



PACIFIC
LUTHERAN
UNIVERSITY

Opportunity and Challenge Profile

Search for the Dean of the School of Nursing
Pacific Lutheran University
Tacoma, Washington

*Pacific Lutheran University seeks to educate students
for lives of thoughtful inquiry, service, leadership and care –
for other people, for their communities, and for the earth.*

Pacific Lutheran University (PLU) seeks a visionary, compassionate, creative, and collaborative leader to serve as its next Dean of the School of Nursing (SoN). PLU's nursing programs are widely regarded in the Seattle-Tacoma region, throughout the Pacific Northwest, and beyond, as high-quality programs that produce leaders in the nursing profession who make a difference in the lives of their patients, the profession, and their communities. The next Dean of the School of Nursing has the opportunity to build upon this excellent reputation and further enhance the impact of the School of Nursing by continuing to foster academic excellence, focusing on holistic nursing and healthcare, expanding programs and partnerships across the University, ensuring the success of new programs, and strengthening a sense of community and pride within the School and as a part of the University. The next Dean will contribute to PLU's aspirations to expand the reputation of the university and its nursing programs to health care more broadly making it the choice for those seeking careers in healthcare.

Pacific Lutheran University is located six miles south of Tacoma, in suburban Parkland, Washington, on a 156-acre woodland campus. PLU offers approximately 2,700 students a unique blend of academically rigorous liberal arts and professional programs, based in the tradition of Lutheran higher education, which seeks to provide access and education to all students. Students develop skills in critical and creative thinking, decision making, analysis, communication, and reasoning that prepare them for a lifetime of success – both in their careers and in service to others.

The School of Nursing operates on the Tacoma campus as well as in a new PLU nursing facility north of Seattle in Lynnwood, WA. The School recognizes that the spiritual, physical, mental, and social health of people is of universal concern and provides nursing education that relies on a strong underpinning in the liberal arts. The nursing faculty and staff are committed to excellence in academic programs, clinical preparation, and scholarly pursuits. Their broad expertise has resulted in the School of Nursing being held up as a flagship program of the University, maintaining an exemplary reputation internally and across the healthcare community in Washington State. Through its clinical and outreach programs, the School of

Nursing is closely connected to the Seattle-Tacoma area and surrounding communities. According to a 2021 Washington State Hospital Association survey, hospitals alone needed to hire 6,100 nurses to meet staffing needs, and that figure grows when including other healthcare providers. PLU has expanded its offerings, including with the opening of a facility in Lynnwood in recent years, and so is an integral part of addressing the nursing shortage, but there is still more work to be done.

This is an exciting time to join Pacific Lutheran University. President Allan Belton assumed that role in 2019 after four years in other senior administrative roles, and he and Provost Joanna Gregson have been working to better position the university to meet the needs of the region and beyond. The university has recently reorganized into 4 colleges with the goals of recognizing the academic strengths and specialized work performed by each of the colleges and improving administrative efficiency. The Dean of the School of Nursing will be a visionary and inspiring educator who is academically accomplished, with a strong background in administration who can help achieve the university's ambitions. The candidate will be a person of the highest integrity with a collaborative leadership style, superior communication skills, and the ability to work with senior leaders, faculty, staff, alumni, and external agencies to achieve the goals that align with PLU's strategic vision and academic mission.

Reporting to the Dean of the College of Health Professions and building upon the existing strengths of the School of Nursing, the new Dean will:

- Further strengthen the School of Nursing's position as the premier nursing school in the region
- Sustain the PLU community of care, building on the University's emphasis on diversity, sustainability, wellness, and faculty development
- Create a vision and plan for the School's continued growth
- Ensure the financial health and future of the School of Nursing through external partnerships, fundraising, and resource management
- Ensure better consistency across nursing programs and create alignment in administrative systems and processes

A list of the desired qualifications and characteristics of the Dean can be found at the conclusion of this document, which was prepared by the search committee with the assistance of Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to provide background information and detail the key opportunities and challenges related to the position. All confidential applications, inquiries, and nominations should be directed to the parties listed at the conclusion of this document.

ABOUT PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY

Pacific Lutheran University purposefully integrates the liberal arts, professional studies, and civic engagement in the beautiful Pacific Northwest. With distinctive international programs and close student-faculty research opportunities, PLU helps its about 2,700 students from all faiths and backgrounds discern their life's vocation through coursework, mentorship and internships at world-class Puget Sound-area businesses and institutions.

Founded in 1890 by Norwegian pioneers, PLU is a university affiliated with the ELCA. PLU continues the distinctive tradition of Lutheran higher education through its commitment to the advancement of knowledge, thoughtful inquiry and questioning, and the preparation of citizens in service to the world.

PLU offers a full range of liberal arts academic programs anchored by their four colleges: Health Professions; Liberal Studies; Natural Sciences; and Professional Studies. The University offers 40 majors and 52 minors, as well as graduate and professional programs in business administration, creative writing, education, finance, marketing research, marriage and family therapy, and nursing. Each of these programs maintains a strong liberal arts emphasis at its core. An honoree on President Obama's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, PLU hosts an Emmy Award-winning MediaLab; a MacArthur Award-winning detachment of Army ROTC; and more than 100 clubs and activities, including 19 varsity athletic teams in the Northwest Conference of NCAA Division III.

The University consistently ranks among the top 25 in U.S. News & World Report's Best Universities in the West, recently rising to 14th and named fifth in the West for Best Colleges for Veterans. It also ranks in the top 4 percent of Master's universities nationwide by Washington Monthly College Guide. The University has produced 108 Fulbright Scholars since 1975. There are 175 full-time and 116 part-time faculty at PLU, and 354 staff and administrators support the work of the University. The annual budget of the University is \$145 million, \$64 million of which takes the form of PLU grants and scholarships to students. Overall, PLU administers around \$101 million in financial aid from all sources. PLU's endowment stands at \$130 million.

PLU is noted for its commitment to diversity, justice, and sustainability. For its record on sustainability, the University was recognized with a Gold Award from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education. PLU attracts students from every possible background—all religions, all races, all socioeconomic groups, and all sexual orientations—from all over the world. For the 2022-23 academic year, 41 percent of incoming first-year students are the first generation in their families to attend college; 53 percent self-identify as students of color; and 36 percent are Pell Grant-eligible.

PLU has worked toward academic distinction through three pathways: global education and service to the world, student-faculty research and creative projects, and helping students discern meaning and purpose in their lives.

- Becoming a globally focused university has become a key characteristic of PLU's academic program. That distinction was publicly recognized in 2009 when PLU became the first university in Washington state – and the first private university on the West Coast – to receive the prestigious Senator Paul Simon Award for Campus Internationalization. Today, 50 percent of all students participate in at least one study-away experience while at PLU.
- Expanded student-faculty research opportunities have enhanced the highly valued educational experience of students and faculty working one-on-one and in small groups to delve deeply into

issues critical to disciplines across the curriculum. The Office of Sponsored Programs has a stated goal of simplifying the grants process and supports faculty by helping to identify and submit proposals. There are also several endowments to support collaborative research in the natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities, as well as additional undergraduate research funds in many schools and departments.

- In the language of the Mary Oliver poem from which PLU's Wild Hope Center for Vocation gets its name, PLU invites students to ponder, "What will you do with your one wild and precious life?" PLU'S commitment to improving the quality of reflection on vocation – meaning and purpose – has contributed to PLU being a more intellectually rigorous, developmentally astute, theologically rich, and world-informed environment for students.

The 2021-25 Strategic Plan is the framework for a five-year, campus-wide effort to enhance the academic experience and to further fortify the commitment to diversity, justice, and sustainability at Pacific Lutheran University. During the development of the University's long-range prospects, four key themes gradually emerged which are now embedded in the strategic plan. They are the articulation of mission and identity, continuation of the University's community of care through wellness and inclusion initiatives, creation of a culture of innovation and technological advancement, and growth of resources and stewardship to support all areas of the University's experience.

To read more about *The 2021-25 Strategic Plan*, visit <https://www.plu.edu/strategic-planning/>. You can also see links to statements and plans including the Academic Identity Statement, Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan, Strategic Enrollment Management plan, and the charge to the Commission on Innovation and Change.

In Fall 2022, a long-planned academic restructure was implemented that reorganized Pacific Lutheran University's academic programs into four colleges: the College of Health Professions; the College of Humanities, Interdisciplinary Studies, and Social Sciences (now Liberal Studies); the College of Natural Sciences; and the College of Professional Studies. The academic restructure was approved by the faculty in December 2021 and by the PLU Board of Regents in February 2022. After the four-college model was approved, the Provost's Academic Council facilitated a process by which academic programs each determined which college they would join. The model was designed to recognize PLU's academic strengths and the specialized work performed by each of the colleges and their academic sub-units, while also improving administrative efficiency. Nursing chose to join Kinesiology, Marriage and Family Therapy, and Social Work in the College of Health Professions. This provides opportunity for more collaboration and partnerships among these disciplines as well as the chance to imagine new programs that might meet the needs of the healthcare community.

ABOUT THE SCHOOL OF NURSING AT PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY

The School of Nursing is a professional school that is housed within the College of Health Professions. It combines nursing science with a strong foundation in the liberal arts and a focus on the spiritual, physical,

mental, and social health of people. Its educational programs employ dynamic learning opportunities in multiple clinical arenas as well as laboratories and classrooms. The program also responds to the educational and technological learning needs of practicing nurses seeking continuing education to remain current, competent practitioners and/or to revise their practice focus.

PLU graduates are widely recognized for their commitment to the care of patients in a holistic manner. Over the years, PLU has developed programs that respond to the changing needs of nurses and the healthcare community. PLU has offered the bachelor of science in nursing (BSN) degree since 1951 and the master of science in nursing (MSN) degree since 1990. The School recently established a 16-month Accelerated BSN (ABSN) program that is offered just north of Seattle in Lynnwood. The BSN and ABSN programs prepare students as skilled generalists and provide a foundation for graduate study. The School also has multiple entry and completion level programs: BSN to MSN; the Entry-Level MSN; and three DNP tracks, the Psych-Mental Health (PMHNP), Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) programs and a new Nurse Executive program that offers a DNP/MBA dual degree designed to prepare practicing nurses for high-level careers in management and administration. The School also offers certificates and continuing education. There are 408 highly engaged students enrolled in the different nursing degree programs. With the new ABSN program, Nursing is the largest undergraduate major at the university and nursing students make up over 1/3 of the student population. There are 278 enrolled in the BSN including 183 in the traditional BSN and 95 in the accelerated BSN (ABSN), 90 in the Entry Level MSN, and 40 in the DNP program in either the Family Nurse Practitioner or Psychiatric Mental Health track. Nursing is a highly competitive program and in recent years, the number of graduate nursing programs at PLU has grown and the demand for nursing as an undergraduate major has increased, even beyond the current programs. For the traditional BSN, students are conditionally accepted at admission, complete prerequisite courses along with other general education requirements during their first two years, then enter the nursing program for their third and fourth year. Not all students who want to enter the nursing program are admitted. This creates an opportunity for the School of Nursing to consider offering other programs in related healthcare fields that may provide these students with additional options, as well as serve the expanding need for healthcare professionals in the region.

The School of Nursing faculty and staff are committed to teaching excellence, clinical competence, and scholarly inquiry. The approximately 50 faculty hold advanced degrees and many faculty members hold certification for advanced practice, including nurse practitioners in specialty areas such as family and community nursing, community health nursing, hospice and palliative care, and gerontology. There are currently 11 tenured or tenure track faculty. There are 16 non-tenure track full-time and a significant number of classroom and part-time clinical faculty; collectively, the faculty and staff represent over 700 years of successful professional nursing and academic experience. Due to the nature of nursing education and the demands on the faculty, the School of Nursing Dean has the challenging responsibility to ensure that faculty who are on the tenure track are supported in terms of time and expectations as they work to be both successful in the tenure process and remain current in their field. As new faculty are recruited, it will be important that the new Dean identify and support them through the tenure and promotion process.

PLU and the School of Nursing enjoy a vibrant culture of shared governance. The School of Nursing is governed by a set of by-laws that address issues such as faculty development and recruitment, curriculum, and program evaluation. The organizational structure supporting the Dean currently consists of an associate Dean, assistant Dean for pre-licensure programs, and director of graduate programs, as well as a highly dedicated staff that handles administration and finance, continuing education, student recruiting for graduate programs, clinical placements, and other areas. Recently, a director was hired to lead the ABSN program in Lynnwood.

The School of Nursing added a new building on PLU's Parkland campus in Fall 2021 that has greatly enhanced the educational experience of its students. It doubled the square footage of the Nursing School, providing a 16 bed skills laboratory, 3 simulation laboratories, a 90 person classroom, and additional faculty spaces. The University has also established partnerships with two healthcare systems to further enhance nursing education.

While most of the School's programs are supported by the university, including registration, course and learning management, and student records, the new ABSN is administered by a third party and has a separate set of systems. This arrangement created some initial confusion for faculty who teach in more than one program, as well as difficulty for staff to provide the same level of assistance to students and efforts are being made to resolve the differences and create a seamless experience for faculty, staff, and students.

The School of Nursing is a member of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) and is approved by the Washington State Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission (WA NCQAC). The baccalaureate degree in nursing (BSN), Master of Science in Nursing, Doctor of Nursing Practice, and post-graduate APRN certificate programs are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). The Care and Outcomes MSN curriculum meets for the Clinical Nurse Leader national certification examination. The Family Nurse Practitioner and Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner tracks meet requirements for national certification examinations.

Outstanding, diversified clinical experiences and instruction are provided for all nursing students through over 100 cooperating health care agencies and community-based sites in Tacoma, Lynnwood, and the greater Seattle-Tacoma metropolitan area. These agencies include the MultiCare Health Care System with Tacoma General, Mary Bridge Children's and Allenmore Hospitals; the Franciscan Health Care System with St. Joseph's Hospital; Providence St. Peter's Hospital in Olympia, Madigan Army Medical Center; Western State Mental Health Services; the Veterans Administration Hospital at American Lake, and other Seattle area hospitals. See <https://www.plu.edu/nursing/resources/clinical-partners/> for a more complete list of partners.

Students and alumni from the School are exemplary in their fields. Students from both the MSN and DNP programs write and submit manuscripts for publication. There are also many opportunities for faculty

research and projects that support the community as well as for student-faculty research that enhances the education of the student. Historically, NCLEX pass rates have been very high but since the COVID pandemic, as with many institutions in Washington and the U.S., the rates have slipped, although efforts are being made to drive them up again with a goal of having 95 percent of takers succeed.

This School enjoys strong alumni and community support. The School of Nursing Advisory Board includes alumni and external stakeholders and provides advice and counsel as well as philanthropic support.

The School is also an integral part of the South Puget Sound region. In 2020, the School of Nursing was awarded a \$2.8 million HRSA grant to help promote healthcare for underserved communities in the area and hosted the then Congressman on campus as part of that initiative. Delta Iota Chi, the nursing student organization, coordinates two blood and bone marrow donation drives on campus every year, as well as a Thanksgiving food drive and a toy donation program for Pierce County Fire Department.

To learn more about the School of Nursing, visit <https://www.plu.edu/nursing/>.

ROLE OF THE DEAN OF THE SCHOOL OF NURSING

The Dean of the School of Nursing has responsibility for all aspects of the School's administration, operations, budget, personnel, accreditation, and academic programs. Working within a culture of shared governance, the Dean leads the development, evaluation, and administration of the activities of the faculty, staff, and academic programs, including curriculum, instruction, advising, and scholarship. The Dean reports to the Dean of the College of Health Professions. The Dean meets with the other program leaders in the College of Health Professions and works with both the School of Nursing Advisory Board and the Alumni Association of Nurses. The Dean also builds external partnerships for clinical placements, enhancements to academic excellence, community support, and fundraising. The Dean oversees a budget of over \$5M, largely consisting of salaries for staff and faculty.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE DEAN OF THE SCHOOL OF NURSING

In order to build upon the existing strengths of the School of Nursing and take the School to the next level of excellence, the new Dean will:

Further strengthen the School of Nursing's position as the premier nursing school in the region

The School of Nursing has an excellent reputation externally with community partners and health settings for clinical placements and for producing excellent nurses at all levels. The Dean will continue to develop this reputation while engaging with new partners, working with state agencies, and monitoring national trends and innovations. The Dean will also build upon existing undergraduate and graduate programmatic offerings, coordinate CCNE and WA NCQAC accreditation activities, and leverage external engagements as opportunities to showcase the excellence of the School of Nursing and PLU. The Dean will also work to

create and promote a better sense of Nursing education as a journey and opportunities for continued learning, starting from BSN/ABSN, traveling through the DNP, and taking advantage of continuing education programs along the way.

Sustain the PLU community of care, building on the University's emphasis on diversity, sustainability, wellness, and faculty development

The Dean will promote a culture of collaboration, communication, and shared decision making among administration and faculty, and build trust and community among all members of the School. This includes creating an organizational leadership structure that is focused on student and faculty success. The Dean will also collaborate with faculty and staff to promote professional development, research, and other scholarly and creative activities. They will ensure that faculty development is aligned with the mission as a liberal arts university while celebrating the profession of nursing. The Dean will also promote inclusive practices that support the hiring of underrepresented faculty and staff and the recruitment and support of underserved students. The Dean will provide leadership in meeting the University's initiative to achieve inclusive excellence in all aspects of the School, including wellness. The Dean will provide a coordinated approach to wellness and expand offerings for students, faculty, and staff.

Create a vision and plan for the School's continued growth

The School of Nursing stands as a flagship of the University. Recent growth in nursing programs and enrollment, including the ABSN program, has benefitted both the University and the School, and it will be important for the next Dean to continue the School's positive trajectory. To accomplish this continuity, the Dean will sustain enrollment growth for the ABSN program and partner with faculty, staff, and students of the School of Nursing, university leaders, and external constituencies to develop a shared sense of purpose and vision for the School. The vision will be firmly rooted in the Strategic Plan for the University and will affirm the School of Nursing as an integral part of the success of the University.

Ensure the financial health and future of the School of Nursing through external partnerships, fundraising, and resource management

The Dean will collaborate with School of Nursing faculty and staff to develop and administer the School's budget and collaborate with other deans and the Dean of the College of Health Sciences when resources across campus need to be prioritized. This will require an ability to think creatively about resources and partnerships to encourage interdisciplinary and inter-professional education, research, and other shared opportunities. Along with the development of new revenue-generating programs, the Dean should proactively seek funding opportunities from federal funding agencies as well as corporate and foundation entities. The Dean will also work closely with the Office of Advancement to enhance PLU's development and alumni-engagement efforts and secure additional funding for facilities expansion, scholarships, and other priorities.

Ensure better consistency across nursing programs and create alignment in administrative systems and processes

The Dean will develop strategies and resources to support consistent success across existing academic programs, including curricular revision and implementation. With expanding programs across two campuses, it is critical that there is consistency across student and faculty experience. The Dean will establish administrative systems and processes and work with faculty and staff to ensure that protocols are supported and carried out appropriately. The Dean will foster a culture of transparency and accountability through clear communication and expectations. Through these efforts, the Dean will stabilize the learning experience across programs and regain the School's consistent NCLEX results.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The Dean of Nursing should be a skilled nurse as well as an academic and administrative leader, capable of inspiring others, with a commitment to excellent teaching, research, scholarship, creative activities, community service, and engagement. In order to meet accreditation requirements, the dean must be a registered nurse (RN), have an advanced degree in Nursing, and have a doctoral degree since PLU offers graduate programs.

The successful candidate should also meet most, if not all, of the following criteria:

- A registered nurse (RN) eligible for WA state licensure, with at least 5 years of experience as an RN;
- Proven administrative ability, including budget and financial management, strategic planning, policy formation, and personnel management;
- Strong interpersonal skills, effective communicator, ability to manage conflict, and commitment to shared governance.
- Experience working in a higher education setting with a demonstrated commitment to excellence in teaching, scholarship, and clinical operations and the ability to foster a culture of academic excellence and service;
- Experience with accreditation processes for nursing education;
- Experience developing academic programs relevant to the School of Nursing;
- A demonstrated commitment to diversity, inclusion, and equity;
- A minimum of two years of teaching experience in nursing education, or equivalent experience with adult learning theory, curriculum evaluations, and related skills;
- Experience building and supporting inter-professional linkages and collaborations;
- Demonstrated success with external funding, grants and donor engagement;
- Experience working in interdisciplinary settings;
- Experience with the recruitment and development of faculty and staff;
- Experience in working in integrated healthcare environments;

- A commitment to the mission, vision, guiding principles, and philosophy of the School of Nursing and an understanding of how the traditions of Lutheran education informs the mission of the School;
- The highest degree of personal integrity.

COMPENSATION

The anticipated salary range for this position is \$190-230k annually and is commensurate with related experience and qualifications. Relocation assistance is available. PLU offers an excellent benefits package including tuition remission for employees and their dependents, generous retirement plan, medical, dental, paid vacation and sick leave, major holidays off (including Christmas/New Year's break and extra time off during the summer), and many other great university benefits. PLU is a qualifying employer under the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program as a 501©(3) tax-exempt organization.

LOCATION

Tacoma highlights the beauty of the Pacific Northwest while being a creative community of emerging writers, artists, and musicians, including the birthplace of renowned glass artist, Dale Chihuly. It offers charming neighborhoods and big city amenities with competitively priced living, and incredible mountain, city, and water views. Recent investment in Tacoma has led to unprecedented growth in business and innovation. It is also home to a thriving academic landscape with PLU, the University of Washington, Tacoma, the University of Puget Sound, The Evergreen State College Tacoma campus, and local community and technical colleges. Just south of Seattle-Tacoma International Airport and easily accessible from Seattle and other neighboring cities, Tacoma is a city on the rise.

Parkland is a sprawling unincorporated area south of Tacoma that blends urban with rural, home to roughly 38,000 people. A multicultural area, the Franklin Pierce School District is ranked by Niche as the 11th most diverse in Washington State. The Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department released a report on the status of access to healthcare in the county in Fall of 2022 that documents some of the improvements that have been realized and the barriers that still need to be addressed. <https://www.tpchd.org/home/showpublisheddocument/694/638012678175770000>. The University has worked to build strong connections and mutually beneficial partnerships by mobilizing students, staff and faculty volunteers in schools, food banks, community gardens, and Habitat for Humanity, to name a few. The connection between citizen and community has become Parkland's calling card and a bond that PLU students looking to serve have come to respect and emulate.

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 for the search: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/pacific-lutheran-university/dean-school-nursing>. Electronic submission of materials is strongly encouraged.

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Pacific Lutheran University is an equal opportunity employer and welcomes applications from members of historically underrepresented and minoritized groups, veterans, persons with disabilities, and others who would bring broadly diverse perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds in educational, research, or other work activities.