



# COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

*The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA HEALTH SCIENCES*

Chair, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences

The University of Oklahoma College of Medicine and OU Health

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

## THE SEARCH

The University of Oklahoma College of Medicine (OUCOM) seeks a bold, mission-driven, and forward-thinking leader to serve as the next Chair of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences and Clinical Service Chief in the health system (OU Health). This is a unique opportunity for a builder to grow and develop a department poised for transformation. The next Chair will guide the department through strategic expansion, modernize operations, address workforce shortages, establish a research portfolio, and cultivate a welcoming and supportive culture. The ideal candidate will bring an inspirational vision that unifies the department's clinical, research, and educational efforts and elevates its impact across Oklahoma and beyond.

As the state's flagship academic health center, the [University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center](#) is home to seven health professional colleges and serves as a hub for education, research, and patient care across the region. The University of Oklahoma [College of Medicine](#) is the largest entity within the Center and the cornerstone of OU Health. It is undergoing dynamic growth under new leadership, with recent investments in new departments, programs, and senior roles. Within this energized environment, the [Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences](#) plays a vital role in advancing behavioral health across the lifespan and across the state.

This is a moment of extraordinary opportunity for the department. In December 2026, OU Health will open the [Oklahoma Children's Hospital OU Health Behavioral Health Center](#), the state's first dedicated pediatric mental health facility, marking a historic investment in youth mental health. For the department, the Center represents a strategic platform to expand clinical reach, strengthen training programs, and develop innovative models of care while advancing investigation. At the same time, Oklahoma faces urgent behavioral health challenges: nearly one in four residents reports symptoms of depression; suicide rates, especially among youth and in rural areas, are among the highest in the nation; and the state ranks 33<sup>rd</sup> in the country for access to mental health services.

With strong institutional support and a clear mandate for change, the department is well-positioned to make a major impact on the health of the state. The next Chair will have the opportunity to shape a cohesive departmental vision, strengthen research infrastructure, enhance clinical operations and

training, and foster meaningful community partnerships, particularly with rural and tribal communities. Starting with the populations most in need, this is a chance to build lasting impact and position the department as a national model for integrated, community-responsive mental health care.

Applicants must be board-certified by the American Board of Psychiatry, eligible for academic appointment in the department as an associate professor or professor, and demonstrate significant leadership in academic psychiatry. The ideal candidate will bring experience managing complex clinical systems, aligning strategy with institutional goals, and fostering a culture of collaboration, accountability, and continuous improvement.

The University of Oklahoma College of Medicine 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.

## ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

The Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences delivers comprehensive psychiatric services across a wide range of populations and care settings. It supports inpatient, outpatient, consultation-liaison, forensic, geriatric, addiction, telepsychiatry, and integrated behavioral health services across OU Health and affiliated partners, with nearly 24,000 patient encounters systemwide in FY2025. The department includes approximately 37 full-time faculty, 36 residents, fellows, and postdocs, and 13 administrative and support staff. It supports an ACGME-accredited General Psychiatry Residency Program, a Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Fellowship, a Clinical Psychology Internship, and two postdoctoral residencies in Clinical Neuropsychology and Psychology. Plans are underway to expand educational offerings to help meet growing statewide behavioral health workforce needs.

Research efforts within the department are expanding, with institutional support to grow infrastructure, recruit research-active faculty, and pursue impactful, community-responsive studies that address Oklahoma's most pressing behavioral health challenges.

Clinical revenue, institutional funding, and external partnerships support the department. It also plays a key role in statewide outreach and service through its partnerships with tribal health systems, rural providers, the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, and the Oklahoma County Detention Center.

Signature programs include:

- **Telepsychiatry and Rural Outreach:** Expanding access to behavioral health care in underserved areas.
- **Integrated Behavioral Health:** Embedding services in primary care and other clinical settings.
- **Forensic Psychiatry Services:** Supporting mental health care in correctional and public safety systems.

The department's clinical and educational reach will expand significantly with the opening of the Oklahoma Children's Behavioral Health Center in 2026. This 72-bed, state-of-the-art pediatric mental health facility represents a landmark investment in child and adolescent behavioral health for Oklahoma.

## ROLE OF THE CHAIR

The Chair of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences reports directly to Dr. Ian Dunn, the Executive Dean of the College of Medicine, Chief Physician Executive, and Chief Academic Officer of OU Health. As the department's senior leader, the Chair is responsible for its strategic direction and operational oversight across clinical care, education, research, and community engagement.

The Chair oversees a leadership team that includes four division chiefs in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Adult Psychiatry, Neuropsychology, and Social Work, and a lead business administrator. The Chair is responsible for recruiting, developing, and retaining faculty and staff across multiple sites. They manage departmental operations, including budget oversight, clinical service delivery, and alignment with institutional priorities.

In collaboration with institutional partners, the Chair will lead efforts to expand the department's research enterprise by recruiting research faculty, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, and building infrastructure to support scholarship that addresses the behavioral health needs of Oklahoma and the region.

The Chair serves as a key liaison to internal and external stakeholders, including other department chairs, health system leaders, community partners, and affiliated institutions such as the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, the Oklahoma City VA Medical Center, and the Oklahoma County Detention Center.

A visible and engaged leader, the Chair is expected to foster a culture of transparency, accountability, and collaboration.

## KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The next Chair of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences will join OUCOM at a moment of extraordinary momentum. The Chair will be expected to lead with vision, collaboration, and operational excellence, bringing together an assorted and dedicated team to shape the future of behavioral health in Oklahoma and beyond.

### **Set a bold strategic direction and lead cultural transformation**

The Chair will provide strategic leadership and executive-level oversight to unify and strengthen the department's missions in clinical care, education, and research. The Chair will, in partnership with faculty and staff, lead the development of a cohesive vision that reflects the department's mission, values, and long-term potential. In close collaboration with faculty and institutional partners, the Chair will align

departmental goals with university and health system priorities, clarify roles and expectations, and foster a culture of transparency, accountability, and collaboration. As part of this work, the Chair will advocate for the infrastructure, staffing, and space needed to support the department's growth and position it as a vital contributor to behavioral health innovation across Oklahoma and the region.

### **Recruit, retain, and develop a high-performing team**

Recruitment and retention are urgent priorities. The Chair will lead efforts to attract top clinical, research, and educational talent at all levels while also investing in the development, mentorship, and well-being of current faculty and staff. Building a strong and stable team will be essential to the department's long-term success and sustainability. The Chair is responsible for setting the tone for the department, and fostering an environment that is safe and transparent will be key to galvanizing and inspiring the potential that exists in the department.

### **Build a vibrant and mission-aligned research enterprise**

The University and OU Health have identified neuroscience and behavioral health as priority areas within OU's "Future of Health" [Research Strategic Framework](#). Strong institutional support exists for expanding the department's research mission by recruiting and supporting research faculty, building the necessary infrastructure, and fostering a culture of inquiry, innovation, and collaboration. With a focus on pressing public health needs, the Chair will shape a research agenda that is both impactful and aligned with the behavioral health needs of Oklahoma and the region.

### **Lead the department through a transformative clinical expansion**

The Chair will also be responsible for strengthening the department's broader clinical footprint. This includes improving access, quality, and coordination of care across inpatient, outpatient, and specialty services, ensuring that the department meets the behavioral health needs of individuals and families across the lifespan.

### **Advance education and training to meet statewide workforce needs**

The department plays a central role in preparing the behavioral health workforce for Oklahoma. The Chair will be expected to strengthen existing training programs and lead strategic efforts to expand educational offerings in response to state and regional needs. This includes enhancing residency, fellowship, and psychology training programs; exploring new models of interdisciplinary education; and expanding access to training in rural and underserved communities. With plans to grow, the department is well-positioned to develop a robust, varied pipeline aligned with Oklahoma's behavioral health priorities.

### **Deepen community partnerships and public advocacy**

OUCOM has a strong foundation of collaboration with state agencies, tribal health systems, and community organizations. The Chair will be well-positioned to draw on these relationships and serve as a visible advocate for behavioral health equity across Oklahoma. This includes engaging in public education,

supporting policy initiatives, and ensuring that the department's work is responsive to the needs of the communities it serves.

## QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The successful candidate will be a respected leader in academic psychiatry with a strong record of clinical, scholarly, and organizational achievement. While no candidate will embody every quality, the ideal Chair will bring many of the following:

- **Academic and Clinical Credentials:** MD, MD/PhD, or equivalent clinical doctoral degree; board-certified in psychiatry and eligible for medical licensure in Oklahoma. Qualifications should merit a tenured academic appointment at the rank of Associate Professor or Professor.
- **Leadership and Strategic Experience:** Progressive academic leadership in a complex academic medical setting, with operational insight and the ability to lead within a matrixed environment.
- **Scholarly and Research Excellence:** A distinguished record of peer-reviewed scholarship and external research funding, along with success in building and supporting research programs and infrastructure.
- **Faculty and Team Development:** A proven ability to recruit, retain, and mentor faculty and staff; build comprehensive teams; and support the growth of junior faculty and trainees.
- **Educational Commitment:** A passion for education and experience leading or supporting residency, fellowship, and medical student training programs.
- **Operational and Financial Acumen:** Expertise in clinical operations, staffing, resource alignment, and budget management in support of strategic goals.
- **Values-Driven Leadership:** A strong commitment to clinical excellence, community engagement, and behavioral health access for all populations.
- **Change-Oriented Mindset:** Visionary, collaborative, and mission-driven; motivated to build and transform programs rather than maintain the status quo.

## 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: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/university-oklahoma-health-sciences-center-college-medicine/chair-department>. Electronic submission of materials is strongly encouraged.

Ariannah Mirick, Partner  
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*disability, political beliefs, or status as a veteran in any of its policies, practices, or procedures. This includes but is not limited to admissions, employment, housing, financial aid, and educational services.*

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

*The University of Oklahoma values our community's unique talents, perspectives, and experiences. At OU, we aspire to harness our innovation, creativity, and collaboration for the advancement of people everywhere. You Belong Here!*

***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.*

## APPENDIX

### ABOUT 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.

### ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA HEALTH SCIENCES

Located in Oklahoma City, the [University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center](#) 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.

With the largest portfolio of National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding in the state, the College grew its research portfolio by more than \$4 million last year to \$64.4 million. Currently ranked 72<sup>nd</sup> according to the Blue Ridge Rankings, the College aims to rank in the top 60 in the next five years and in the top 50 within 10 years.

As a reflection of its commitment to advancing health equity and community-engaged research, OUHSC is a lead participant in the [Oklahoma Shared Clinical and Translational Resources](#) (OSCTR), a statewide initiative supported by the NIH to accelerate clinical and translational research that improves health outcomes, particularly in underserved and rural populations. Through OSCTR, OUHSC fosters robust collaborations with academic, clinical, and tribal partners across Oklahoma and the region, supporting research infrastructure, workforce development, and culturally responsive engagement.

This work is part of a broader, long-standing commitment by OUHSC and the greater OU community to serving tribal nations and Indigenous populations across Oklahoma. From research partnerships and community-based interventions to education and outreach, OUHSC continues to be a trusted partner in advancing the health and well-being of Native communities.

### ABOUT OU HEALTH

Established in 1910 by founding partners OUHSC and the University Hospitals Authority and Trust, OU Health, in its current form, was incorporated as a locally owned nonprofit corporation in 2018. In 2021, the OU College of Medicine faculty practice and OU Medicine, Inc. merged. OU Health is the state's only

comprehensive academic health system of hospitals, clinics, and centers of excellence. With 10,000 employees and more than 1,300 physicians and advanced practice providers, OU Health is home to Oklahoma's largest doctor network, [OU Health Physicians](#), with nearly one million patient visits per year.

OU Health's flagship adult hospital, [the University of Oklahoma Medical Center](#), serves as the state's only Level 1 Trauma Center and includes the [Harold Hamm Diabetes Center](#) and the renowned [Dean McGee Eye Institute](#). OU Health serves Oklahoma and the region with the state's only dedicated free-standing children's hospital, [Oklahoma Children's Hospital](#). It also hosts the state's only National Cancer Institute (NCI)-designated cancer center, the OU Health [Stephenson Cancer Center](#). [OU Health Edmond Medical Center](#) is a community hospital in the network located a short 20-minute drive from Oklahoma City. OU Health also has clinical affiliations with [Oklahoma City Veterans Affairs Medical Center](#) and other major hospitals and clinics across Oklahoma.

## ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

The University of Oklahoma College of Medicine is the largest entity within the OU Health Sciences Center and the cornerstone of OU Health. With nearly 1,000 full-time faculty and 218 endowed chairs and professorships, the College spans 23 [academic departments](#) (including two new departments), and numerous centers and institutes advancing research and clinical care across Oklahoma.

Under the leadership of Executive Dean and Chief Academic Officer Dr. Ian Dunn, the College has entered a period of transformative growth. Milestones include the creation of new departments (Emergency Medicine, Genetics), strategic chair recruitments, and the appointment of new vice deans for Education and Research.

OUCOM offers MD, MD/PhD, PA, and MPH programs and oversees 83 residency and fellowship programs across Oklahoma City and [Tulsa](#). More than 80% of Oklahoma's healthcare professionals are educated at OU, and over half of trained physicians remain in-state to practice.

## OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

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