



Search for the Chair, Department of Health, Behavior, and Society
The University of Texas at San Antonio School of Public Health
San Antonio, Texas

THE OPPORTUNITY

The [University of Texas at San Antonio School of Public Health](#) seeks an innovative and entrepreneurial academic leader to serve as the chair of the [Department of Health, Behavior, and Society](#) (HBS). Launched in 2022, the School of Public Health was a strategic collaboration between two institutions, The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio (UT Health San Antonio) and The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA). UT Health San Antonio and UTSA recently merged to form The University of Texas at San Antonio (UT San Antonio) to create an integrated world-class academic research and academic medical center, and the third largest University in Texas. Proudly known as the “People’s School,” the School of Public Health addresses the need for a dedicated school of public health to serve San Antonio, the seventh-largest city in the United States, Bexar County, and the broader 38-county service area within South Texas. The School seeks to become the regional steward to advance the health and well-being of those living in San Antonio, Bexar County, and South Texas.

The HBS Department is dedicated to creating healthy communities where all people in San Antonio and South Texas can live, learn, work, play, and age with well-being. The Department reflects the School’s strong focus on integrating community in all aspects of research, education, and practice, and emphasizes a multidisciplinary approach. The Department’s focus areas include maternal and child health, health promotion and maintenance throughout the life course, and health communication, in addition to an interest in the connections between mental health, physical health, social, emotional, and spiritual health, health behavior, and policy and advocacy strategies that promote health and well-being.

The School’s identity as the “People’s School” is more than a slogan; it is a call to action. The next chair will be instrumental in ensuring that HBS’s teaching, research, and service reflect the needs and strengths of the region around the School. Reporting to the School’s founding dean, [Vasan Ramachandran, MD](#), the chair will work in partnership with the School’s leadership team and oversee a talented group of faculty within HBS. The successful candidate will be a collaborative academic leader who deeply understands public health education, research, and practice, and has put the community and serving it at the center of their work. The chair will bring experience working across disciplines and institutions, and a stellar reputation as an educator, mentor, and scholar. The chair will have the skills and experience to inspire

faculty, attract extramural funding, and foster an environment that supports continuous learning, discovery, and impact.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO

Effective September 1, 2025, UTSA and UT Health San Antonio merged to form [UT San Antonio](#), creating the third-largest public research university in Texas. This historic integration brings together two Carnegie R1 institutions into a single, world-class university committed to excellence in education, healthcare, and transdisciplinary research.

UT San Antonio now serves approximately 40,000 students and employs 17,000 faculty and staff across six campuses. The university offers more than 320 undergraduate and graduate degrees and certificates across various disciplines, including public health, medicine, engineering, business, liberal arts, and biomedical sciences. With \$486 million in annual research expenditures and a \$1.3 billion endowment, UT San Antonio is positioned to drive innovation and discovery at scale.

UT San Antonio is one of the original 189 universities in the nation to be federally designated as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) by the U.S. Department of Education. UT San Antonio is one of only a handful of HSI institutions in the nation also designated as an R1 institution by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education for research excellence.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

The School of Public Health's community, research, and educational partnerships will enrich San Antonio's health care, public administration, and city planning economic sectors. Before its creation, San Antonio was the largest city in the U.S. without a school of public health. Because the demography of San Antonio illustrates what our nation will look like by 2050, San Antonio is an optimal setting for fostering and educating the region's future public health workforce.

The School of Public Health's tripartite mission is to provide:

- Education that is experiential and leverages local data.
- Research that addresses regional health needs and priorities.
- Service that counts for the local community.

The School seeks to:

- Educate and train the next generation of public health leaders to formulate and implement scalable solutions to advance the state of health and well-being of the planet, its populations, cities, and communities.
- Create an evidence-based educational experience to address public health challenges of the 21st century locally, regionally, and globally.

- Promote rigorous public health scholarship that leads to evidence-based solutions.
- Create an advanced, socially responsible, financially self-sufficient, state-of-the-art multiversity.

Leadership

Dean Vasan Ramachandran

Vasan Ramachandran, MD, a distinguished public health researcher from Boston University, was named founding dean of the University of Texas at San Antonio School of Public Health in September 2022. Dean Ramachandran served on the faculty of the Boston University School of Medicine and School of Public Health for more than a quarter-century and as principal investigator of the Framingham Heart Study between 2014 and 2022.

Dean Ramachandran has also served since 2019 as one of the principal investigators for the Risk Underlying Rural Areas Longitudinal Study (RURAL), aimed at addressing critical gaps in the knowledge of heart and lung disorders in rural counties in the southeastern U.S. This study is of 4,600 individuals aged 25-64 from 10 rural counties in Southern Appalachia and the Mississippi Delta.

Most recently, Dean Ramachandran leads the Community Engagement for Building Capacity, Trust, and Ownership of Research (CONNECTOR) initiative. This initiative, funded by the American Heart Association (AHA) and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, is designed to advance research that benefits historically underresourced communities.

Ramachandran is a well-funded and collaborative investigator. He has nearly 1,200 publications, including many in prominent journals such as The New England Journal of Medicine, the Lancet, the Journal of the American College of Cardiology, the Journal of the American Medical Association, and Circulation.

The Department of Health, Behavior, and Society

Academic focus areas within the HBS Department include:

- Maternal and Child Health: Developing preventive strategies to improve the health of mothers, infants, children, adolescents, and children with special health care needs.
- Health throughout the Life Course: Prevention and intervention at every stage of life to address the long-term consequences of biological, social, economic, and behavioral experiences that influence health and well-being.
- Health Communication: Developing strategies to promote effective communication between all people impacted by health decisions, behaviors, and policies.

The Department is also interested in exploring the connections between mental health, physical health, health behavior, and policy and advocacy strategies that promote health and well-being in both urban and rural South Texas.

Other Academic Departments in the School include:

[Environmental and Occupational Health](#): dedicated to advancing environmental and occupational health, which encompasses the social, economic, and environmental conditions that influence people's well-being throughout their lives.

[Health Policy and Health Services Administration](#): dedicated to supporting and enhancing community engagement, research, and education that advance public health by improving the [delivery](#) and outcomes of health care services. The department promotes initiatives to enhance access to care while focusing on person-centered outcomes and evidence-based policy development.

[Quantitative and Qualitative Health Sciences](#): dedicated to promoting data-driven, community-centered research that addresses health challenges and supports local service initiatives.

Academic Programs

Current graduate program offerings through the School include [Master of Public Health \(MPH\) specializations](#) and a [Doctor of Medicine/Master of Public Health \(MD/MPH\) Dual Degree program](#). The MPH degree program welcomed its first cohort of thirty-five students in August 2024 and its second cohort of 24 students in August 2025. The School co-developed an innovative MD/MPH dual-degree program in partnership with the Joe R. and Teresa Lozano Long School of Medicine and received its first cohort of seven medical students in the summer of 2025. Additional offerings, including doctoral degree programs and professional certifications, are in the planning stage.

Current and future academic programs will leverage the methods-to-research-to-practice and service continuum to conduct transdisciplinary, intersectional, multi-sectoral research. The program curriculum emphasizes experiential learning opportunities, offering the advantages of active engagement and hands-on experience with school and community partners. Students will develop skills in impactful scholarship to promote the discovery, dissemination, and application of evidence-based and scalable solutions and policies.

The School of Public Health's collaborative academic programs will serve a wide population and build public health leaders who understand and are dedicated to finding positive interventions to mitigate the greatest public health challenges. Through its coursework, the School of Public Health provides a unique curriculum that integrates advanced health research. The curriculum incorporates locally relevant public health data to provide students with concrete, tangible applications of public health concepts and strategies. This approach ensures that students experience practical learning, engage in research relevant

to the San Antonio and South Texas region, and participate in valuable service that meaningfully impacts the region's communities.

Accreditation

The School of Public Health is on a trajectory to achieve accreditation from the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH), the premier accreditation for schools of public health. The MPH program has approval from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR

The chair will serve as the academic leader of their department and a senior collaborator in shaping the continued development of the new school. They will provide educational leadership, including curriculum development, classroom teaching, and mentoring to faculty and graduate students. The chair will support the Department's two current junior faculty, fostering their academic growth through guidance in teaching, research, and career development, and lead efforts to recruit an additional scholar to join the founding team, cultivating a collaborative and supportive academic environment.

The chair will actively pursue their own research agenda in areas such as population health, community health, or clinical health. They will seek extramural funding through grant applications and contribute to the School's scholarly output. The chair will also build academic and community partnerships that align with the School's mission and collaborate with colleagues across the School of Public Health and UT San Antonio to advance interdisciplinary initiatives.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The chair will address the following opportunities and challenges:

Build and Lead in a Growing School of Public Health

As a leader within a new school of public health, the chair of the Department of Health, Behavior, and Society will play a critical role in shaping both departmental operations and the broader infrastructure and future of the School. The chair will co-create policies, procedures, and strategic direction in an environment where innovation and community engagement are central. The chair will balance administrative leadership—managing budgets, teaching loads, and faculty advising—with academic vision, guiding the HBS Department's growth and ensuring alignment with the School's mission. The successful chair will thrive in dynamic settings, bring a collaborative spirit to school-wide governance, and demonstrate a commitment to building programs that support faculty success and student achievement.

Advance a Department with Deep Community Roots

HBS is uniquely positioned within the School of Public Health as the hub for behavioral, social, and community-based public health research. Faculty are deeply embedded in local and global communities, working on issues from maternal health to HIV prevention. The next chair will guide a department that is outward-facing and impact-driven, with strong ties to San Antonio and South Texas (including urban and rural areas). The chair will partner with local schools and community colleges for public health education, build a culturally competent pipeline of future students, and engage multi-sectoral and multidisciplinary stakeholders. The chair will understand community public health needs and job opportunities for placement of students in the local public health workforce. This is a role for someone who values community partnerships and can help faculty translate research into meaningful change.

Deliver Transformative Programs That Attract and Advance Students

The School of Public Health operates in a competitive landscape with external pressures on public health education, research, and practice. The chair must bring creativity to this leadership role and high standards for the quality of the School of Public Health's offerings, ensuring that programs remain attractive and distinctive in a crowded market. They will promote experiential competency-based learning that is practical and reflective of community needs. The chair and their faculty will educate using a collaborative, interpersonal, intersectional, interprofessional, and interdisciplinary framework. The Department will model state-of-the-art mixed instructional methods with integrated and dynamic curricula that address regional public health challenges and meet local public health workforce needs.

Lead Mentorship and Faculty Development

The chair of HBS will play a central role in mentoring early-career faculty and supporting student development within a dynamic and evolving academic environment. With a department currently composed of early-career faculty, the chair will provide guidance in areas such as grant writing, IRB navigation, promotion and tenure preparation, and professional development. The chair will help establish mentoring systems and foster a culture of support, collaboration, and growth. This role requires a commitment to faculty success, including helping faculty build community partnerships, develop innovative curricula, and balance research, teaching, and service. The Chair will also serve as a resource for students, supporting their academic and career goals while contributing to the broader strategic direction of the School of Public Health.

Champion Research for Community Health Solutions

The chair will promote a culture of research and scholarly excellence that is deeply rooted in the School's mission to serve the public health needs of San Antonio and South Texas. They will lead efforts to cultivate a vibrant research ecosystem that integrates transdisciplinary, intersectional, and multi-sectoral approaches to public health inquiry. The chair will guide faculty and students in producing high-impact

research that informs practice and drives policy. The chair will continue to build and sustain a research enterprise that is both academically rigorous and mission-driven, while navigating the complexities of a newly merged institution and a rapidly evolving public health landscape.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The ideal candidate will elucidate and understand patterns of health, well-being, and disease and their causes with demonstrated intellectual leadership in a field relevant to health sciences and/or public health, a substantial record of scholarly achievement, strong visibility in the public health research community, and significant experience in educational and community program development.

In addition, the successful candidate will meet most, if not all, of the following criteria:

- An earned doctorate or medical degree, along with a distinguished record of academic excellence; credentials that qualify for appointment as a tenured associate or full professor
- Exceptional leadership skills, with the proven ability to foster a spirit of unity and collaboration across a department, and team science across the School
- Excellent interpersonal skills to build and maintain relationships with faculty, staff, and students
- Engage in community-based scholarship, and demonstrate a strong commitment to and respect for community and the ability to work in community-based settings
- A personal and professional history of impactful research and scholarship, with a record of success in grant writing and the ability to encourage and support others in their own scholarly achievement
- The ability to identify and seize opportunities that support the continued growth across the mission of the School
- Demonstrated ability to function effectively and collaboratively in a complex, fast-moving, dynamic environment with multiple stakeholder groups
- Ability to make difficult decisions and prioritize
- An astute understanding of academic finances and experience establishing budget priorities and serving as a responsible manager and steward of departmental resources
- A demonstrated history of fostering learning and working environments that support success and engagement for students, staff, and faculty across varied backgrounds and experiences
- Demonstrated experience in recruiting and retaining top faculty
- A commitment to transparency and an inclusive management style
- Excellent interpersonal, written, and oral communication skills; exceptional planning and organizational skills, and superb follow-through
- Personal qualities that include creativity, flexibility, adaptability, tenacity, courage, a sense of humor, and unquestionable integrity

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: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/university-texas-san-antonio-school-public-health/chair-department-health-behavior>.

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UT San Antonio is an Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer including protected veterans and persons with disabilities. All faculty appointments are designated as security sensitive positions.

This document has been prepared based on the information provided by The University of Texas at San Antonio School of Public Health. The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and information provided by The University of Texas at San Antonio School of Public Health would supersede any conflicting information in this document.

APPENDIX

About The University of Texas System

[The University of Texas System](#) is one of the largest and most respected public university systems in the United States, comprising 13 academic and health institutions across the state. With a mission to improve the lives of Texans and beyond through education, research, and healthcare, the UT System offers a rich environment for faculty to thrive.

Faculty benefit from a comprehensive support structure that includes competitive benefits, professional development resources, and access to cutting-edge research infrastructure. Systemwide initiatives such as the STARs Program and the UT Research Cyberinfrastructure provide funding and tools to advance innovative scholarship. The UT System also fosters interdisciplinary collaboration across campuses, enabling faculty to engage in impactful research and community partnerships.

Public health is a strategic priority across the UT System, reflected in the expansion of Schools of Public Health and investment in initiatives addressing health equity, behavioral health, and population health. Faculty in public health disciplines are supported through collaborative networks, grant development assistance, and opportunities to shape health policy and practice across Texas.

Joining the UT System means becoming part of a diverse, mission-driven academic community committed to improving public health through research, education, and service.

The University of Texas at San Antonio

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The merger enhances the university's ability to deliver exceptional patient care, with its Health Science Center seeing over 2.5 million patient visits annually. It also strengthens UT San Antonio's role in addressing critical workforce needs in healthcare and science, particularly in South Texas.

[President Taylor Eighmy](#) describes the new institution as “nimble, creative, and unlike any other,” emphasizing its mission to champion social mobility, improve health outcomes, and amplify impact through community engagement and global research initiatives.

Why San Antonio?

Ranked by [Travel + Leisure](#) as one of the best cities to live in the U.S., San Antonio is a city where history, culture, and innovation converge. The city offers a vibrant lifestyle with a rich blend of traditions and modern amenities. Festivals, music, and a thriving culinary scene make it a dynamic place to live, while its affordability—cost of living about 8% below the national average—ensures that professionals can enjoy a high quality of life without the financial strain often found in other major cities.

For leaders in public health and higher education, San Antonio offers a unique professional landscape. The city is home to a robust healthcare and bioscience sector, valued at over \$40 billion, which employs nearly one in five residents. This ecosystem fosters collaboration between academic institutions, research centers, and healthcare organizations, creating opportunities for impactful partnerships and interdisciplinary work. It is a community deeply committed to addressing population health challenges and shaping the next generation of public health professionals.

San Antonio’s diverse population and rapid growth make it an ideal setting for public health innovation. The city faces real-world challenges—such as health disparities, chronic disease prevention, and community wellness—that provide fertile ground for applied research and community engagement. With strong ties to military medicine, global health initiatives, and emerging technology sectors, the region offers a wealth of resources for academic leaders seeking to make a difference both locally and globally.

San Antonio is home to a vibrant culture and features iconic landmarks, including The Alamo and the River Walk. It’s also just a short trip away from Austin or the beach. San Antonio’s cultural personality is unique. Mexican, European, Asian, African, and Western traditions blend to create something not found anywhere else in the country. When you come to study in San Antonio, you are adding to a unique cultural environment that we love to celebrate here. For more information about San Antonio, please visit [this link](#).



SAN ANTONIO RIVER WALK