SEARCH PROFILE:
DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
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THE OPPORTUNITY

Athens State University invites applications and nominations for the position of Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences (COAS). Reporting directly to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Dean is responsible for academic planning, enhancement of programs, curriculum, teaching, scholarship and services, professional and regional accreditation, recruitment of faculty, faculty development and evaluation, student recruitment, advising, and budget development and allocation of resources, among other things.
ABOUT ATHENS STATE UNIVERSITY

The institution was founded in 1822 by local citizens who purchased five acres of land, erected a building, and began the Athens Female Academy. Ownership of the school was transferred to the Methodist Church in 1842. It became a public institution in 1975 and was charged to serve the graduates of state junior, community, and technical colleges/institutes. In October 2012, the Alabama legislature approved the first autonomous board to govern the University.

The University’s bicentennial represents a significant milestone: despite epidemics, wars, and economic downturns, the institution has not only endured, but also has grown into a highly respected university. It celebrates its past while preparing for the future. The ideas that led to its founding in 1822 continue to influence its mission to educate all students but especially those who have been historically underserved in higher education due to economic and social circumstances. The challenges faced by the institution over the years fostered a resilience and agility that result in ongoing transformation.

VISION AND MISSION

VISION
Athens State University will be the premier destination for transfer students seeking the highest quality education and cutting-edge delivery at the most affordable cost. As the upper-division university in Alabama, building on a tradition that began in 1822, Athens State University will be the catalyst for positive change in the lives of its students.

MISSION
The University advances the best interests of its students and the state of Alabama through teaching, service, research, and other creative activities to empower students to make valuable contributions in their professional, civic, educational, and economic endeavors. Through innovative communication and course delivery for high-quality undergraduate and select graduate programs, Athens State University provides a supportive environment for each student, demonstrating the importance of the diverse and interdependent nature of our state and society. Athens State University changes the face of Alabama by changing the lives of its students.

STRATEGIC PLAN
In January 2021, the Board of Trustees approved Horizon 2030.
ACCREDITATION

Athens State University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools - Commission on Colleges to award bachelor’s and master’s degrees. Reaffirmation of accreditation occurred most recently in 2021, and the next Fifth-Year Review is scheduled for 2027. Among programs in the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, the B.S. in Computer Science degree program (excluding the concentration in Information Security) is accredited by the Computing Accreditation Commission of ABET.

THE CITY OF ATHENS, AL

Located in the heart of the Tennessee Valley region, roughly 24 miles west of Huntsville, Athens is an attractive, quintessential, Southern city. For much of its history, Athens was a small agricultural town housing the seat of government for Limestone County. However, with the onset of the 21st century, Athens has continued to develop into an industrial and commercial center for Limestone County and a bedroom community within the Huntsville metropolitan area. Athens and its surrounds are booming. In 2018 its population was estimated to be approximately 26,247. It is expected to continue to grow rapidly due to the growing automotive, aerospace, manufacturing, government service, and cybersecurity industries. Until the COVID-19 recession, labor shortages were common, and the economy is expected to continue its upward trajectory, auguring well for new residents of the area. The region has one of the most highly educated populations in the country. To learn more about Athens, please visit https://athensalabama.us

The Athens-Decatur-Madison-Huntsville region is a great place to live. Housing options include historic homes, riverfront living, new houses, and apartments. The cost of living in Athens is approximately 84 percent of the US average. The climate is subtropical with hot humid summers and cool but not snowy winters. The region is a safe place to raise a family. Schools are very reputable. Sports facilities, public parks, hiking trails, golf courses, and fishing opportunities abound. Entertainment is varied and plentiful. Numerous festivals are part of the annual calendar in Athens. According to U.S. News & World Report, in 2021 metro Huntsville was the best place to live in Alabama; the best place to live in the Deep South; and the 3rd-best place to live anywhere in the United States out of the 150 most populous metros.
Academics

Athens State University is one of a few institutions in the country to offer only upper-division (junior and senior) and graduate programs. University students are typically transfer students primarily from two-year schools in the Postsecondary Education System in the State of Alabama and adults returning to higher education to complete their degrees. Enrollment is generally around 3000 students, consisting primarily of non-traditional students, averaging 30 years of age, with two-thirds being female. Some students are wholly online, but most mix online, in-person, and blended coursework. Students often maintain full-time jobs and have family obligations.

The University offers 34 baccalaureate degree programs and eight master's degree programs, with more in the approval process. In addition, the University offers 57 minors, 21 concentrations, and 17 certificate programs. See https://www.athens.edu/academics/. The three Colleges include: Arts and Sciences, Business, and Education and each College produces graduates who are career-ready for today's job markets.
THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

The mission of the College of Arts & Sciences is to prepare students for entry into the job market or for continuing education in graduate or professional school. Comprising 30 faculty and seven staff members, the College offers Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Fine Arts, and Bachelor of Science degrees as well as Master of Arts in Religious Studies, Master of Science in Computer Science, and a Master of Science in Cybersecurity.

The Department of Behavioral Sciences offers courses in nine areas of study: Behavioral Science, Psychology, Sociology, Criminal Justice, Health Science, Health & Wellness Management, RN-BSN, Public Safety and Health Administration, and Homeland Security. Programs in the Department employ an interdisciplinary approach aimed at developing a strong academic background to prepare students for employment. In addition, the programs prepare students for graduate or professional studies.

The Department of Humanities and Social Sciences offers courses in four areas of study: English, History, Religion, and Social Science. Programs in the Department help students develop a strong academic background in preparation for careers, graduate or professional programs, or certification as secondary education teachers.

The Department of Fine and Performing Arts offers courses in two areas of study: Art and Drama & Theatre Arts. Programs in the Department emphasize individual commitment to creating art and providing students with the opportunity to shape the future of the art community, emphasizing the importance of art in society. Graduates of the program find themselves with a deepened artistic appreciation, knowledge-base, and skill-set that will allow them to pursue a graduate school education and/or that will enhance career opportunities.

The Department of Mathematical, Computer and Natural Sciences is committed to providing students with a strong academic background within the context of an increasingly technology-driven society. The mathematics, computer science, and information technology programs allow students the flexibility to explore a wide range of applied and theoretical areas of mathematics, computing, and logic suitable for diverse employment environments in business, industry, and government, or for further studies. The curriculum is designed to include an interdisciplinary approach where students can combine mathematics, information technology, and/or computer science courses with other disciplines, as well as gain certification for teaching mathematics at the secondary school level.
The natural science programs include biology and chemistry. These programs employ an interdisciplinary approach to the natural sciences, providing a comprehensive science education background obtained through rigorous coursework, laboratories, and field experiences. The natural sciences are structured to prepare students for career opportunities in science, government, industry, and education or for pursuing graduate studies.

The College of Arts and Sciences, in cooperation with the College of Education, offers majors with a minor in Education in Biology, Chemistry, English/Language Arts, History, Mathematics, and Social Science for those students who are interested in teaching grades 6-12. Completion of these programs will lead to Class B Certification in middle and high school education. Completion of the Bachelor of Arts Art Major with a minor in Education will lead to Class B Certification in grades P-12. In cooperation with the College of Business and the College of Education, the College sponsors interdisciplinary majors in Health Science and Public Safety and Health Administration leading to the Bachelor of Science degree.

The College of Arts and Sciences offers online degree programs in the following majors: Religion, Psychology, RN-BSN, and Individualized Degree Program. All coursework for these majors may be completed via distance learning.

For a full list of programs, please visit www.athens.edu/department/arts-and-sciences/?view_all=1.

THE ALABAMA CENTER FOR THE ARTS

The Alabama Center for the Arts (ACA), located in Decatur, represents a unique and dynamic partnership between Calhoun Community College, Athens State University, and the City of Decatur. The Center serves as a hub for active and engaged creative activity and learning in an inspiring, vibrant, and supportive environment. The Center serves people of all ages, backgrounds, and skill levels through targeted outreach, partnerships, and programs. As a key resource and driver for arts activities and education, the Center also enhances the civic and cultural life of the community. Classes at the ACA are offered by Calhoun Community College (leading to an Associate of Science or Associate of Applied Science degree) and Athens State University with faculty drawn from the College of Arts and Sciences (leading to a Bachelor of Arts degree). Programs are offered in both the visual and performing arts. Simultaneously, the Center also serves as a site for community engagement via performances and exhibits. The Visual Arts facilities of the Alabama Center for the Arts provide students with a state-of-the-art environment to learn to create in large, well-equipped studios with natural lighting.

Housing one of the finest recital halls in the state, the ACA is the site of student, faculty, and professional performances, as well as ensemble concerts. Students in drama and theatre arts programs benefit from the unique black-box studio theater that permits a variety of staging configurations. Additionally, they will acquire various fundamental performance and production techniques; develop skills by learning to critically analyze dramatic literature through historical and aesthetic movements in a variety of arts; and gain knowledge of theatre history, dramatic literature, dramatic theory, as well as current trends in the arts. Music technology students receive cutting-edge experience using industry-standard technology to get the most efficient and balanced recordings in real-world applications and projects.
LEADERSHIP AGENDA FOR THE DEAN

The College of Arts and Sciences seeks to engage the intellect, excite the imagination, and lead students to a deeper understanding of the common human story. Working collaboratively with faculty and staff, the new dean will continue to develop programs in the arts, humanities, and social and natural sciences that support the mission of Athens State University by empowering students “to make valuable contributions in their professional, civic, educational, and economic endeavors.” Specifically, the new dean will:

Create a vision for the College that builds on existing strengths and imagines future opportunities

Athens State University and the College of Arts and Sciences is emerging from the pandemic years in a strong position—a tribute to faculty and staff creativity and agility that took advantage of already existing online and hybrid pedagogies. The dean will have the opportunity to work with faculty to strengthen existing and create new programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels that are built to be delivered in multiple modalities. Supporting continued faculty pedagogical innovation and engagement with students on research and creative activities will be an important responsibility for the dean. The College is also a key player in the interdisciplinary work that will be the backbone of many new programs. The dean will be responsible for facilitating these collaborations both within the College and across the University in ways that are flexible, data driven, entrepreneurial, and creative. A particular area of opportunity is the continuing expansion of the health sciences and in creating pathways toward appropriate disciplinary-specific accreditation.

Focus on the continued success of students

Athens State University’s unique mission as an upper division institution makes deep and productive partnerships with community colleges a cornerstone of student recruitment and success. The dean will need to continue to nurture and expand these partnerships in ways that make seamless the continued educational experience and success of students who enter Athens State University with an associate’s degree. The dean will also need to recognize the multiple pathways that students have taken to arrive at Athens State University and create models for student success and degree completion that flex to fit the needs of students of multiple ages, backgrounds, and circumstances.

Engage with the larger Athens/Huntsville/Madison/Decatur Community as part of an “Anchor Institution"

The Athens State University Horizon 2030 Goals state that the University will “engage with its outside communities as an ‘anchor institution’ resulting in reciprocal benefits.” The new dean will have opportunities to match program development with local workforce need; to create community sites for student internships and project-based learning; to collaborate with other other school deans to enhance economic development; and, to partner with community leaders on local projects. These partnerships will also allow the dean to highlight and promote COAS programs in the community. A key partnership area for the Dean of the COAS lies within the Alabama Center for the Arts.

The Alabama Center for the Arts: a unique leadership opportunity

The Alabama Center for the Arts represents a unique and dynamic partnership between Calhoun Community College, Athens State University, and the City of Decatur. It is a focal point for promoting education and engagement in fine and performing arts in the region through professional faculty, quality programs, and state-of-the art facilities. The Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences plays a central role in managing this ongoing collaboration so as to reach its full potential in serving students and the community. The dean works with Athens State University faculty in the arts who find their professional home at this joint facility and is responsible for integrating their work into the College as a whole.
QUALIFICATIONS

REQUIRED

• Ph.D. or other terminal degree as appropriate in the candidate’s field of study
• Strong record of teaching, service, and scholarship or creative activity that merits the award of full professor with tenure status in a field represented within the College of Arts and Sciences
• Successful record of academic leadership with progressive administrative responsibilities

PREFERRED

• Strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, including demonstrated success in promoting a positive, inclusive, and collaborative teaching and learning environment
• Reputation as an approachable leader who communicates often, openly, and effectively with faculty, staff, and students
• Experience as a dean, department chair, and/or program director
• Experience managing the recruitment, retention, tenure, and promotion processes and a record of mentoring faculty at all career stages
• Experience with online and hybrid teaching environments
• Experience with institutions that have multiple campuses
• Record of leading collaboration across disciplines—especially arts and sciences and professional programs
• Record of successful work with students—especially adult and first-generation college students

• Experience with program review and accreditation
• Ability to analyze and use data to drive decision making
• Record of successful fiscal management and strong understanding of budget processes
• Experience with strategizing and creating effective marketing and promotion for programs in the arts and sciences
• Experience with creating community partnerships
• Experience with creating and overseeing graduate programs that respond to the needs of the local community
• Experience with advancement work and successful grant writing and administration
APPLICATION AND NOMINATION PROCESSES

Academic Search is assisting Athens State University in this search. Applications must include, in three separate attachments: 1) a detailed cover letter; 2) a current curriculum vitae (CV); and 3) a list of five professional references with contact information and a brief description of the working relationship with each. References will not be contacted without the explicit permission of the candidate and at a later stage of the search. All documents should be in PDF format.

The position is available in August 2022. Nominations and applications should be sent to AthensStateCOAS@academicsearch.org. To ensure full consideration by the Search Committee, applications should be received by **Monday, June 6, 2022**. Nominators and prospective candidates may arrange a confidential discussion about this opportunity with Eric Richtmyer (eric.richtmyer@academicsearch.org) or Linda McMillin (linda.mcmillin@academicsearch.org), or at 202-332-4049. When submitting a nomination, please include the nominee’s full name, position, institution, and email address.

Athens State University, as an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution, complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding nondiscrimination and affirmative action. Athens State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, marital status, gender, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, sexual orientation, disability, religion, genetic information, or veteran status in employment, or admissions to or participation in educational programs and activities. Inquiries or concerns may be addressed to the Office of the Vice President of Enrollment and Student Support Services, 300 N. Beaty St., Athens, AL 35611, 256-233-8175.
ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting Athens 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. For more information, visit www.academicsearch.org.