SJSU SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY

Dean, Charles W. Davidson College of Engineering
San José State University

THE SEARCH

San José State University (SJSU) seeks a bold, innovative, and collaborative leader to serve as the next dean of the Charles W. Davidson College of Engineering.

Nestled in Silicon Valley, the global center of technology and innovation, the Charles W. Davidson College of Engineering is the largest and most comprehensive engineering college in the California State University system. The College prepares the next generation of engineers to tackle society's most complex problems through hands-on learning environments, applied research opportunities, and interdisciplinary projects with industry. SJSU's strong teaching mission is matched by its growing research enterprise, rising national visibility, expanded industry partnerships, and emerging doctoral programs. As a result, the College sits at the intersection of technological innovation, workforce development, and social mobility.

Nationally, the Charles W. Davidson College of Engineering ranks #7 among public universities and #15 overall (tied) for undergraduate engineering non-doctorate (US News & World Report). Its impact can also be felt across the region as the College deploys more engineering graduates to Silicon Valley technology companies than almost any other university in the United States. The dean will shape the future workforce for one of the world's most influential innovation ecosystems while advancing access and opportunity for thousands of students, many of whom come from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds.

The oldest public university on the West Coast, SJSU is a leader in serving California's students while advancing scholarly innovation and community engagement. Recognized as the #5 public university in the nation by the Wall Street Journal in 2026, SJSU's engineering programs also consistently earn top rankings among public universities. SJSU is committed to further expanding its research profile and developing new academic programs and collaborations with academic partners, nonprofit organizations, and corporations across Silicon Valley and beyond.

A list of desired qualifications and characteristics of the dean can be found at the conclusion of this document. All confidential applications, inquiries, and nominations should be directed to the parties listed at the conclusion of this document.

ABOUT CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY

The California State University (CSU) system spans the state of California and has an annual budget of more than $9.1 billion. It is not only the largest four-year university system in the nation, but also one of the most diverse and affordable. With 22 campuses, more than 470,000 students, and 63,000 faculty and staff, the CSU is a leader in high-quality, accessible, student-focused higher education. The CSU system provides opportunities for upward mobility to a broadly diverse student body and empowers those students to become leaders in the changing workforce.

To learn more about the California State University system, see https://www.calstate.edu/.

ABOUT SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY

Established in 1857 as the first public university in the West, San José State University (SJSU) has grown into a comprehensive university renowned for its strong emphasis on research, innovation, and industry connections as an essential partner in the economic, cultural, and social developments of Silicon Valley and California. SJSU has 2,120 faculty members who combine research, scholarship, and creative activity with industry or practical experience and create a problem-solving and entrepreneurial culture. The university is ranked in the top 200 nationally in research funding spending and 2nd in research productivity in the CSU system, with $95M in annual research expenditures in 2025.

SJSU is home to over 40,000 students comprising one of the most ethnically diverse student populations in the nation. As a top performer in student upward mobility, SJSU is a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI). 44% of SJSU students identify as first-generation. The university offers its students a broad range of undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral programs in 250 areas of study through the Charles W. Davidson College of Engineering, College of Graduate Studies, College of Health and Human Sciences, College of Humanities and the Arts, College of Information, Data and Society, College of Science, College of Social Sciences, Connie L. Lurie College of Education, and Lucas College and Graduate School of Business.

SJSU is preparing for its next comprehensive fundraising campaign to support its bold and ambitious strategic plan, Transformation 2030, which will ultimately serve as a direct investment in students, faculty, and staff. The strategic plan is undergirded by five goals: Engage and Educate, Excel and Lead, Grow and Thrive, Connect and Contribute, and Rebuild and Renew. Transformation 2030 serves as the blueprint to guide students, faculty, staff, alumni, and external stakeholders to actualize the university's position as a nationally prominent urban public university that builds on the dynamic, diverse, and engaged campus community and thriving region in the heart of the Silicon Valley to better position SJSU to have far-reaching and global impact.

ABOUT CHARLES W. DAVIDSON COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

The Charles W. Davidson College of Engineering is one of the nation's leading public engineering schools and serves as a critical talent pipeline for the region's innovation economy. Founded in 1946, the College has evolved into a dynamic hub for engineering education, applied research, entrepreneurship, and workforce development, preparing graduates to address complex challenges in areas ranging from artificial intelligence and cybersecurity to advanced manufacturing, semiconductors, biomedical technologies, transportation, and sustainability.

The College enrolls more than 6,100 undergraduate and graduate students and is supported by approximately 200 faculty and staff across 10 academic departments and programs representing 13 engineering disciplines. Its academic portfolio includes bachelor's and master's degree programs across the major engineering fields, with multiple programs accredited by ABET, as well as emerging opportunities in interdisciplinary and doctoral-level education. These programs include Aerospace Engineering, Aviation and Technology, Biomedical Engineering, Chemical and Materials Engineering, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Computer Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Industrial and Systems Engineering, Interdisciplinary Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, and Extended Studies.

The College's strength is rooted in its distinctive combination of academic excellence, access, and industry engagement. With a large percentage of its graduates entering Silicon Valley's workforce, students and faculty benefit from deep partnerships with leading technology companies, startups, public agencies, and research organizations throughout the region. The College is consistently recognized as one of the nation's top public engineering schools offering bachelor's and master's degrees; it ranks among the leading institutions for social mobility and workforce outcomes.

Research and innovation continue to be areas of significant momentum. SJSU is an R2 Carnegie Classification campus and one of the largest research universities in the country without PhDs. In 2026, SJSU is projecting over $100M in annual research expenditures, with 10% coming from the College, reflecting the institution's growing commitment to scholarship, innovation, and student-engaged research. Engineering faculty play a central role in this trajectory through externally funded research, industry-sponsored projects, interdisciplinary collaborations, and partnerships that connect discovery to real-world impact. In 2023, the College received $2.5 million from the National Science Foundation for S-STEM to empower low-income students to succeed in engineering and computer science.

The College is accredited by the Accreditation Board of Engineering and Technology, Inc. (ABET). The next program review will be in 2029-30.

ROLE OF THE DEAN

Reporting to Provost Vincent J. Del Casino Jr., the dean serves as the senior administrator for the Charles W. Davidson College of Engineering, providing leadership and direction for all the College's programs and 10 departments. The dean must work effectively with departments, faculty, staff, and other senior

administrators to define, articulate, and successfully implement an innovative and distinctive vision for the College and strive to grow as a national and international leader for engineering in the 21st century. The dean oversees a college budget of approximately $39 million.

As a member of the Provost's Academic Affairs Leadership Team, the dean brings the College's voice to university-wide decisions and is responsible for leadership of the College's strategic planning, student success efforts, accreditation, enrollment, academic program planning, assessment of curriculum and instruction, recruitment and evaluation of faculty and staff, professional development and research support, budgeting and management of funds, and the allocation and use of facilities. The dean serves as a strong advocate for the College within the University and the CSU system, representing the needs and perspectives of faculty, staff, and students to university leadership, and represents the College and SJSU in community and professional organizations while developing resources from internal and external sources.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE DEAN

In carrying out the responsibilities of the position, the next Dean of the Charles W. Davidson College of Engineering will leverage several key opportunities, outlined below.

Set a forward-looking vision that positions SJSU as a regional, national, and international leader in engineering education

The College is a pillar of engineering education in Silicon Valley and the nation. The dean will build on the current success and provide visionary leadership to advance the College further toward its central mission as a top-ranked program preparing students for careers in engineering. In alignment with the University's Transformation 2030 strategic plan, the dean will partner with faculty, staff, students, alumni, campus leaders, and external stakeholders to craft a strategic vision for the future of the Charles W. Davidson College of Engineering. This will require a dean who can be strategic and creative in navigating a resource-constrained environment and articulating a clear vision for the future of the College that considers student success, teaching, and research in a shifting landscape. The dean will advocate for the College and inspire and align stakeholders around a cohesive strategy that enables it to continue its growth and positions the University as a key player in graduating a substantial percentage of the region's engineering workforce, shaping the future of the engineering field for decades to come.

Build and deepen external partnerships that support and enhance the College's success

The dean will be a visible and influential leader both within the University and externally, cultivating meaningful connections and extending the College's reach and impact locally, across the CSU system, nationally, and globally. The dean will effectively broadcast the College's distinctive hands-on approach to education and scholarship, engage industry leaders, alumni, donors, and other community members to garner support and ensure the College stays at the cutting edge in planning and innovation. The dean will leverage the College's reputation to strengthen Silicon Valley's workforce, sustain existing

partnerships, and build new ones, creating more opportunities for advancement initiatives, applied research, student internships, and workforce preparation. The dean will have the opportunity to represent SJSU's many strengths in Silicon Valley, with the opportunity to benefit from partnerships and pursue collaborations with the world's leading technology companies to enhance the College's excellence and impact.

Thoughtfully manage and augment the College's resources

The next dean must possess strong resource management and fundraising skills to achieve the College's goals. The dean will prioritize and capitalize on the College's current resources and will work creatively to secure additional resources. In partnership with SJSU's President and University Advancement, the dean will be called upon to support SJSU's next comprehensive campaign, while setting a vision for fundraising priorities and opportunities. The dean will work closely with industry partners, the Engineering Advisory Council, alumni, and other potential donors to continue to build a strong donor pipeline. Effective fundraising will be critical to support the infrastructure necessary to carry out the College's important work, including modernizing laboratory and classroom spaces, improving health and safety conditions in laboratories, addressing deferred maintenance, and advancing long-term planning for future enrollment growth. In doing so, the dean will ensure the College remains on the cutting edge of engineering education.

Support and sustain student access and success

Enrollment for the College has been on an upward trajectory, and the dean will support a comprehensive strategic enrollment management plan across all programs, engaging faculty, students, and staff in this effort. A growing area for the College is the online space, which provides the opportunity to increase enrollment without straining the College's physical infrastructure. The dean will also position the College to respond to the changing landscape, particularly in graduate education, and cultivate alternative opportunities for students, such as microcredentials. At the same time, the dean will place the highest priority on student success and retention, expanding programs that improve retention and graduation rates across the College, especially for students from historically underrepresented backgrounds. This includes increasing experiential learning opportunities, internships, and other hands-on engineering experiences that prepare students for engineering careers. The dean will promote a culture of belonging throughout the College community, ensuring that the research and educational experiences are welcoming and support the success of all students. The next dean will build upon this commitment and culture that exists in the College to accelerate recruitment, retention, and degree completion of all students.

Attract, retain, and support a world-class faculty and staff

The faculty and staff in the College are central to its mission and are widely recognized for excellence in teaching, research, and service. The College has successfully recruited outstanding faculty in recent years, and the next dean will build on this progress, placing particular emphasis on retaining top talent in an

increasingly competitive national landscape. The dean will also build on opportunities for faculty to conduct research by investing in programs and facilities that foster a culture of excellence and inspire faculty to join SJSU. In addition, the dean will foster an environment in which all faculty and staff can thrive. College staff have had to do more with less in recent years, and the dean will identify new resource opportunities so the college can add staff capacity, support professional development, and recognize and reward staff contributions. The dean will demonstrate strong interpersonal and managerial acumen, serving as an accessible, visible, and engaged leader across the College and campus.

Elevate a growing and thriving student-focused research enterprise

As a thriving Research-2 University, SJSU has pushed boundaries in its growing research enterprise, and the College plays a foundational role in sustaining its success. The dean will develop a research strategy that is aligned with its culture of student-centered research, including opportunities for undergraduate research. The dean will be an effective collaborator with other academic leaders on campus and will encourage faculty to push boundaries and move beyond siloes to engage in interdisciplinary, multi-PI, and multi-institution proposals to advance the College's research output and secure major funding. By serving as a bridge to other units across campus, the dean will partner across Academic Affairs to build and strengthen interdisciplinary academic programs and cross-cutting research initiatives. By fostering a culture that recognizes faculty for innovation and inclusive excellence, the dean will empower those within the unit to tackle large-scale research challenges, secure major research funding, and train the next generation of engineers with the tools to advance the field.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The next Dean of the Charles W. Davison College of Engineering will possess many of the following qualifications and characteristics:

- A terminal degree in a discipline represented by the College's academic programs, and a demonstrated record of teaching, research, service, and/or experience meriting appointment as a tenured professor in the college;
- Leadership experience at the department chair, director, associate dean, and/or dean level;
- Visionary and energetic leadership with the ability to advance academic excellence, innovation, and continuous improvement across a complex engineering college;
- Exceptional communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to engage diverse constituencies in a professional, respectful, transparent, and collegial manner;
- A demonstrated commitment to student success and an understanding of the educational needs of a diverse student population;
- A record of effective advocacy on behalf of an academic unit, including the independence and judgment to represent faculty, staff, and student perspectives to senior leadership;
- A genuine commitment to shared governance, with a record of building consensus, working effectively with faculty committees, and making transparent, fair decisions on hiring, workload, promotion, leadership appointments, and resource allocation;

- Strong strategic, analytical, and data-informed decision-making skills, including the ability to define complex problems, evaluate information, draw sound conclusions, and translate data into action;
- Knowledge of national trends in engineering education, research, workforce development, and higher education;
- Administrative expertise in academic planning, personnel management, policy development and implementation, budgeting, fiscal stewardship, and accreditation;
- Success working collaboratively across varied organizational settings and building productive partnerships among faculty, staff, students, alumni, industry, and community stakeholders;
- A record of fundraising, external engagement, and grant development that advances institutional priorities;
- Knowledge of the facilities, laboratory, infrastructure, and technology needs associated with engineering programs;
- Demonstrated understanding of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, and the ability to lead their strategic adoption in support of teaching, research, student success, and operational effectiveness;
- Experience working in a collective bargaining environment.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. **For best consideration, please apply by Friday, January 22, 2027.** To submit inquiries, nominations, and applications, please visit the Isaacson, Miller website for the search: https://www.imsearch.com/index%2ephp/open-searches/san-jose-state-university-college-engineering/dean. Applicants may also complete a Voluntary Self Identification Form for Executives to assist the CSU system's recruitment efforts and workforce diversity.

The CSU salary bands set the pay ranges for deans and classify the salary band for an Administrative IV at $115,000-$370,752; the anticipated hiring range for this position is $300,000-320,000.

Cati Mitchell-Crossley, Luciano Zuniga, and Rachel Banderob
Isaacson, Miller

San José State University (SJSU) is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer committed to nondiscrimination on the basis of age, ancestry, citizenship status, color, creed, disability, ethnicity, gender, genetic information, marital status, medical condition, national origin, race, religion or lack thereof, sex, sexual orientation, transgender, or protected veteran status consistent with applicable federal and state laws. This policy applies to all SJSU students, faculty and staff programs and activities. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and certain other federal and state laws, prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex in all education programs and activities operated by the university (both on and off campus).

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