

SEARCH PROFILE:

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT FOR ENROLLMENT
AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT



**STEPHEN F. AUSTIN
STATE UNIVERSITY**

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SYSTEM
NACOGDOCHES, TEXAS

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Stephen F. Austin State University welcomes applications and nominations for the recently created position of Senior Vice President for Enrollment and Student Engagement (SVPESE), which is an executive position responsible for developing strategies and overseeing implementation of student success initiatives that promote student well-being, engagement, purpose-finding, and academic achievement.



STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY

[Stephen F. Austin State University](#), the newest member of [The University of Texas System](#), began a century ago as a teachers' college in Texas' oldest town, Nacogdoches. Today, it has grown into a regional institution comprising six colleges – business, education, fine arts, forestry and agriculture, liberal and applied arts, and sciences and mathematics. Accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, SFA provides the academic breadth of a comprehensive university with the personalized attention of a liberal arts college.

Nestled in a pine tree sanctuary, the main campus encompasses 421 acres that include 36 academic facilities, nine residence halls, and 68 acres of recreational trails that wind through six gardens. With the inclusion of its off-campus Todd Agricultural Research Center, DeWitt School of Nursing Complex, and aviation program hangars, SFA is spread across 1,210 acres of land in Nacogdoches County.

SFA continues to make substantial upgrades to campus infrastructure and technology to encourage academic innovation. Recent additions include the Naymola Basketball Performance Center, Cole STEM Building with innovative makerspaces and cutting-edge tech, and a new first-year residence hall. A significant expansion of the Griffith Fine Arts Building completed in 2023 added a recording studio, sound stage, audio and video editing rooms, and an art gallery, among several other state-of-the-art additions.

A new, [soon-to-be-completed 20,000-square-foot dining hall](#) will add outdoor seating and flexible spaces for events such as culinary expos. Occupying an important

campus corner, the building will showcase southern yellow pine mass timber construction to not only students, staff, and faculty, but also to the local east Texas community by relying solely on southern yellow pine harvested within 500 miles of campus. The Arthur Temple College of Forestry and Agriculture will undergo major renovations as the UT System has budgeted \$77 million toward improvements for the Forestry Building, Agriculture Building, Forestry Laboratories and Agricultural Mechanics Shop.

In addition, [live performances, cultural programs, and special events](#) occur throughout the year. The Micky Elliott College of Fine Arts presents nationally acclaimed artists, award-winning plays and lively choreography through a lineup of concerts, performances and exhibitions. The University Series, Children's Performing Arts Series, plus art, music and theatre and dance events offer an outstanding range of events for all tastes and ages.

Fall 2023 enrollment was 10,781 with the following demographic breakdown:

- 37% male
- 63% female
- 22% Hispanic
- 13% African American
- 1% Asian

Over 41% of undergraduate students are first generation – being the first in their families to achieve four-year college educations. Approximately 39% of AY 2023-2024 undergraduate students received a Pell grant.



PRESIDENT NEAL WEAVER

Dr. Neal Weaver began his tenure as President of SFA May 13, 2024. Previously, he was the President of Georgia Southwestern State University (GSW) for seven years.

Before his role at GSW, Weaver served as the Vice President for University Advancement and Innovation at Nicholls State University in Thibodaux, Louisiana. In this capacity, he provided leadership in fundraising, enrollment management and athletics while generating new revenue and improving retention, operating efficiencies and customer service. Weaver's previous roles include Vice President for Institutional Advancement at West Texas A&M University and Vice President for University Relations at Northeastern State University in Oklahoma.

Weaver earned a doctoral degree in organizational leadership from The University of Oklahoma, a Master of Business Administration from Southeastern Oklahoma State University, and a bachelor's degree from Oklahoma Panhandle State University.

President's Vision for the SVPESE

President Weaver's vision for this senior vice presidential role is as follows:

"This is a critical leadership position that will drive not only the creation of a campus division that is student centered, but also a campus-wide approach to student development and support that will integrate classroom instruction with student experiences to produce graduates ready to succeed in an evolving and dynamic workforce. SFA has incredible traditions, campus pride, and engaged alumni. This reimagining is an opportunity for the institution to further evolve the student experience in a way that attracts, inspires, and engages the modern college student. The University has the resources and the people to quickly become a national leader in student development. We are looking for the unique person with the right combination of professional experience and personal drive to elevate this new division and build something special at SFA."

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

The University offers [more than 80 bachelor's degree programs, more than 40 master's degrees, and four doctoral degrees, covering more than 120 areas of study](#). Small class sizes, with a student-faculty ratio of 17:1, ensure students receive personalized attention from faculty members who are active mentors.

SFA's academic offerings have evolved with shifting industry expectations. Within the past five years, it has launched an aviation initiative where students can graduate with a bachelor's degree and pilot's license in four years, an agricultural communications major, a master's degree in publishing, and a Bachelor of Business Administration in entrepreneurship. SFA added its fourth doctoral-level degree program in 2023 with the creation of the Doctorate in Social Work.

Opportunities for immersive learning prepare students to enter the workforce. A survey of SFA's May 2023 graduating class indicated that 94% of graduates self-reported positive career outcomes within six months of graduation. Also, related to student success are increased overall graduation rates over the last six years to 52%. The university is increasing degree completion numbers with high need populations, including more than 3,000 economically disadvantaged graduates over the last three years.

The University's commitment to academic excellence has garnered multiple distinctions, including being ranked in the top 12 public universities in Texas by educational rating agency Niche. *U.S. News & World Report* ranked SFA's Charter School the second-best charter elementary school in Texas in 2024. SFA's forestry program continues to achieve high rankings, named as the best in Texas by education technology firm Plexus.

There were 2,793 degrees awarded in AY 2022-2023, including:

- 2,096 Bachelor's
- 554 Master's
- 7 Doctoral

The University has approximately 737 faculty and 895 staff.

COLLEGES

The [Nelson Rusche College of Business](#) has awarded nearly 20,000 degrees since 1940. Combining foundational business classes with a personalized classroom experience and experiential learning, the College's degree programs provide students the tools they need to launch careers and become industry leaders.

The [James I. Perkins College of Education](#) prepares competent, successful, caring, and enthusiastic education professionals from diverse backgrounds. The College is dedicated to responsible service, leadership, social justice, and continued professional and intellectual development in an interconnected global society.

The [Micky Elliott College of Fine Arts](#)'s academic programs are designed to provide a first-class education and develop the talents of its students. These programs equip students to compete successfully in the real-world arts marketplace for performing, teaching, or creating original art.

The [Arthur Temple College of Forestry and Agriculture](#) is home to one of the top forestry and agriculture colleges in the nation. The College's advanced technology and proximity to natural resources makes this the ideal university for students seeking hands-on field research. In addition, the College's science-based programs and experience-based learning prepare graduates for successful careers with top employers across the country.

The [College of Liberal and Applied Arts](#) provides students with the broad-based skills required to be successful over a lifetime. A combination of humanities and social sciences ensures that students communicate well, think critically, solve problems creatively, and value ethics.

The [College of Sciences and Mathematics](#) houses disciplines that are key to world-changing discoveries. The College's students have opportunities to participate with SFA faculty members in groundbreaking research – even at the undergraduate level.



ATHLETICS

SFA's [athletic teams compete in 18 intercollegiate sports](#) – six men's, 10 women's, and two co-ed – in the Southland Conference at the NCAA Division I level. Steeped in tradition, SFA athletics enjoy unwavering support from SFA students and the Nacogdoches community. The University's vibrant and passionate student fan base, known as the "Purple Haze," has its

own special traditions during football and basketball seasons that create a unique and exciting atmosphere. With a history of notable achievements in football, basketball and track, and national championships in softball and women's bowling, the Lumberjacks and Ladyjacks are part of the fabric of the full SFA experience.



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SYSTEM

Stephen F. Austin State University takes great pride in being part of The University of Texas System, known for its exceptional academic success, breakthrough research, and international reputation for excellence and innovation. It includes 13 other educational institutions throughout the state, including eight universities and five health institutions. For 140 years, The University of Texas System has improved the lives of Texans – and people all over the world – through education, health care and research. With an enrollment of more than 256,000 students at academic and health institutions across the state, as well as an operating budget of \$29.1 billion, the UT System is one of the largest public university systems in the nation and the world.

UT institutions are powerful drivers of economic and social mobility in Texas, producing more than 63,000 graduates annually, including more than one-third of the state's undergraduate degrees and more than 60% of the state's medical degrees. Almost half of all undergraduate

degrees are awarded to students who qualified for a Pell grant based on financial need while enrolled at a UT institution. The UT System is one of the largest employers in Texas, with more than 122,000 faculty, health care professionals, researchers, support staff and student workers.

More than three-fourths of undergraduate students secure jobs in Texas within a year after graduation, providing a skilled workforce and fueling the state's economy. In fact, UT students who entered the Texas workforce between 2002 and 2019 had cumulative earnings through 2020 of \$350 billion.

With the Texas population expected to grow dramatically in the years to come, the UT System will continue to lead in driving prosperity, innovation, and health for the people of the Lone Star State.

THE DIVISION OF ENROLLMENT AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

The Senior Vice President will oversee a merger of SFA's current divisions of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs.

THE DIVISION OF ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

SFA's [Division of Enrollment Management](#) consists of enrollment strategies, undergraduate admissions, financial aid and scholarships, the registrar's office, the one-stop shop, and academic partnerships. It seeks to identify, recruit, and enroll students who meet the university's standards for admission and are thus likely to be successful in their degree program.

The [Office of Financial Aid](#) is responsible for administering state and federal aid in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations, as well as administering student scholarships in accordance with any specified criteria.

The [Office of the Registrar](#) strives to help students while compiling, processing, and maintaining accurate academic records for all currently and previously enrolled students; to accomplish academic registration and commencement, and to provide academic record services.

The [One-Stop Shop](#) is the primary initial contact for student inquiries regarding student business services, financial aid, registration, and residence life. The shop provides student support via phone and live-chat by diagnosing issues and providing solutions to the most common obstacles students encounter in those areas. It functions to increase teamwork and breakdown silos by developing a holistic approach in serving students and student success, resulting in an enhanced customer experience.

Within SFA's student population, 96% are Texas residents and 90% come from within 200 miles of Nacogdoches. In fact, most students (82%) originate from three areas: East Texas (37%), Houston (27%), and Dallas (18%). SFA serves more than 9,000 undergraduate students, who comprise 87% of the total student population.

THE DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

The mission of SFA's [Division of Student Affairs](#) is to holistically develop Lumberjacks who engage, lead, thrive, and succeed. The Student Affairs units are organized within four diverse pillars: [Dean of Students](#); [Student Life](#); [Campus Living, Dining, and Auxiliary Enterprises](#); and [Student Development and Access Services](#). SFA's dedicated team is committed to student access and student success and the following divisional goals:

- Advance the holistic development of students and support their well-being.
- Foster an engaged and connected Lumberjack experience.
- Champion a welcoming, respectful, and inclusive campus.
- Enhance the career readiness of SFA students and empower them to function in a global economy.
- Ensure Student Affairs employees have the knowledge, competences, training, and support to advance student success.
- Effective stewardship and cultivation of resources.

The [Office of Student Engagement](#) helps students make the most of their college experience. Home to the [Student Activities Association](#), the [Involvement Center](#), and the [Student Government Association](#), Student Engagement is a key hub for campus life. SFA's students are encouraged to actively participate in meaningful experiences outside the classroom. The office's programs, events, activities, and organizations enhance and develop students' leadership skills by fostering accountability, creative thinking, and lasting personal connections.





THE SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT FOR ENROLLMENT AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

This newly created and defined position has responsibility for each student from the moment of first contact in the admissions process, through enrollment and fostering an engaged student life, and culminating in a successful graduate. Alongside the Provost, this senior executive position fosters student success and achievement by promoting successful academic performance; identifying barriers to classroom achievement, campus engagement, and leadership development; and providing mechanisms for early warning of student distress. The Senior Vice President for Enrollment and Student Engagement (SVPESE) will strategically implement current best practices in identifying, cultivating, and enrolling a student body, including transfer students, for maximum success at SFA. This is an executive position responsible for developing strategies and overseeing implementation of student success initiatives that promote student well-being, engagement, purpose-finding, academic achievement, and graduation. As the chief student enrollment, engagement, and success officer of the university, the SVPESE sets the strategy to cultivate an integrated and comprehensive student experience from first contact, successful enrollment, engagement, and persistence to graduation. This position serves as a member of the President's Cabinet. This position serves as the senior executive officer responsible for providing leadership, vision, and oversight of the units within the Enrollment and Student Engagement division. This Senior Vice President will work under minimal supervision, have extensive latitude for the use of initiative and independent judgment, and report directly to the President.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

- Creates and implements strategies for a unified vision for enrollment management, student engagement, retention, and overall student success in partnership with faculty, staff and the SFA leadership team.
- Works in collaboration with the Provost to develop and implement a student enrollment, engagement, and success plan that ensures each student is supported to maximize student educational outcomes through alignment of academic and workforce programs.
- Provides campus-wide vision and leadership for the development, implementation, assessment, maintenance, delivery, and integrity of critical and exemplary enrollment practices and essential student services.
- Has central responsibility for attracting students to fulfill the University's mission as a highly recognized university, meeting revenue goals, and presenting SFA's high-quality programs and exceptional outcomes to prospective students, parents, the higher education community, and the public.
- Oversees financial aid awarding in compliance with all governmental and campus policies.
- Provides strategic leadership for all operational areas of the division: plans, designs, and organizes division goals and objectives, guides efforts toward expected outcomes, and evaluates results.
- Supervises and directs the work of divisional staff working across a broad spectrum of student enrollment, support, engagement, and success areas. Leads teams, inspiring productive individual and team efforts in achieving stated goals.
- Provides direction and oversight to all offices and services within the division and develops a culture of continuous improvement throughout all functional areas of enrollment management and student services.
- Stays abreast of current enrollment management and student success models, utilizing data, metrics, transparent reporting, and state of the art CRM tools.
- Coordinates the annual budget and retains executive authority over all division budgets.
- Directs the ongoing evaluation and revision of University standards, policies, and procedures that address the most effective, efficient, and student-centered enrollment practices and delivery of programming in support of the University mission.

THE SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT FOR ENROLLMENT AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT (CONT.)

- Provides leadership and direction to the Division of Enrollment and Student Engagement for the development and recommendations of policies, planning guidance, and procedures for strategic planning and institutional effectiveness.
- Serves as a student success thought-partner and senior advisor to the President and other university leaders. In partnership with the Provost, responsible for collaboratively developing student success strategies aligned with the University vision and strategy.
- Promotes positive student relations and leadership opportunities by maintaining effective lines of communication and serving as a strong advocate for the non-academic, extra-curricular, and co-curricular needs of students.
- Provides oversight of and compliance with federal, state, system, and University policies and processes, including the protection and confidentiality of student records and information.
- Promotes accountability by tracking and evaluating the effectiveness of enrollment, engagement, and success outcomes on a continual basis with data-driven metrics and dashboards.
- Provides effective leadership for staff, including hiring, motivating, mentoring, supervising, and evaluation of personnel.
- Fosters relationships with University System peers and leadership in support of mutually shared goals, missions, and strategies.
- Maintains a highly engaged relationship with students and parents and remains visible throughout the campus community.
- Plans and implements effective communication and involvement strategies with parents of students. Works with the Advancement Office in identifying parents who may assist in the realization of SFA strategic needs and goals.
- Works with Alumni Affairs to promote the involvement post-graduation of all former students to raise the visibility of SFA nationally and internationally as well as to encourage future philanthropy of alumni. Cultivates a commitment to SFA encouraging graduates to become admission representatives by visiting college/career nights in middle and high schools and hosting prospective student gatherings in their community and city.
- Knowledge of current enrollment management processes, student development models, and engagement practices.
- Knowledge of industry and national trends across all functional areas (enrollment management, engagement, and success) to ensure strategies and practices are relevant.
- Organizational and managerial skills, experience in strategic planning, budget, and resource management.
- Skill in using computer applications including spreadsheet, database, and word processing software.
- Ability to work effectively within a complex organizational structure.
- Ability to plan, implement, and evaluate programs.
- Ability to exercise sound judgment in making critical decisions and recommendations.
- Ability to communicate effectively in both oral and written form.
- Ability to be highly collegial and consultative.
- Ability to develop and sustain collaborative relationships.
- Ability to communicate effectively within the University environment and community.
- Ability to establish and maintain a good rapport with students, staff, faculty, system employees, university guests, parents, and the general public.
- Ability to work with and maintain confidential information with discretion.
- Ability to handle difficult and stressful situations with professional composure.
- Ability and desire to promote a favorable image of the University.

GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS

Required Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

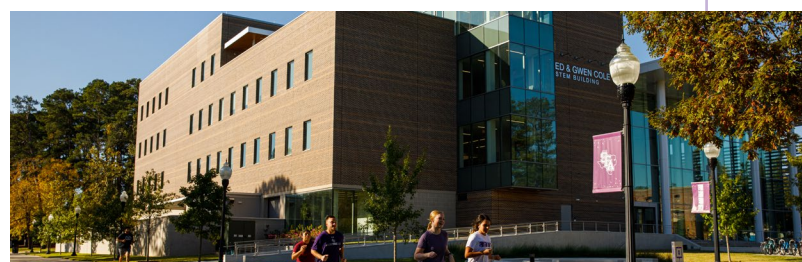
- Knowledge of, or the ability to learn, University policies and procedures.
- Knowledge of federal, state, and local laws, statutes, regulations, codes, and standards related to the area of responsibility.

Education

- A master's degree in a course of study related to the occupational field is required. A Doctoral degree in a related field is strongly preferred.

Experience and Training

- Directly relevant and progressively responsible experience with a proven record of accomplishments is required. Ten years of related experience is strongly preferred. Demonstrated successful management and leadership experience is required. Experience in higher education is preferred. Experience representing a large organization in a high-profile setting is preferred.





HOW TO APPLY

Applications should consist of a substantial letter of interest, a CV, and a list of five professional references with full contact information and a note indicating the nature of your working relationship with each. No references will be contacted without the explicit permission of the candidate. Applications, nominations, and expressions of interest can be submitted electronically, and in confidence, to: SFASVPESE@academicsearch.org

The position is open until filled but only applications received by **Monday, September 23, 2024**, can be assured full consideration. The University is being assisted by Academic Search. Confidential discussions about this opportunity may be arranged by contacting consultants Ann Hasselmo

at Ann.Hasselmo@academicsearch.org and Chris Butler at Chris.Butler@academicsearch.org. Further information about Stephen F. Austin State University is available at <https://www.sfasu.edu/>.

Stephen F. Austin State University, an Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Employer and Educator, is committed to excellence. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to sex, race, creed, color, age, national origin, religion or physical or mental disability as required by law. If, because of an impairment or disability, you need accommodation during any part of the employment process, please contact Human Resources at 936-468-2304.

ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting Stephen F. Austin State University in this work. For more than four decades, Academic Search has offered executive search services to higher education institutions, associations, and related organizations.

Academic Search was founded by higher education leaders on the principle that we provide the most value to partner institutions by combining best practices with our deep knowledge and experience.

Our mission today is to enhance institutional capacity by providing outstanding executive recruitment services, executive coaching, and transition support, in partnership with our parent organization, the American Academic Leadership Institute.

