Position Profile
Dean of the College of Liberal Arts
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Table of Contents

About the Role .................................................................................................................................3
  Opportunities and Challenges ........................................................................................................3
    Advocate for COLA and Strengthen its Offerings .......................................................................3
    Lead Budget Management, Revenue Generation, and Resource Allocation ............................3
    Support COLA Faculty ................................................................................................................4
    Prioritize Community Engagement ............................................................................................4
  General Representative Duties of the Dean ..................................................................................4
  Desired Attributes and Qualifications ..........................................................................................4

About the College of Liberal Arts ..................................................................................................6
  COLA Values .................................................................................................................................6
  COLA Skills ..................................................................................................................................6
  COLA Academics ..........................................................................................................................7

About the University ......................................................................................................................7
  Notables .........................................................................................................................................8
  Mission ..........................................................................................................................................9
  University Academics ...................................................................................................................9
  Academic Colleges .......................................................................................................................9
  Accreditation ...............................................................................................................................9
  Leadership .....................................................................................................................................10
    President Jennifer Cowley ..........................................................................................................10
    Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Tamara L. Brown .........................10

About Arlington ............................................................................................................................10

Process for Candidacy ..................................................................................................................11

Equal Employment Opportunity ....................................................................................................11

Campus Safety and Security ..........................................................................................................11
About the Role

The University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) invites applications, expressions of interest, and nominations of candidates in its search for its next dean of the College of Liberal Arts (COLA). The new dean will have the opportunity to develop and articulate a strategic vision for COLA, one of UTA’s largest and most dynamic colleges, which spans diverse disciplines and programs in three main areas: fine and performing arts, humanities, and social sciences. Reporting to the provost and senior vice president for academic affairs, the dean serves as the chief academic officer for COLA and is responsible for strategic, programmatic, and financial operations.

As UTA’s new senior leadership team leads the institution into its exciting future, the dean will lead COLA in its support of UTA’s central mission to promote and achieve academic excellence as it works to become one of the nation’s most inclusive and impactful research universities. The dean will support and sustain a highly effective work environment and a culture of inclusion and collaboration within COLA and with UTA’s other schools and colleges while championing the value of a liberal arts education.

The dean will have considerable administrative experience in a highly complex research institution, a collaborative and visionary leadership style, the highest standards of personal ethics and integrity, and a strong record of research and scholarly accomplishment as well as an understanding of a variety of creative endeavors and research initiatives that span academic disciplines at a comprehensive university. The dean should possess a strong working knowledge of the academic enterprises within higher education and have a deep appreciation for how research intersects with the educational mission of a university that serves a diverse, large urban population. The successful candidate will be a relationship-builder who can promote interdisciplinary collaboration and strengthen COLA’s contribution to UTA and the surrounding communities.

Opportunities and Challenges

The dean will bring enthusiasm and innovation to COLA with a commitment to advancing the college’s positive impact on the lives of students. Building on a solid foundation and working collaboratively with COLA’s devoted staff and renowned faculty, the dean will develop a strategic vision to advance and strengthen the college. In close partnership with the provost, president, and fellow deans, the dean will forge a meaningful path forward for COLA.

Priorities for the Dean are described in the following sections.

Advocate for COLA and Strengthen its Offerings

The dean will be a tireless advocate for COLA and its relevant, vital contributions to the larger University mission, working to evolve the college into a valued, leading partner across UTA in scholarship, teaching, and service activities. The dean will drive excellence and innovation in promoting visionary curricular offerings in dynamic formats that appeal to students at the undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral levels, with particular attention paid to growth in and support of COLA’s graduate programming. Beyond the campus borders, the dean will inspire potential partners from businesses, nonprofits, and foundations throughout the metroplex to partner with COLA faculty and students to create impactful opportunities to demonstrate the value and necessity of a liberal arts education.

Lead Budget Management, Revenue Generation, and Resource Allocation

The dean will provide budgeting leadership and management that drive strategic initiatives and daily operations as well as revenue generation to support the priorities and initiatives of COLA. The dean will bring a strategic mind and creative eye to advancement and resource allocation, offering transparent, decisive leadership in fundraising and distribution. The dean will be an assiduous advocate in garnering institutional and external resources to support the eclectic work of COLA. The dean will lead the forecasting, budgeting, and fund distribution in close partnership with COLA associate and assistant deans and department chairs, seeking input from a wide variety of constituents to create fair and equitable processes for COLA departments and faculty.
Support COLA Faculty

The dean will prioritize the growth of research, scholarship, and creative activity for tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty across COLA disciplines and interdisciplinary pursuits. The dean will attract, retain, and support faculty, with particular emphasis on increasing the diversity of faculty to better mirror the student population and demographics of the state. Under the dean’s leadership, the number of COLA faculty will grow, research activity will increase, and faculty will thrive.

Prioritize Community Engagement

As a leader at one of the country’s few urban Carnegie R-1 universities, the dean will promote COLA engagement within the surrounding metroplex and the state of Texas. The dean shall promote opportunities for COLA constituents to serve traditionally underserved communities and leverage the college’s diversity for greater student learning and mutual benefit. The dean will ensure that COLA incorporates community engagement opportunities into its curriculum, scholarship, and service activities. Finally, the dean shall be an engaged community member and leader who will seek additional opportunities to further build upon UTA’s civic engagement.

General Representative Duties of the Dean

The dean is expected to:

- Provide leadership and oversight for all academic and student service personnel and programs for both undergraduate and graduate programs within the college;
- Work with and coordinate the activities of associate and assistant deans, COLA department chairs, and the dean’s office staff, who are responsible for achieving goals in support of the college;
- Establish and maintain an effective plan that supports student success, including the recruitment and retention of highly qualified and diverse faculty to serve in the college;
- Set quality standards for academic program assessments, curriculum, teaching, and student learning outcomes within COLA;
- Manage faculty personnel processes, including hiring, tenure, and promotion decisions, in an orderly and equitable fashion;
- Collaborate closely with the executive leadership of the University to further the strategic goals and mission of UTA;
- Coordinate and strategically manage the budget development and resource allocation of the college; and
- Engage diverse resource and funding sources for innovative programs, curricula, and scholarship opportunities, including fundraising initiatives and partnerships.

Desired Attributes and Qualifications

UTA seeks a dean who has demonstrated leadership excellence in a complex higher education setting with impeccable integrity. The successful candidate will hold a terminal degree from an accredited institution in an academic discipline within COLA, a record of distinguished research/scholarship and teaching that would support appointment as a tenured full professor at UTA, and experience in an administrative leadership position within higher education.

The ideal candidate will also possess many of the following professional qualifications and personal characteristics:

- A collaborative and authentic approach to shared governance
- High motivation and ability to function effectively within a complex environment, with strong interpersonal skills
• A record of successful management of large and complex academic units
• A demonstrated ability to inspire others to engage in a collaborative environment to innovate, create, and advance the research, creative work, and development mission of the University
• A strong record of commitment to and development of a culture of diversity, equity, social justice, and inclusion and the advancement of a safe, welcoming, and supportive environment for students, staff, and faculty
• A demonstrated commitment to affirmative action and equal opportunity in academic admissions, personnel actions, and other relevant arenas
• Experience with attracting and retaining faculty with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives
• An established history of contribution to student success efforts and a demonstrated record of seeking student input and fostering student engagement
• Substantial and successful fiscal management and budgeting experience, particularly in an environment of constrained resources
• Demonstrated success in obtaining extramural funds at the institutional level as well as experience with research infrastructure development, budgeting in a complex environment, grants and contract administration, and strategic planning with accountability measures
• A demonstrated support of faculty research and creative works in the liberal arts
• A proven ability to make collaborative decisions
• An understanding of the unique culture of an urban university with diverse commuting and residential student populations, including an appreciation of the unique needs of first-generation students, distance education learners, students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, students of color, women, and students with disabilities
• A working knowledge and appreciation of a broad range of academic scholarship and creative activities, student services, and administration practices
• A demonstrated ability to exercise inclusive and decisive leadership
• Excellent communication skills and demonstrated ability to engage successfully with internal and external diverse constituencies
• Experience and aptitude with quality online educational offerings
• Ability and willingness to champion the value and relevance of the liberal arts within the UTA community and beyond
• Knowledge of the multiple communities served by the University, as well as an understanding and appreciation of the University’s mission
• Successful experience leading strategic planning, academic program evaluation, learning outcomes assessment and accreditation, and interdisciplinary programs development
• The highest level of personal integrity and a demonstrated history of promoting ethical behavior and social responsibility
• Strong commitment to fostering a transparent, collaborative, and consensus-building environment
• Demonstrated achievements in supporting and expanding the development of mutually beneficial industry partnerships and innovative curricular changes that support student success and economic development
• Evidence of fostering a culture of service, collaboration, and supporting professional growth, along with the capacity to help sustain UTA as a destination workplace that attracts and retains top-level team members committed to the institutional mission and values
• Charisma, a sense of humor, and a dedication to leading with transparency and collegiality
• Strong active listening skills
• A commitment to sustainability across COLA’s operations
About the College of Liberal Arts

The College of Liberal Arts (COLA) offers students creative, interdisciplinary approaches to address the challenges of a complex, global society. COLA departments and centers cluster into the social sciences, humanities, and fine and performing arts, with highly skilled faculty and students who are dedicated to elevating the human condition through research, scholarship, and creative activity.

The following section describes the values and skills emphasized throughout COLA.

COLA Values

Local Engagement and Global Thinking. COLA fosters a community-based understanding at UTA, in Dallas-Fort Worth, throughout Texas, and on a global level. This capacity encourages students to act locally while being globally conscious.

Creativity and Innovation. COLA ensures students are engaging and cultivating various pursuits in entrepreneurship and artistic expression.

Inclusiveness and Diversity. COLA encourages an environment that is open to diverse backgrounds, ideas, and ways of thinking. Teaching respect, empathy, and tolerance for all people and cultures, COLA develops thoughtful, well-rounded students and citizens.

Community and Collaboration. COLA provides students with the ability to examine their place and space in the world. COLA cultivates partnerships and collaborative efforts to produce an impact on society and help students in an increasingly global, ever-changing world and workplace.

Curiosity and Imagination. COLA encourages students to speak to allow the brain to roam free, question unexpectedly, think divergently instead of conversely, and to not be afraid to express oneself and ideas.

COLA Skills

Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving. Students foster inquiry into the attitudes and ideas that shape contemporary society. These skills facilitate bold ideas, challenge conventional thought, and reveal the process of finding solutions to complex issues.

Leadership, Teamwork, and Effective Communication. Students learn work habits and develop character traits commonly associated with 21st-century skills.

Research and Professional Expertise. Students highlight scientific, social science, and humanities literacy and reasoning with advance disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge.

Comprehension, Interpretation, and Analysis. Students study, appreciate, and analyze written, oral, and visual materials, producing thoughtful interpretations that demonstrate a high level of cognitive ability.

Technological and Digital Tools. Students are enriched with tremendous knowledge in social and media spaces, the internet, computer programming, computer hardware and software, applications, and future technologies.
COLA Academics

More than 4,000 students (including 326 graduate students) are currently working towards degrees in the 126 majors offered by the college. At the graduate level, COLA currently offers masters programs (in Communication, Criminology and Criminal Justice, English, History, Linguistics, Modern Languages, Music, Political Science, and Sociology), PhD programs in English, History, and Linguistics and MFA programs in cinematic arts, glass, intermedia, and design. COLA employs more than 300 dedicated faculty to include very active researchers who generated $1,183,391 in research expenditures in 2021. The college is supported by a staff of 118 and a budget of nearly $36,964,492.

COLA’s diverse group of departments, programs and minors include:

- Art and Art History
- Communication
- Criminology and Criminal Justice
- Disability Studies (minor program)
- English
- History
- Linguistics and TESOL
- Military Science
- Modern Languages
- Music
- Philosophy and Humanities
- Political Science
- Prelaw (minor program)
- Sociology and Anthropology
- Theatre Arts and Dance
- Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies (minor program)

About the University

Located on a 420-acre campus in the heart of the thriving Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington metro area (population 7.6 million), The University of Texas at Arlington is a comprehensive teaching, research, and public service institution dedicated to the advancement of knowledge through scholarship and creative work.

As one of the largest and most diverse universities in Texas, UT Arlington is committed to providing access and ensuring student success, and to a culture of innovation, entrepreneurship, and commercialization of discoveries by our community of scholars. The University promotes lifelong learning through its academic, continuing education, and experiential learning programs. The faculty, staff, and student community share diverse cultural values that foster inclusivity and cultivate mutual respect.
Founded in 1895 as a private liberal arts institution, UT Arlington enrolls over 46,000 students and employs nearly 5,000 faculty and staff. The University has the fifth most ethnically diverse undergraduate population in the United States (U.S. News & World Report, 2023) and is a Hispanic-Serving Institution and an Asian American, Native American, Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (U.S. Department of Education). UTA graduates more African American students at the undergraduate and master’s degree levels than any other Texas university (Diverse: Issues in Higher Education, 2021).

In addition to nurturing student success, UTA is focused on making an impact through innovative research. Anchored by its five strategic pillars—health and the human condition, sustainable communities, global environmental impact, data-driven discovery, and culture and societal transformations—the University’s research portfolio saw significant growth over the past decade, with expenditures reaching $125 million in 2021. Faculty work in state-of-the-art facilities has resulted in important breakthroughs in areas such as sustainable infrastructure, healthy aging, high-energy physics, cardiovascular disease, machine-learning systems, and more.

In 2021, the combination of outstanding academics and innovative research contributed to the University once again receiving Carnegie R-1 “Very High Research Activity” designation and becoming just the fourth university in the state to achieve Texas Tier One status, a milestone of excellence that brings with it access to the state’s National Research University Fund. By providing exceptional educational opportunities and addressing important societal challenges, UTA enhances the quality of life in Texas and beyond.

The government of the University is vested in a nine-member Board of Regents of the UT System, nominated by the governor, and approved by the Texas Senate. In addition to its main campus in Arlington, UTA has two facilities in neighboring Fort Worth: a downtown campus called UTA Fort Worth that is tailored for working professionals and a research institute on the banks of the Trinity River that is focused on bridging the gap between academic research and product development.

Notables

- UTA has 16 graduate programs ranked as “Best Graduate Schools” by U.S. News & World Report (USNWR, 2022).
- UTA is ranked No. 5 nationally on the U.S. News & World Report’s undergraduate diversity index and is ranked No. 41 as a “Top Performer on Social Mobility” (USNWR, 2023).
- UTA is ranked No. 4 for veterans and their families among four-year institutions (Military Times, 2022).
- UTA alumni occupy leadership positions at many of the 22 Fortune 500 companies headquartered in North Texas.
- UTA’s College of Nursing and Health Innovation is the No. 1 producer of baccalaureate-degreed nurses in Texas.
- UTA and its alumni contribute $22.2 billion and 216,544 jobs annually to Texas.
- UTA was one of 171 colleges and universities recognized on the Phi Theta Kappa 2022 Transfer Honor Roll.
- UTA baccalaureate graduates working in Texas earn the highest first-year median wage of all UT System non-medical institutions (UT System Smartbook, 2021).
Mission

The University of Texas at Arlington is a comprehensive teaching, research, and public service institution dedicated to the advancement of knowledge through scholarship and creative work. The University is committed to providing access and ensuring student success, and to a culture of innovation, entrepreneurship, and commercialization of discoveries by our community of scholars.

The university promotes lifelong learning through its academic, continuing education, and experiential learning programs. The faculty, staff, and student communities share diverse cultural values that foster inclusivity and cultivate mutual respect.

University Academics

UT Arlington offers more than 180 baccalaureates, master’s, and doctoral degree programs across nine schools and colleges, including the largest nursing college at a public university in the country. Students hail from coast to coast and over 100 countries worldwide, with around 10,000 living on or near campus. Each year, approximately 14,000 graduates join the ranks of UTA alumni, now numbering more than 250,000.

Academic Colleges

- College of Architecture, Planning, and Public Affairs
- College of Business
- College of Education
- College of Engineering
- College of Liberal Arts
- College of Nursing and Health Innovation
- College of Science
- Honors College
- School of Social Work

Accreditation

The University of Texas at Arlington is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award baccalaureate, master’s, and doctoral degrees. In addition, many of UTA’s academic departments and schools have received national accreditation from specific agencies. These accreditations are detailed under the individual listings for departments and schools in the University Catalog.
Leadership

President Jennifer Cowley

The University of Texas at Arlington welcomed Jennifer Cowley, Ph.D., on April 28, 2022, as the first female president in the University’s history. Most recently, she served as provost at the University of North Texas (UNT), where she advanced research, fostered student success, and advanced diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Before joining UNT in 2017, Dr. Cowley was a member of the faculty at Ohio State University, serving as vice provost for capital planning and regional campuses, associate dean for academic affairs and administration in the College of Engineering, and department chair and professor in city and regional planning.

Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Tamara L. Brown

UTA welcomed Tamara L. Brown, Ph.D., as provost and senior vice president for academic affairs on Aug. 1, 2022. Dr. Brown came to UTA from the UNT, where she served as executive dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, the largest college on its campus.

Before joining UNT in 2019, Dr. Brown was interim dean of graduate studies at Prairie View A&M University, with academic roots in psychology and juvenile justice.

About Arlington

Arlington, Texas, is one of the fastest-growing communities in the nation. Located between Dallas and Fort Worth in North Texas, the city is home to more than 380,000 residents, making it the seventh largest in the state. It is also the hometown of three professional sports teams: the Texas Rangers, the Dallas Cowboys, and the Dallas Wings, the latter of which plays its home games at UTA’s College Park Center. Residents, athletes, and visitors alike enjoy hot summers and mild winters and fill their days with good food, company, and entertainment.

The University of Texas at Arlington is in Tarrant County (population 2.1 million). Arlington is easily accessible, located 30 minutes from the two major airports in the Metroplex—DFW International Airport and Dallas Love Field Airport. Less than two miles from AT&T Stadium and Globe Life Field, where the Dallas Cowboys and Texas Rangers, respectively, play, and less than three miles from Six Flags Over Texas.
Process for Candidacy

The search committee will begin reviewing applications immediately.

Application materials will include the following:

- letter of interest
- curriculum vitae
- list of five professional references

Please send all nominations and applications to UTADeanCOLA@StorbeckSearch.com.

Sincerely,

R. Thomas Fitch, Managing Director
Carol Fairborn, Associate

Equal Employment Opportunity

The University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) is committed to providing equal employment and educational opportunities for all qualified persons without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, disabilities, pregnancy, genetic information, and/or veteran status. Retaliation against persons who oppose a discriminatory practice, file a charge of discrimination, or testify for, assist in, or participate in an investigative proceeding relating to discrimination is prohibited. See the University of Texas at Arlington’s Notice of Non-Discrimination which includes contact information.

Campus Safety and Security

The Annual Security and Fire Safety Report, containing policy statements, crime, and fire statistics is available online. A hard copy may be obtained by contacting Office of Legal Affairs, University Administration Building, 701 S. Nedderman Drive, Arlington, TX 76019, 817-272-2141