



**Dean of the College of Applied Studies
Wichita State University
Wichita, Kansas**

The Search

Wichita State University (WSU), the premier urban, public research university in Kansas, seeks a visionary, engaged, and collaborative leader to be the next Dean of the College of Applied Studies (CAS).

Founded in 1895, WSU has a keen focus on student success, applied learning, and innovative faculty with a deep commitment to the Wichita community as a driver in workforce development. It is a growth-minded university where collaboration and creativity shape the future of education, with an entrepreneurial spirit embedded in its foundation. CAS is a unique unit blending departments that touch all aspects of Pre-K-12 education, educational administration, sport management, organizational leadership and learning, counseling program tracks that include several counseling fields, athletic training, and exercise science with collaboration, technology, and a focus on student success as foundational markers of excellence. The regional impact of CAS is significant and vital as it graduates more than half of the teachers and administrators working in Wichita schools. CAS takes this charge seriously as it creates new and inventive ways to support its undergraduate and graduate students through experiential learning opportunities and innovative classroom and lab experiences that directly impact the community. It is an exciting moment in time as CAS has experienced great success and is poised for additional growth in enrollment, research funding, and philanthropic support as the next Dean steps into a collaborative culture that is driven by its [Core Values](#).

The Dean's primary responsibility is to advance the academic quality and profile of CAS through visionary leadership, strategic planning, interdisciplinary collaboration, ethical governance, and skillful human and financial resource management. The Dean is charged with advancing the educational and research agendas of four diverse academic units within CAS and closely collaborating with the faculty and leaders across WSU to enhance the University's educational impact on campus and in the region while ensuring the College remains student-centered, innovation-driven, and entrepreneurial-focused. A deep personal commitment to and demonstrated track record of actively supporting and promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion is a priority. In line with the University's strategic plan and priorities, the Dean will work with the President's Executive Team to advance WSU as an innovative university by focusing on increasing enrollment, developing new online and hybrid educational experiences, applied learning, funded

research, improvement of facilities, and digital transformation. The Dean will also be responsible for ongoing fundraising efforts in close partnership with the WSU Foundation.

Wichita State University has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in the recruitment of the new Dean. All confidential inquiries, applications, and nominations should be directed in confidence as noted at the end of this document.

Wichita State University

The mission of WSU is to be an essential educational, cultural, and economic driver for Kansas and the public good. With the vision to be one of the nation's premiere urban public research universities, known for providing impactful applied learning experiences and driving prosperity for the people and communities they serve, WSU launched a [university-wide strategic plan](#) and [three key priorities](#):

- Helping families through access and affordability
- Supporting Kansas businesses with a talent pipeline that meets employer needs
- Increasing economic prosperity with higher education that benefits the Kansas economy

Highly focused on core and distinctive values, the University has specifically committed to:

- *Student Centeredness*: Promote holistic student success through a supportive learning environment in which all students, past, present, and future, continually thrive and grow.
- *Research and Scholarship*: Accelerate the discovery, creation, and transfer of new knowledge.
- *Campus Culture*: Empower students, faculty, staff, and the greater Wichita community to create a culture and experience that meets their ever-changing needs.
- *Inclusive Excellence*: Be a campus that reflects and promotes, in all community members, the evolving diversity of society.
- *Partnerships and Engagement*: Advance industry and community partnerships to provide quality educational opportunities and collaboration to satisfy rapidly evolving community and workforce needs.

Wichita State is one of six state universities governed by the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) and is Kansas' only urban, public research university. With an institutional operating budget of \$489.5 million, WSU's approximately 4,360 employees have a regional economic impact of \$1 billion. On a sprawling 330-acre campus, WSU currently has over 500 tenured or tenure-track faculty and

an enrollment of around 16,000 students (approximately 76 percent undergraduate and 24 percent graduate) with a steady record of sustainable enrollment. WSU is home to eight colleges, including the College of Applied Studies; College of Engineering; Fairmount College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; College of Fine Arts; College of Health Professions; the Dorothy and Bill Cohen Honors College; College of Innovation and Design; the W. Frank Barton School of Business; and the Graduate School. Offering 70 Bachelor's degree programs, one associate degree, 13 doctoral degrees, 48 master's degrees, and over 60 credit-bearing certificates, WSU offers its educational opportunities to students and community members through the main campus and six regional campus locations as well as WSU Online.

WSU is the most racially and ethnically diverse campus in Kansas. About 77 percent of its students are from Kansas, and the remainder hail from every state in the U.S. and 111 countries. In the current academic year, approximately 45 percent of all degree-seeking undergraduates at Wichita State are first-generation students, 55 percent identify as women and 21 percent are underrepresented minorities. Reflecting its deep commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion WSU is working to be designated as a Hispanic-Serving Institution.

WSU leadership is focused on strengthening the educational opportunities provided to students, helping ensure student success, and providing a wide array of research and career opportunities. To foster these opportunities, the University has experienced [tremendous growth](#) over the last 10 years with new research centers, labs, classroom buildings, housing, dining, and athletic facilities. The newest college, the College of Innovation and Design, merges arts, science, and technology curricula to create opportunities for student-faculty collaboration across the colleges and is one of the only face-to-face programs of its type in the country.

To help address the core workforce needs of the state while creating a seamless pipeline to higher education, WSU established an alliance with Wichita Area Technical College, now known as WSU Tech. WSU Tech offers more than 100 programs of study, including in aviation, health care, manufacturing, design, and business.

WSU's [Innovation Campus](#) is an interconnected community of partnership buildings where organizations establish operations and reap the rewards of the University's vast resources and laboratories that give students access to real-world applications and the training needed to effortlessly assimilate into the workforce. It is also a community Makerspace that gives both students and non-students alike access to the technology and services that helps facilitate product development and mixed-use areas that provide everyone with a place to eat, sleep, play, shop, and share.

Leadership

[Dr. Richard \(Rick\) Muma](#) was named the 15th president of Wichita State University on May 6, 2021. Before becoming president, he was the provost and executive vice president providing academic leadership for the University's priorities, including enrollment, applied learning, funded

research, and regional economic development. Dr. Muma has also served as senior associate vice president for Academic Affairs and Strategic Enrollment Management and chair and professor in the departments of Public Health Sciences and Physician Assistant.

[Dr. Shirley Lefever](#) was named as Wichita State University's executive vice president and provost in April 2022 after serving as interim since fall 2020. Prior to that, she was dean of WSU's College of Education, which in 2018 she transitioned to the College of Applied Studies. During her tenure as dean, enrollment in the College grew more than 60 percent (2013-2020), and several new programs were added including the Teacher Apprentice Program, which remains one of the largest enrolled programs at the University.

The City of Wichita

Sitting in the center of the U.S. Great Plains, and as Kansas' largest metro area, with a growing population of nearly 700,000, Wichita is the commercial, financial, medical, cultural, and entertainment hub for the state. Despite its growth, WSU has a large footprint across Wichita and is a leader in the active higher education community of the city which includes multiple universities and community colleges. Wichita has maintained the friendly Midwestern feel and enjoys a mild climate for most of the year. Wichita has been nationally recognized for its low cost of living, growing economy, and excellent quality of life. Below are additional accolades the city has recently received:

- No. 3 U.S. Advanced Industry Hotspot
- No. 1 Most Affordable College Town in America
- Top 10 Best Cities for New College Grads
- The 15 Best Midsize Cities for New Grads
- Top 10 Best Places to Live
- Top 10 Best Value City
- No. 2 Most Recession-Proof City

More information about the City of Wichita can be found at <https://www.wichitachamber.org/main/welcome-to-wichita/>

The College of Applied Studies

The College of Applied Studies is a leader in workforce development, interdisciplinary collaboration, innovation in education and digital transformation. The College's bedrock are their Core Values of **Diversity, Integrity, Collaboration, Discovery, and Leadership**. They uphold these values by listening to and acting on diverse perspectives and viewpoints. They further enact these ideals through relevant, intensive, and fully integrated applied learning experiences for all of their students helping develop leaders in a variety of career fields.

The College has experienced tremendous strides in enrollment, enjoying a 39 percent increase between 2017-2021. CAS serves 2,632 students (1636 undergraduates and 996 graduate students) across the following four departments: [Intervention Services and Leadership in Education \(ISLE\)](#); [School of Education](#); [Human Performance Studies](#); and [Sport Management](#). [These departments are](#) accredited by six accrediting agencies. CAS has 39 tenured and tenure-track faculty and, for this fiscal year's research funding, \$547,856 in proposals have been submitted with \$121,951 funded. More than 25 percent of CAS students are from underrepresented minorities and 51 percent are the first in their families to attend college.

With the growing teacher shortage in the country, CAS has continued to be an impactful leader in Wichita, and in the state of Kansas, in educator preparation by providing a variety of pathways for individuals to become teachers. The [Teacher Apprenticeship Program \(TAP\)](#) is an online program customized to provide paraeducators with a streamlined pathway to licensure as teachers of record and is the largest undergraduate degree program at the University.

Continually working to discover and develop programs that offer WSU students unique and out-of-the-box opportunities, in 2019 WSU and CAS introduced an [Esports](#) program to the campus. This in-demand, growing, cutting-edge program offers competitive teams that are officially sanctioned as a varsity activity for undergraduate and graduate-level students. Currently there are five competitive varsity esports teams at the University. Esports is one of the most exciting aspects of digital transformation in education with significant potential as a pedagogical tool in support of the soft skill development and student motivation employers across different industries seek.

The home of CAS, the Corbin Education Center, located on the north side of the WSU campus, was designed by renowned architect Frank Lloyd Wright. The center was named in honor of former Wichita University President Harry F. Corbin Jr. and was dedicated in 1964. The structure is actually two buildings divided and held together by the esplanade and runs 156 feet north and south and 288 feet east and west. The building is 40,000 sq. ft, including sheltered outdoor balconies and terraces. The belvedere roof is 28 feet from the ground and two 60-foot-tall light needles stand in the center section of the two buildings. A fountain runs down the center of the esplanade. The color scheme of terra cotta, turquoise and black was selected by Mrs. Wright. Many of the original furnishings are still being used.

Applied Learning and Mentorship

A hallmark of the WSU experience is experiential learning and mentorship. CAS is deeply committed to these areas and all CAS students take advantage of the opportunity to combine their classroom learning with real-world experience in a wide range of settings—from Wichita Public Schools and Major League Baseball to Walt Disney World—equipping them with a professional resume and important contacts in their chosen fields.

WSU and CAS continue to strengthen their commitment to students and their values of diversity and leadership through [Men of Color - Educators of Tomorrow](#), a distinctive program for men of color with high academic potential, a demonstrated commitment to teach, and a servant-leadership orientation. Combining the special strengths and resources of the University, CAS, and the Wichita Public Schools, this program adds an additional layer of academic support for African American and Hispanic male students who want to pursue post-secondary education as educational leaders.

In addition to off-campus experiential opportunities, on-campus centers and labs provide continued skill development and enriching professional and personal growth opportunities. These include the [Center for Physical Activity and Aging](#), [College Readiness Partnership Initiative](#), [Corbin Connect](#), [the WISE Play Therapy and Counseling Clinic](#), [Human Performance Lab](#), [Kansas Mentor and Induction Center](#), [The Fuse](#), [SMART Lab](#), and [The Center for Educational Research and Evaluation Services](#).

The Role of the Dean of the College of Applied Studies

Reporting directly to the Executive Vice President & Provost, the Dean serves as chief academic and administrative officer of the College of Applied Studies. The Dean's direct reports include the College's four department chairs, two Associate Deans, the Assistant Dean for Diversity and Outreach, and the Senior Director of Faculty Development. The Dean oversees an annual operating budget of \$10.9 million dollars.

The next Dean will work closely with the four departments to create a cohesive identity that will allow for continued collaborative and interdisciplinary activities that will propel the College forward as an aligned academic unit comprised of distinctive programs. The Dean and College leaders will ensure CAS remains at the forefront of excellence in all of its academic and applied learning priorities, while proactively developing relationships to drive workforce development, increase philanthropic activities, and establish CAS as a leader in advancing learning in a digital space.

Through innovative, dynamic, open, transparent, and respectful leadership and management, the Dean will work to strengthen the already successful undergraduate and graduate academic programs, grow enrollments and online programming, and ensure that sustainable resources exist to enable CAS to meet its goals and objectives, while steadfastly upholding CAS's core values in these efforts. The successful candidate will possess the ability to persuasively advocate for CAS in a variety of contexts, to speak the language of different disciplines, to promote and support interdisciplinary research, to effectively lead and inspire a talented team of staff, to engage multiple communities, and to stimulate learning that capitalizes on the diversity of the College. The Dean will demonstrate a commitment to excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service and support faculty members striving for excellence in these domains. The Dean will ensure the community is an inclusive one that values, supports, and celebrates the contributions of all faculty, staff, and students.

Opportunities and Challenges

The next Dean of the College of Applied Studies will be charged with addressing the following opportunities and challenges:

Provide visionary academic leadership and continue the trajectory of interdisciplinary programmatic growth with a focus on digital transformation

The College of Applied Studies is a campus leader in program innovation, the inclusion of technology in learning, with a reputation for engaging in interdisciplinary research and programs. The next Dean will endeavor to maintain this trajectory by creating a clear vision that will further programmatic and reputational growth in areas including the Teacher Apprentice Program and the Esports program. Opportunities exist to leverage CAS's lead in learning and technology to establish additional and sustainable digital transformation programs including a digital learning center and potentially leading the effort to create a campus-wide, faculty-focused Center for Teaching and Learning. The Dean will have the opportunity to champion the development of a PhD program to provide new academic pathways for graduate students which already has a groundswell of faculty support and is being spearheaded by the Intervention Services and Leadership in Education department. In concert with the CAS community and external stakeholders, the Dean will craft and communicate a new vision for CAS and work collaboratively with University and College leadership to define strategic goals and measures that align with the strategic plan and goals of the University.

Position the College of Applied Studies to grow enrollment and support diversity, equity, and inclusion across programs

WSU has implemented a comprehensive strategic enrollment management plan to drive enrollment across all programs, engaging faculty, students, and staff in this universal effort. The Dean will bring a history of skillfully managing and growing enrollment, and the challenges that come with supporting an increased number of students. The Dean will work with faculty to develop additional diverse, innovative and distinctive academic programs to attract a high quality and diverse student body at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Integral to the growth of CAS is ensuring a thriving culture that nurtures diversity, equity, and inclusion. Members of CAS are deeply committed to building an environment that prioritizes the success of all students, faculty, and staff. CAS has demonstrated this commitment as the first college on campus to hire an Assistant Dean of Diversity and Outreach. Working collaboratively across CAS and the University, the Dean will increase success, access, and retention of students, faculty, and staff from historically underrepresented groups, and ensure that all members of the College community feel welcomed and valued. As WSU actively works towards recognition as a Hispanic Serving Institution, the Dean will wholeheartedly promote this endeavor through the continued growth of supportive programs for underrepresented undergraduate and graduate students with the creation of new scholarship opportunities. Additionally, WSU has formally

committed to becoming a designated age-friendly campus, and the Dean will diversify services to all students through the Center for Physical Activity and Aging, the Human Performance Lab, and the on-campus Mental Health Clinic that serves the greater Wichita community.

These efforts will require ongoing attention and resources, as well as a clear and personal leadership commitment on the part of the Dean. The Dean will be a skillful communicator who effectively advances authentic conversations around inclusive excellence and will bring a track record of experience and a nuanced understanding of the critical role equity plays in the education sector and national discourse.

Provide leadership in fundraising, revenue generation, and resource allocation to support the College's aspirations and priorities

The Dean will be a compelling, tenacious, and persuasive champion for CAS internally and externally and will strategically and adeptly manage College resources during times of financial constraint. As the face of CAS, the Dean must be an effective advocate, emissary, and public speaker who will further enhance the College's profile and resources. As a key partner with the embedded Director of Development and with the WSU Foundation, the Dean will develop and foster relationships with critical stakeholders such as alumni, funding agencies, industry partners, foundations, and donors to articulate unique opportunities for collaboration and areas for investment. The Dean will fundraise to support key priorities, including digital transformation and online learning programs and projects, the revitalization of facilities including the Corbin Education Center – the home of CAS - and actively encourage the growth of funded research and grants, striving to elevate the research profile of the College. In addition to philanthropic priorities, the Dean will bring an entrepreneurial vision to develop new revenue streams.

Propel the College forward through innovation and distinction

The University's leadership vision for WSU includes advancing learning in the digital space with CAS at the forefront of these conversations. To be successful, the Dean will bring an innovative mindset and proven track record of creating distinctive, interdisciplinary, and forward-thinking programs. The Dean will continue to foster the College's culture of interdisciplinary research and encourage faculty scholarship. Actively seeking partners across the University and in the region, the Dean will carry on the College's pioneering reputation and seek uncharted paths that will uncover new and inventive methods of program creation and delivery to serve the needs of CAS undergraduate and graduate students, the University, and the Wichita community.

Strengthen partnerships and collaboration within the College, the University, and the community

Community and industry partnerships are paramount to furthering workforce development in Wichita, as the University is one of the major economic drivers in the city and the state. Building on the momentum of successful school district and community partnerships, the new Dean will

concentrate on expanding opportunities for applied learning experiences, including co-ops, internships, and research activities and will continue to develop intentional collaborations with WSU Tech and the Kansas School of Medicine, including the Kansas Health Sciences Education Center. These opportunities naturally lead to collaborative engagement with other WSU colleges and schools, including the College of Health Professions.

Recruit, retain, and mentor faculty and staff in a teaching and research environment ensuring academic quality and distinction

In collaboration with the College's leadership team, the Dean will lead efforts in the recruitment, retention, and professional development of an exceptional and diverse faculty. By relying on the strength of the University's shared governance, and unwavering commitment to innovative excellence, the Dean will fortify the College's recruiting position and ensure the continued ability to attract and retain academic and industry talent for all CAS departments. The Dean will reinforce a positive, inclusive culture and nurture collaborative initiatives to foster a strong community that will buoy the success of faculty, staff, and students.

CAS benefits from a group of dedicated and talented staff members who are integral to the daily work of the College and bring their expertise and exceptional service to bear in support of the College's mission. To maintain this high bar, the Dean will work to provide appropriate recruitment and retention initiatives to attract talented staff and advocate for resources to support professional development and mentorship.

The Successful Candidate

While no one person will embody all of them, the successful candidate will exemplify many of the following qualifications and attributes:

- A distinguished record of teaching, research, and service commensurate with appointment at the tenured full professor level;
- Strong administrative experience with a minimum of five years at the rank of program director, department chair, or above;
- A record of recruiting and mentoring researchers, practitioners, and educators who embody high caliber professionalism and diversity;
- Experience or familiarity with higher education accreditation processes;
- Demonstrated ability to acquire and manage external resources through fundraising, grants, or contracts;
- Demonstrated understanding of, and commitment to, working as a member of the University's senior academic leadership team consisting of the Vice President and Associate Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs, and Deans of the WSU Colleges;
- Ability and desire to work within a culture of shared governance;
- Willingness to advocate for and incorporate University systems and processes that support faculty and students;

- Demonstrated entrepreneurial skills that leverage the expertise of faculty to enhance educational offerings at the local, regional, and state levels;
- Willingness to advocate for the development of high quality online and flexible courses, ensure continuous faculty professional development supporting quality curriculum and instruction in face-to-face, blended, and online modalities within the College;
- Effective interpersonal skills and ability to develop people within teams;
- Excellent oral and written communication skills;
- Ability to clearly articulate the nature of the College's vision to internal and external constituencies;
- An innovative and visionary leadership style;
- Prior success in leading/expanding a major program, department, or college;
- Experience supporting technology transfer, online curriculum, public/private partnerships, and university engagement in the external community;
- Experience working with development/fundraising personnel and alumni relations

To Apply

Wichita State University has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist the Dean of the College of Applied Studies Search Committee in its identification and review of candidates. Inquiries, referrals, and resumes accompanied by a cover letter should be sent in confidence to:

Jacqueline Mildner, Partner
Robin Dougherty, Senior Associate
Annah Wells, Associate
<https://www.imsearch.com/8574>

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