



Search for the Dean, College of Arts, Sciences and Education
University of Michigan-Flint
Flint, Michigan

THE SEARCH

The University of Michigan-Flint (“the University” or “UM-Flint”) seeks a visionary, collaborative, and energetic leader to serve as the next dean of the College of Arts, Sciences and Education (“the College” or “CASE”). CASE is an interdisciplinary college offering degrees in social and behavioral sciences, education, fine and performing arts, language and communication, and humanities while also providing general education coursework across all units in the University. CASE offers a broad-based education grounded in real-world experience with programs designed to help students develop key skills that employers seek both now and in the future.

CASE supports a diverse community of learners and is dedicated to providing access and opportunity to a wide range of students, including a high percentage of first-generation, Pell-eligible, and part-time students. An intellectual base for the UM-Flint community, the College offers courses taken by the vast majority of UM-Flint students and guides them to foster big-picture thinking skills, curiosity, and resilience in support of lifelong learning and postgraduate success in a wide range of professions and careers. The College has experienced significant leadership and organizational transitions over the past few years, and the CASE community is excited to coalesce around a new leader and begin its next chapter. The dean will provide stable leadership with an acute and proactive eye toward student enrollment as well as financial and organizational strength.

The College is the largest academic unit on campus and enrolls approximately 2,000 undergraduate and graduate students in a wide range of majors, minors, certificates, pre-professional programs, and graduate degrees that celebrate the arts, humanities, social and behavioral sciences, and education. Centered in Flint, CASE students, faculty, and staff empower each other to affect positive change locally and globally and create an inclusive community of scholars, artists, and practitioners across a diverse set of disciplines. CASE also prioritizes connecting to and collaborating with schools, businesses, and organizations in Flint, across Genesee County, and beyond to provide and engage in enriching activities, educational workshops, and cultural events for the local and regional community.

Reporting to the Provost, the dean will lead the College with a forward-thinking vision and strategy, represent CASE as its head academic and administrative officer, and advance the value of the arts, social and behavioral sciences, and education across the UM-Flint community. The dean will oversee all academic programs and services within CASE and provide intellectual and academic leadership to the faculty and staff in matters related to curriculum, research, student success, DEI, and faculty and staff development.

The University of Michigan-Flint has retained the executive search firm Isaacson, Miller to assist in this search. All applications, inquiries, and nominations, which will remain confidential, should be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

THE UNIVERSITY

Established in 1956, the University of Michigan-Flint is recognized for its commitment to excellent teaching and learning and distinctive civic engagement. UM-Flint attracts a diverse array of learners and scholars interested in advancing communities through education, research, and service. UM-Flint offers a student-focused education alongside access to many shared services and resources across the three University of Michigan campuses located at Flint, Dearborn, and Ann Arbor.

Aligned with UM-Flint's core value of engaged citizenship, the University has a long history of community engagement and locally engaged research. Professors embed creativity and expertise into research and service-learning projects that both match course curricula and address the world's most pressing issues. In 2010 and again in 2019, UM-Flint was awarded the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement, a prestigious recognition for its highly engaged campus with a commitment to "the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity." Along with many topics, UM-Flint research has responded to the local water crisis with critical research across water infrastructure, public health, early childhood education, and special education.

Of UM-Flint's 6,500 students, 77 percent are undergraduates, and 23 percent are graduate students. These students span about 100 academic programs and majors within five schools and colleges: the College of Arts, Sciences and Education, the College of Health Sciences, the College of Innovation and Technology, the School of Nursing, and the School of Management. UM-Flint enrolls many part-time, online, adult learners, and dual-enrollment students; therefore, the College thinks creatively about optimizing the student experience for non-traditional students. The University has two residence halls for on-campus living, and about half of its students live locally in Genesee County and commute to campus.

UM-Flint remains committed to the ideals of diversity, equity, and inclusion by making an affordable, accessible education possible for the community. A remarkably economically diverse community, 43 percent of UM-Flint undergraduate students receive federal Pell grants. Students at UM-Flint are eligible for the [Go Blue Guarantee](#), the University of Michigan's landmark promise of free tuition for high-achieving in-state undergraduate students from lower-income backgrounds. In addition, UM-Flint is a

partner in the [Flint Promise](#) and [Detroit Promise](#) scholarship programs, allowing eligible students to attend college at minimal or no cost to them. Nearly all incoming students receive some form of financial aid to help them enroll in and graduate from college.

Academic Profile

The University of Michigan-Flint's educational mission is supported by 466 staff and 521 faculty, 255 of whom are full-time. The 31 percent of faculty who are tenured or on the tenure track recently voted to form a union that received recognition in April 2024 and began the first contract negotiations in October 2024. Faculty are generous teachers and talented scholars who interact closely with their students in in-person and virtual settings. Students enjoy a 14:1 student-faculty ratio and small class sizes, with over 60 percent of classes containing fewer than 20 students.

Students and Student Life

The UM-Flint student population represents a broad array of racial, ethnic, cultural, socio-economic, and religious communities, creating a campus culture that is highly diverse across several dimensions. Of its 5,011 undergraduate students, the majority enter the UM-Flint community with some prior college experience, such as a local community college, high school dual enrollment, or from a previous time in their life and/or career. Approximately 67 percent of new degree-seeking undergraduates enter UM-Flint as transfer students, and 33 percent as first-time students. Many of the University's graduate students are employed full-time in a related professional career. Students at UM-Flint represent 27 birth countries, and nearly one-third of the University's students identify as people of color.

Students at the University of Michigan-Flint enjoy access to more than 100 student clubs and organizations, fraternity and sorority life, and club and intramural sports which compete against other colleges and universities in state, regional, and national contests. The city of Flint boasts a thriving cultural scene with arts and culture venues such as the Flint Institute of Arts, the Mott-Warsh Gallery, Flint Repertory Theater, and Flint Institute of Music. The Flint River allows kayak enthusiasts to enjoy relaxing trips, the For-Mar Nature Preserve and Arboretum provides the community with seven miles of hiking trails, and three local mountains allow for skiing and snowboarding in the winter season.

Leadership and Governance

At the campus level, the University of Michigan-Flint is in the midst of an important moment of transition. A new chancellor began in 2024 after a period of interim leadership, and a long-time respected member of the University of Michigan-Flint community currently serves as interim provost. A search is currently underway to identify permanent leadership in academic affairs, and a permanent provost is expected to begin in summer 2025.

Laurence B. Alexander was named chancellor of the University of Michigan-Flint in May 2024 and took office on July 1, 2024. Alexander comes to Flint after 11 years as chancellor of the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff (UAPB). Alexander brings more than 30 years of combined professional and academic experience as a university leader, administrator, distinguished professor, First Amendment scholar, attorney, and journalist. Under his leadership, UAPB grew enrollments, achieved remarkable increases in retention and graduate rates, launched new marketable academic programs, received reaffirmation of 10-year university accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission, reached higher levels of research investment and grant funding, acquired funding for new construction and renovation of capital projects, increased engagement of government officials and community leaders, and developed new corporate partnerships that led to multiple major-gift donations to the university, raising the endowment by 200%. Prior to joining UAPB, Alexander served 22 years as a professor and administrator at the University of Florida (UF) and was the first African American tenured full professor in the UF College of Journalism and Communications. Before joining the faculty at UF, Alexander was also a member of the faculty at the University of New Orleans and Temple University. A native of New Orleans, Alexander is licensed to practice law in Louisiana.

Yener Kandogan currently serves as interim provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs, as well as interim dean for the School of Management, where he is a professor of international business. He is also a faculty associate at the Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies of the University of Michigan. He joined the University of Michigan-Flint in 2002 after receiving his Ph.D. in economics from the University of Michigan in 2001. He has served in multiple administrative roles for the School of Management. He has more than 30 academic publications in various international business and economics journals, including the *Journal of International Business Studies*, *Journal of World Business*, *International Business Review*, *Journal of Business Ethics*, and *European Journal of International Management*, among others.

The University of Michigan is led by President Santa Ono, who began a five-year term in October 2022 with a recent contract extension to 2032. President Ono previously served as the president and vice chancellor of the University of British Columbia from 2016 to 2022. The University is governed by the Board of Regents, which consists of eight members elected at large in biennial statewide elections, and on which the president of the University serves as an *ex officio* member.

Strategic Plan

In recent years, the University has focused its strategic priorities on excellent education and scholarship, retention and student success, and increased enrollment through high-quality programs and campus life. During the 2022-2023 academic year, the campus was asked to re-envision the University's future. The overall goal of the Strategic Transformation Plan, which is still in development, is to help UM-Flint emerge as an academically strong and financially viable institution that is an undisputed engine for economic growth and social mobility in the region. In line with national demographic trends, UM-Flint has experienced a downward enrollment trend over approximately 10 years. For the last two academic years

beginning in fall of 2023, UM-Flint has enjoyed a reversal of that trend with a 2.5 percent increase in enrollment in 2023 and 6.5 percent increase in 2024. The Strategic Transformation Plan is designed to facilitate the critical work of further accelerating continued growth.

THE COLLEGE OF ARTS, SCIENCES AND EDUCATION

Widely recognized as the heart of the university and a critical provider of valuable liberal arts education to all UM-Flint students, the College of Arts, Sciences and Education is committed to the core values of academic excellence, student-centeredness, and engaged citizenship. CASE is celebrated for its unique approach to exploring how interconnected ideas and perspectives translate into real-world problem-solving, and it serves students achieving degrees and certificates in a wide array of fields while providing the majority of general education coursework to all UM-Flint students.

CASE has experienced several significant organizational shifts in recent years. The former College of Arts and Sciences' programs in mathematics, engineering, computer science, and natural sciences moved to the newly created College of Innovation and Technology, and the education department of the former School of Education and Human Services joined the remaining College of Arts and Sciences programs. The faculty reorganized into the current College of Arts, Sciences and Education and was officially recognized as such by the University of Michigan Board of Regents in December 2023. Throughout the reorganization, the College has remained the largest academic unit on campus with over 32 percent of students enrolled. The College offers 26 bachelor's degrees, six master's degrees, an education specialist degree, a Doctor of Education degree, ten areas of initial teacher certification, two areas of educational administrative certification, 11 skill-focused certificates, and over 40 interdisciplinary minors that complement students' primary program of study. In partnership with the School of Management, the College also offers a dual degree master's program in liberal arts and business.

The College of Arts, Sciences and Education has approximately 25 staff members and approximately 100 governing faculty members, including 69 tenured and tenure-track faculty and more than 20 full-time lecturers across its departments. The College also employs many adjunct lecturers that fluctuate in number each semester. Faculty are productive and creative scholars with a strong commitment to their research activity, including community-engaged research, while maintaining a focus on teaching and other student-centered endeavors. CASE faculty research is diverse in subject matter and explores topics from global issues to more local themes in Michigan. UM-Flint is uniquely positioned to offer undergraduate and graduate students robust research opportunities, allowing them to work alongside faculty to develop skills and knowledge that can be applied to their current or future careers.

THE ROLE OF THE DEAN

The dean is the academic and administrative leader of the College and reports to the provost. As a member of UM-Flint's leadership team, the dean must be a clear and transparent communicator and an enthusiastic champion for the College of Arts, Sciences and Education and the institution's role in the

region. The dean oversees an annual budget of \$17 million and manages a lean but highly skilled team of direct and indirect reports, consisting of approximately 15 staff as well as the College's department chairs who report to the associate dean but serve at the discretion of the dean.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE NEXT DEAN

The next dean will join the College of Arts, Sciences and Education and the University of Michigan-Flint at an important moment of transition and opportunity, and will sit at the helm of the College, building and directing its strategy as it adapts to a changing demographic and educational landscape. To succeed, the dean must be well-versed in the strengths and challenges of regional comprehensive and tuition-dependent universities. Specific opportunities for the dean include:

Inspire and work closely with faculty, staff, and students to shape a unified vision that builds on the College's distinct identity and supports UM-Flint's mission, values, and goals

The College has experienced significant programmatic and organizational transitions in recent years, and the next dean will have a critical role in planning the next chapter of the College's history. The dean will collaborate with the College's faculty, staff, students, and alumni to articulate and execute a compelling vision for the future that leverages its disciplinary diversity, deep commitment to the intrinsic value of the liberal arts, and its many connections with the local and regional community. After listening to and connecting with constituents across the College, the dean will articulate an aspirational but realistic vision for the College that is responsive to the rapidly shifting higher education landscape, the recent organizational changes within CASE, and the differing needs across departments and disciplines. Through this process, the dean will stabilize and unite the CASE community around common goals and priorities and ensure that the College's vision is in alignment with UM-Flint's Strategic Transformation Plan that is currently in development.

Collaboratively develop innovative academic programs and initiatives that increase student enrollment and retention in the College and allow students to reach their full potential

UM-Flint, like nearly all colleges and universities in the area, is challenged by a regional population decline that has resulted in a decrease in high school-aged students locally. Increasing student enrollment is a key priority for both the College of Arts, Sciences and Education and UM-Flint at large, and opportunities exist to expand existing and develop new cross-unit and interdisciplinary programs that attract students. In addition, the dean should explore new domestic pipelines for enrollment and identify opportunities to enhance pathways that are already in place.

Beyond attracting new students to the College, retention and graduation rates remain critical to the enrollment equation, and the dean will continue to focus on and strengthen student success, which is an institutional priority for UM-Flint. The dean will cultivate an environment of authentic collaboration, emphasize the values of student curiosity and growth, and identify new initiatives across campus and in the community for students to gain real-world experiences to complement their classroom studies. As

CASE prioritizes access and offers coursework in a range of online, in-person, and flexible modalities, the dean will be attuned to student involvement and belonging for all. The dean will leverage the potential for interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration among faculty and students that will promote robust understanding of the multiple ways of knowing and interfacing in society and across careers.

Provide financial leadership, grow the College's resources, and identify new revenue streams

The University of Michigan-Flint has a decentralized budget model that provides significant latitude and autonomy to deans to generate new resources. The next CASE dean must bring a sophisticated understanding of higher education finances as well as the ability to develop new revenue streams to ensure the College has financial stability for years to come. Since enrollment is tied closely to the budget and college-level finances, as described above, the next dean must prioritize strategies that result in enrollment growth and increased retention, both in general education courses offered to all UM-Flint students as well as students in CASE degree programs.

In addition, the dean will be tasked with identifying and cultivating new sources of revenue from community partners, alumni, and other potential donors. As UM-Flint enters the public phase of a capital campaign, the dean will have an opportunity to partner closely with the advancement team to work on important fundraising initiatives that are CASE-specific as well as those that cross multiple schools and colleges, with priorities including named professorships, fellowships, and scholarships.

Be a visible spokesperson with external stakeholders and alumni to support the mission of the College and develop new community partnerships

The founding mission of the University of Michigan-Flint was centered on the needs of the local community, and to this day UM-Flint and the central Michigan region remain closely connected through a reciprocally beneficial relationship. The dean will have the opportunity to create new and maintain existing relationships with two-year institutions, elementary and secondary schools, and the education community at large. With a thriving cultural community in Flint, there will also be prime opportunities for the dean to connect with humanities and arts institutions in the area and further integrate the CASE community into the larger Flint community. As part of the University of Michigan system, the dean has access not just to UM-Flint alumni, but also to the Alumni Association of the University of Michigan, offering an additional opportunity for greater connections to the larger Michigan community and beyond.

Advocate for the College of Arts, Sciences and Education within and beyond the University

As the College of Arts, Sciences and Education's lead advocate, the successful dean will be a sophisticated spokesperson for the College's faculty, staff, students, and programs. The dean will be a staunch supporter of the arts, humanities, social and behavioral sciences, and education, and effectively communicate CASE's importance to leadership across the Flint campus, the UM system, and beyond. The dean must be a persuasive communicator who can articulate the intrinsic value of the liberal arts and

education, their critical contribution to producing an informed citizenry, and the financial value of the professional skills acquired by students.

Foster a positive and collaborative environment that embraces diversity, equity, and inclusion

From its founding, the University of Michigan-Flint has embraced its mission of access. The dean must understand the mission of a regional comprehensive university and be committed to fostering the University's efforts to build an inclusive campus for faculty, staff, students, and the broader community. Cognizant of the diverse population of learners in the College, the dean will be a passionate advocate for inclusion, promote a culture of belonging, and ensure that the College's services and course delivery options proactively support diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. The dean will help recruit and retain faculty that reflects the composition of the College's student body and will also strengthen engagement with the diverse communities surrounding the campus.

Lead and retain a talented and committed faculty and staff

The College benefits from a research-engaged faculty and a dedicated staff who care deeply about student success and are eager to be engaged in the shared governance of the College. Following the recent CASE organizational changes, the dean will be a convener, highly attuned to ensuring appropriate faculty teaching loads and staffing needs across each unit. The dean is the lead academic officer of the unit, and in addition to playing a significant role in promotion, tenure, and review processes, the next leader will help to define the College's pedagogical philosophy. The dean will provide support across all units and ensure that faculty continue to deliver outstanding instruction while also growing its research output and creative activities.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The University of Michigan-Flint seeks an inspiring, strategic, and community-oriented leader with a proven track record and a demonstrated commitment to regional public higher education. While no one person will possess all the qualifications enumerated below, the ideal candidate will have many of the following professional experiences and personal characteristics:

- An established record of academic achievement, commensurate with a tenured appointment at the rank of full professor in the College of Arts, Sciences and Education at UM-Flint;
- An ability to develop a culture of engagement and lead through organizational change;
- Demonstrated commitment to student success for a diverse student population;
- The ability to work cooperatively and effectively in a shared governance context;
- Proven management and financial skills with a record of success in academic administration;
- A familiarity with and understanding of arts and education accreditation standards, policies, and processes as well as an appreciation for how these processes must be supported;
- The demonstrated ability to encourage, develop, and evaluate teaching, scholarly research, and creative activity across the College;

- Experience enhancing impact on the region of a current or former institution;
- The ability to serve on the University's senior leadership team while successfully representing the College and advocating on its behalf to help CASE thrive as a key player in the overall University strategy;
- Evidence of effective communication and relationship-building skills and a demonstrated ability to establish long-term, strategic partnerships with key parties, including other academic units and leaders in the community;
- Proven collaborative and decisive leadership ability;
- Evidence of successful involvement in fundraising initiatives;
- A leadership style based on integrity, transparency, and inclusiveness.

TO APPLY

Review of nominations and applications will begin immediately and will continue until the position is filled. All inquiries, nominations, referrals, and applications (including CVs and letters of interest responding to the position challenges and opportunities outlined above) should be sent electronically and in confidence via the Isaacson, Miller website: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/university-michigan-flint-college-arts-sciences-education/dean>.

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