

## **UT SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH SAN ANTONIO**



**The University of Texas School of Public Health San Antonio**  
*a collaborative school of public health of*  
**The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio &  
The University of Texas at San Antonio**  
**San Antonio, Texas**

**Search for:**  
**Chair, Department of Health, Behavior and Society**

### **THE OPPORTUNITY**

The University of Texas School of Public Health San Antonio (UTSPHSA or School) seeks an innovative, visionary and entrepreneurial academic leader to serve as the founding chair for the Department of Health, Behavior and Society. UTSPHSA is a new collaborative school between The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio (UT Health San Antonio) and The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA). UTSPHSA will educate leaders passionate about addressing public health issues, advancing vital public-health-focused research and scholarship, and strengthening community partnerships across the San Antonio and South Texas regions.

The opportunity to initiate a new school of public health in San Antonio is timely, necessary and critical for the long-term viability and sustainability of the city and the region. The South Texas area is a vast 38-county region of five million people that includes several urban markets and majority-minority cities, as well as several communities that the U.S. Health and Resources Administration has identified as underserved rural areas. As the seventh largest city in the U.S., the city of San Antonio is a prime location for a school of public health because it is the epicenter of health care in South Texas. However, it is the largest city in the United States without its own school of public health.

UT Health San Antonio and UTSA offer collective strengths to serve as a strong foundation for advancing public health education and service to South Texas. Building on efforts to advance community health and wellness, both institutions share a rich and collaborative history in meeting the unique health needs of the region's multicultural population, including federal designation as Hispanic-serving Institutions by the U.S. Department of Education. UTSPHSA is the latest venture in a long history of collaborative efforts between the two institutions and builds on efforts to advance community health and wellness in the region.

As an inaugural leader at UTSPHSA, the founding chair will work as a strategic thought partner with, and report to, the School's founding dean, [Vasan Ramachandran, MD](#). They will join the foundational team for the School and will have the unique opportunity to build the department and lead its future development. This foundational team will collaborate with the dean and align their visions to build a school of public health that is a regional steward of human and planetary health and well-being to eliminate health inequities through excellence in research, instruction and community engagement. This is a transformative opportunity at a pivotal moment in the wake of a global pandemic to recalibrate and realign the future of public health education, service and research in a region of the United States where there are tremendous unmet public health needs.

The successful candidate will be an academic leader with a demonstrated commitment to working with multidisciplinary groups through research, teaching, mentoring and service. They will display excellent leadership skills and an entrepreneurial mindset. The chair will ably create and continually enhance an academic environment focused on excellence, professional growth, social justice, equity, belonging and inclusion. They will bring transformational and innovative thinking to the mission of building and growing a robust and vibrant teaching, research and service infrastructure.

Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, has been retained to assist in this search. All inquiries, nominations and applications with cover letters should be submitted in confidence to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

## CURRENT CONTEXT

### THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH SAN ANTONIO

The University of Texas School of Public Health San Antonio's overarching goal is to create an advanced, socially responsible, financially self-sufficient and state-of-the-art Hispanic-serving school. UTSPHSA will have a regional focus with an aim to bring excellence, innovation and community engagement in its tripartite mission to promote public health and well-being in San Antonio, Bexar County and South Texas. The School seeks to become the regional steward of achieving a dynamic condition of health and well-being in South Texas. The tripartite mission of the School is to provide regional public health professionals with:

- **Education**—*learning that is practical*
- **Research**—*that matters*
- **Service**—*that counts*

To achieve its mission, the school will perform meaningful scholarship that discovers, disseminates and applies evidence-based, equity-driven scalable solutions and policies that can be implemented promptly to advance the health of the planet and its human populations — especially those that belong to historically underserved, marginalized and vulnerable groups. It will serve public health needs and promote a culture of health and well-being locally and regionally while thinking nationally and globally. It will educate, develop and train the next generation of inclusive public health leaders and professionals in systems thinking, social justice and health equity, and precision public health, so that they can face the public health threats and opportunities of today and tomorrow.

## TIMELINE

UTSPHSA is on a trajectory to achieve accreditation by 2027 from the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH), the premier accreditation for schools of public health. The School plans to establish and obtain the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) approval and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) accreditation in 2023 to permit the admission of students for the Master's in Public Health (MPH) degree in the fall of 2024. Doctoral programs in public health and epidemiology will admit students the following year. As well, opportunities to offer dual degree programs within UT Health San Antonio (e.g., M.D./M.P.H) and across both UT Health San Antonio and UTSA (e.g., M.P.H./M.B.A.) will expand academic offerings in the School. The graduate educational and administrative functions of the School will be supported by a combination of student tuition and fees, and general revenues appropriated by the Texas Legislature and philanthropy. In addition, the School will be supported by funding from both UT Health San Antonio and UTSA during the start-up years. It is expected that research activities will be fully supported by external grants and contracts. Additional sources of initial investment and endowments will be pursued for sustainability and growth.

## ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS IN THE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

The School is currently planned to have four departments:

The Health, Behavior, and Society department will examine and intervene at the individual and community levels to promote a healthy society for all. The department will prioritize and emphasize public health in South Texas and in San Antonio through a health equity lens and will include areas of focus ranging from health disparities in heart disease, stroke, dementia and other neurocognitive disorders, cancer, behavioral health (including use of tobacco and alcohol), substance use, physical activity, nutrition and diabetes and metabolic disorders, sexual health and infectious diseases. Faculty in the department will have scholarly and programmatic activity on structural and social determinants of health, social capital, cultural determinants of health, approaches to priority populations, community-based participatory research, implementation science, structural interventions, evaluation and health communication.

The Environmental and Occupational Health department will contain faculty with a range of expertise including applied science, community-based participatory research, intervention research or health disparities research. Disciplines may be broad including, but not limited to, the fields of environmental and occupational health, environmental justice, industrial/occupational hygiene and safety, water and air quality, climate change and health, food safety, agricultural health, environmental risk assessment, environmental engineering or a closely related field.

The Health Policy and Health Services Administration department will have scholars with interests spanning the full range of issues in health policy; access to and disparities in health care; the economics of health care; health insurance and health care financing; global health; health systems administration at federal, state, county and city levels; health care policies and organization of its services addressing current and emergent health care needs, the needs of an aging population and that of under-represented groups infant and children's health; women's health; and Hispanic health. Disciplines within the department may be broad including but not limited to the fields of health economics, health care management, health services administration, and health policy.

The Quantitative and Qualitative Health Sciences department will contain faculty with multidisciplinary research, teaching and service interests including both quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods researchers. The department will include faculty with interests including epidemiologic research in infectious diseases; spatial, environmental, social, and/or genetic epidemiology; disease screening and prevention; aging; pediatrics; primary care; cardiometabolic, cardiovascular and cancer outcomes; health inequities; substance use; injury prevention; rural health and disparities; pharmacoepidemiology; mental health; fetal-maternal health and women's health; behavioral interventions; and exercise and physical activity. Faculty in this department may specialize in epidemiology and/or biostatistics/data sciences in a variety of fields of study. Faculty may also have methodologic interests including longitudinal data analysis, systematic reviews, meta-analysis, clinical trials, missing data, psychometrics, mixed methods, structural equation modeling, Bayesian method, ethnography, focus groups, case studies, in-depth interviews and other types of qualitative research.

### **ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR**

Reporting to the dean of the UTSPHSA, the chair will serve as the academic leader of their department and senior collaborator in the development of the new school. They will provide educational leadership, including classroom teaching and mentoring to graduate students and junior faculty; develop research grant applications and seek extramural funding; and create academic and/or community collaborations to support the School's mission. They will develop and implement research related to population health, community health or clinical health initiatives and work collaboratively with their colleagues at UTSPHSA, UT Health San Antonio and UTSA.

### **KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE DEPARTMENT CHAIRS**

The founding chair will address the following opportunities and challenges:

#### **Create an evidence-based educational experience to address public health challenges**

The founding Chair will seek to attract, admit, develop and graduate students who are knowledge-seeking, inclusive and service-driven public health leaders of the future. The Chair will promote experiential competency-based learning that is practical, inclusive, ongoing and reflective of community needs. The Chair and their faculty will educate using a collaborative, interpersonal, intersectional, interprofessional and interdisciplinary framework. The Chair will promote foundational, professional and superordinate skills in students via competency-based education and systems-based thinking. The Department will model state-of-the-art mixed instructional methods with integrated and dynamic curricula that address regional public health challenges and meet local public health workforce needs. Teaching and learning will be personalized to meet the different learning needs and styles of a multicultural student body.

The Chair's curriculum and academic program development and student recruitment objectives will align with the School's pursuit to achieve accreditation from the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) by 2027.

**Serve the public health needs of the local community and play an anchoring and stewardship role prioritizing health equity**

The Chair will build the School's capacity for local and regional public health collaborative practice and community service. The Chair will partner with local schools and community colleges for public health education and build a culturally competent pipeline of future students and engage multi-sectoral and multidisciplinary stakeholders. The Chair will understand community public health needs and job opportunities for placement of students in the local public health workforce. The Chair will work to establish and prioritize target health equity zones for revitalization and instill a place-based, community-led, health equity-centered approach to tackle social determinants of health to improve the performance of local health systems.

**Build a resilient foundational internal and external infrastructure that supports the vision and mission and ensures operational effectiveness**

The Chair will work collaboratively with the Dean to develop a unified narrative and clear vision that highlights the School's focus, strengths, expertise and unique programs. The Chair will identify resource requirements, refine budgetary and operational plans, develop and leverage philanthropic relationships, and maximize physical space for their departments to build the foundational infrastructure of the School. The foundational team will formulate context- and culture-specific messaging and engagement to create and maintain a holistic culture of health, well-being and education. The Chair will complete this work with the overarching goal of creating and maintaining professionalism and civility in an inclusive, vibrant academic atmosphere where students, faculty and staff thrive.

**Attract, recruit, develop and retain faculty and staff who are inclusive, high-performing and mission-driven**

The Chair will strategically manage resources for hires and look for opportunities to collaborate across departments, schools and colleges. They will align efforts with School initiatives to be opportunistic and strategic in attracting talent. The Chair will build the department by recruiting and hiring faculty and staff with demonstrated knowledge and scholarship in education, research or community service to supplement the School's tripartite mission. The foundational team will demonstrate both leadership and inclusion by implementing a model of shared governance, distributed leadership and empowered participation. The Chair will institute continuous professional development as a key support feature for faculty and staff (putting faculty/staff first), promoting student, staff and faculty well-being and continuous development by building teaching, research and leadership skills. The Chair will build new faculty pathways to link leading local public health practitioners to academia.

**Promote rigorous public health scholarship that leads to evidence-based equity-driven solutions**

The Department will leverage the methods-to-research-to-practice and service continuum to conduct transdisciplinary, intersectional multi-sectoral research prioritizing equity and inclusive excellence in the process. The Department will engage in quality research in public health that will inform practice, determine policy, and form the basis of health policy that is critical for dismantling structural racism and mitigating the impact of community drivers of health on public health and well-being. The Chair will identify and advocate for new resources for future infrastructure needs and evaluate, plan, and expand

the necessary equipment, organizational structures, faculty and staff to enable excellence in public health research.

### QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The ideal candidate will elucidate and understand patterns of health, well-being, and disease and their causes with demonstrated intellectual leadership in a field relevant to health sciences and/or public health, a substantial record of scholarly or policy achievement, strong visibility in the public health research community, and significant experience in educational and community program development.

In addition, the successful candidate will meet most, if not all, of the following criteria:

- An earned doctorate or medical degree along with a distinguished record of academic excellence; credentials that qualify for appointment as a tenured associate or full professor
- Perform community-engaged scholarship; a strong understanding of research in behavioral and cultural determinants of public health and health disparities
- A personal and professional history of impactful research and scholarship, with a record of success in grant writing and the ability to encourage and support others in their own scholarly achievement
- A demonstrated track record of enhancing access and opportunity and improving the culture and climate for students, staff, and faculty; respect for individuality and a commitment to promoting inclusive excellence
- Expertise and/or experience in issues pertaining to underserved populations are especially desirable, but not required
- Demonstrated experience in recruiting and retaining top faculty
- Excellent interpersonal skills to build and maintain relationships with faculty, staff, and students
- Exceptional leadership skills, with the proven ability to foster a spirit of unity and collaboration across a department
- The ability to identify and seize opportunities that support continued growth across the mission of the School
- A commitment to transparency and an inclusive management style
- An astute understanding of academic finances and experience establishing budget priorities and serving as a responsible steward of resources
- Ability to make difficult decisions and prioritize
- Demonstrated ability to function effectively and collaboratively in a complex, fast-moving, dynamic environment with multiple stakeholder groups
- Excellent interpersonal, written, and oral communication skills; exceptional planning and organizational skills and superb follow-through
- Personal qualities that include creativity, flexibility, adaptability, tenacity, courage, a sense of humor, and unquestionable integrity

### TO APPLY

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](#) for the search. Electronic submission of materials is strongly encouraged.



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## APPENDIX

### The University of Texas System

The University of Texas (UT) System was established by the Texas Constitution in 1876. It is one of the nation's largest higher education systems and is currently comprised of eight academic universities and five health institutions. The nine-member Board of Regents is the governing body for The University of Texas System. The chancellor, the chief executive officer of the UT System, reports to the Board of Regents and is responsible to the board for all aspects of the UT System's operations. The UT System has an annual operating budget of \$22.1 billion in sponsored programs funded by federal, state, local, and private sources. It confers more than one-third of the state's baccalaureate degrees and educates nearly three-fourths of the state's health care professionals annually. With approximately 100,000 employees in Texas, the UT System is one of the largest employers in the state. It is responsible for the central management and coordination of the multiple campuses and is in Austin, Texas. For more information about the UT System please see <https://www.utsystem.edu/>.

### The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio (UT Health San Antonio)



Located in San Antonio, Texas, with over two million square feet of facilities for education, research, treatment and administration, UT Health San Antonio is a dynamic and rapidly expanding health science center with six professional schools, a workforce of 7,900, a FY2023 annual operating budget of more than \$1 billion, a clinical practice that dedicates more than \$633 million to uncompensated care and a research portfolio of \$360 million. The institution enrolls over 3,500 students annually. UT Health San Antonio has produced more than 41,100 graduates and has been designated by the U.S. Department of Education as a Hispanic-serving institution, consistently ranking among the top schools in the nation for graduating Hispanic health care providers.

The mission of UT Health San Antonio is to make lives better through excellence in education, research, health care and community engagement. Strategies for achieving this mission are:

- *Education:* educating a multicultural student body to become excellent health care providers and scientists
- *Research:* engaging in research to understand health and disease, and to commercialize discoveries, as appropriate, to benefit the public health
- *Patient Care:* providing compassionate and culturally appropriate health care and influencing thoughtful advances in health policy
- *Community Engagement:* engaging our community to improve health
- *Organizational Effectiveness:* striving for excellence, innovation, quality and professionalism in every aspect of our operations and outcomes

The institution has also been on a tremendous growth trajectory for the last several years in all its mission areas, but to a great extent in its clinical mission. UT Health San Antonio is in the process of building its first hospital, [UT Health San Antonio Multi-Specialty & Research Hospital](#), a \$465 million, eight-story, 144-



bed facility which broke ground in March 2021 and will be open in 2024. The hospital will offer specialty care in cancer, orthopaedics, urology and thoracic and bariatric surgery. Early-phase clinical trials, including immunologic and cellular-based therapies for cancer, will be housed and supported by the most innovative research conducted across South Texas.

UT Health San Antonio has excelled at fostering mutually beneficial, collaborative arrangements with business, industry, education, government and the military. Its current primary teaching hospitals in San Antonio – University Hospital and clinics of University Health, the South Texas Veterans Health Care System (VA) and UT Health San Antonio’s important military hospital partner, the San Antonio Military Medical Center (SAMMC) – all play a vital role. University Hospital is a component of University Health, a separate governmental entity serving San Antonio and Bexar County, that also serves as the teaching hospital for UT Health San Antonio’s graduate medical education residency programs, with the physicians of UT Health San Antonio serving as the medical staff for University Hospital. In addition to serving as an educational site for trainees, the VA holds an important relationship with UT Health San Antonio in clinical and basic science research. The concentration of military medicine centered at the historic and internationally recognized Brooke Army Medical Center of the San Antonio Military Medical Center also provides unique opportunities to collaborate in education, research and clinical care.

UT Health San Antonio is the chief catalyst for the \$44.1 billion health care and biosciences sector of the San Antonio economy, the city’s largest economic sector. It is ranked in the top 3% worldwide for all organizations that receive National Institutes of Health funding. The institution is a national research leader in cancer, diabetes, stroke prevention, heart disease, kidney disease, orthopaedics, respiratory disorders, transplant surgery, imaging research, pain management, psychiatry and clinical neurosciences, genetics, nursing, dentistry, allied health and public health preparedness. The institution is home to numerous centers and institutes in aging, Alzheimer’s and neurodegenerative diseases, cancer, population health and trauma research, among others. Currently, UT Health San Antonio has more than \$360 million in annual research awards and sponsored program activities and is on track to reach \$400 million in the next few years.

For more information regarding UT Health San Antonio, please visit <https://www.uthscsa.edu/>



## The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA)

The University of Texas at San Antonio is a Hispanic serving institution (HSI) situated in a global city that has been at the crossroads of peoples and cultures for centuries. The university community values equity and inclusion in all aspects of university life. UTSA was founded to advance the education of Mexican Americans and other underserved communities, and the university remains committed to that mission today. UTSA is the third largest of the nine academic universities in the UT System and is the leading public Hispanic-serving research university in the UT System.

UTSA serves over 34,000 students with more than 1,400 faculty and 5,600 staff and student employees; it is the largest university in the San Antonio metropolitan region. As one of the first designated Hispanic Serving Institution Research Universities, UTSA is highly focused on student success and meeting the educational and socio-emotional needs of first-generation, traditionally excluded, transfer, DACA, Veteran and international students. UTSA is proud of its multicultural community; approximately two-thirds are persons of color from historically underrepresented backgrounds (with more than half of the student body identifying as Hispanic) and nearly half of the students will be the first in their families to earn a bachelor's degree. Transfer students comprise about 40% of UTSA's total undergraduate population, further enhancing the inclusive excellence of its community. UTSA's military community makes up 13% of the total students and includes active-duty military members, veterans, reserves and their spouses and dependents. Additionally, UTSA remains committed to the local community and 63% of the student community comes from San Antonio and South Texas.

UTSA advances knowledge through research, scholarly and creative activities, teaching and learning, community engagement and public service. It serves as a center for intellectual and creative resources and a catalyst for both socioeconomic development and the commercialization of intellectual property—for Texas, the nation and the world. UTSA is leading San Antonio's knowledge economy by training the next generation of scientists and researchers. With research expenditures reaching their highest levels in UTSA's 50+ year history (\$141 million in the 2022 fiscal year), designation as a Top-Tier research institution, or R1 university, by Carnegie, and participation in the National Research University Fund (NRUF), UTSA has become one of Texas's innovation powerhouses and a driver of economic opportunity and social mobility for the community. The addition of this new collaborative school of public health will be an important driver of continued acceleration in sponsored research growth for UTSA.

UTSA has many points of pride, including being recognized as the #1 Hispanic-serving Institution in the nation by Bloomberg Businessweek, ranked #44 among all universities by *US News & World Report* in Social Mobility and has the #1 cybersecurity program in the nation according to a survey by Ponemon Institute. *Hispanic Network Magazine* includes UTSA among its "Best of the Best" rankings of U.S. universities. UTSA also is among an elite group of U.S. universities to earn the Carnegie Foundation's Community Engagement Classification. For more information about UTSA, please visit <https://www.utsa.edu/about/>.



## Leadership

### ***Dr. Ramachandran***

Vasan Ramachandran, MD began his tenure as founding dean of the UT School of Public Health San Antonio in September of 2022. Ramachandran served on the faculty of the Boston University School of Medicine and School of Public Health for more than a quarter-century and as principal investigator of the Framingham Heart Study since 2014. Ramachandran also has served since 2019 as one of the principal investigators for the Risk Underlying Rural Areas Longitudinal Study (RURAL), aimed at addressing critical gaps in the knowledge of heart and lung disorders in rural counties in the southeastern U.S. This study is of 4,600 individuals ages 25-64 from ten rural counties in Southern Appalachia and the Mississippi Delta.



### ***Dr. Henrich***

William L. Henrich, M.D., MACP, has served as the president of UT Health San Antonio since 2009. During his career, Henrich has served as professor of medicine at The University of Texas Southwestern School of Medicine, as professor and chair of the Department of Medicine at the Medical College of Ohio, and as the Theodore Woodward professor and chairman of the Department of Medicine at The University of Maryland School of Medicine in Baltimore. He became the dean of the School of Medicine and vice president for medical affairs at UT Health San Antonio in 2006, before being selected as its president in 2009. He is the founding holder of the John P. Howe, III, M.D., Distinguished Chair in Health Policy.



### ***Dr. Eighmy***

Taylor Eighmy, Ph.D., has served as the president of UT San Antonio since 2017. During his career, Eighmy has served as the chief research officer at the University of New Hampshire, Texas Tech University, and the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. In addition to the presidency, Eighmy serves as a member of the UTSA faculty as a professor with appointments in the College of Engineering's Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, and the College of Sciences' Department of Environmental Science and Ecology. Eighmy is an advocate for urban-serving public education and is passionate about UTSA's role in developing San Antonio's knowledge economy and preparing new leaders for a changing world.







SAN ANTONIO RIVER WALK

### **About San Antonio**

Located in South Central Texas, the southwestern corner of an urban region known as the Texas Triangle, San Antonio thrives as one of the fastest-growing cities in the United States. San Antonio is the seventh most populous city in the United States of America and the second-most populous city in the state of Texas, with a population of 1.45 million. It ranked 41 on the U.S. News and World Report's list of best places to live in the United States, based on factors including its low unemployment rate, annual household income, cost of living, education, health care and migration. San Antonio has a strong public school system with 13 school districts across the metropolitan area and several of the nation's highest-ranked private schools as well. The city also is home to dozens of private and public colleges and universities. "As comfortable as an old pair of jeans," San Antonio offers big-city amenities, world-renowned attractions, and a relaxed and inviting atmosphere. Residents benefit from living in a destination city with year-round access to such attractions as Six Flags, Fiesta Texas, and SeaWorld San Antonio, while also enjoying such arts and culture venues as the Majestic Theater, the Tobin Center for the Performing Arts, and the McNay Art Museum, along with the Alamo and other historic Spanish missions.

### ***Cost of Living***

San Antonio's cost of living is consistently ranked among the lowest of major U.S. cities. In addition, according to [myaffordableluxury.com](http://myaffordableluxury.com), San Antonio ranked as the city with the lowest luxury property price among 51 major U.S. cities as of December 15, 2020.

### ***Climate***

The average high is 80.2 degrees Fahrenheit, and the average low is 58.6 degrees. San Antonio sees approximately 300 days of sunshine per year. During the winter, below-freezing temperatures and snow are very uncommon.