



An invitation to apply for the position of:

Dean, College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters

University of Michigan-Dearborn

Dearborn, Michigan

THE SEARCH

The University of Michigan-Dearborn (“the University” or “UM-Dearborn”) seeks a dynamic, collaborative, and innovative dean of the College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters (“the College” or “CASL”) who can leverage its unique advantages to advance the College’s academic scope, regional economic development, and educational impact. The next dean will join a strong senior leadership team in supporting this student-focused institution that is deeply committed to preparing students to have productive professional and personal lives, to be engaged and informed citizens, and to be contributors to the intellectual and civic rejuvenation of an important U.S. metropolitan region. This is an exciting moment as the next dean will have an opportunity to build on a solid foundation, advocate for the liberal arts and sciences, and lead a deeply committed faculty, a highly diverse and engaged student body, and an excellent staff to write the College’s next chapter.

One of the three campuses of the University of Michigan, UM-Dearborn is a top ranked metropolitan university serving southeastern Michigan committed to excellence and rooted in strong academics, innovative research and programming, and civic engagement. With approximately 8,300 students, an outstanding faculty, and a beautiful 200+ acre campus near Detroit and Ann Arbor, UM-Dearborn provides a transformative education for the highly diverse populations in the region.

The College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters is a transformative and student-centered exploratory learning environment, regionally and globally focused, deeply grounded in the value of inclusiveness, and engaged with leading-edge research. It develops and empowers students to become future leaders who will guide the resurgence and renewal of southeastern Michigan and the world beyond. CASL offers three dozen undergraduate majors and select graduate programs that are housed in five interdisciplinary departments in addition to several college-wide units.

The dean is the chief academic and administrative officer of the College and reports to the provost. The dean oversees all academic programs and services within CASL and provides intellectual and academic

leadership to the faculty in matters related to curriculum, research, student excellence, DEI, and faculty and staff development. The University has ambitious plans to increase research productivity and external funding while maintaining the highest levels of educational quality for students, and CASL has an important role in that effort. The dean will also be a visible face and force beyond the boundaries of the College, working with students, faculty, staff, alumni, other colleges on campus, and the community to enhance and build external relations and to raise funds.

The University of Michigan-Dearborn has retained the executive search firm Isaacson, Miller to assist in this search. All applications, inquiries, and nominations, which will remain confidential, should be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

THE UNIVERSITY

Established in 1959 with a gift from the Ford Motor Company and founded on the original Henry Ford Estate, UM-Dearborn was forged in a community of working people with the global economy in mind. The University is committed to academic excellence, community engagement, and service to southeastern Michigan. Over the past two decades, the institution has taken deliberate and successful steps to improve its academic profile and increase its recognition as it has evolved from a regional commuter campus to a university with a full range of services for students. In the 2023 edition of *US News and World Report*, the University of Michigan-Dearborn ranks as the top public university in Michigan in its category and fifth overall among regional public universities in the Midwest. In 2020, UM-Dearborn was named a top producer of Fulbright U.S. Scholars.

UM-Dearborn is an engine of social mobility and is frequently included in *US News and World Report's* list of Top Performers on Social Mobility as measured by enrollment and graduation rates of Pell Grant eligible students. Among Michigan's 15 public universities, graduates of UM-Dearborn enjoy the second highest median annual earnings of students two years after graduation.

Today, UM-Dearborn is comprised of four academic units: the College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters; College of Business; College of Engineering and Computer Science; and College of Education, Health, and Human Services. Across these units, the University offers more than 100 undergraduate majors and minors, and more than 40 graduate degree programs that include flexible evening and online options as well as doctoral programs. Academic programs integrate teaching, research, and service in ways that enhance the learning experience for students, providing small class sizes and a dynamic environment that fosters innovation, openness, and creativity.

The University provides a strong foundation in the liberal arts and sciences and the knowledge and skills essential for career and personal success. Academic programs across the curriculum emphasize learning beyond the classroom. The institution's close ties to industry, the regional community, other educational institutions, and government agencies enable applied research opportunities, undergraduate projects, meaningful internship and co-op experiences, study abroad, student employment, and innovative courses and programs. In the last year, all four academic colleges at the institution have committed to Practice-Based Learning (PBL) across their curricula, with CASL leading in these efforts.

In recent years, departments across campus have adopted advanced technologies to meet changing educational needs. The University has celebrated the opening of multiple new buildings, including the Natural Sciences Building, and various new labs. The applied nature of a UM-Dearborn education was on full display during the pandemic as these new facilities equipped students and faculty to join the fight against Covid-19 by producing PPE from home in 2020.

Academic Profile

The University of Michigan-Dearborn is a coeducational, master's-level, public university that is part of the University of Michigan system and fully accredited by The Higher Learning Commission. Approximately 8,300 students are enrolled in about 100 academic programs and majors within the four academic units.

The institution's educational mission is supported by over 300 full-time and more than 200 part-time faculty members. Faculty are both talented teachers and productive scholars who are first-rate and accessible, interacting closely with their students inside and outside the classroom. With an average class size of 25 students and a student-faculty ratio of 16:1, UM-Dearborn provides its students with an unusual degree of personalized attention from high quality, experienced faculty. In addition to their excellence as teachers, many UM-Dearborn faculty are also top scholars in their fields.

Students and Student Life

The UM-Dearborn student population represents a broad array of racial, ethnic, cultural, socio-economic, and religious communities, creating a campus culture that is highly diverse across several dimensions. More than 60 percent of the 6,117 undergraduate students enter directly from high school, and the remainder are students who have prior college experience either immediately before entering the University or at a previous time in their lives and careers. Many of the 1,982 graduate students are employed full-time in a related professional career. Ninety-four percent of students are Michigan residents and 91 percent of students who accepted employment in 2021 remained in Michigan following graduation. Students at UM-Dearborn represent 78 birth countries, and nearly one-third of the University's students identify as people of color. Forty-nine percent are first-generation college students and 44 percent are eligible for Pell Grants. UM-Dearborn provides a variety of innovative programs to support its diverse student population and allow students of all backgrounds to be involved in the University's success.

The University is strongly committed to affordability for its students and awarded nearly \$41 million in merit-based, four-year general fund grants and scholarships to incoming first-year students in the 2022-23 academic year. Merit-based scholarships are also available for community college transfer students. Eighty-eight percent of incoming students receive some form of financial aid to help them enroll in and graduate from college.

Students at UM-Dearborn are eligible for the Go Blue Guarantee, the University of Michigan's landmark promise of free tuition for high-achieving in-state undergraduate students from low-income backgrounds.

The Guarantee offers free tuition for first-time, full-time in-state college students with an incoming GPA of 3.5, family income of \$65,000 or less, and assets below \$50,000. Transfer students meeting the same criteria are eligible for up to four semesters of free tuition. The Guarantee offers additional support for incoming students not meeting these criteria.

UM-Dearborn students engage in a variety of extracurricular activities to enhance their academic lives, including athletics, honorary societies, religious groups, fraternities and sororities, cultural and ethnic associations, recreational clubs, a student newspaper, and a radio station. With more than 130 recognized clubs and organizations on campus, students have many opportunities to connect with others who share similar interests and goals. The UM-Dearborn Wolverines compete in men's and women's basketball, men's and women's hockey, men's baseball, women's volleyball, and women's softball. UM-Dearborn students attend their games as well as sporting events at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

The University is committed to the community it serves. Every year, students, faculty, and staff dedicate tens of thousands of hours of community engagement through classes, research, student activities and events, as well as personal projects. UM-Dearborn specializes in community-engaged teaching and research, and its students are [Difference Makers](#) that are in the forefront of their fields, improving the lives of others and making an impact on campus and in the local communities. The Office of Metropolitan Impact (OMI) provides engagement support to faculty, students, and community partners and hosts and sponsors a variety of community-based events to benefit faculty's engaged teaching and scholarship, in which they excel.

Leadership and Governance

Chancellor Domenico Grasso is the sixth chancellor of the University of Michigan-Dearborn and the first Michigan graduate to lead the university. He also is an executive officer of the University of Michigan. Prior to joining UM-Dearborn in 2018, he was provost and chief academic officer at the University of Delaware. Earlier in his career, he held posts as Smith College's Rosemary Bradford Hewlett Professor and founding director of the Picker Engineering Program — the first engineering program at a women's college and one of the few at a liberal arts college in the United States. He is a former Army officer and earned his Ph.D. from Michigan in environmental engineering.

Considered a leading thinker in the field, Grasso has published extensively in the areas of environmental engineering and engineering educational reform. He has held numerous high-profile posts, including as advisor to NATO, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Academy of Engineering. Grasso also has a passion for holistic engineering education and has reasoned for the importance of the social sciences, arts, and humanities in better contextualizing the relevance of STEM education.

Dr. Gabriella Scarlatta has served as UM-Dearborn's provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs since July 2022 after serving a year in the interim role. Prior to becoming interim provost, Dr. Scarlatta served seven years as Associate Dean of the College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters and the Director of the French Studies Program. Working with undergraduates and taking part in numerous university service activities, her long career at UM-Dearborn has been marked with distinction. Provost Scarlatta joined UM-Dearborn

in 1996 and was promoted to professor of French, with tenure, in 2017. She has served as chair of the Department of Language, Culture, and Communication and co-chair of the Department of Humanities, has been a member of the College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters' Executive and Curriculum Committees, and has served on the Faculty Senate. She served as a faculty representative on the Lecturers' Employee Organization university bargaining team in 2009, 2012, and 2017. She teaches French literature and culture and has published several books and scholarly articles about the French and Italian Renaissance and early women writers.

She received her B.A. and the Maîtrise in Modern Languages from the Université de Savoie, Chambéry, France. She earned her M.A. in French and Italian Literatures and her Ph.D. in Modern Languages from Wayne State University.

Shared Governance

The University of Michigan-Dearborn has a long tradition of strong shared governance within a well-established structure. The Faculty Senate acts as a critical conduit between faculty and administration, communicating the faculty's perspectives on all matters pertaining to the interests of the University. In addition to the Faculty Senate, Executive Committees in each of the four colleges are empowered by the Board of Regents to act on behalf of the faculty in matters of appointments, promotion and tenure, budgets, and curriculum.

Go Blueprint for Success

Shortly after arriving at UM-Dearborn, Chancellor Grasso led the institution through a comprehensive visioning exercise, resulting in a new strategic plan, *Go Blueprint for Success*, which was finalized in 2019. This strategic plan starts from the premise that UM-Dearborn holds as a fundamental institutional tenet that a university must play an active role in addressing the challenges its communities face. Currently, southeastern Michigan, the state of Michigan itself, and the industrial Midwest are facing new and difficult economic realities and related social problems like racial and ethnic divisions, urban environmental problems, and questions around the future of manufacturing. In response to these issues, *Go Blueprint for Success* focuses on four central priorities — student experience and success; diversity, equity & inclusion; faculty & staff excellence; and economic sustainability — that will contribute to the realization of UM-Dearborn's ambitious institutional goals and help catalyze an economic and civic revival in the region.

The University has set a goal of increasing its enrollment to 10,000 students in the coming decade. In order to achieve this number, UM-Dearborn is committed to a vigorous recruiting strategy, growth in undergraduate and graduate programs, and increased funding for scholarships, financial aid, and infrastructure. Engaging students in experiences beyond the classroom will enable them to see the impact of their work in the local community and encourage them as young graduates to lend their talents to the needs of the region. The University is striving to expand student participation in internships, research projects, student life, and civic engagement opportunities to facilitate this local community engagement. Fundamental to all these efforts is providing excellent academic programs, led by accomplished faculty.

UM-Dearborn continues to be on the cutting edge of knowledge in the sciences, humanities, and professional disciplines, recruiting excellent and engaged scholars and teachers, engaging in continuous assessment and improvement of its academic programs, and expanding curricular offerings to meet the evolving needs of its students.

THE COLLEGE OF ARTS, SCIENCES, AND LETTERS

The College is home to 36 undergraduate majors and a number of interdisciplinary fields, including environmental science and environmental studies, mathematics education, Arab-American studies, and health psychology. The College also offers two dual degrees with the College of Engineering and Computer Science, as well as master's level graduate programs in criminology and criminal justice, applied and computational mathematics, environmental science, psychology, and public administration and policy. With its rich array of majors and minors in addition to certificate programs and an Honors program, the College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters prepares citizens with a wide and critical perspective, a deep appreciation for humanity's achievements, and the creative bent necessary for tomorrow's work.

Faculty and Academic Programs

The College has 266 faculty members, including 136 tenured and tenure-track faculty, and 130 non-tenure track faculty who teach the 2,275 undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in the College in addition to UM-Dearborn students across the other three colleges through general education coursework. Faculty are committed teachers and scholars who believe strongly in the value and importance of liberal arts education and interdisciplinary academic pursuits. Three CASL faculty were awarded Fulbright Awards, one faculty member was named Michigan Association of State Universities (MASU) Professor of the Year for their outstanding contributions to undergraduate education, and CASL faculty garnered three of the eight campus-level faculty awards granted in 2022: the Distinguished Research Team Award, the Distinguished Teaching Award, and the Collegiate Lecturer Award. The College hosts an annual Faculty Research Slam, highlighting faculty research achievements across departments and has been home to a Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) site since 2015.

The College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters has five interdisciplinary departments that reflect the full range of the liberal arts and sciences, with related fields grouped together to facilitate interdisciplinary teaching and research. Departments in the College include Behavioral Sciences; Language, Culture, and the Arts; Mathematics and Statistics; Natural Sciences; and Social Sciences. The College is also home to a number of interdisciplinary programs that bring together faculty and students from different departments to study and respond to challenges of the region, nation, and planet. These college-wide programs include African and African American Studies, Arab American Studies, Behavioral and Biological Sciences, Criminology and Criminal Justice Studies, and Women's and Gender Studies.

The College is home to several research centers that produce scholarship, sponsor lectures, workshops, and symposia, and engage in projects relevant to the Dearborn and metropolitan Detroit community. These centers and institutes include the [Center for Arab American Studies](#), [the Center for Armenian Research](#), [the Center for Mathematics Education](#), [the Center for Ethnic and Religious Studies](#), [the](#)

[Environmental Interpretive Center](#), [the UM-Dearborn Observatory](#), and [the Voice/Vision Holocaust Survivor Oral History Archive](#).

Practice Based Learning (PBL)

Practice-based teaching and learning are deeply embedded in the DNA of UM-Dearborn, and over two-thirds of CASL courses contain some practice-based learning elements. Faculty are deeply engaged in problem-based research and students have broad exposure to project-based work in the form of classroom assignments, mentored and independent research, academic service learning, internships, and co-op experiences. While a CASL education provides students with professional skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, diversity and inclusion, and ethical responsibility, the addition of PBL further strengthens those skills in the development of additional career skills. Coursework with PBL may focus on skill-building, while others emphasize understanding, studying, working in Dearborn and Detroit, or taking a global perspective to real world problems. In the College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters, PBL coursework is offered at the foundation level with exploration courses in storytelling, health, or social and environmental justice; within major or program degree courses; or as part of a senior capstone course.

THE ROLE OF THE DEAN

Reporting to the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the dean is the chief academic and administrative officer of the College. Within the framework of a shared governance system, the dean leads ongoing strategic visioning from the College, is responsible for all academic programs and services of the College, and provides intellectual and academic leadership for faculty in matters related to curriculum, research, and faculty development. The dean is also a visible force beyond the boundaries of the College, working with alumni and community members to build productive external relations and advocate for CASL. In addition, the dean works closely with Institutional Advancement to devise fundraising plans that directly benefit students, faculty endeavors, and strategic initiatives.

Direct reports to the dean include two associate deans, five department chairs, and three administrative staff members. The dean oversees an annual budget of \$29.4 million.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE NEXT DEAN

CASL seeks as its next dean an academic leader who is committed to supporting teaching, research, and creative activities across all departments of the College. The dean must be well-versed in the challenges facing regional public academic institutions that rely on tuition support and bring creative energy to build on the work underway while collaborating with partners across the College and the University to develop new innovative solutions to CASL's enrollment challenges. Specific opportunities for the dean include:

Work closely with faculty, staff, and students to shape and articulate a plan that builds on CASL's strengths and aligns with the University's vision and strategy, Go Blueprint for Success

Central to both Go Blueprint for Success and the current CASL strategic plan are student experience and success; diversity, equity, and inclusion; faculty and staff excellence; and economic sustainability. The next

dean will lead a planning effort within CASL to guide the next chapter in its history, preserving the unique character of the College within the University while preparing for a rapidly evolving future in higher education. The dean will work with faculty, staff, and students to develop and implement a clear, consistent, and sustainable strategy that builds on the College's success, recognizes the constraints and opportunities of the College's external environment, and positions the College to continue playing a central role in the University's path to an even higher level of excellence.

Collaboratively develop innovative new academic programs that attract and retain students

Like many other universities in the Midwest, over the past decade UM-Dearborn has experienced a decline in enrollment at the undergraduate and graduate levels due to a decrease in the number of high school graduates in the region. Due to the decrease's effect on the College's budget, enrollment growth is a longstanding goal for the University—including CASL—and will continue to be an important priority for the campus for the foreseeable future. The University has a decentralized budget model and increasing student enrollment brings in revenue to CASL while promoting greater accessibility to the University, enhancing the diversity and inclusivity of the campus, and ensuring that more students are exposed to the many benefits of a broad-based CASL education.

The next dean will work with faculty to enrich existing programs and develop promising new programs that address unmet needs in southeast Michigan, particularly at the graduate level, to attract academically strong students while sustaining the College's commitment to foundational fields of study in the arts and sciences. The dean will also collaborate with colleagues in the Enrollment Management division to spread the word about CASL's programmatic offerings and recruit and retain an exceptional and diverse student body.

Foster an environment that embraces diversity, equity, and inclusion

Located in one of the largest metropolitan regions of the country, the student population of UM-Dearborn—and CASL specifically—reflects the rich diversity of southeast Michigan. The College has been intentional about building a community that is welcoming and inclusive to all students and the next dean is expected to ensure this work continues. The faculty in CASL, however, are not as diverse as the student body. The next dean will partner with faculty leadership to support the further diversification of CASL's faculty in the coming years.

Further strengthen the educational experience for all students to reach their full potential

The University of Michigan-Dearborn—and the College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters in particular—has a long tradition of being student-centered and focusing on excellence in undergraduate and graduate student learning. With an increasingly diverse student body, the dean must maintain CASL's well-established reputation for providing an interactive and engaging student experience and further improve student success by providing exposure to a range of distinct disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches to problem-solving and analysis, path-breaking faculty research, high-impact pedagogical practices, and the transferrable skills inherent in an education grounded in the liberal arts and sciences. These practices

will help retain students and prepare them for post-graduation success. Additionally, CASL has several yearly, faculty-led study abroad programs, and the University is committed to further investment in and growth of its study abroad partnerships. The next dean will continue to foster collaboration among students, faculty, and advising to ensure students receive strong mentorship and an enhanced learning experience, both curricular and co-curricular, in Dearborn and abroad.

Lead a talented, committed faculty by balancing, recognizing, and rewarding their full range of scholarship and creative activity

CASL benefits from a talented faculty that is eager to be engaged in the shared governance of the College. The next dean will support faculty across all disciplines—as well as interdisciplinary College-wide programs—and further refine the appropriate balance of scholarly activity, teaching excellence, and service to CASL and the University. Many CASL disciplines and departments are in the process of converting courses from three to four credits, and faculty in those units will teach two courses per semester. The next dean, in coordination with the Provost's office, will help disciplines transition to the new course credit model while ensuring equity and successful credit transfer across disciplines, departments, and Colleges. Students across the University benefit from the College's overarching emphasis on teaching and research excellence, and the next dean will work carefully to ensure the faculty maintains its strength in outstanding, student-centered instruction while creating space and time for faculty to engage in more scholarship and creative activity.

Advocate for the College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters within and beyond the University

The dean will be a visible force beyond the boundaries of the College and will advocate on behalf of CASL and its faculty, staff, and students by communicating compellingly the College's priorities, needs, and challenges to the University community and articulating its contribution to the success of the institution's mission.

The dean will also serve as a valued partner to and collaborator with other senior leaders in the broader University community, including the Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement, the Dean of Students, the Vice Provost for Enrollment Management, the Vice Provost for Research, and many others across campus. UM-Dearborn has only four colleges and four deans, and this tight-knit group works exceptionally well together, which is especially important given UM-Dearborn's decentralized budget model. The next CASL dean will have an opportunity to deepen these relationships, removing barriers for faculty and students to collaborate across academic colleges, and ensuring that the College is positioned for success.

Be visible and engaged with alumni, friends, and external stakeholders to support the mission of the College

The dean must be a financially astute leader who provides strategic management of the College's resources and brings a focus on generating new revenue streams from external sources and fundraising. The dean is the lead ambassador for CASL and should be prepared to enthusiastically engage alumni and other potential supporters to share the College's story and its dynamic vision for the future. The

University of Michigan system is in the silent phase of a comprehensive capital campaign, and the dean of CASL will work closely with UM-Dearborn's Chancellor and the Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement to make the case for the impact of philanthropic support on the College.

In addition to cultivating financial support for CASL, the dean has an opportunity to leverage UM-Dearborn's commitment to Practice-Based Learning by pursuing innovative opportunities in multidisciplinary research, teaching, and outreach to local industry, non-profits, government agencies, and other community partners. Opportunities exist across the curriculum for these types of innovative partnerships that would serve students, faculty, and the community by addressing unmet needs.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

The University of Michigan-Dearborn seeks an accomplished and experienced academic leader with a demonstrated commitment to the mission of regional public higher education. While no one person will possess all the qualifications enumerated below, the ideal candidate will have many of the following professional experiences and personal characteristics:

- Credentials and achievements that merit appointment as a tenured full professor in the College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters.
- Significant senior leadership and administrative experience in a large, complex organization; astute budgeting, financial, and personnel management acumen; experience with a decentralized budget model is preferred.
- Experience with strategic planning, program assessment, and policy development to enhance academic units within a college or university.
- A commitment to shared governance, transparency in management, and data-informed decision-making.
- Evidence of successful involvement in development initiatives and the ability to work effectively with university alumni.
- An appreciation of the varied disciplines and functions that compose the rich academic tapestry of the College, and a clear commitment to the delivery of both an undergraduate and graduate liberal arts and sciences education.
- The demonstrated ability to encourage, develop, and evaluate teaching, scholarly research, and creative activity across the College with a proven commitment to interdisciplinarity.
- Demonstrated experience enhancing impact on the region of a current or former institution and prioritizing research that involves the local community.
- Experience supporting educational methods and approaches that cultivate a high level of student engagement, initiative, collaborative learning and research, and community outreach; an understanding of strategies that promote student retention and success.
- A demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, including an appreciation for a curriculum that is inclusive and promotes intercultural and global competency; an understanding of the challenges faced by students who live off-campus.

- High capacity to instill trust and motivate faculty and staff toward the achievement of shared goals.
- Experience serving as an advocate; evidence of strong communication and relationship-building skills; demonstrated ability to establish long-term, strategic relationships with key parties, including other academic units and leaders in the broader community.

TO APPLY

The University of Michigan-Dearborn has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in this recruitment. Review of candidates will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. Nominations, inquiries, and applications, including a CV and letter of interest, should be sent in confidence to:

Jeff Kessner, Partner
Debbie Scheibler, Senior Associate
Lauren Wilkes, Senior Associate

<https://www.imsearch.com/search-detail/8823>

The University of Michigan-Dearborn is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Educator and Employer, is committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive environment, and strongly encourages applications from women, minorities, veterans, and individuals with disabilities regardless of age, gender identity, genetic information, religion, or sexual orientation.