Dean, Rice Business
Rice University
Houston, Texas

THE SEARCH

Rice University (Rice), one of the nation's premier private research universities, seeks a visionary, entrepreneurial, and collaborative leader to serve as the next Dean of Rice Business. Building on five decades of achievement, the Dean will guide Rice Business through its next phase of growth and distinction, advancing its reputation, expanding its impact, and positioning it among the world's leading business schools.

Located in the heart of Houston, Texas, Rice University is a member of the Association of American Universities (AAU) and is widely recognized for its excellence in research, teaching, and student outcomes. Founded in 1912, Rice enrolls approximately 9,000 undergraduate and graduate students and is home to more than 1,000 faculty members across eight schools. The University combines the strengths of a world-class research institution with a collaborative and student-centered culture. Under the leadership of President Reginald DesRoches and guided by its ambitious *Momentous* strategic plan, Rice is pursuing a bold vision to become the world's premier research and teaching university while expanding its global visibility, graduate education, and research enterprise. Houston provides a uniquely powerful environment for Rice. As the fourth-largest city in the United States and a global center for energy, healthcare, and international logistics and transportation, Houston offers unparalleled opportunities for industry engagement, innovation, and experiential learning.

Established in 1974, Rice Business has evolved into one of the nation's most respected and fastest-growing business schools. Today, the School comprises both the Jesse H. Jones Graduate School of Business and the recently established Virani Undergraduate School of Business, reflecting Rice's commitment to developing leaders at every stage of their careers. Guided by a mission to develop principled, innovative thought leaders who create impact in global communities, Rice Business has earned recognition for its academic quality, entrepreneurial orientation, and innovative approach to management education. Currently ranked in the top 20 MBA programs by the *Financial Times* and among the top 30 in *U.S. News & World Report*, Rice Business has established a reputation for excellence across its programs. Its part-time MBA ranks No. 11 in *U.S. News*, and the Executive MBA is No. 19. Rice Business has ranked No. 1 for Graduate Entrepreneurship in the U.S. for seven consecutive years in *The Princeton Review* and

Entrepreneur magazine. Rice Business's newly established BBA program, admitting its first class in 2021, is poised to be among the top undergraduate programs. Rice University is ranked No. 17 in *U.S. News & World Report's* National Universities rankings, with only four higher-ranked universities offering undergraduate business programs.

Building on Rice Business's remarkable momentum and continued ambition, the next Dean will provide strategic leadership at a defining moment for both the school and the university. Reporting to the Provost, Dr. Amy K. Dittmar, the Dean will articulate and advance a compelling vision aligned with Rice's institutional aspirations; strengthen the school's academic programs, research enterprise, and global reputation; and continue to foster a culture of excellence, innovation, collaboration, and belonging. The Dean will lead with transparency and be a persistent supporter of both faculty and staff while continuing to elevate the student experience. As the school's chief academic and external leader, the Dean will elevate Rice Business's profile, deepen engagement with alumni, donors, and industry partners, drive interdisciplinary collaboration across the university, and leverage Houston's dynamic business environment to create new opportunities for growth and impact.

ABOUT RICE UNIVERSITY

Rice University aspires to pathbreaking research, innovative pedagogy, and meaningful contributions to the betterment of humanity and the world. It seeks to fulfill this mission by cultivating a diverse community of learning and discovery that produces leaders across the spectrum of human endeavor. Rice opened its doors in 1912 and has consistently deepened and broadened its research, education, and service missions ever since.

The University's eight schools — Architecture, the George R. Brown School of Engineering and Computing, Humanities and Arts, Rice Business, the Shepherd School of Music, the Wiess School of Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, and the Susanne M. Glasscock School of Continuing Studies — attract a diverse group of highly talented students from around the country and internationally. Renowned faculty are devoted to excellence in research and teaching. Sponsored research awards totaled $258 million in FY2026; over the last decade, Rice has consistently outpaced federal budget increases for research spending. Over seventy percent of undergraduate students participate in research during their time at Rice, concomitant with Rice's dedication both to research and pedagogical excellence.

These activities take place on Rice's tree-lined campus, a designated arboretum, just a few miles from downtown Houston and adjacent to premier shopping and some of the city's most desirable neighborhoods. Rice is often recognized as having one of the most beautiful campuses in the country. The University has twelve residential undergraduate colleges and boasts excellent campus facilities and amenities, including a robust public art collection. Rice's community includes about 5,000 undergraduate and approximately 4,000 graduate students, over 1,000 faculty, and over 2,600 staff. Since 2020, the University has increased its undergraduate population by approximately 25 percent and expanded its faculty by approximately 20 percent while maintaining its hallmark low 6-to-1 student-to-faculty ratio and

close-knit residential college experience. This strategic growth includes expansion and a renewed focus on graduate education.

A mile from campus is the Ion District, Houston's innovation district, which Rice established and leads. The Ion building, managed by Rice, brings the city's entrepreneurial, corporate, and academic communities into a collaborative space that seeds novel ideas, supports partnership development, and accelerates the commercialization of research and company formation. The Ion has wide-ranging capabilities, including a prototyping lab, an investor studio, an accelerator hub, venture firms, and a network of corporate and academic partners, including Rice, all tailored for collaboration. The district also includes a branch of Greentown Labs, planned graduate housing, and the newly launched Ark initiative, which will bring faculty labs and entrepreneur-oriented wetlab facilities to the district in support of Rice's research commercialization efforts.

Rice also sits across the street from the Texas Medical Center (TMC), the largest medical complex in the world, and occupies part of Helix Park, a district within TMC that brings together top medical talent, cutting-edge research, and academic institutions to fuel innovation. This includes the Rice Biotech Launchpad, which enables Rice to tackle some of the most pressing healthcare challenges by working with partners at TMC to make therapeutics more affordable and advance biotech innovation.

Rice has an endowment of $8.5 billion, reported an operating budget of $1.08 billion, and maintains a triple-A credit rating. Nationally acclaimed by Kiplinger's as the "best value" in private higher education, in part due to the generous Rice Investment offering free tuition to families with incomes up to $200,000. Rice's resources allow it to offer an intellectually ambitious yet financially affordable education.

Momentous Strategic Plan

Rice University President Reginald DesRoches stated in his inaugural address that his vision for Rice is to be a premier research university with much greater visibility and with graduate programs of the same distinction as the undergraduate program, all while maintaining Rice's commitment to undergraduate education and the values of access and excellence. In 2022, he launched a comprehensive strategic planning process led by Provost Dittmar that engaged the entire Rice community. The result was a clear and compelling vision: to be the world's premier research and teaching university, delivering unparalleled personalized education and propelling breakthrough discoveries that transform lives and better humanity.

More information about the plan can be found at momentous.rice.edu.

Houston, Texas

The fourth-largest city in the U.S., Houston is the energy capital of the world, home to vibrant performing and visual arts communities, and boasts more Fortune 500 company headquarters than any city except New York and Chicago. Houston is one of the nation's largest and most dynamic metropolitan regions, with nearly 7.8 million residents across a 10-county area and an economy that would rank as the 22nd

largest in the world if it were an independent nation. The region is a global center for energy, health care, aerospace, manufacturing, trade, and innovation, supported by one of the nation's busiest ports and a robust international business community. Houston leads the United States in exports, shipping $180.9 billion in goods and commodities in 2024, and has attracted more than 1,400 corporate relocations, expansions, and startup operations since 2021. Renowned for its diversity, nearly one in four residents was born outside the United States, contributing to a vibrant multicultural environment.

For more information about Houston: https://wpb.houston.org/app/uploads/2025/09/Houston-Facts-2025-Publication.pdf

RICE BUSINESS

The Jesse H. Jones Graduate School of Business was established in 1974 through a gift from the Houston Endowment Inc. in honor of Houston civic and business leader Jesse Holman Jones. Established in 2024 through a transformative gift from Houston business and community leaders Farid and Asha Virani, the Virani Undergraduate School of Business was created to give Rice's rapidly growing undergraduate business program its own identity and dedicated support structure. Today, Rice Business encompasses both the Jones Graduate School and the Virani Undergraduate School of Business, with approximately 1,200 graduate students and 550 undergraduates. In 2025, Rice Business celebrated its 50th anniversary, marking five decades of growth in academic reputation, enrollment, faculty excellence, and impact. The School has experienced significant expansion in recent years, including the launch of new degree programs and the recent opening of a new 112,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art academic facility that will fuel its continued growth and evolution.

Rice Business offers a comprehensive portfolio of undergraduate, graduate, doctoral, and executive education programs designed to serve students and professionals at every stage of their careers. The School leverages its Houston location, a global hub for industry and commerce, to connect students and faculty with real-world business challenges and opportunities. The School has earned national and international recognition for its academic quality, entrepreneurial focus, and innovative approach to business education. Rice Business's commitment to experiential learning ensures that students have opportunities to apply classroom concepts through global programs, Experiential Labs, the Rice Business Green Belt, the Liu Idea Lab for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, the Finance Center, and the Center for Customer-Based Execution and Strategy. Further, the Rice Business Plan Competition, hosted by Rice Business and the Rice Alliance for Technology and Entrepreneurship, is widely recognized as the world's largest and richest student startup competition, providing graduate student entrepreneurs with the opportunity to pitch their ventures to investors, receive mentorship, and compete for more than $1.4M in prizes. For seven consecutive years, Rice has ranked No. 7 in the nation for graduate entrepreneurship education.

The Jones Graduate School offers a diverse suite of MBA options, including the Full-Time MBA, which enrolls 139 students. Additional MBA offerings include a Professional MBA, Executive MBA, Hybrid MBA, and MBA@Rice online program. The school also offers a Master of Accounting, an MD/MBA in partnership

with Baylor College of Medicine, and a Graduate Certificate in Healthcare Management. Rice Business also offers a Ph.D. program that currently enrolls 41 students with placements at top research universities. Many programs feature STEM-designated curricula. Executive Education offerings further extend Rice Business's impact by providing open-enrollment and customized programs for organizations and business leaders seeking professional development and organizational transformation. Executive Education serves more than 1,400 participants annually from 184 organizations.

The academic enterprise is supported by over 200 faculty members, of whom 65 are tenure-track. The faculty comprises accomplished scholars and experienced educators whose research informs business practice across disciplines, including accounting, finance, entrepreneurship, organizational behavior, strategy, marketing, operations management, analytics, and economics. Faculty members are deeply engaged in advancing knowledge through impactful research while maintaining strong connections to industry and public-sector organizations.

Rice Business benefits from the guidance of a highly engaged Board of Advisors, whose 40+ members provide strategic counsel, strengthen industry connections, and support the school's long-term priorities. Rice Business is proud of its 10,000 alumni, who represent 60 countries and stay connected through 12 regional alumni chapters across the United States. As of June 2025, Rice Business has an endowment of $460M and, in FY26, is projected to give $12.7M in scholarships. Rice Business has strong philanthropic support, securing $12M in 2024 and $41M in 2025, which includes a naming gift for the new Rice Business building.

ROLE OF THE DEAN

The Dean of Rice Business is the chief academic and administrative officer of the school, reporting directly to the Provost and serving as a key member of the University's academic leadership team. The Dean provides strategic leadership for all aspects of Rice Business. As the leader of both the Jones Graduate School of Business and the Virani Undergraduate School of Business, the Dean will steward a dynamic and growing academic enterprise while advancing the school's mission of developing principled, innovative thought leaders. The Dean oversees an operating budget of $120M and has an executive leadership team of 11 assistant and associate deans.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE DEAN

The successful candidate will focus on the following key opportunities and challenges:

Define and implement a strategic vision while raising the profile and reputation of Rice Business.

Rice Business stands at an important inflection point, with an opportunity to translate its many strengths into even broader visibility, influence, and impact. The next Dean will lead the school to greater national and international prominence, cementing its status as one of the nation's leading business schools and within at least the top 20 across the graduate program rankings and top 10 across the undergraduate

program rankings. Working closely with stakeholders across the school and university, the Dean will identify opportunities to expand Rice Business's global footprint, elevate the visibility of its research and thought leadership, and strengthen the school's competitive position in key areas, all while preserving a steadfast commitment to core strengths, including the full-time MBA program, undergraduate education, and a world-class Ph.D. program. The Dean will promote innovation and seize opportunities in growing areas such as artificial intelligence, data, analytics, and emerging technologies, leveraging interdisciplinary opportunities within Rice's vibrant academic landscape. Overall, the Dean will ensure that Rice Business remains at the forefront of future-focused educational programs that equip graduates to thrive in an increasingly complex global marketplace.

Advance research excellence and recruit and retain high-achieving faculty.

Rice Business has a distinguished reputation for academic excellence, supported by a faculty whose research is recognized globally. The Dean will foster an environment that advances scholarly achievement and faculty success. Over the past several years, the level of research activity at Rice Business has risen steadily, reaching a record high for total publications and per capita publications in 2025. The Dean should sustain and extend this trend. The Dean will also take a strategic approach to faculty recruitment and development, attracting accomplished and promising scholars whose work aligns with Rice Business's aspirations and areas of distinction. Equally important will be the retention and advancement of outstanding faculty at every career stage through meaningful mentorship, research support, leadership development opportunities, and transparent pathways for promotion and professional success.

Pursue innovative academic programs that respond to an evolving marketplace.

An important opportunity for Rice Business lies in the continued development of programs that respond to the dynamic business school market. This includes potential expansion of specialized master's programs that align with evolving industry needs and the university's distinctive strengths, particularly in engineering and computing. Areas such as energy, real estate, finance, artificial intelligence, analytics, fintech, healthcare management, entrepreneurship, sustainability, and technology commercialization may offer significant potential to attract new student populations and deepen engagement with industry partners seeking talent. The Dean will lead rigorous assessment and analysis of new program opportunities as well as a careful examination of existing programs to ensure they remain relevant and at the cutting edge. The portfolio of programs should also leverage Houston's position as a global center for innovation and the university's strengths in science, technology, and engineering.

Lead fundraising, external partnership development, and alumni outreach.

The Dean plays a pivotal role in advancing Rice Business's philanthropic ambitions and external relationships, working closely with the school's advancement and external relations teams. Rice Business has benefited from extremely strong support, including for its new Asha and Farid Virani Hall. The Dean will continue stewardship of a loyal community of alumni, friends, and supporters while cultivating new sources of philanthropy. The Dean will harness the school's location in Houston to deepen relationships

with prospective donors, industry leaders, and expand partnerships and civic enterprises to support the school's continued success. Serving as the school's chief ambassador, the Dean will maintain a visible presence in the region's business community while extending Rice Business's reach nationally and internationally.

Continue to expand and define the Virani Undergraduate School.

The Virani Undergraduate School of Business attracts incredibly talented students, and it has quickly become one of the highest-demand undergraduate programs at Rice. The program is still relatively new, and the next Dean will ensure its continued growth and development as well as define what differentiates the school and its long-term vision as it matures. The next dean will raise its visibility and boast its distinctive advantages to prospective students, which include signature engaged learning, career preparation and placement, and Rice's commitment to a personalized education for undergrads. As the Virani Undergraduate School of Business enters this next phase of development, the Dean will ensure that it is positioned as a premier destination for undergraduate business education and recognized nationally through rankings and other indicators for the unparalleled quality of business education.

Foster interdisciplinary collaborations with the other schools across Rice.

A defining strength of Rice University is its tight-knit community and ability to connect across the broader intellectual and innovation environment. As part of a world-class research institution with a top-25-ranked Engineering and Computing school, Rice Business is well-positioned to advance interdisciplinary collaboration to address complex challenges facing organizations and society. The next Dean will join a highly engaged group of fellow deans and academic leaders and work collaboratively to pursue opportunities for mutual benefit and innovation. The Dean will ensure that Rice Business is deeply connected to other schools and strengthen partnerships that cut across traditional academic boundaries, including the exploration of new interdisciplinary degree programs.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The search committee seeks candidates with the following experience and abilities:

- A doctorate or equivalent terminal degree and a record of distinguished scholarship and teaching that achieves the rank of a full professor with tenure at Rice Business;
- Commitment to supporting high-level research activity in a business school and the ability to promote initiatives for transformative scholarship and research;
- An experienced and creative administrator with a track record of impact; ability to guide cross-cutting strategic initiatives from ideation to implementation;
- A forward-looking, entrepreneurial, and decisive leader who can challenge conventional approaches and move an organization forward;
- High standards of excellence that will inform their leadership at Rice Business;

- Outstanding listening and communication skills; a proven collaborator who can work in partnership;
- Strong management, planning, and financial skills; ability to operate in a large and complex organization and to maintain focus on priorities;
- Demonstrated abilities in fundraising, soliciting, and stewarding individual donors and philanthropic partners;
- Ability to represent the university externally and engage alumni, business leaders, and others in the work of Rice Business;
- A demonstrated record of successful recruitment, retention, and development of faculty and staff;
- A deep dedication to students, with demonstrable commitment to student success, wellness, and outcomes;
- Evidence of working collaboratively with a senior leadership team; judicious and diplomatic temperament; ability to motivate and empower colleagues, combined with a courteous and respectful manner;
- Unimpeachable moral compass and the highest standard of ethics and 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/rice-university-jones-graduate-school-business-and-virani-undergraduate-school.

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This document has been prepared based on the information provided by Rice University. 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 Rice would supersede any conflicting information in this document.