



Chair, Department of Neurosurgery
University of Oklahoma College of Medicine and OU Health
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

THE SEARCH

The University of Oklahoma College of Medicine (College) and OU Health seek an accomplished academic neurosurgical leader to serve as Chair of the Department of Neurosurgery and Clinical Service Chief of Neurosurgery in the health system. This is an opportunity to lead Oklahoma's only academic neurosurgery department at a pivotal moment in its evolution and help define its future trajectory in clinical care, education, and research.

Over the past several years, the department has experienced significant growth, expanding its faculty, strengthening clinical programs, building a nationally competitive research program, and establishing itself as Oklahoma's destination for highly specialized neurosurgical care. Today, the department combines a broad and increasingly sophisticated clinical platform, a well-regarded ACGME-accredited Neurological Surgery Residency Program, an ACGME-accredited Pediatric Neurosurgery Fellowship program, a CAST-Certified Endovascular Fellowship Program, and a research enterprise that ranks among the nation's leading neurosurgery departments in NIH funding. The Department also oversees OU's Neuroscience graduate program.

The next Chair will inherit a robust foundation and a department with significant momentum. Having successfully recruited vibrant faculty and built strength across its clinical, educational, and research missions, the department is now positioned for a new phase of development. The Chair will have the opportunity to cultivate the next generation of academic neurosurgical leaders, elevate the national profile of the department and its faculty, mature unique clinical programs, strengthen interdisciplinary collaborations, and build upon an already impressive trajectory to further advance the department's impact and reputation.

This opportunity is further amplified by the University's ambitious investment in research growth through [Project 200](#), a major faculty recruitment initiative that will bring approximately 200 new investigators to the University, including 150 across the Health Campus. Together, with strong alignment across the College, OU Health, and the broader neuroscience enterprise, these investments create an environment uniquely positioned to support continued growth, innovation, and academic excellence.

Applicants should hold an MD, DO, or equivalent terminal medical degree and be eligible for appointment at the associate or full professor level. The successful candidate will be an accomplished academic neurosurgeon with a record of excellence in leadership, clinical care, education, and scholarship. They will possess the strategic vision, operational sophistication, and collaborative leadership style required to guide the department through its next phase of growth and impact.

The University of Oklahoma College of Medicine and OU Health have 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.

UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA HEALTH CAMPUS

The [University of Oklahoma Health Campus](#) is one of the nation's few academic health centers to bring together seven health professions colleges, including [Medicine](#), [Allied Health](#), [Dentistry](#), [Nursing](#), [Pharmacy](#), [Public Health](#), and the [Graduate College](#). The campus is also home to major research and clinical enterprises, including the Harold Hamm Diabetes Center and the Stephenson Cancer Center.

With an annual budget of approximately \$900 million, more than 800 full-time faculty, 3,500 staff, nearly 4,000 students, and approximately 1,000 residents, fellows, and postdoctoral trainees, the Health Campus serves as the state's leading center for health professions education, biomedical research, and specialized patient care.

Under the leadership of Gary E. Raskob, PhD, Senior Vice President and Provost, and Ian F. Dunn, MD, Executive Dean of the College of Medicine, Chief Academic Officer, and Chief Physician Executive of OU Health, the institution is pursuing an ambitious growth agenda focused on expanding research capacity, recruiting high-impact investigators, and strengthening nationally recognized programs in neuroscience, cancer, diabetes and metabolic disease, and population health.

UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

The College includes nearly 1,350 faculty across campuses in Oklahoma City and Tulsa and supports 83 residency and fellowship programs, training approximately 766 residents and fellows annually. More than half remain in Oklahoma, reflecting the College's critical role in developing the state's physician workforce.

The College maintains the largest NIH-funded research portfolio in Oklahoma, with approximately \$72.3 million in annual support, and it is pursuing an ambitious agenda to expand research capacity, clinical trials, and national visibility. Institutional priorities include growth in extramural funding, recruitment of research-active faculty, and investment in strategic areas such as neuroscience, cancer, diabetes and metabolic disease, and population health. Supported by the state's largest biomedical research infrastructure, the College aims to further strengthen its national standing and research impact.

OU HEALTH

[OU Health](#) is Oklahoma's flagship academic health system, with approximately 10,000 employees and more than 1,300 physicians and advanced practice providers supporting over one million ambulatory visits annually. Led by President and CEO Jonathan Curtright, MBA, MHA, the health system includes:

- The [Oklahoma Children's Hospital](#), the state's only dedicated freestanding children's hospital
- The [University of Oklahoma Medical Center](#), the state's premier Level 1 Trauma Center
- The [OU Health Harold Hamm Diabetes Center](#)
- The [OU Health Stephenson Cancer Center](#), the state's only National Cancer Institute-designated cancer center
- The [OU Health Dean McGee Eye Institute](#)
- The [OU Health Edmond Medical Center](#)

OU Health maintains affiliations with the Oklahoma City Veterans Affairs Medical Center and regional partners across the state.

THE DEPARTMENT OF NEUROSURGERY

Established in 1946, the [Department of Neurosurgery](#) is among the oldest neurosurgical training programs in the United States. It has evolved into a multifaceted academic enterprise encompassing clinical care, education, and discovery, with 20 clinical faculty, four neuro-oncologists, seven dedicated basic science researchers, and 11 postdoctoral fellows and neuroscience graduate students.

A distinguishing feature of the department is its integrated structure, which brings together clinical neurosurgery, neuroscience graduate education, and basic and translational science research within a single department. This model creates unique opportunities for collaboration across the full spectrum of neuroscience, from laboratory discovery and translational investigation to clinical innovation and patient care.

Clinical Programs

The department provides comprehensive adult and pediatric neurosurgical care across the spectrum of neurological disease, including complex spine disorders, cerebrovascular and endovascular disease, skull base pathology, neuro-oncology, epilepsy, functional and movement disorders, pediatric neurosurgery, and neurotrauma. Faculty deliver highly specialized care through a statewide referral network anchored by OU Health University of Oklahoma Medical Center, Oklahoma Children's Hospital OU Health, the Oklahoma City VA Medical Center, Mercy Hospital, and affiliated clinical sites.

A hallmark of the department is its collaborative, multidisciplinary approach to patient care. Faculty work closely with colleagues in neurology, stroke, neuro-oncology, trauma, orthopedics, rehabilitation medicine, and pediatrics to provide coordinated care for patients with complex neurological disorders.

This includes participation in [OU's Comprehensive Stroke Center](#), a key component of the institution's broader neuroscience platform.

The department maintains a high-volume surgical practice, with annual case volume increasing from approximately 2,800 cases in 2023 to 5,400 cases in 2025. Significant growth has occurred across all major clinical programs, including cranial surgery (674 to 1,200 cases), spine surgery (651 to 1,441 cases), and pediatric neurosurgery (129 to 670 cases).

Trainees benefit from broad operative exposure across the department's clinical sites, with resident and fellow case volumes exceeding 5,000 annually, supplemented by additional experience in complex spine and peripheral nerve surgery.

Education

Education is a leading strength of the department. The ACGME-accredited Neurological Surgery Residency Program currently trains 14 residents and matriculates two residents annually. Through a model of progressive responsibility and autonomy, residents gain extensive experience across adult and pediatric neurosurgery, cerebrovascular disease, spine, neuro-oncology, trauma, critical care, functional neurosurgery, peripheral nerve surgery, and radiosurgery. The department plans to expand its residency complement from two to three residents annually, reflecting the strength and continued development of its training program.

The department sponsors an ACGME-accredited Pediatric Neurosurgery Fellowship and supports additional advanced training opportunities through a CAST and Society of Neurological Surgeons-approved Endovascular Surgical Fellowship, as well as focused training experiences in spinal surgery. Faculty are deeply invested in education, mentorship, and professional development, fostering an environment that emphasizes both clinical excellence and academic achievement.

Since its founding, the department has trained and graduated 76 neurosurgeons and continues to attract highly accomplished trainees interested in academic neurosurgery, research, and leadership. The department's educational platform also includes medical student education, sub-internships, and the Neuroscience PhD Program, creating opportunities for integration across clinical training, research, and doctoral education.

Educational programs include:

- [ACGME-Accredited Neurological Surgery Residency Program](#)
- [ACGME-Accredited Pediatric Neurosurgery Fellowship](#)
- [Medical Student Neurosurgery Education and Sub-Internships](#)
- [Neuroscience PhD Program](#)
- Neuroscience Research and Scholarly Training Opportunities

Research

The department's [research](#) activities span basic, translational, clinical, and outcomes-focused investigation and are supported by NIH-funded investigators, clinician-scientists, dedicated research faculty, postdoctoral researchers, neuroscience graduate students, and collaborative partnerships across the OU Health Campus.

Ranked #23 in the Blue Ridge Rankings in 2025, a particular strength of the department is its bench-to-bedside translational model, which integrates basic neuroscience, surgical innovation, clinical investigation, outcomes research, and quality improvement. Areas of research focus include neurodegenerative disease, brain aging and dementia, cerebrovascular disease, traumatic brain injury, spinal disorders, surgical innovation, clinical outcomes research, and translational neuroscience.

The Neuroscience PhD Program is housed within the Neurosurgery department, providing an uncommon level of integration between basic and clinical neuroscience. Faculty and trainees collaborate across laboratory, translational, and clinical settings, creating a highly interdisciplinary environment for discovery and innovation.

THE CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF NEUROSURGERY

The Chair reports to the Executive Dean of the College of Medicine and Chief Physician Executive of OU Health, [Dr. Ian Dunn](#), a nationally recognized neurosurgeon and former Chair of the Department of Neurosurgery.

As the department's senior academic and clinical leader, the Chair is responsible for the strategic, academic, operational, and financial leadership of the department across its missions of patient care, education, and research.

The Chair is supported by a leadership team that includes vice chairs for clinical affairs, education, and research; eight division chiefs; residency and fellowship program leaders; and a department administrator.

The Chair serves as a key leader within the broader neuroscience enterprise and works closely with colleagues across neurology, stroke, neuro-oncology, trauma, orthopedics, rehabilitation medicine, pediatrics, and related disciplines to advance shared clinical, educational, and research priorities.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE CHAIR

Guide the department's next phase of impact

The incoming Chair will be expected to lead the department through its next stage of evolution by translating a period of extraordinary growth into sustained academic, clinical, and research impact. Having assembled a strong faculty and expanded expertise across multiple subspecialties, the department is well-

positioned to further integrate clinical programs, align recruitment and investments with strategic priorities, strengthen operational infrastructure, and ensure resources support continued excellence across all missions. Working in close partnership with the College and OU Health leadership, the Chair will help transform a department with significant momentum into one defined by enduring impact, national visibility, and organizational maturity.

Develop faculty and future leaders

Having recruited strong faculty across its clinical, educational, and research missions, the department is entering a new phase of development. The next Chair will have the opportunity to cultivate a predominantly early and mid-career faculty into nationally recognized leaders through thoughtful mentorship, strategic career development, leadership opportunities, and support for academic advancement. The opportunity now is not simply to grow the faculty, but to cultivate a generation of leaders whose achievements further distinguish the department nationally.

Advance research and neuroscience enterprise

The Chair will leverage a strong foundation of funded investigators, dedicated research faculty, and institutional investment to further strengthen the department's research enterprise. The next Chair will have the opportunity to enhance NIH funding, recruit and support clinician-scientists, expand translational neuroscience initiatives, and build upon the department's unique integration of clinical neurosurgery, neuroscience research, and doctoral training. These efforts will advance discovery, strengthen interdisciplinary collaboration, and elevate the department's academic impact and national reputation. Importantly, a key goal of the University of Oklahoma's "Lead On" strategic plan is the establishment of the neuroscience institute, in which the next Chair will have a critical influence.

Strengthen education and training excellence

The Chair will be charged with further elevating a residency program that has demonstrated significant momentum and is supported by a broad clinical training environment, engaged faculty mentorship, and growing academic opportunities. The next Chair will have the opportunity to enhance resident scholarship, strengthen the national profile of the department's training programs, and leverage a distinctive educational platform that integrates residency, fellowship, and neuroscience doctoral education to attract and develop the next generation of academic neurosurgical leaders.

Expand clinical reach and programmatic excellence

The incoming leader will capitalize on the department's clinical depth, statewide reputation, and broad referral base to expand access to highly specialized neurosurgical care across Oklahoma and the surrounding region. Opportunities include strengthening referral pathways, enhancing the department's presence in Tulsa and other strategic markets, and further establishing OU as the destination for complex neurosurgical care throughout the region.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The ideal candidate will bring many of the following experiences, skills, and qualities:

- MD, DO, or equivalent terminal medical degree with board certification in Neurological Surgery; eligibility for medical licensure in Oklahoma; and credentials sufficient for appointment as associate professor or professor at the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine.
- Distinguished record of clinical excellence, scholarly achievement, and leadership in academic neurosurgery, with a reputation for advancing programs in clinical care, research, education, or organized neurosurgery.
- Demonstrated success in a significant academic leadership role, such as chair, vice chair, division chief, program director, center director, or equivalent.
- Ability to develop and execute a strategic vision that advances clinical growth, academic distinction, operational excellence, and institutional impact.
- Experience leading complex clinical and academic enterprises, including aligning growth, resources, infrastructure, faculty recruitment, and strategic priorities within a multifaceted healthcare environment.
- Demonstrated success recruiting, mentoring, developing, and retaining faculty, trainees, and staff while fostering a collaborative, high-performing culture.
- Record of supporting and expanding research, education, and clinical innovation, including experience advancing interdisciplinary programs, neuroscience initiatives, and collaborations across clinical, research, and educational missions.
- Experience elevating the visibility, reputation, and impact of an academic department through program development, faculty recruitment, scholarship, and strategic partnerships.
- Ability to build productive partnerships across departments, disciplines, health systems, and institutional leadership while serving as an effective advocate for departmental priorities.
- Strong communication, relationship-building, and organizational leadership skills, with the ability to inspire confidence among faculty, trainees, staff, institutional leaders, and external partners.
- Personal qualities that include integrity, sound judgment, transparency, humility, resilience, accountability, and a commitment to excellence.

OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma's capital and the largest city in the state, anchors a growing metropolitan area of more than 1.5 million residents and offers a rare combination of momentum, livability, and affordability. The region enjoys a mild climate with abundant sunshine and long spring and fall seasons that support year-round outdoor activity, complemented by more than 75,000 acres of parks and trails and the nationally recognized Oklahoma River corridor for rowing, kayaking, cycling, and major sporting events.

Over the past two decades, Oklahoma City has experienced sustained civic and economic transformation driven by long-term public investment and population growth. With a collaborative culture, expanding research and innovation ecosystem, and continued investment in infrastructure, Oklahoma City offers an appealing environment for academic leaders seeking both professional opportunity and livability.

For more information about Oklahoma City please visit:

<https://www.okcchamber.com/>
www.visitokc.com/
www.abetterlifeokc.com/

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the search process is complete. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/university-oklahoma-health-sciences-college-medicine/chair-department-neurosurgery>. Electronic submission of materials is strongly encouraged.

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The University, in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, genetic information, gender identity/expression (consistent with applicable law), age (40 or older), religion, 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.

This document has been prepared based on the information provided by University of Oklahoma College of Medicine and OU 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 OUHSC would supercede any conflicting information in this document.