UTA

Position Profile

Dean of UTA Libraries | March 2023

Search

The University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) invites nominations and applications for the position of dean of UTA Libraries. The University seeks a dynamic, visionary leader who will advance the University's mission of research and teaching by ensuring the provision of outstanding and innovative library services to all its users. As a Carnegie Doctoral/Very High Research Activity university, UTA is focused on meeting the needs of Texans today, tomorrow, and into the future with bold solutions and global impact.

As 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 through a culture of innovation, entrepreneurship, and commercialization of discoveries by a community of scholars.

UTA Libraries creates extraordinary opportunities for learning, discovery, and innovation through its three libraries, collections depository, and 8000-square-foot FabLab makerspace. The Central Library is an energetic hub with a dedicated staff ensuring library resources are accessible and students feel welcomed.

Reporting to the provost and senior vice president for academic affairs, the dean of UTA Libraries serves as the chief executive of the libraries with responsibility for oversight of all administrative activities, including budget and personnel management. The dean will have the opportunity to build on the libraries' excellent reputation for innovative and experimental initiatives that foster student success, provide cutting-edge technology for interdisciplinary collaboration, and create meaningful engagement with K-12 partners across the region.

As a forward-thinking leader, the dean will develop a vision for the future that reflects the needs of UTA students, staff, faculty, and the surrounding community. The dean will leverage the libraries' resources wisely to develop and strengthen dynamic internal and external partnerships in support of UTA's goals.

The successful candidate must be a strong advocate for the libraries and implement dynamic, strategic, entrepreneurial, and innovative approaches. Ultimately, the successful candidate will provide:

- the leadership to develop and achieve a vision of a university library in the 21st century.

- a clear understanding of the major challenges facing research university libraries in a time of complex and extended transition.

- the ability to develop and maintain collaborative partnerships across campus and to engage, influence, and facilitate collaborations with UTA's external constituents—including state, regional, and national consortia and organizations.

- an advanced understanding of digital technology trends and their impact on information management infrastructure.

- a demonstrated commitment to developing a diverse workforce.

UTA has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist a University search committee.

All applications, inquiries, and nominations, which will remain confidential, should be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

University

Located on a 420-acre campus in the heart of the thriving Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington metro area (population 7.6 million), UTA 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, UTA is committed to providing access and ensuring student success, and to a culture of innovation, entrepreneurship, and commercialization of discoveries by its 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, UTA 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, and Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (U.S. Department of Education). UTA graduates the most African American students at the master's degree level and the second-most at the undergraduate level of any other Texas university (*Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*, 2022).

UTA is one of just six institutions nationwide this year to earn the Seal of *Excelencia* certification, a prestigious honor granted to colleges and universities for their commitment to accelerating Latino student success. *U.S. News & World Report* 2022-23 ranked UTA among one of the best graduate schools in the country, and it was chosen again by the American Indian Science and Engineering Society as one of the top 200 Colleges for Indigenous students. UTA is consistently ranked as a top institution serving first-generation and low-income students, and it was ranked fourth nationally for serving veteran students (*Military Times*, 2022).

Guided by world-class faculty members, the University's more than 46,000 students in campus-based and online degree programs represent 120 countries and pursue more than 184 bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in a broad range of disciplines. UTA is dedicated to producing the lifelong learners and critical thinkers that the region and nation demand. More than 60% of the University's 250,000 alumni live in North Texas and contribute to an annual economic impact of $17.1 billion in the region.

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 2022. 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. By providing exceptional educational opportunities and addressing important societal challenges, UTA enhances the quality of life in Texas and beyond.

University governance 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.

Leadership

Dr. Jennifer Cowley, University President

Dr. Cowley joined UTA in 2022 and is the first woman to serve as president. She is also a professor of public affairs and planning in the College of Architecture, Planning, and Public Affairs.

Cowley has dedicated her career to public service. Before joining UTA, she was the provost and vice president for academic affairs at the University of North Texas (UNT), where she led economic development partnerships, advanced diversity and inclusion initiatives, fostered student success, bolstered the research portfolio, and helped increase enrollment.

Cowley earned her PhD in urban and regional science, master's degree in urban planning, and bachelor's degree in political science from Texas A&M University and master's degrees in interdisciplinary studies and public administration from UNT. She is a fellow of the American Institute of Certified Planners and the National Academy of Public Administrators.

Dr. Tamara Brown, Provost, and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Dr. Brown came to UTA from UNT, where she served as executive dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences for three years. In that position, she was responsible for the largest college on campus, consisting of 9,000 students and more than 22 academic departments and programs.

Prior to her time at UNT, Brown was interim dean of graduate studies from 2018-19 at Prairie View A&M University. From 2012-18, she served as dean and professor at Prairie View's College of Juvenile Justice and Psychology and executive director of the Texas Juvenile Crime Prevention Center.

Brown earned her doctoral and master's degrees in clinical psychology from the University of Illinois and a bachelor's degree in psychology from Longwood College. She also has a master's of divinity from Asbury Theological Seminary.

UTA Libraries

UTA Libraries is a model for a 21st-century urban academic library dedicated to elevating research and scholarship and meeting the needs of its campus community through various educational programs, locating resources across campus, and maintaining a significant web presence. UTA Libraries includes the Central Library, two branch libraries (West Campus Library, Science and Engineering Library (SEL)), and an on-campus, high-density storage facility, the Library Collections Depository (LCD).

These facilities offer access to a diverse collection of print, microform, media, and electronic information resources developed to enhance student learning and support faculty research. UTA Libraries' growing collection of online resources enables access to a variety of e-books, datasets, open access and paid journals, and databases for the University community and is accessible in the libraries, on campus, off campus, and online. In addition to its commitment to extraordinary access, the UTA Libraries offers a diverse suite of study spaces, creative studios, and services, such as course reserves, bindery, borrowing, distance education, disability services, faculty delivery services, graduate retrieval services, interlibrary loan, library instruction, technology lending, printing, and more.

UTA Libraries employs 44 librarians/archivists, 64 classified staff, and 176 students with a recurring budget of $14.4 million. The majority of UTA Libraries' funding is generated through federal grants, student fees, and endowments.

The Central Library, the largest and busiest library facility on campus, is 201,040 gross square feet comprising six floors; it had roughly 850,000 visits for the 2022 academic year. A variety of study spaces in the Central Library are available for individual and group study throughout the building. The open basement is a hub for technological resources and gaming, as well as comfortable casual seating encouraging group study and interaction. The Central Library is deeply embedded in the Arlington community, and the University is committed to making the library accessible by offering visits for K-12 students and providing a reading resource collection to support teachers in their curriculum development. In addition, UTA Libraries partners with UTA faculty to offer 27 open educational resources for students and develop experiential learning opportunities.

UTA Libraries' Fabrication Laboratories, or FabLab, exemplifies the University's commitment to ensuring it graduates career-ready creators, innovators, and inventors. As the first MIT-affiliated fab lab in Texas, UTA's FabLab creates opportunities for project-based and hands-on science, technology, arts, and mathematics education. Located on the main floor of the Central Library and open five days a week, the FabLab is available to all UTA students and faculty. As a member of the international FabLab network, the UTA FabLab democratizes access to creative technologies for students across disciplines and fosters cross-disciplinary collaboration. This space and these collaborations uniquely situate UTA Libraries to advance understanding of how maker spaces and maker literacies can equip college graduates, particularly first-generation college students and students from diverse populations, for academic success and the 21st-century workforce.

Since 2013, UTA Libraries has partnered with the Division of Student Success and other stakeholders to create the Academic Plaza in the Central Library. The plaza offers free group-based late-hours tutoring in high-fail and high-drop classes, supplemental instruction, fee-based tutoring, and academic advising.

You can learn more about UTA Libraries' facilities and ongoing initiatives at libraries.uta.edu/about.

Position

The dean of UTA Libraries is responsible for the leadership and administration of UTA Libraries, overseeing its innovation and development in the areas of user services, collections and resources, management and infrastructure, cooperative initiatives and outreach, and support and funding.

The dean articulates a clear vision for the role of the academic research library in the 21st century; develops and implements the libraries' strategic plan in support of academic priorities, curricula, and research; and represents the libraries to campus administration and external audiences.

The dean is expected to be deeply engaged in development opportunities and expanding donor support. The dean regularly represents The University of Texas at Arlington in regional, national, and international discussions relating to academic libraries and their development. The dean reports to the provost and vice president for academic affairs and sits on the Dean's Council.

Key Opportunities

Key opportunities and challenges facing the dean of UTA Libraries include:

Drive and execute a compelling, innovative, and strategic vision.

UTA Libraries, like other major academic research libraries today, must define and position itself during a time of rapid transformation of the information management landscape; changes in scholarly communication; the mechanisms of information storage and retrieval; the orientation and expectations of students, faculty, and researchers when seeking information; and the use of library buildings as spaces for instruction, learning, and community building.

The next dean will work in close collaboration with senior leadership, faculty, and staff within and outside the libraries to craft a compelling and animating vision for an academic unit crucial to the success of the University. In particular, the vision will provide the foundation for many of UTA's most exciting overarching initiatives, including advancing research growth and exploring the possibility of pursuing Association of Research Libraries membership. In doing so, the dean will bring a forward-looking orientation to technology and digital initiatives while maintaining and expanding the libraries' physical collections and remaining on the cutting edge of information technology without leaving behind the traditional functions of academic libraries.

Lead, develop, and inspire a talented and service-oriented staff.

The success of UTA Libraries is due in large part to the strength of its librarians and staff, who are committed to providing a student-first approach to their services. This team contributes valuable expertise and ideas to the libraries and seeks a leader who can provide vision and prioritization. Thinking from a broad systems perspective will enable the libraries to work smoothly and effectively.

The dean will also be skilled at looking at the institutional environment and the larger context in which the libraries exist, bringing that knowledge back to the librarians and staff. This includes feedback on the needs of the provost, deans, and faculty. The dean will help define and implement programs to mentor, develop, and retain librarians and staff. This is especially important given the increasing level of expertise required by both librarians and staff in an increasingly technology-focused environment. The dean will understand how the promotion process impacts the work of the librarians and be supportive of their needs, collaborating to extend an already well-established culture of service.

Advocate for UTA Libraries across campus and outside of the University.

The dean will be a dynamic, tireless advocate for the libraries on all matters. On campus, this includes securing needed resources, getting involved in University initiatives and collaborations, and promoting UTA Libraries and its services to the campus and broader community.

The dean will be a collaborative partner with the other deans, ensuring strong cross-campus coordination and support. The dean will present a clear, compelling vision for the libraries and will skillfully and passionately educate the community about its value.

Beyond the University, UTA Libraries has a strong presence locally and regionally. The dean will support the continued engagement of the libraries as a collaborative partner and leader in the sphere of research libraries and in higher education more broadly.

The dean of UTA Libraries will be strongly engaged with local, national, and international consortia and associations and will leverage collaborative opportunities to amplify the libraries' influence, impact, and reputation.

Steward and creatively manage and augment UTA Libraries' resources.

Creative management and leveraging resources will be an ongoing challenge for the dean, whether hiring librarians and staff, maintaining and improving collections and other services, assessing space needs, or launching special projects that add to the libraries' capabilities.

UTA Libraries has a substantial budget that requires strategic and judicious management. The dean will make strategic decisions to deploy existing resources and negotiate cost-effective, mutually beneficial partnerships with publishers and other partners effectively.

The dean will develop opportunities for individual giving and grant possibilities to supplement the funding received through the University's budget. The dean will play a key leadership role in working with the libraries' development staff in setting fundraising goals, building relationships with prospects and existing donors, and soliciting major gifts. The dean will present a clear, compelling vision for UTA Libraries and skillfully and passionately market the libraries' opportunities for serving the external community.

Qualifications

The dean of UTA Libraries role represents an outstanding opportunity for an experienced senior administrator with a history of decisive, creative, and innovative leadership. Successful candidates will also possess most, if not all, of the following characteristics and credentials:

- A master's in library and information sciences from an ALA-accredited school.

- Strong executive leadership background with substantial management experience in strategic planning, change management, budgeting, and human resources.

- A keen understanding of the major challenges facing academic research libraries and the ability to engage key actors and peer organizations in new and emerging developments and technology.

- A deep understanding of open access issues, digital content, physical spaces, student success, online learning and innovation, open educational resources, scholarly publishing reform, knowledge curation, and the continued development of print, digital, and A/V collections.

- An ability to champion, empower, and inspire staff and faculty at all levels and in all roles; a commitment to transparent communication that clearly delineates decision-making processes and offers forums for input and shared governance; a successful history of recruitment, retention, development, and team building.

- A record of innovation and continued openness to fresh and new approaches, coupled with wise decision-making and prioritization—e.g., when to engage or forgo new initiatives and opportunities for cross-institutional collaborations.

- The ability to break down silos and promote collaboration across units and institutions, to continue the libraries' record of generous partnership in research and teaching activities; as well as demonstrated skill in envisioning, developing, and advocating for the libraries' role in campus, statewide, regional, national, and international initiatives.

- A record of professional accomplishment through research, publication, service, and leadership in areas that affect and inform libraries.

- Proven experience engaging in development, fundraising, community engagement, and public relations in an academic library setting.

- At least five years of progressively responsible and successful academic library administration or leadership experience

- Unimpeachable ethics and integrity

Arlington, TX Area

Arlington, Texas, is one of the fastest-growing communities in the nation.

The city is located between Dallas and Fort Worth in North Texas and home to more than 390,000 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.

Application Process

The review of candidates begins immediately and continues until an appointment is made.

Applications should include (as separate documents) a cover letter and resume. Apply at imsearch.com/open-searches/university-texas-arlington/dean-libraries.

All inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed in confidence to:

Jackie Partner, Partner
Quizayra Gonzalez, Senior Associate
Isaacson, Miller

UTA is an equal employment and a provider of ADA services. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to age, ethnicity, color, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, marital status, national origin, disability status, or protected veteran status.

UTA

Office of Talent, Culture and Inclusion