



Hamilton Family Distinguished Professorship in Food and Nutrition
Washington University in St. Louis, Bursky School of Public Health
St. Louis, Missouri

THE SEARCH

The Andrew M. and Jane M. Bursky School of Public Health at Washington University in St. Louis invites applications and nominations for the Hamilton Family Distinguished Professorship in Food and Nutrition, an endowed position for a field-leading scholar whose work advances understanding of the relationships among food systems, nutrition, and population health.

Located within the newly established Bursky School of Public Health, this endowed professorship offers a distinctive opportunity for an accomplished scholar to contribute to a school experiencing rapid growth in education, research and impact. Launched in January 2025 under the leadership of Internationally recognized public health scientist and author, Dr. Sandro Galea, the School is the University's first new school in more than a century. Its growth and impact are being accelerated in part by a landmark \$200 million philanthropic commitment, the largest gift in the University's history.

The Hamilton Family Distinguished Professor in Food and Nutrition will be a senior scholar whose work advances the field at the intersection of food systems, nutrition, and population health. This individual will bring: a distinguished research portfolio with national and international standing, along with a proven track record of convening cross-disciplinary and cross-sector collaborators; and the vision and academic stature to help build a distinctive, interdisciplinary hub of scholarship that bridges nutrition science, agricultural systems, environmental health, and policy, under the [Food and Agriculture Research Mission \(FARM\)](#). The successful candidate will also contribute to teaching and mentoring across the School's MPH, doctoral, and postdoctoral programs. By combining a rigorous research agenda with meaningful engagement across academia, government, industry, and communities, this faculty member will strengthen WashU's position as a leading center of knowledge and innovation in this evolving field.

Washington University in St. Louis has engaged Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist with this recruitment. Inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed in confidence to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS

Founded in 1853, Washington University (WashU) is nationally and internationally renowned for fostering excellence and creativity in teaching, research, scholarship, patient care, and service to society. WashU invests in the highest quality of both undergraduate and graduate education and has established

distinctive programs in nine schools: [Arts & Sciences](#), [Brown School](#) (Social Work), [Bursky School of Public Health](#), [McKelvey School of Engineering](#), [Olin Business School](#), [Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts](#), [School of Continuing & Professional Studies](#), [School of Law](#), and [School of Medicine](#). WashU educates approximately 15,000 full-time students, divided almost equally between undergraduate and graduate/professional students. Over 90 fields of study lead to bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in a broad spectrum of traditional and interdisciplinary fields. WashU spans two main campuses – the [Danforth Campus](#) and the [Medical Campus](#).

Washington University in St. Louis is guided by Here and Next, Chancellor [Andrew Martin](#)'s strategic vision to strengthen the university's academic distinction, expand access to its world-class educational experience, and deepen its partnerships and impact across the St. Louis region. As one of the nation's leading research universities, WashU fosters interdisciplinary collaboration to address complex societal challenges and translate discovery into real-world impact. Located within one of the country's most dynamic research and innovation ecosystems, WashU serves as both an academic and economic anchor for the St. Louis region. The university brings together faculty, students, clinicians, community partners, industry, philanthropy, and government to advance research, education, and innovation that improve health and well-being locally and globally.

WashU's FY 2025 operating revenues exceeded \$5.2 billion, and its operating expenses were \$4.9 billion. As of June 30, 2025, the market value of the university's endowment was \$14 billion. The current fundraising and engagement campaign, [With You: The WashU Campaign](#), aims to support healthier lives, greater access, and flourishing communities, and produce future-ready leaders through innovative programs. To date the campaign has raised over \$3 billion of its \$5 billion goal.

THE BURSKY SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Since its launch in January 2025, the [Andrew M. and Jane M. Bursky School of Public Health](#) demonstrates a significant moment of institutional growth and WashU's deepened commitment to advancing population health. Established in response to the growing complexity of global health challenges and informed by lessons of the COVID-19 pandemic, the School unifies decades of public health-related work across the university into a cohesive, forward-looking enterprise.

Guided by a vision to ensure all people can live healthier, more fulfilling lives, the School advances health and well-being through interdisciplinary population health science, education, and meaningful local and global impact. It brings together a robust and growing faculty with expertise spanning the biological, clinical, social, behavioral, environmental, and policy sciences and works collaboratively across Washington University to address the complex factors that shape health. Drawing on partnerships with WashU Medicine, the Brown School, and disciplines including engineering, business, and the social sciences, the School integrates diverse perspectives to generate knowledge and translate it into solutions that improve population health and strengthen communities. The School's [first five-year strategic plan](#) focuses on strengthening faculty and student excellence, advancing interdisciplinary research networks, and deepening local and global partnerships.

Despite its recent founding, the School has quickly gained momentum by building on a broad base of public health research and a university-wide network of investigators. By fall 2025, the School had grown to include more than 63 primary faculty, 121 secondary faculty, 100 staff, and nearly 200 students, reflecting rapid early scale and strong demand. With strengths in areas such as global health, implementation science, health policy, planetary health, and health communication, it serves as a focal point for interdisciplinary collaboration and innovation. Its [academic portfolio](#) includes a Master of Public Health with five concentrations, a PhD in Public Health Sciences with specialized tracks, multiple dual-degree programs across disciplines such as business, law, medicine, and social work, and an undergraduate major and minor in Public Health and Society, preparing students to address complex public health challenges while strengthening research capacity and expanding partnerships locally, nationally, and globally.

Since May 2026, the pace of growth has been accelerated by a landmark [\\$200 million philanthropic commitment from the Bursky Family Foundation](#), the largest gift in Washington University's history, enabling expansion of faculty hiring, student support, and research initiatives. This investment supports the development of infrastructure to translate public health evidence into action.

Leadership

[Sandro Galea, MD, DrPH](#), is the Margaret C. Ryan Dean, the Eugene S. and Constance Kahn Distinguished Professor in Public Health, of the Andrew M. and Jane M. Bursky School of Public Health and Vice Provost for Interdisciplinary Initiatives at WashU.

A physician, epidemiologist, and widely cited scholar, Galea's work centers on the social and behavioral determinants of health, particularly trauma and population health. He previously served for a decade as dean of the Boston University School of Public Health, where he led significant growth in academic programs and research. He's also held senior leadership roles at Columbia University, the University of Michigan, and the New York Academy of Medicine. He is an elected member of the National Academy of Medicine and editor-in-chief of *JAMA Health Forum*.

[Morven McLean, PhD](#), is Associate Dean of Innovation and Professor of Practice in Public Health at the Bursky School of Public Health at Washington University in St. Louis. She also serves as the founding director of FARM, one of the School's flagship research initiatives.

An internationally recognized expert in food systems, agriculture, and public health, McLean brings extensive experience leading global initiatives at the intersection of nutrition, agriculture, and policy. Her work has focused on advancing sustainable food systems, improving nutrition security, and strengthening partnerships across sectors to drive measurable improvements in population and planetary health.

Research

Research at the WashU Bursky School of Public Health is grounded in a commitment to advancing interdisciplinary, impactful scholarship that addresses the conditions shaping health across populations. The School organizes this work through the Office of Innovation's [research networks](#), which serve as the foundation for its research enterprise. Designed to catalyze collaborative, interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral research, the networks bring together faculty, staff, students, and external partners to translate innovation that addresses critical public health priorities into practice and policy.

Among these, the [Food and Agriculture Research Mission \(FARM\)](#) anchors the School's work at the intersection of food systems, agriculture, and public health. FARM focuses on advancing interdisciplinary research and partnerships that generate scalable, evidence-based solutions to improve nutrition, environmental sustainability, and population health outcomes.

Complementing FARM, the School's broader research ecosystem includes the [Dissemination and Implementation Science Innovation Research Network \(DISIRN\)](#), [Global Health Futures](#), the [Health Communication Collaborative](#), [Policy and Structural Solutions \(PS2\)](#), and [Solutions through Planetary Health Research \(SPHERE\)](#). Additional centers and labs, including the [Center for Diabetes Translation Research \(CDTR\)](#), the [E3 Nutrition Lab](#), and the [Health Design and Impact Lab](#), further strengthen the School's capacity to advance research aligned with its food and agriculture agenda and broader public health priorities.

Together, these networks reflect the School's strategy to build a coordinated research ecosystem that spans disciplines and sectors, positioning WashU to lead in emerging areas of public health science while driving meaningful improvements in population health.

FARM

The Food and Agriculture Research Mission (FARM) launched in 2025 to advance scholarship at the intersection of public health, food systems, and agriculture. FARM is guided by a mission to catalyze interdisciplinary research and multisector partnerships that generate innovative, evidence-based solutions for healthier communities and a healthier planet, with a broader ambition to position WashU as a leading food systems hub in the Midwest.

The initiative is organized around four core research themes: sustainable food systems, rural health, governance and food policy, and technology for improved food systems. These areas address critical issues ranging from nutrition and food security to chronic disease, environmental sustainability, and supply chain systems, and build on WashU's strengths across public health, medicine, engineering, and policy, as well as its connections to the St. Louis regional agriculture and ag-tech ecosystem.

THE HAMILTON FAMILY DISTINGUISHED PROFESSORSHIP

The Hamilton Family Distinguished Professor will serve as both a magnet and catalyst for interdisciplinary collaboration, advancing research that bridges the biological, environmental, social, and policy dimensions of food and nutrition. The scholar will contribute to the school's growing research enterprise, including collaboration with FARM, and will engage in community-centered research, forging partnerships with organizations in St. Louis and beyond. The scholar will also train the next generation of public health professionals to recognize the central role of food in sustainable health outcomes.

The successful candidate will maintain an internationally recognized research program focused on the role of food and nutrition in shaping health across the life course and across diverse populations. Areas of scholarship may include, but are not limited to:

- Nutrition and chronic disease prevention
- Food systems and population health
- Diet quality, food environments, and health equity
- Food policy and governance
- Agricultural systems and nutrition outcomes
- Food systems innovation and translation

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

Candidates should have a doctoral degree in nutrition, public health, food systems, agriculture, or a related field, along with a distinguished record of scholarship, sustained external funding, and demonstrated leadership in interdisciplinary research.

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

As the second-largest employer in the metropolitan area and with an [economic impact that totals \\$9.3 billion](#), WashU is an essential institution for St. Louis, and the city's prosperity is essential to WashU. The university has provided innovative leadership, and the entire region counts on the university as a key partner for its success. The St. Louis region boasts a remarkable concentration of world-class research institutions and nationally ranked accelerator programs, making it a magnet for entrepreneurship in both medical and plant sciences. The region's innovation district boasts [Cortex](#), a hub that creates inclusive economic growth in St. Louis by uniting diverse innovators, spaces, and organizations to transform ideas into solutions. The city's rapidly evolving startup community continues to attract new enterprises, talent, and investment, fueled by its moderate cost of living and access to cutting-edge lab space. This unique combination of affordability, advanced infrastructure, and proximity to farmland positions St. Louis as an ideal location for solving critical challenges in healthcare and agriculture.

Beyond its professional appeal, St. Louis offers a high quality of life, consistently ranked among the [most beautiful and affordable places](#) to live and build a career. Its eclectic neighborhoods, rich cultural scene, and vibrant culinary and entertainment offerings provide the perfect blend of big-city excitement and small-town charm. The St. Louis region has excellent schools and offers many opportunities to watch or participate in a wide range of sports, recreational activities, and cultural events. St. Louis is highly accessible, and there are more free, world-class attractions in the city than any place in the U.S. outside of Washington, D.C., largely due to the area's active philanthropic community. Newcomers are often pleasantly surprised by the city's character and livability, making it not only a place to work and innovate but also a place to thrive.

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/washington-university-st-louis-school-public-health/hamilton-distinguished>

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Washington University encourages and gives full consideration to all applicants for admission, financial aid, and employment. The university does not discriminate in access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, veteran status, disability or genetic information.

It is the policy of the university to: (1) provide equal employment opportunity to all job applicants and employees; (2) administer recruiting, hiring, compensation and benefit practices, training, upgrading and promotion procedures, transfers and terminations of employment without discrimination because of race, color, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin or ancestry, citizenship, veteran status, disability or genetic information; (3) provide a workplace free from harassment based on any of the foregoing factors; and (4) encourage the hiring of minorities, women, disabled individuals, Vietnam era veterans and disabled veterans.

This document has been prepared based on the information provided by Washington University in St. Louis, Bursky 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 Washington University in St. Louis, Bursky School of Public Health would supersede any conflicting information in this document.