



Position Profile



Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations

Executive Summary

On April 28, 2022, [The University of Texas at Arlington](#) (UTA) welcomed Jennifer Cowley, Ph.D., as its first female and 10th overall president. President Cowley's goals for UTA include raising its standing on the national stage, putting the University on outstanding financial footing, and building a first-rate development program to significantly increase alumni engagement and philanthropic support. To achieve these ambitions, the University invites applications, expressions of interest, and nominations of candidates in its search for a Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations.

The Vice President will report to President Cowley. This new leader will serve as a member of the President's senior staff and will lead the development team to create and execute strategies, programs, and budgets that effectively communicate the President's vision to key stakeholders and secure philanthropic resources.

UTA is in a uniquely strong position, enjoying new levels of achievement and stability. UTA has attracted its largest freshman class ever and now supports approximately 48,000 students. The University's more than 250,000 alumni are making an impact across Texas and around the globe. The University's innovating and evolving. Leadership across UTA is ready to dedicate the attention and investment needed to bring the development program up to the level of the best contemporary fundraising operations.

The University of Texas System Board of Regents, in concert with President Cowley, has identified the transformation of the development program as one of UTA's most important strategic priorities. Success in this endeavor requires a development leader with significant experience in high-performing fundraising programs and the ability to lead compellingly in both word and deed. The Vice President will possess exceptional leadership, communication, and management skills and experience as well as a track record of success as a fundraiser, collaborator with faculty, and builder of programs and staff.

Experience in higher education and with one or more institutions as comprehensive and complex as UTA is highly preferred. Leadership experience in campaign planning and a bachelor's degree are required, though an advanced degree is preferred.

President Cowley is challenging UTA to be more innovative and strategic in an effort to become one of the nation's most inclusive and impactful research universities. President Cowley has outlined her strategic vision, with plans to focus on four key themes: People and Culture, Student Success, Research and Innovation, and Alumni and Community Engagement. With increased support and engagement, the new Vice President can help to build a more just, humane, and inclusive community. UTA's new Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations will have the opportunity to have a significant, personal impact on UTA's success.

To submit a nomination or express personal interest in this position, please see Procedure for Candidacy at the end of this profile.

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 student access and 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 shares diverse cultural values that foster inclusivity and cultivate mutual respect.

Founded in 1895 as a private liberal arts institution, UT Arlington enrolls over 48,000 students and employs nearly 5,000 faculty and staff. The University has the third-most ethnically diverse undergraduate population in the United States (*U.S. News & World Report*, 2022) 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 to make important breakthroughs in areas such as sustainable infrastructure, healthy aging, high-energy physics, cardiovascular disease, machine-learning systems, and more.

In 2021, UTA's 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, UT Arlington 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, 2023).
- UTA is ranked No. 3 nationally on the *U.S. News & World Report's* undergraduate diversity index and is ranked No. 26 as a "Top Performer

on Social Mobility” (*USNWR*, 2022).

- UTA is ranked No. 1 for veterans and their families among four-year institutions (*Military Times*, 2020 and 2021).
- 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 150 colleges and universities recognized on the Phi Theta Kappa 2021 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 community shares diverse cultural values that foster inclusivity and cultivate mutual respect.

Vision and Values

The University of Texas at Arlington is a pre-eminent urban public research university that inspires bold solutions with global impact through creative scholarship, transformative access, and collaborative learning.

Institutional values are Access and Success, Opportunity and Excellence, Inclusiveness and Diversity, Mavericks and Innovators, and Collegiality and Collaboration.



Academics

UT Arlington offers more than 180 baccalaureate, 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 is thrilled to welcome Jennifer Cowley, Ph.D. Dr. Cowley assumed her role as the first female president in the University's history on April 28, 2022. 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, Cowley was a member of the faculty at The 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.

Cowley grew up in Arlington and is looking forward to advancing UTA as one of the nation's leading research universities.



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 four professional sports teams: the Texas Rangers, the Dallas Cowboys, the Dallas Jackals, and the Dallas Wings, the latter of whom 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, good company, and good 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, UTA is just a stone's throw away from the excitement the city of Arlington has to offer.

Role of the Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations

The Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations will engage in the below roles and responsibilities:

- Serve on the President's leadership team to establish and execute University-wide vision, strategies, and priorities for philanthropic support. Effectively coordinate integrated development efforts across all colleges, schools, and units in collaboration and partnership with

University leaders, deans, development and advisory board members, alumni, and constituent leaders. Provide innovative leadership to manage and inspire an effective development team while enabling staff members to grow professionally.

- Develop effective strategies to attract major and transformative gifts and broaden the University's base of philanthropic support. Oversee comprehensive fundraising campaigns and special initiatives. Build a program of distinction using a balanced fundraising model that includes planned giving, principal and major gifts, leadership and annual giving, and corporate and foundation relations.
- Operate a strong development services unit with exceptional programs for stewardship, donor relations, compliance, data integrity, analytics, and gift processing. Create and execute annual and long-range fundraising plans within department budgets and operating guidelines to fund institutional priorities.
- Implement best practices, performance metrics, and standards to maximize fundraising efforts. Develop a culture of philanthropy that embraces all institutional partners. Maintain positive, strong relationships with the President's Advisory Board and other potential donors and constituents.
- Successfully manage a portfolio of high-potential philanthropic partners and work directly with the President to secure transformative gifts.
- Provide executive leadership for the Office of Alumni Relations, ensuring that University and departmental goals for areas of responsibility are met.
- Foster a robust alumni relations program that provides meaningful engagement and service opportunities to increase alumni support and participation. Produce an effective communications plan to engage new graduates and alumni with University news and opportunities in order to develop institutional pride and connections.
- Build a University relations program with various constituencies, including parents, volunteers, development board and advisory groups, and community leaders.

Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

UTA has never been more ready for transformative fundraising leadership than it is today. With the arrival of Dr. Jennifer Cowley as its new president, the creation of her strategic vision, and a newfound commitment to engaging with its alumni, the University is ready to make the investment and to initiate the cultural changes required to establish a sophisticated, highly productive, and finely tuned development operation, including broadening the University's base of support, developing a strategic protocol for donor cultivation and stewardship, and creating a culture of philanthropy throughout UTA. This moment in UTA's history brings with it a once-in-a-career opportunity for UTA's new Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations.

UTA is seeking a Vice President of the highest caliber and professional experience to transform the development organization into a modern, leading-edge program that will take UTA to unprecedented levels of constituent engagement and philanthropic success. This leader will implement a disciplined, consistent, and high-performing program. The Vice President will lead the transformation of UTA's development program by addressing the following opportunities:

Build, align, focus, and inspire the development team

UTA has a development team of 55 in the central development office, and there are a number of vacancies across the organization, providing an important opportunity for the Vice President to recruit new members to their team. On that note, the Vice President is expected to bring a fresh perspective to assess the current organizational structure and staffing plan. This leader will ensure adequate human resources and will restructure, hire, and realign as needed to meet the needs of the University's fundraising program and ensure strength at all levels within the team—entry-level, mid-level, and senior-level—across all functions. The Vice President will recruit, mentor, coach, and retain top talent and create a positive, forward-looking, goal-oriented team that has strong morale.



Build the infrastructure, systems, and processes required of a first-rate, high performance development program

Building infrastructure, systems, and processes will be one of the most important jobs of the Vice President—in short, the Vice President will need to build a modern, first-rate operation that emulates best practices of the finest development programs.

The prospect research program has an opportunity to become a highly proactive unit that is vital to the building of a more robust major gift pipeline. The unit will ensure that development officers have the information they need for successful and informed outreach, assist in preparing prospect profiles and briefings for leadership, conduct and make routine comprehensive wealth screenings of the database to identify the top prospective donors, and develop a proactive prospect assignment and clearance process that ensures that all highly rated prospects are assigned and cultivation strategies are in place. Ultimately, the infrastructure, systems, and processes must be in place and ready to support a highly-functioned development program and the launching of a campaign in the future.

Create a robust constituent engagement strategy to build a major gift pipeline for the future

UTA historically has not committed to a consistent, comprehensive, and strategic program of alumni engagement. That era has ended. UTA is ready to welcome its 250,000 alumni (65% of whom live in North Texas) into the ongoing life of the University in ways they have not experienced to date. The Vice President will build a comprehensive alumni communication and engagement strategy to strengthen ties and cultivate engagement of

alumni across the University. Likewise, the new leader will build a first-rate annual giving program to maximize alumni giving and significantly increase the alumni participation rate from its current 1.12%. All development and alumni relations messaging and activities will be fully integrated to instill a new culture of philanthropy among alumni and invite them to invest in the future of UTA.

UTA—the most diverse university in the UT System and the third-most diverse in the nation—is now officially an Asian American Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution, and in 2014 it became the largest public four-year university in Texas to meet U.S. Department of Education requirements to be labeled a Hispanic-Serving Institution. UTA has designated an additional \$25 million in scholarships to address student diversity and especially the financial concerns of first-generation college students. These additional funds will support even more students from low-income families and those facing challenges in the wake of COVID-19. The new Vice President will need to show a commitment to engaging this diverse community and helping to instill a passion for giving that will lead them to greater community engagement, fulfilling careers, and meaningful lives.

Partner with University leadership and galvanize the development team to increase philanthropic support significantly

University leaders are eager to partner with the development team in a more strategic way. The Vice President will work with University leadership to identify top fundraising priorities and unearth the “big ideas” that will inspire transformational gifts to UTA, including building a compelling case for support with inspiring gift opportunities that will advance UTA’s mission and meet strategic priorities. The Vice President will also ensure that the President, Provost, and Deans have relationships with key alumni, supporters, and friends; provide high-level staffing of the President, Provost, and Deans to support their development activities; and make certain their portfolios are managed in a highly proactive and sophisticated manner. The Vice President will create goals for all aspects of the fundraising program and for each fundraiser to ensure that philanthropic support grows at a strong and steady pace over time to reach a new, significantly increased, and sustainable level of annual support.

Join together with leadership to create a culture of philanthropy across the University and manage the change process to assure success

Like many institutions, UTA has not created a culture of philanthropy that pervades the institution and all of its constituencies. The Vice President will work with leadership to ensure that philanthropy, and the understanding of its importance and impact, becomes part of the fabric of UTA. This leader will identify and engage strategic partners to provide counsel and advocate as needed to assist with and support the changes required to create a lasting cultural shift. All constituents—University and academic leaders, faculty, the Board of Regents, alumni, patients, students, and community friends—will be engaged in this endeavor. The new Vice President will lead this effort and will bring skilled attention to the change-management process to optimize its success.

Qualifications and Qualities

The University of Texas at Arlington seeks a Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations who has demonstrated leadership excellence in complex, higher education settings. The ideal candidate will have a bachelor’s degree and demonstrate many of the following experiences and characteristics:

- Extensive experience as an executive in higher education fundraising at the level of vice president or positioned to be a vice president as the next career step;
- Demonstrated experience and leadership in a complex, demanding, and fast-paced environment, preferably at a Carnegie R-1 university;
- Record of senior leadership and accomplishment as a fundraiser who has played a leading role in generating six- to eight-figure gifts;
- Over 10 years of progressive increased responsibility and leadership in development;
- Experience with athletic and international fundraising preferred;
- Proven record of effectively working with volunteers and high-net-worth individuals;
- Demonstrated experience and skills in employee talent development, recruitment, and retention; and
- Demonstrated experience and engagement skills in effectively collaborating with university leadership, faculty, and volunteers and successfully cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding key prospects and donors.

Procedure for Candidacy

All applications, nominations, and inquiries are invited. Applications should include, as separate documents, a CV or resume and a letter of interest addressing the themes in this profile.

WittKieffer is assisting UT Arlington in this search. WittKieffer is assisting The University of Texas at Arlington in this search, which will remain open until an appointment is made. Application materials should be submitted using WittKieffer's [candidate portal](#). Applications, nominations, and expressions of interest will be treated in full confidence. References will not be contacted without prior knowledge and approval of candidates.

Nominations and inquiries can be directed to:

Mercedes Chacòn Vance and Ashlee Winters
UTAVPDev@WittKieffer.com

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 here 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 OLA, University Administration Building, 701 S. Nedderman Drive, Arlington, TX 76019, 817-272-2141.



Office of Human Resources

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