



# COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

*The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA HEALTH SCIENCES*

## Search for the Vice Dean for Research The University of Oklahoma College of Medicine Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

### THE SEARCH

The University of Oklahoma College of Medicine (OUCOM or College) seeks a visionary, strategic, and collaborative builder to serve as the inaugural Vice Dean for Research (VDR or Vice Dean) for the College of Medicine. This entrepreneurial academic leader will join OUCOM at an exciting inflection point in its trajectory and will work with leadership, researchers, and staff across The University of Oklahoma's (OU) campuses to accelerate research growth and increase the impact the Health Sciences Center, the College of Medicine, and the University have on Oklahoma and beyond.

Founded in 1900, the University of Oklahoma [College of Medicine](#) (OUCOM) is the largest component of the [University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center](#) (OUHSC) and serves as the academic arm of [OU Health](#), the state's largest and flagship comprehensive academic health system. The health system and clinical group practice work in concert with the College of Medicine's educational and research missions. OUCOM, as part of the Health Sciences Center, is on a growth trajectory with an ambitious [strategic plan](#) aimed in part at leveraging its strengths to become a top-tier academic health center, enhancing national recognition, bolstering Oklahoma's healthcare and public health workforce, improving health outcomes and quality of life for many Oklahomans, and driving economic growth through the translation of research into commercial enterprises. This Vice Dean will be an impactful contributor and enthusiastic partner in advancing these critical goals.

As an inaugural leader, the VDR will work as a strategic thought partner with and report to the Executive Dean of OUCOM and will have the primary responsibility of maintaining, enhancing, and growing the research enterprise of OUCOM, including overseeing strategic investments, research space priorities, recruitment of new faculty, and support for core facilities and programs. The VDR will play a leading role in working with OUCOM's department chairs, center directors, and faculty, as well as OUHSC's Vice President for Research/University of Oklahoma's Vice Provost for Research to identify and pursue opportunities to build synergistic transdisciplinary research programs across the OUHSC and the University of Oklahoma.

The successful candidate will bring innovative vision, excellent judgment, and proven management skills to this key leadership role at OUCOM. They will be a highly accomplished scientist with a strong record of extramural funding and scholarly activity, a demonstrated ability to foster a vibrant research culture that promotes collaboration, and outstanding interpersonal skills. It is expected that the VDR will have ongoing research activity and funding, although the primary responsibility would be dedicated to the roles outlined in this profile. The successful candidate will hold an MD, PhD, MD/PhD, or equivalent terminal degree and have the credentials appropriate for an appointment at the rank of full Professor (research or tenure pathway) at OUCOM.

OUCOM has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist with this search. Inquiries, nominations, and applications will be treated confidentially and should be directed to the firm as indicated at the end of this document.

## The University of Oklahoma

Founded in 1890, the [University of Oklahoma](#) (OU) in Norman, Oklahoma, is the state's premier institution of higher education and a leading research university. It spans three campuses and boasts a student body of 31,000 enrolled in 170 academic programs. With a significant commitment to research, OU expends \$416.6 million annually on research initiatives, driving a \$2.05-billion enterprise focused on transforming lives through scholarship and impactful research across Oklahoma.

## The University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center

Located in Oklahoma City, the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center (OUHSC) is one of the nation's few academic health centers with seven professional colleges on site, including [Medicine](#), [Allied Health](#), [Dentistry](#), [Nursing](#), [Pharmacy](#), [Public Health](#), and [Graduate Studies](#). With an annual budget of \$900 million, OUHSC employs over 800 full-time faculty and 4,000 staff. It educates and trains nearly 4,000 students and 1,000 residents, post-docs, and fellows across more than 70 undergraduate and graduate degree programs. An internationally prominent faculty, state-of-the-art facilities, and new technologies combine to make the OUHSC a leader in education, research, and patient care.

The OUHSC is a dynamic clinical environment that leads cutting-edge clinical and translational research through strategic, programmatic [centers of excellence](#) such as the [Stephenson Cancer Center](#) (SCC), the [Harold Hamm Diabetes Center](#), and the [Dean McGee Eye Institute](#). The SCC is the only National Cancer Institute (NCI)-Designated Cancer Center in Oklahoma. It currently ranks number one among all cancer centers in the nation for the number of patients participating in NCI-sponsored treatment trials, and it is one of only 30 lead centers in the NCI's National Clinical Trials Network. The Harold Hamm Diabetes Center is committed to curing diabetes and ending the diabetes pandemic in the 21st century by providing comprehensive care for people and families who live with diabetes, as well as conducting world-renowned research towards a cure. The Dean McGee Eye Institute is one of the most highly funded and multidisciplinary research programs at OUHSC, investigating a wide range of conditions with translational

and fundamental scientists. The OUHSC and OU Health partnership integrates the three missions of education, biomedical and public health research, and patient care to create a research-driven academic health system.

## THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

The University of Oklahoma College of Medicine (OUCOM) is the largest entity within the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center and forms the cornerstone of OU Health. OUCOM boasts a distinguished faculty of nearly 1,350 members, including almost 1,000 full-time faculty and 218 endowed chairs and professorships. It comprises 21 [academic departments](#), including 17 clinical departments and four basic science departments. Many faculty from these departments work within institutes and the centers of excellence at OUHSC, such as the Stephenson Cancer Center, Dean McGee Eye Institute, Harold Hamm Diabetes Center, Reynolds Oklahoma Center for Aging, Oklahoma Shared Clinical and Translational Resources (OSCTR), the Oklahoma Center for Adult Stem Cell Research (OCASCR), and several NIH-supported Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence to advance research and clinical initiatives across diverse biomedical fields.

In addition to its main campus in Oklahoma City, OUCOM operates a branch campus in Tulsa, which hosts eight clinical departments and the unique School of Community Medicine track. Together, these campuses offer the MD degree program, which currently enrolls 650 medical students and received an eight-year reaccreditation by the Liaison Committee for Medical Education (LCME) in 2019. This year more than fifty first-year students will participate in summer research, and two students will pursue full-year paid research fellowships after their third year. Furthermore, OUCOM offers a highly competitive Physician Assistant (PA) program, an innovative MD/PhD dual-degree option, and opportunities for MPH coursework while playing a vital role in training healthcare professionals through 83 specialty and subspecialty programs, accommodating 766 residents and fellows.

OUCOM provides training for undergraduate and graduate students and partners with the Graduate College, which grants Master of Science (MS) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degrees and is home to approximately 300 students enrolled in 30 nationally and internationally recognized research-based programs supported by approximately 400 graduate faculty members. OUCOM collaborates closely with the Graduate College to provide the Graduate Program in Biomedical Sciences (GPiBS), which is a first-year, interdisciplinary program serving seven degree programs at OUHSC. Students in the GPiBS program graduate with a PhD from one of the participating programs, which include Biomedical Sciences, Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Cell Biology, Microbiology and Immunology, Neuroscience, Pathology, and Physiology to prepare them for careers in the biomedical sciences. OUHSC's internationally prominent faculty, state-of-the-art facilities, cutting-edge technology, and nearly \$200 million in external funding combine to make OUHSC the leader in graduate education and research in Oklahoma.

Ian F. Dunn, MD, FACS, FAANS, was appointed executive dean of the OUCOM beginning January 2024, where he also serves as Chief Academic Officer of OU Health. With a distinguished career spanning renowned medical institutions and pioneering contributions in neurosurgery, research, and healthcare

leadership, Dr. Dunn brings a wealth of experience and vision to the College of Medicine. Dr. Dunn's journey to leadership at the college is marked by a pursuit of excellence. Prior to joining OU, he served as a trailblazing figure in neurosurgery and academic medicine. As an associate professor at Harvard Medical School and director of the Center for Pituitary and Skull Base Surgery at Brigham and Women's Hospital, Dr. Dunn gained national recognition for his expertise in resecting and treating complex brain tumors, particularly those in the skull base and pituitary region. He has published widely on these topics and on the role of genomic alterations in tumor natural history and has lectured around the world.

## Research at the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine

With the largest portfolio of National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding in the state, OUCOM grew its research portfolio by more than \$4 million last year, to \$64.4 million. Currently ranked 72nd according to the Blue Ridge Rankings, OUCOM aims to rank in the top 60 in the next five years and in the top 50 within 10 years. Key areas of research include cancer, diabetes, neuroscience/vision, and infectious diseases/immunology. OUCOM has a solid core of basic and clinical researchers in these four areas, plus the largest biomedical infrastructure in the state, which includes the [Institutional Research Core Facility](#). As OUCOM continues to grow its ranks of top researchers, ambitious plans are in place to recruit 150 new research faculty, including 50 new faculty with expertise in clinical trials and clinical-translational research, and use cluster hiring to drive research growth and excellence.

As part of the IDeA (Institutional Development Award) state network, OUCOM has three Center of Biomedical Research Excellence (CoBRE) grants in the areas of cancer, geroscience, and microbiology in addition to an IDeA Network of Biomedical Research Excellence (INBRE) grant to develop research across the state of Oklahoma. Additionally, there are T32 training grants in geroscience from the National Institute on Aging (NIA) and vision from the National Eye Institute (NEI). The site is also a [Nathan Shock Center of Excellence in Geroscience](#).

Supporting these efforts is the [Oklahoma Shared Clinical and Translational Resources](#) (OSCTR). Funded by the National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS), the OCTSR provides research expertise, strategic partnerships, and evolving infrastructure to improve the health of Oklahomans while promoting economic development within the state. The OCTSR is engaged with research programs and centers on campus and with communities at large to build relationships and resources that stimulate clinical and translational research efforts at OUCOM and OUHSC. The OCTSR helps to support research cores in Biostatistics/Epidemiology/Research Design, Clinical Resources, Professional Development, Community Engagement, and Evaluation and Oversight/Management.

While [research facilities](#) exist throughout the OUHSC campus, the [University Research Park](#) is dedicated to supporting biomedical research, enhancing the infrastructure available to support increasingly successful University research activities and will also support biomedical research companies in their efforts to commercialize new equipment and technologies. The complex consists of more than 700,000 square feet of modern biomedical research lab and office space supported by state-of-the-art communications and infrastructure systems. The mission of the University Research Park is to grow biomedical research in the State of Oklahoma to benefit healthcare across the State and nationwide.

The [Office of Research Administration](#) (ORA) serves as a central resource to support the research community at OUCOM and OUHSC by providing a variety of high-quality services and expertise to the researchers and administrators on both the Oklahoma City and Tulsa campuses. Its mission is to provide administrative support to the investigators in their pursuit of research and other scholarly endeavors while ensuring compliance with federal, University, and sponsor guidelines and regulations.

Research at OUCOM is integral to the University's goal of becoming a top-tier research university. OUHSC's current research strategic plan targets and builds upon existing research and clinical strengths to achieve a healthier future and vigorous economy for Oklahoma. OUHSC's research has led to the development of several Oklahoma companies that continue to create economic growth in the state.

## THE ROLE OF THE VICE DEAN FOR RESEARCH

The inaugural VDR will play a key leadership role within OUCOM and is responsible for a wide range of activities in support of its research mission. Reporting to the Executive Dean, the VDR will serve as an integral member of OUCOM's senior leadership team. The VDR is responsible for the allocation of all resources related to OUCOM's research enterprise, including internal grant and bridge support programs, medical student research, the development of recruitment packages, and the support for core facilities and programs and works in concert with OUHSC leadership in regards to research lab space. As the primary liaison between OUCOM and OU's Office of the Vice Provost for Research, the VDR plays a vital role in coordinating research investments. In addition, the VDR serves as the compliance officer for the College.

## KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The overarching challenge for the inaugural Vice Dean for Research is to continue to develop and grow the quality, quantity, and breadth of research at OUCOM and to foster a culture that supports increased transdisciplinary research activity. To sustain and build on OUCOM's significant strengths and accomplishments, the new Vice Dean for Research will address the following key opportunities and challenges.

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### **Lead and strategically expand the research priorities of OUCOM**

OUCOM is poised for a bright future, supported by its outstanding teaching and research facilities, fresh and inspiring leadership, and substantial financial backing. This inaugural Vice Dean will collaborate closely with leadership to organize and build upon OUHSC's and OUCOM's current research strengths, provide strategic planning and a vision for the College's research growth, and ensure that the research administrative structure sufficiently supports the research mission. This is likely to include designing and recruiting a core research leadership team.

To support research growth, the VDR will focus on assessing and strengthening research support infrastructure and fostering interdisciplinary collaborations among clinical, translational, and basic science investigators at the College and other colleges within OU and OUHSC. Additionally, a major goal of the VDR will be to facilitate growth in clinical trials. The VDR will identify and cultivate areas for growth by harnessing the financial strength of the system. The VDR will work closely with campus-wide leaders on space allocation and future planning. The VDR should be seen as a creative originator of innovative ideas and directions, promoting and incentivizing major cross-disciplinary research initiatives and ensuring that faculty across departments within OUCOM are well supported in their research endeavors.

### **Promote and facilitate interdisciplinary research and team science**

The research portfolio of the College has been on an upward trajectory, having doubled over the last five years. Critical to the continued growth of the research enterprise is the promotion of interdisciplinary and team-based science. OUCOM is well positioned in this regard, with capable partners across the OUHSC and on the OU Norman and Tulsa campuses. There exist many opportunities to build interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research teams across multiple areas of investigation. There are opportunities to identify additional external partners to engage in research and to enhance current partnerships, including those with the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation, a private non-profit biomedical research institution close by that focuses on the treatment of cardiovascular disease, Alzheimer's disease, cancer, arthritis, lupus, and AIDS. Given the caliber of faculty and physical resources across OUHSC, there will be many opportunities for the VDR to accomplish this important task.

### **Expand the range of support for research funding**

As part of the IDeA state network, OUHSC has been the recipient of significant funds to bolster and support its research efforts. The VDR will work actively with department, center, and other unit leaders to build systems and implement strategies to ensure the success of OUCOM's research programs, which will be demonstrated by the level and progress in extramural funding from federal and other sources as well as reflected by OUCOM's national ranking. They will also connect with leadership at the NIH and other major granting organizations to predict and influence major funding initiatives and position the College and Health Science Center to best utilize that funding. It is expected that the VDR will devote considerable energy to identifying and helping to secure new funding opportunities from the full range of potential

sources, including previously untapped federal and state agencies, industry, foundations, and private philanthropy.

### **Recruit, mentor, and retain outstanding research faculty and staff**

Strategic recruitment, mentorship, and retention of faculty and staff are critical to advancing a productive research enterprise. The VDR will work with other leaders across OU to identify areas for faculty appointments and joint faculty recruitment to ensure that the institution attracts high-quality candidates to maximize the College's research growth potential, including recruiting clinical trialists. The VDR will develop and promote research support policies, practices, and programs that encourage the professional growth and development of OUCOM faculty and enable the College to continue to recruit and retain, top-tier research faculty now and in the future. Collaborating closely with other leaders, the VDR must take a leading role to ensure that mentoring of OUCOM faculty, as it relates to research interests and potential, is a formalized component of their professional development.

While each department is responsible for faculty development, the VDR can support its efforts by offering centralized activities and guidance to department chairs and directors on strategies to foster research activity. The VDR will also work with the department and center leadership to evaluate research portfolios and space, create start-up packages, consider retention packages, and deliberate over specialized facilities and equipment for significantly productive faculty.

### **Streamline key programs and operations to lower barriers to research success**

In cooperation with research leadership at OU and OUHSC, the OUCOM VDR will also be tasked with the oversight of research activities and operations regarding contract and grant conduct, technology transfer, research subject conduct (human, animal, stem cell, and biosafety), integrity in research, research conflict of interest, compliance, research space, and research resource development. They will also maintain oversight of OUCOM programs and initiatives that promote and support research activities including the College's research training programs for faculty, graduate students, medical students, and postdoctoral scholars.



## QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The ideal candidate will bring many of the following experience, skills, and qualities:

- A highly accomplished scientist with an MD, PhD, MD/PhD, or equivalent terminal degree with credentials appropriate for a tenured position or for the rank of full Professor at OUCOM.
- A strong record of extramural funding and scholarly activity and demonstrated success and creativity in fostering research synergies, combined with proven administrative and leadership skills.
- Proven skills as a highly effective, innovative, collaborative leader gained through serving as an academic department chair, center director, or a comparable role requiring solid management, financial, and administrative skills at a research university, NIH, or research foundation.
- Demonstrated experience in the procurement and management of sponsored research programs.
- Demonstrated novel approaches to grant seeking; demonstrated excellence in inter- and multi-disciplinary academic pursuits.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and proven capacity to build and maintain relationships with faculty and administrators as well as with government, foundation, and industry leaders.
- Exceptional leadership skills, with the proven ability to foster a spirit of collaboration.
- A commitment to transparency.
- Proven experience in the effective allocation of resources.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills.
- Exceptional planning and organizational skills, superb follow-through, and timely task completion.
- Uncompromising standards of excellence, with the highest standards of integrity.
- Persuasive, patient, flexible, resilient, and a sense of humor.

## OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

To explore Oklahoma City, please visit this [link](#) and watch this [video](#).

## APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website for the search via this link: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/university-oklahoma-health-sciences-center-college-medicine/vice-dean-research>. Electronic submission of materials is strongly encouraged.

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***Why You Belong at the University of Oklahoma:***

*The University of Oklahoma fosters an inclusive culture of respect and civility, belonging, and access, which are essential to our collective pursuit of excellence and our determination to change lives. The unique talents, perspectives, and experiences of our community enrich the learning, and working environment at OU, inspiring us to harness our innovation, creativity, and collaboration for the advancement of people everywhere.*

***Mission of the University of Oklahoma:***

*The Mission of the University of Oklahoma is to provide the best possible educational experience for our students through excellence in teaching, research and creative activity, and service to the state and society.*