after a 26-year drought that ended in 2008, saw the women’s basketball team compete in the NCAA tournament every year and sent the men’s basketball team into postseason play, advancing as far as the Sweet 16 in the NCAA tournament. In 2012, the men's basketball team won its first SEC tournament championship in 61 years. The women's cross country team won its first SEC championship in fall 2011.
In addition, there have been numerous teams playing in the postseason and finishing in the top 25 in the nation. Individual accomplishment has also been increasing, with numerous Vanderbilt athletes playing professional sports all over the world. In 2011, an SEC-record 12 baseball players were drafted into Major League Baseball and two men's basketball players were drafted in the first round of the 2012 NBA draft - along with the first pick in the second round.

The university is also increasingly hosting postseason play - including the first and second rounds of the NCAA women's basketball tournament, three NCAA baseball regionals and two NCAA baseball super regional, and the 2012 NCAA women's golf championship, which was the first time Vanderbilt has hosted a national championship.

Williams has overseen the recruitment and hiring of nine outstanding head coaches - most recently head football coach James Franklin and Scott Limbaugh, head coach of the men's golf team. He also has overseen numerous facility upgrades, including an extensive refurbishing of Vanderbilt Stadium - new turf, lights, Jumbotron and football locker rooms, an expansion of baseball park Hawkins Field, the addition of new tennis courts and amenities at Brownlee O. Currey Center and renovations in Memorial Gym, which includes the recently installed new Jumbotron, the Hendrix Dining Room and McGugin Center. In addition to the facility upgrades, he also spearheaded a project that re-imagines sports and fitness at Vanderbilt moving toward the trend on many college campuses of combined recreation facilities that serve students, faculty and staff. The project involved enhancing the existing Student Recreation Center and making it open to the entire Vanderbilt community as well as the construction of a multipurpose facility includes an indoor practice field that can be used for varsity football, soccer and lacrosse as well as intramural and club sports teams. An indoor track - open for use by the university's athletic teams and students, faculty and staff - is also part of the multipurpose facility, which opened in November, 2013.

Williams has also played an increasing role in collegiate athletics with his service on a number of NCAA panels. He is a member of the Division I Academic Cabinet, which reviews all measures dealing with academics before they are passed on to the Board of Directors; is chairman of the five-member Infractions Appeals Committee, which is responsible for hearing all the appeals for NCAA violations and makes the final decisions regarding appeals; a member of the working group on enforcement, which is planning the adoption of an expanded, four-level violation structure for infractions as part of NCAA President Mark Emmert’s intercollegiate reform effort.

He is also a member of the SEC team responsible for negotiating national television contracts for the conference.

Williams' activities at Vanderbilt also include his being a tenured full professor at the Law School where he teaches tax law, sports law and education law. He has also taught a class on Law and Higher Education at the university's Peabody College of...
education and human development, and occasionally teaches courses in the undergraduate curriculum.

He was named vice chancellor, general counsel and secretary of Vanderbilt in 2000 and previously oversaw Vanderbilt student affairs. He joined Vanderbilt after serving as a professor of law and in numerous administrative roles at The Ohio State University for 14 years.

A native of Detroit, Williams is a graduate of Northern Michigan University where he was a member of the track team. He also earned a Master of Business Administration and a Doctor of Jurisprudence from the University of Detroit, and an L.L.M. in taxation from New York University. Before entering law school, Williams spent 10 years as a teacher and coach in the Detroit public school system.

Williams has taught at the law schools of the University of Detroit, Capital University, The Ohio State University and Vanderbilt, and directed the Ohio State University Law Program in Oxford, England, in 1992 and 1995. He was elected outstanding law professor at both the University of Detroit and The Ohio State University.

Williams and his wife, Gail, have four children: Erika, a grade school teacher in Detroit; David Williams III, an academic counselor at Michigan State University; Samantha, a recent Brown University graduate who is now working in Washington, DC, and Nicholas, a high school senior who competes in basketball, soccer and track. Gail Williams, a graduate of the University of Michigan and the University of Detroit College of Law, serves as the associate director of community relations of Vanderbilt. She is serving her third year as president of the University School of Nashville Board of Trustees and is the past chair of the Metro Transit Authority where she continues to serve as a Board member. In addition, she serves on the boards of many nonprofit organizations, including The Frist Center, The Women’s Fund Advisory Board and the YWCA.