



CHANGE THE WORLD FROM HERE

Dean

University of San Francisco, School of Education
San Francisco, California

THE SEARCH

The University of San Francisco (USF), a private, Catholic, Jesuit research university, seeks applications and nominations for the Dean of the School of Education (SOE). Known for its pioneering work in humanizing education, urban education, and counseling and engaged learning, particularly in schools and communities most affected by injustice, the SOE produces first-class leaders who work in solidarity with communities to improve the lives of those who need it most. The incoming Dean will join USF at a time of great opportunity; in this shifting political climate, they will have a unique platform from which to impact the national educational landscape, from one of the most socially minded universities in one of the most progressive cities and diverse regions in the world.

The University of San Francisco was established in 1855 by the Jesuit Fathers as San Francisco's first institution of higher learning. Once a one-room schoolhouse, USF has grown to become San Francisco's largest independent university. With a mission of promoting learning in the Jesuit Catholic tradition, USF educates leaders for a more humane and just world, as characterized in their statement, "Change the World from Here." The University takes pride in being a diverse, socially responsible learning community with deep roots in social justice and globalism.

USF's School of Education is the largest graduate School of education in Northern California and has remained true to this mission of driving new ways of thinking about education since its inception in 1948. Today, it is a destination that draws scholars and social justice advocates alike from around the globe to study, serve, and teach. It is currently the largest graduate program at the university, offering certificate, master's, and doctoral degree programs to approximately 1,100 students in San Francisco, in addition to locations in Downtown San Francisco, Sacramento, Santa Rosa, San Jose, East Bay, and Orange County.

The incoming Dean of the School of Education (SOE) will join the administration at a time of tremendous excitement and opportunity. Under the leadership of President Salvador Aceves '83, EdD '95, and Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dr. Eileen Fung, USF is experiencing a new era of growth within the SOE while advancing the university's broader priorities: the continued enhancement of academic excellence, strengthening community partnerships, and deepening service to students. To achieve these goals, the Dean will address the following opportunities and challenges:

- Continue to provide visionary and strategic leadership that better positions the School as a national as well as local leader while fostering innovation and academic excellence;
- Raise funds and expand resources to ensure the School is able to reach its full potential;
- Lead efforts that strengthen the School's programs and ensure student success;
- Preserve the School's collaborative culture while ensuring continued operational stability and transparency;
- Expand strategic partnerships and elevate the School's local and national profile.

A list of the desired qualifications and characteristics of the Dean can be found at the conclusion of this document, which was prepared by the search committee with the assistance of Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to provide background information and detail the key opportunities and challenges related to the position. All confidential applications, inquiries, and nominations should be directed to the parties listed at the conclusion of this document.

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

The University of San Francisco distinguishes itself as a diverse, socially responsible learning community of high-quality scholarship and academic rigor, sustained by a “faith that does justice.” The university draws from the cultural, intellectual, and economic resources of the San Francisco Bay Area and its location in a dynamic and culturally rich location to enrich and strengthen its educational programs. Deeply rooted in its [Jesuit mission](#) and guided by [aligned Catholic values](#), the community is mid-course in the implementation of the five-year strategic plan, [USF Strategic Plan 2027](#). Developed in June of 2022, the plan positions the university to thrive in a rapidly changing landscape, bolster student success, strengthen enrollment, and ensure the academic program's sustainability. In 2025, USF was named a Research 2 university in the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. The R2 designation places USF among 139 doctoral universities in the U.S. with “high research activity.”

The university welcomes and supports a student body reflective of San Francisco's diversity and rich multiculturalism. Over 30 percent of the university's students are first-generation college students, and the university has been designated an [Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution](#) by the Department of Education. The 2025 *US News and World Report* ranks USF as tied at number one for student body ethnic diversity among national universities, in addition to the distinction of being a “Best Value” national university. USF's campus culture reflects the vibrancy of its location and student body. Approximately 3,000 undergraduate and graduate students live on campus. At the heart of campus engagement are over 190 graduate and undergraduate student organizations, including academic, honorary, and professional organizations; social fraternities and sororities; cultural, international, religious, and spiritual associations; media and performing arts groups; and political, service, and special interest organizations. University Ministry, open to community members of all faiths, beliefs, and identities, engages with students to help achieve USF's social justice mission.

In addition to its campus in San Francisco, USF has a long, distinguished history of providing working adults the opportunity to further their education through its additional locations. These locations are in

Downtown San Francisco, Sacramento, Santa Rosa, San Jose, East Bay, and Orange County and offer full services conveniently located to students' homes and workplaces. Online degree programs are available in a growing number of fields. To learn more, visit <https://www.usfca.edu>.

ABOUT THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

In 1948, the teacher training program was established under Paul J. Harney, S.J, the former Chancellor of the University of San Francisco. In 1972, the Board of Trustees established the School of Education, and the first doctoral students were admitted. From 1975 on, enrollment grew rapidly at various sites throughout the state— Sacramento, Santa Rosa, San Jose, and Oakland —with the goal of providing flexible and regional access for students. Its mission is to act collectively and leverage resources in ways that are driven by Jesuit values and responsive to community needs, fostering measurable impact in schools and communities.

Today, the University of San Francisco School of Education is nationally recognized for its commitment to diversity, equity, and social justice. With 65% of students and 76% of full-time faculty identifying as people of color, and nearly half of students being first-generation college graduates, the School fosters an inclusive and mission-driven learning environment. Faculty are deeply engaged in community partnerships, maintaining over 90 collaborations with school districts across the Bay Area to support teacher and counselor residencies and credential programs. The School's academic excellence is reflected in its strong student outcomes, including a 91% first-year retention rate for master's students and an 88% four-year graduation rate in 2024. The School of Education combines rigorous scholarship with real-world impact, preparing educators, counselors, and leaders as scholar-practitioners who advance justice and equity in education locally and globally. The School has played a significant role in USF's attainment of R2 status.

The SOE serves exceptionally talented students and prepares them to pursue careers as teachers, educational administrators, clinicians, social service professionals, educational research scientists, and more. Located in the heart of San Francisco, the School offers 20 master's and doctoral programs, as well as credential and certificate programs, across five departments:

- [Counseling Psychology](#)
- [Leadership Studies](#)
- [International and Multicultural Education](#)
- [Learning and Instruction](#)
- [Teacher Education](#)

For more details on the academic offerings and centers of the SOE, please see Appendix A.

The SOE is known for providing an excellent and academically rigorous education, with classes that focus upon a commitment to diversity and social justice. With a small faculty/student ratio, student success is

taken seriously, all within the diverse cultural backdrop of the San Francisco Bay Area. To learn more, visit <https://www.usfca.edu/education>.

ROLE OF THE DEAN

The Dean is the chief academic and administrative officer of the SOE. Reporting directly to the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dr. Eileen Fung, they will oversee a budget of approximately \$14.6 million and will manage (FY25) 37 unionized faculty members, 94 part-time adjunct faculty, and 26 staff members, currently including one Associate and one Assistant Dean. The Dean will also be responsible for the design, development, and delivery of 20 academic programs in over 5 campuses and cities.

The Dean is a member of the Provost's Council and the President's Leadership Team, a larger university management organization composed of Deans, Vice Provosts, Vice Presidents, and the Provost and President. The new Dean will also interface externally with a range of stakeholders, including a wide array of national educational leaders and other professional associations and school-based groups.

As USF is largely a [collective bargaining institution](#), the Dean plays a significant role in guiding and mentoring faculty. They will work closely with the current Associate and Assistant Dean on matters related to faculty evaluation and will also serve as an external face for the School, responsible for external relations and marketing, fundraising, and the building of educational partnerships.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE DEAN

To be successful in this dynamic environment, the Dean will need to be a visible, student-centered, collaborative leader with a thorough understanding of enrollment trends, financial stewardship, shared governance, and the unique mission-driven culture of the School of Education. They will address the following opportunities and challenges:

Continue to provide visionary and strategic leadership that better positions the School as a national as well as local leader while fostering innovation and academic excellence

The incoming Dean will build on the previous Dean's work by developing a bold, strategic vision that further elevates the School of Education's social justice profile and impact. This means moving beyond internal stabilization toward external visibility, including upgrading facilities, integrating technology, and fostering innovation that generates new lines of community-engaged, justice-oriented research and practice while deepening existing work in ways that attract new students and enhance the experience for those already enrolled. The Dean will advocate for the School within university leadership, ensuring alignment with mission while amplifying the School's distinct identity as a graduate-only, justice-centered institution. The Dean will also be tasked to lead the School through upcoming accreditation reviews, including the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing and the California Board of Behavioral Sciences, ensuring compliance, quality, and continuous improvement across all programs. Overall, the Dean will position the School as a national exemplar in education and mental health by leveraging its research, community engagement, and student-centered ethos to shape the future of the field.

Raise funds and expand resources to ensure the School is able to reach its full potential

The Dean will continue the School's strong trajectory in fundraising and financial stewardship, emphasizing the importance of meeting its mission to ensure that access and equity remain central. Building on recent successes, the Dean will cultivate donor relationships, secure external funding, and expand scholarship opportunities to reduce financial barriers for students. At the same time, this leader must strike a balance between fiscal responsibility and the wider goals of the university, as well as the School's commitment to growth and innovation in educational research and practice, which centers on the strengths and needs of the communities most impacted by injustice. The Dean will pair financial acumen with operational transparency, sustaining the School's reputation as one of USF's strongest contributors while supporting its people and programs.

Lead efforts that strengthen the School's programs and ensure student success

Building on record-high enrollment, the Dean will champion proactive advising and persistence practices that help students thrive from admission to graduation. With nearly 30% of the student body enrolled at the branch campuses, the Dean will work to ensure programming meets the needs of all learners and remains robust across all locations. They will lead a comprehensive enrollment and retention strategy by ensuring the School and its programming reflect the realities of today's shifting higher education landscape while maintaining its commitment to humanizing pedagogy. This work must prioritize consistent support and integration across locations, ensuring technology upgrades and classroom enhancements that meet student expectations. This commitment involves ensuring student success as well as faculty and staff sustainability, so that departments provide every student with academic and personal support throughout their journey.

Preserve the School's collaborative culture while ensuring continued operational stability and transparency

The next Dean will safeguard the School's culture, which is characterized by being highly collaborative, supportive, inclusive, and deeply rooted in Jesuit and social justice values, while strengthening operational systems and processes. This entails maintaining transparency in decision-making by engaging with community voices and upholding the collective vision that has defined the School's success. In a time of structural change, the Dean must balance sustainability with care for faculty and staff, who are governed by multiple collective bargaining agreements, addressing workload challenges and morale while advocating for and generating new resources. By listening deeply and fostering trust across departments and campuses, this leader will preserve the School's commitment to justice, its collaborative spirit, and its unwavering focus on the whole person.

Expand strategic partnerships and elevate the School's local and national profile

The Dean will deepen and scale partnerships that strengthen enrollment pipelines and amplify the School's influence. This includes expanding partnerships with Bay Area school districts, healthcare systems, and private entities to create local impact and ensure enrollment flows through cohort models, residencies, internships, and more. At the same time, the Dean will leverage the School's geographic advantage and community-engaged programs to raise its profile across the Bay Area and nationally, therefore connecting faculty scholarship, alumni networks, the Center for Humanizing Education and Research, the Center for Community Counseling and Wellness, and others to broader conversations about equity and workforce development in education and counseling. By cultivating mission-driven partnerships, the next Dean will position the School as a trusted partner and a leading voice in education research and leadership across the Bay Area and beyond.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The university seeks a well-rounded academic leader with a distinctive record of organizational building and change management as its next Dean. The ideal candidate will have prior administrative experience in the areas of program development, faculty and staff administration, and budget planning, at the Associate Dean or Chair of a large department level or above. In addition, the successful candidate should possess:

- An understanding and commitment to the Vision, Mission and Values of the university and its Jesuit Catholic heritage and social justice mission (<https://www.usfca.edu/about-usf/who-we-are/vision-mission>) as well as the Vision, Mission and Values of the School of Education (<https://www.usfca.edu/education/our-difference/our-vision>).
- Established record of superior university teaching, exemplary scholarship and distinguished university, professional, and community/public service.
- Administrative leadership, vision, and a record of increasing experience and responsibilities in a diverse, higher education environment characterized by collegial management, mentorship, inclusive decision-making, and effective communication skills.
- Ability to create and nurture a supportive environment that utilizes transparent processes and relationship building to foster intellectual vitality, creativity, student learning, staff development and outstanding teaching, research, and service.
- Demonstrated commitment to access, equity, social justice, and diversity in all its forms; experience in supporting, promoting and implementing the learning opportunities offered by a highly diverse community.
- Demonstrated ability to foster relationships with urban school districts and agencies.
- Experience and commitment to fostering international perspectives in the curriculum and promoting global experiences for students, faculty, and staff.
- Ability to effectively represent the School of Education while working in collaboration and building partnerships with the University community and San Francisco Bay Area stakeholders.

- An understanding of leadership within a unionized higher education environment.
- Knowledge of current issues in K-12 and higher education, counseling in schools and community centers, community relations/partnerships and appreciation of innovative technologies and delivery systems.
- Demonstrated ability to support faculty in obtaining grants and contracts and to institutional and School fund-raising.

LOCATION

The position will be housed in San Francisco, CA on the School's main campus located on a 55-acre setting between the Presidio and Golden Gate Park. Part of the main campus is on Lone Mountain, one of San Francisco's major geographical features. San Francisco is one of the top tourist destinations in the world, ranking 35th out of the 100 most visited cities worldwide. It is renowned for its cool summers, fog, steep rolling hills, eclectic mix of architecture, and landmarks including the Golden Gate Bridge, cable cars, Alcatraz Island, and its Chinatown, among many other attractions. The city is also a primary banking and finance center, with more than 30 international financial institutions. San Francisco ranks 18th in the world's top-producing cities and 12th in the top twenty global financial centers. USF was San Francisco's first university and the city provides USF students with an extended classroom - interning and volunteering from City Hall to Fortune 500 companies to Silicon Valley startups; serving schools and nonprofits; immersing themselves in the art, culture, adventure, and natural beauty of the City by the Bay.

COMPENSATION

The anticipated salary range for this position is \$225,000 and \$275,000 annually, commensurate with related experience and qualifications.

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-san-francisco-school-education/dean>. Electronic submission of materials is required.

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Isaacson, Miller

The University of San Francisco is a Jesuit Catholic University founded in 1855 to educate leaders who will fashion a more humane and just world. Candidates should demonstrate a commitment to working in a culturally diverse environment and to contributing to the mission of the University.

USF is an Equal Opportunity Employer dedicated to affirmative action and workforce diversity.

The University provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities upon request.

This document has been prepared based on the information provided by the University of San Francisco, School of Education. 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 San Francisco, School of Education, would supersede any conflicting information in this document.

APPENDIX A

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS AND CENTERS

The Department of Counseling Psychology prepares professionals for careers in schools and a wide range of mental health settings. The department currently serves approximately 600 students and offers two master's programs, which include:

- Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology with a concentration in Marriage and Family Therapy, which prepares therapists to address the varied mental health needs of children, adults, and families, including those with severe mental illnesses.
- Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology with a concentration in School Counseling (with a Pupil Personnel Services Credential), which prepares counselors to address the social, cultural, emotional, and academic needs of children and youth in school settings.

The Department of International and Multicultural Education is committed to promoting educational scholarship and research based on principles of equity and social justice. Its offerings address the realities of urban schooling in the United States and maintain a global focus by examining the impact of globalization and immigration on education worldwide. These programs serve approximately 160 students and include:

- Master of Arts in Human Rights and Educational Justice, the only such program in the nation focusing on global and local educational issues and movements
- Master of Arts in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), which is a practitioner-oriented degree. The program combines coverage of linguistic theory with practical application, providing students with the knowledge and strategies necessary to be effective ESOL teachers.
- Doctoral Degree (Ed.D.) in International and Multicultural Education (IME), which is designed for education professionals, and offers optional concentrations in (1) Human Rights Education; (2) Language and Culture; and/or (3) Racial Justice and Education.

The Department of Leadership Studies offers certificate, credential, master's (M.A.), and doctoral (Ed.D.) degree programs to approximately 160 students in four program areas that explore the work of leadership in and transformation of educational organizations:

- Catholic Educational Leadership (CEL), which offers an innovative Hyflex scholarly educational certificate, master's, and doctoral program for Catholic school personnel and prepares a corps of highly competent and knowledgeable educators for Catholic schools.
- Organization and Leadership (O&L), which offers a unique program for working professionals interested in developing their leadership and organization capacities through credential, master's (M.A.) and a doctoral (Ed.D.) degree program.
- Master of Arts in Higher Education Student Affairs combines a rigorous academic curriculum with practicum experiences in various areas of student life.
- Preliminary Administrative Services Credential can be combined with the Master's or Doctor of Education in O&L. This program is designed to prepare future principals, assistant principals,

teacher leaders, curriculum coaches, specialists, and district administrators for the demands of school leadership.

The Department of Learning and Instruction prepares graduates to contribute to, and make use of, an ever-changing knowledge base in learning and instruction. The department serves approximately 100 students and offers:

- Master of Arts in Educational Technology, providing educators with innovative ways to integrate technology with sound pedagogical practice
- Master of Arts in Special Education with a Mild/Moderate Education Specialist Credential, which is designed to prepare interns for special education careers in diverse, urban schools. Candidates earn Preliminary Teaching credentials and master's degrees while working as paid intern teachers in Bay Area schools.
- Learning and Instruction Doctoral Program (Ed.D.), which applies research and educational psychology to diverse learning environments. It is designed to give students a deep understanding of educational psychology, as well as learning, teaching, and instructional design research to help create supportive and engaging learning environments.

The Department of Teacher Education programs reflect a special focus on philosophical inquiry, social justice and concern for individual differences in the development of children. The department serves approximately 200 students and offers:

- Preliminary California Multiple or Single Subject Teaching Credential Program with a Master of Arts degree. Designed primarily to prepare students as classroom instructors, the programs train educators dedicated to social justice and pursuit of the common good.

Together with its program offerings, the School of Education also operates a variety of centers and institutes that provide vehicles for faculty and students to work in the community on a wide range of outreach projects. These centers include:

The Center for Humanizing Education and Research (C-HER) promotes the generation, application, and diffusion of high quality methodologically rigorous research that is conducted in solidarity with local and global communities to address pressing issues through humanizing frameworks.

The McGrath Institute for Jesuit Catholic Education supports Catholic education around the world and promotes an engagement with the social reality and a broad vision of a hope-filled world. Utilizing Jesuit pedagogy and Ignatian spirituality, Jesuit Education labors in the work of a liberating education. The McGrath Institute is administered by the Dean and a Program Director.

The College Access Programs (CAP) works with underserved middle and high school students in the San Francisco Bay Area. CAP collaborates with institutional and community partners to efficiently serve students and create a safety net of caring adults to help students navigate the educational and social landscapes.

Center for Community Counseling and Wellness (CCCW) provides free to low-cost mental health services to adults in the San Francisco community while training the next generation of social justice therapists. The center has over 80 community partnerships and serves individuals with high needs and socioeconomic barriers who may not have access to mental health support otherwise.