



## School of Nursing

Senior Associate Dean, Professional Development and Faculty Affairs  
School of Nursing  
University of Alabama at Birmingham  
Birmingham, Alabama

### THE SEARCH

The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) School of Nursing (School) seeks an experienced and collaborative nurse leader to serve as the inaugural Senior Associate Dean for Professional Development and Faculty Affairs (SAD-PDFA).

Ranked among the top 10 public nursing schools in the nation by *U.S. News & World Report*, the [UAB School of Nursing](#) sits at the heart of one of the nation's largest academic health science centers. It is home to more than 340 employees, including 170 benefit-earning faculty and 176 benefit-earning staff, and serves approximately 2,699 students across a full continuum of academic programs. The School includes two academic departments—Acute, Chronic, and Continuing Care, and Family, Community, and Health Systems—that span a wide range of clinical specialties and research disciplines. Its research enterprise is robust, placing it 13<sup>th</sup> in the nation for National Institute of Health (NIH) funding in 2024, with strengths in areas such as health equity, oncology, aging, palliative care, and HIV/AIDS. The School's BSN program is ranked #13, the MSN ranks #17, and the DNP ranks #11 nationally according to *U.S. News & World Report*. The School maintains a strong commitment to global health and community engagement; it is designated as a [Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for International Nursing](#), hosts a Paul D. Coverdell Peace Corps Fellows Program, and is one of the leading VA Nursing Academic Partnerships in the nation.

Reporting directly to [Dean Maria Shirey](#), the SAD-PDFA will lead with vision—overseeing department chairs, collaborating across the School, and shaping a dynamic enterprise that champions excellence in teaching, research, clinical practice, and service. This newly created role reflects a bold investment in a high-performing academic community poised to transform health care. The SAD-PDFA will have the rare opportunity to help set and execute the strategy for a forward-thinking school of nursing and design a comprehensive development framework that empowers faculty and staff at every career stage. Through mentorship, leadership development, and a commitment to equity and well-being, this leader will foster a culture of continuous growth and data-informed decision-making.

The ideal candidate for Senior Associate Dean for Professional Development and Faculty Affairs will hold a Doctorate in Nursing or a related discipline (PhD preferred), have or be eligible for licensure as an RN in Alabama, and meet the criteria for a tenured appointment at the rank of Professor. They will bring at least five years of academic leadership experience, including direct supervision of faculty and staff, and a proven track record in professional development, mentorship, and performance management. They will embody the School's [core values](#)—Access, Accountability, Caring, Collaboration, Communication, Engagement, Excellence, Innovation, Integrity, and Respect—and help cultivate a positive, high-performance team culture. This is an on-site leadership role, requiring active engagement with the School's vibrant community.

The UAB School of Nursing has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in this recruitment. Please direct all applications, nominations, and inquiries in confidence to Isaacson, Miller, as indicated at the end of this document.

## THE ROLE OF SENIOR ASSOCIATE DEAN, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND FACULTY AFFAIRS

As a member of the School's executive leadership team, the Senior Associate Dean for Professional Development and Faculty Affairs (SAD-PDFA) serves as the Chief Faculty Affairs and Professional Development Officer, responsible for overseeing faculty and staff development across the School. The SAD-PDFA supervises the School's two academic department chairs and the associated departmental budgets. The SAD-PDFA, in collaboration with the SONHR office and in partnership with others, such as Department Chairs, Vice Chairs, and staff managers, broadly oversees onboarding, performance evaluation, promotion and tenure processes, mentorship, and leadership development. The SAD-PDFA will collaborate with the Assistant Dean for Evaluation to lead efforts to enhance data systems by standardizing performance-related reporting and implementing dashboards and metrics to support evaluation, planning, and recognition. The role also collaborates with the Associate Dean for Access and Engagement to support well-being, work-life integration, and a positive, inclusive work environment for all faculty and staff.

The School environment is highly collaborative and team-focused, with defining pillars around academic programs, research, practice, and service, and a matrixed leadership design. With this in mind, the SAD-PDFA will work in partnership with others, including UABSON Human Resources, Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Associate Dean for Research and Scholarship, Associate Dean for Clinical and Global Partnerships, Associate Dean for Access and Engagement, Associate Dean for Graduate Clinical Education, Associate Dean for Undergraduate and Pre-licensure Education, Associate Dean for Technology and Innovation and staff supervisors to align faculty and staff development strategies. The SAD-PDFA also advises the Dean on faculty-related policy, planning, and organizational development, and works hand in hand with the SONHR office to serve as a School liaison for faculty affairs to UAB's offices of Human Resources, Legal Affairs, and the Provost.

The SAD-PDFA will hold a full-time, 12-month, tenured faculty position at the rank of Professor.

---

## KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE SENIOR ASSOCIATE DEAN

### **Lead a Transformative Faculty and Staff Development Enterprise**

The UAB School of Nursing has established a solid foundation in faculty and staff development through programs in mentorship, onboarding, and performance management. The Senior Associate Dean will have the opportunity to work collaboratively with the SONHR office to unify and expand these efforts into a cohesive, school-wide framework that advances excellence across teaching, research, clinical practice, and service. Operating within a culture that values innovation, the SAD-PDFA will strengthen systems for career advancement, leadership development, and accountability, ensuring they are equitable, scalable, and aligned with UAB's long-term goals and the evolving needs of its academic workforce.

### **Drive Organizational Excellence and Shape the School's Strategic Future**

As a key member of the School's executive leadership team, the SAD-PDFA will be instrumental in charting and executing the School's strategic direction. In close partnership with the Dean and senior leaders, this role will align faculty and staff development with the School's long-term vision and institutional priorities. Serving as both mentor and strategic advisor to department chairs, the SAD-PDFA will strengthen leadership capacity through collaborative planning, operational insight, and a deep commitment to professional growth. By cultivating a unified and empowered leadership structure, this leader will help position the School for continued excellence, innovation, and impact in an evolving academic and healthcare landscape.

### **Advance Mentorship, Career Progression, and a Culture of Well-being**

The SAD-PDFA will champion a professional environment where faculty and staff are supported holistically across their careers. This includes building a robust mentorship ecosystem—combining peer networks, individualized planning, and formal mentorship—to support development at every stage. The SAD-PDFA will also lead efforts to clarify and communicate promotion and career progression processes, ensuring they reflect the School's values and commitment to equity.

### **Advance Data-Driven Performance Management and Technology Integration**

To support continuous improvement, the SAD-PDFA will collaborate with the Assistant Dean for Evaluation and others to enhance the School's capacity for data-informed decision-making. This includes modernizing how faculty and staff contributions are captured, evaluated, and recognized through consistent data collection, meaningful performance metrics, and accessible dashboards. By aligning information systems with strategic priorities, the SAD-PDFA will foster greater transparency and empower leaders to use data to support development, planning, and recognition efforts across the School.

---

## **Elevate Faculty and Staff as Institutional Leaders and Ambassadors**

The SAD-PDFA will play a critical role in identifying and developing future leaders. This includes collaborating with UABSON Human Resources, Department Chairs, Vice Chairs, and staff managers, creating pathways for faculty and staff development within UAB and beyond, through institutional committees, professional awards, development programs, and strategic initiatives. By building visibility and cultivating talent, the SAD-PDFA will help advance the School's position as a hub of leadership and innovation and strengthen its voice within the broader academic and health care communities.

## **QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS**

The successful Senior Associate Dean of Professional Development and Faculty Affairs will possess many, if not all, of the following professional qualifications, skills, and experience:

### **Minimum Requirements**

- Doctoral degree in Nursing or related field (Ph.D. preferred) with significant academic nursing experience.
- Eligibility for appointment at the rank of Professor with tenure.
- Unencumbered RN license in Alabama or eligibility for licensure.
- At least five years of successful academic leadership experience, preferably at the level of department chair or associate Dean, including direct supervision of faculty and/or staff.
- Demonstrated success in leadership, strategic planning, budget management, and academic operations within a complex, matrixed academic health sciences environment.
- Ability to work effectively and collaboratively with multiple constituents across a matrix organization.
- Recognized record as an educator, mentor, and scholar, with sustained scholarly productivity and a history of grant funding (NIH preferred).
- Proven expertise in performance management, including both developmental and disciplinary processes.
- Active engagement in institutional service and national or international professional organizations.
- Leadership grounded in emotional intelligence, respect, and the ability to lead teams effectively.
- Strong interpersonal skills and ability to work across departments, disciplines, and administrative levels.
- High ethical standards and discretion in handling sensitive faculty and staff matters.

### **Highly Desired Qualifications and Attributes**

- Forward-thinking mindset with a commitment to continuous improvement and innovation.
- Deep understanding of academic promotion and tenure processes, including mentoring faculty through these milestones.

- Proficiency in using data to inform policy, assess faculty and staff needs, and evaluate program outcomes.
- Understands measurement and can help shape performance dashboards collaborating with data science experts.
- Collaborates with data science experts.
- Experience working across multiple faculty tracks (tenure, clinical, research) and staff roles.
- Background in coaching, leadership development, or organizational effectiveness.
- Strong communication and collaboration skills, with the ability to lead through influence.
- Recognition as a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing (FAAN) or equivalent distinction.

## APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, and applications (CV with cover letter) should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/university-alabama-birmingham-school-nursing/senior-associate-dean-professional>

Amy Segal, Partner  
Erin Schwass, Senior Associate  
Olivia McVicker, Managing Search Coordinator  
Isaacson, Miller

*If you have any accommodation or access needs, we are happy to provide reasonable accommodations.*

*UAB is an Equal Employment/Equal Educational Opportunity Institution dedicated to providing equal opportunities and equal access to all individuals regardless of race, color, religion, ethnic or national origin, sex (including pregnancy), genetic information, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and veteran's status. As required by Title IX, UAB prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates. Individuals may report concerns or questions to UAB's Assistant Vice President and Senior Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX notice of nondiscrimination is located at [uab.edu/titleix](http://uab.edu/titleix)*

---

## APPENDIX

### THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM

The University of Alabama at Birmingham's story is one of remarkable growth in size, quality, reputation, and impact. UAB traces its roots to the 1859 founding of the Medical College of Alabama and the 1936 establishment of the Birmingham Extension Center of the University of Alabama. In 1945, the University's Medical Center was founded in Birmingham. In November 1966, the Extension Center and the Medical Center were administratively merged to form the "University of Alabama in Birmingham," an organizational component of the University of Alabama (in Tuscaloosa). In 1969, UAB became an independent institution, one of the autonomous universities within the newly created three-campus University of Alabama System.

UAB is the only public, four-year, degree-granting university in the state's largest metropolitan area and serves as Alabama's biomedical university. The UAB schools of Medicine, Health Professions, Dentistry, Optometry, Nursing, and Public Health are co-located in downtown Birmingham, along with the schools of Engineering, Business, Education, and Human Sciences, and the College of Arts and Sciences, facilitating greater interdisciplinary collaboration. UAB is an internationally renowned research university and academic medical center with more than \$780 million in annual research expenditures and an economic impact on the state exceeding \$12.1 billion yearly. UAB is Alabama's largest employer, with more than 35,000 employees, and was named Forbes' No. 1 Large Employer in the United States in 2021. UAB serves nearly 21,000 students, offering more than 180-degree programs.

The UAB campus is in the heart of downtown Birmingham, a city that has enjoyed revitalization in recent years with the advent of numerous residential, sporting, music, and outdoor entertainment developments. Birmingham is also a foodie town, home to James Beard Foundation award-winning chefs and restaurants, and a robust craft brewery scene.

### THE SCHOOL OF NURSING

The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) School of Nursing is a nationally recognized leader in nursing education, research, and clinical practice. As part of a major academic health center, the School prepares nurse leaders who excel as clinicians, educators, and researchers both locally and globally. UAB offers a comprehensive range of programs—from undergraduate degrees to advanced doctoral pathways such as the DNP and PhD—many of which are available in hybrid or fully online formats to accommodate diverse learner needs. Known for its innovative curriculum and strong clinical partnerships, the School provides students with hands-on experience in a Level 1 trauma center and other cutting-edge healthcare settings. With a focus on leadership, technology, and evidence-based practice, UAB nurses are equipped to drive advancements in healthcare and improve patient outcomes across all populations. The School in 2018 opened a state-of-the-art \$32 million addition to its building adding new technology-enhanced classrooms and nursing simulation labs designed to develop the next generation of nurses, as well as

additional gathering and other spaces for students, and additional faculty and staff offices to accommodate growth.

### **Mission**

UABSON leads, innovates, and excels in education, research, and practice to promote well-being through equitable and sustainable health care.

### **Vision**

Innovative leaders transforming health.

### **Strategic Plan**

The UAB School of Nursing has developed a comprehensive [Strategic Plan](#). This plan builds upon the momentum of the 2021–2023 Strategic Plan Reboot and reflects extensive collaboration among faculty, staff, students, alums, and community partners. The strategic priorities are organized around three pillars: Academic Programs, Community and Global Partnerships, and Scholarship; and five foundations: Assets & Relationships, Evaluation & Innovation, Access & Engagement, Communication, Faculty Development, and Sustainability.

Aligned with the responsibilities of the Senior Associate Dean for Professional Development and Faculty Affairs, the plan emphasizes faculty and staff development, wellness, and leadership. Key initiatives include enhanced onboarding and mentoring programs, expanded leadership development opportunities, and structured support for promotion and tenure. Faculty and staff engagement in professional development has grown through fellowships, workshops, and recognition programs. Wellness and belonging are supported through joint faculty-staff initiatives and a culture of collaboration. These efforts reflect UABSON's commitment to fostering a thriving academic environment that supports excellence, growth, and impact across all missions.

### **Faculty and Staff**

The faculty and staff at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) School of Nursing are a highly educated and accomplished team of educators, clinicians, and researchers committed to advancing nursing education, science, and healthcare. The faculty includes many who are nationally and internationally recognized in their fields, and the majority also maintain active clinical roles, integrating current practice with academic instruction. The School's 176 staff provide essential support across academic and student services, helping create a collaborative, student-focused environment. Together, the Schools' faculty and staff promote innovation, mentorship, and inclusivity—preparing future nurse leaders to navigate the changing landscape of healthcare.

---

## Students

The School of Nursing enrolls 2,669 students across its programs, including 1,018 at the undergraduate level, 831 in master's programs, 742 in doctoral programs, and 78 in certificate/non-degree programs. UAB nursing students are known for their academic rigor, compassionate care, and dedication to improving health outcomes in their communities and beyond. With access to cutting-edge simulation labs, interprofessional learning opportunities, and mentorship from nationally recognized faculty, they are well-prepared to thrive in complex healthcare environments and lead transformative change in the nursing profession. Committed to student success, the School of Nursing has invested in a team of success champions to enhance the student experience.

## Academics

The School offers a full continuum of academic programs, including [bachelor's](#), [master's](#), and [doctoral](#) degrees, and [non-degree certificates and subspecialties](#). At the undergraduate level, students can pursue a traditional four-year Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN), an RN to BSN pathway for working nurses, or a Joint Enrollment Pathway that allows simultaneous completion of an ADN and BSN. Graduate offerings include Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) programs in nurse midwifery, nurse practitioner specialties, health systems leadership, and an accelerated master's entry option for non-nursing degree holders, as well as Post-BSN to DNP Pathways and Post-BSN PhD Pathways. At the doctoral level, UAB provides both a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) with tracks such as nurse anesthesia, population health, and nurse executive, and a PhD in Nursing for those pursuing research and academic careers. The School also offers dual DNP-PhD programs, post-graduate certificates, and subspecialty options to support lifelong learning and specialization.

The academic mission is supported by the School's Office of Technology and Innovation, which is revolutionizing nursing education through the power of simulation. The UAB School of Nursing leverages state-of-the-art technology and real-world scenarios to create immersive learning experiences not found anywhere else. The School's hands-on approach equips students with the critical skills and confidence they need to excel in the demanding healthcare environment. Beyond technical expertise, [Blazer Simulation](#) fosters the development of essential patient care qualities. Students gain experience in communication, teamwork, and critical thinking, all within a safe and supportive environment. They refine their decision-making abilities and practice effective patient interactions before encountering real-world situations. In addition to numerous skills and practice labs, Blazer Simulation includes four state-of-the-art, fully functional hospital-style patient rooms for nursing simulations, a working operating room, a nurse's station, a transport elevator, and a home health lab complete with a kitchen, living area, bedroom area, and working bathroom providing the latest in at-home simulation.

## Research and Scholarship



Research at the UAB School of Nursing is a cornerstone of its mission to improve health outcomes and advance health equity across the lifespan. The School is home to leading scientists with funded studies in oncology, pediatrics, workforce development, occupational health, and aging. In FY2024, the School had over \$14 million in total external research awards, including over \$7.4 million from the NIH.

Research within the School of Nursing is organized around four core areas:

- Chronic Condition Management
- Supportive and Palliative Care
- Caregiving
- Health Systems and Improvement Science

Nursing faculty at UAB have robust opportunities to engage in interdisciplinary research through collaborations with colleagues across the health sciences, in public health, engineering, and social sciences, and among other fields. Faculty engage in cross-disciplinary research through UAB's [University-Wide Interdisciplinary Research Centers \(UWIRCs\)](#), accessing shared resources across fields such as health disparities, neuroscience, aging, and minority health. These partnerships enable nursing researchers to contribute clinical insights and patient-centered perspectives to innovative, cross-sector solutions.

The School's [Office of Research and Scholarship](#) (ORS) provides robust infrastructure for faculty and student success in grant development, mentoring, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

## **Practice**

UAB Nursing is nationally recognized for its leadership in innovative, evidence-based, and patient-centered care. Most faculty and staff maintain active clinical practices, mentoring students through real-world challenges. The School integrates clinical excellence with education and research to improve individual and community health. Through strong partnerships with UAB Medicine, which includes a formal collaboration between the School of Nursing and UAB Medicine, and other healthcare systems, the School extends its impact across diverse clinical settings, preparing nurses to be leaders in transforming health and healthcare delivery. The School has a [faculty practice](#) plan, and faculty also provide care through nurse-managed clinics, including the Providing Access to Healthcare (PATH) Clinic, Heart FailuRe Transitional Care Services for Adults (HRTSA) Heart Failure Clinic, and Women's Health Clinic.

## **Global Engagement**

The School's [Global Health Action Framework](#) guides its international engagement across teaching, research, and service. Efforts are aligned with the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, reinforcing the School's commitment to health equity worldwide. The School of Nursing is home to a PAHO/WHO Collaborating Center for International Nursing that has been continuously designated as such for more than 30 years. Its global initiatives span continents—from palliative care and family caregiving in

Turkey, to midwifery research in Japan and Taiwan, to educational exchanges in Brazil, Thailand, and Jamaica. These partnerships provide students and faculty with rich opportunities for global learning, collaborative research, and culturally responsive care, reinforcing the School's mission to transform health care worldwide.

## ABOUT BIRMINGHAM

UAB is proud to be in Birmingham: home to 1.1 million metropolitan residents, the birthplace of the Civil Rights Movement, and one of the South's most celebrated culinary destinations. Surrounded by the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains and the Warrior and Cahaba River watersheds, Birmingham is one of the greenest major cities in the country, with more green space per capita than any other. The city has nearly 100 different neighborhoods, each with its own personality. Nearby, Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve and Red Mountain Park together offer more than 30 miles of trails and green spaces for hiking, biking, and running – plus over 1,000 acres of urban forest for interacting with nature.

Downtown Birmingham has enjoyed a revitalization in recent years. [Railroad Park](#), a 19-acre green space in the heart of the city, and Regions Field, home of the [Birmingham Barons](#), have sparked development in adjacent districts that are now home to craft breweries, restaurants, artist-run shops, and new housing. Professional sports teams, including the [Birmingham Stallions](#) (USFL), the [Birmingham Squadron](#) (NBA G League), and the [Birmingham Bulls](#) (Southern Professional Hockey League), reflect the city's growing profile and local pride.

There are a host of attractions, only a short walk from UAB's campus, including the Birmingham Civil Rights District National Monument. This area encompasses the historic sites that played significant roles in the Civil Rights Movement, places such as the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, Kelly Ingram Park, and the [Birmingham Civil Rights Institute](#).

Birmingham's cultural scene is thriving with museums, galleries, theaters, and live music venues. Birmingham is home to multiple music, art, and film festivals, including the Sidewalk Film Festival. In addition, Birmingham has a professional ballet company, a professional opera company, the Alabama Symphony Orchestra (based at UAB's Alys Stephens Performing Arts Center), a [School of Fine Arts](#), the [Jazz Hall of Fame](#), and the historic [Lyric Theatre](#) and [Alabama Theatre](#).