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St. John Fisher College invites applications, expressions of interest, and nominations for an outstanding academic leadership opportunity: Dean of the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. School of Education. An independent, liberal arts institution in the Catholic tradition of American higher education, St. John Fisher College emphasizes education for students in traditional academic disciplines as well as career-oriented fields.

Ranked among the top colleges and universities in the northeast, Fisher has a rich history of academic excellence and an outstanding reputation for its commitment to a student-centered educational environment that promotes learning and discovery. The College enrolls approximately 3,700 students and retains the educational philosophy of the founding Basilian Fathers, whose motto, “Teach me goodness, discipline, and knowledge,” reflects Fisher’s traditions and values today.

Fisher is in the midst of an exciting time. The College’s Strategic Plan, “Renewing our purpose. Broadening our impact,” is currently at its mid-point and focuses on five pillars that are strategic areas of focus for the institution: Intellectual Engagement; Student Success; Community Engagement; Equity, Inclusion, and Community; and Institutional Excellence. The College’s campus master plan has also been reassessed, with continuing refinements being made to align with the Strategic Plan. Most recently, the College launched “Fisher Forward,” the largest comprehensive fundraising campaign in its history, aiming to raise $75 million by 2023, which will mark the institution’s 75th anniversary.
An independent, liberal arts institution in the Catholic tradition of American higher education, Fisher was founded in 1948. From its modest beginnings of one building on 70 acres, the campus is now situated on 163 park-like acres, a beautiful setting for nearly 30 modern academic, campus life, and residential buildings; robust athletic facilities; and a warm, friendly campus community. The College offers 38 academic majors in the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, business, education, and nursing, as well as 11 pre-professional programs and a variety of master’s and doctoral programs.

Fisher employs 230 full-time faculty, 87 percent of whom hold a terminal degree, and students benefit from a student/faculty ratio of 12:1. In fall 2019, the total enrollment was nearly 3,700.

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<th>PROGRAM LEVEL &amp; ENROLLMENT STATUS</th>
<th>APPROXIMATE COUNT</th>
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<tr>
<td>UNDERGRADUATE, FULL-TIME</td>
<td>NEARLY 2,600</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDERGRADUATE, PART-TIME</td>
<td>OVER 100</td>
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<td>GRADUATE</td>
<td>NEARLY 1,000</td>
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For the ninth year in a row, Fisher has been named by *U.S. News & World Report* to the list of “America’s Best Colleges” in the National Universities category, and was also included in the publication’s “National Universities Social Mobility” category, “Best Colleges for Veterans” list, and “A-Plus Schools for B Students” feature. Forbes.com included Fisher on its “America’s Top Colleges” list, which ranks undergraduate institutions based on variables including student satisfaction and academic success, graduation rates, and alumni earnings. Fisher also ranked in several other Forbes Top Colleges sub-lists, including “Best Private Colleges,” “Best Research Universities,” and “Best Colleges in the Northeast.”

*MONEY.com’s “Best Colleges in America, Ranked by Value”* ranked Fisher in approximately the top 10 percent of colleges and universities nationwide. The *Wall Street Journal/Time’s Higher Education 2020 College Rankings* also placed Fisher among the top universities and colleges in the nation, rising 12 spots from the previous year. The College is also regularly named to *Kiplinger’s Personal Finance’s* list of 100 “Best Values in Private Colleges” year after year.

For the last several years, Fisher has been designated a Military Friendly School, one that is awarded to the top colleges, universities, and trade schools in the country that are doing the most to embrace military students, and to dedicate resources to ensure their success in the classroom and after graduation. In addition, Fisher consistently makes the Phi Theta Kappa Transfer Honor Roll in recognition of the dynamic pathways the College has created to support transfer students.

Fisher has also earned the Colleges of Distinction recognition, which assesses institutions based on four characteristics: engaged students, great teaching, vibrant communities, and successful outcomes. In 2019, Fisher’s Schools of Education, Business, and Nursing were specifically recognized by Colleges of Distinction, and the College also earned two new accolades including the Colleges of New York and Colleges of Career Development Distinctions.

Fisher has been consistently named to the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for exemplary service efforts and service to America’s communities. The Honor Roll is the highest federal recognition a school can achieve for its commitment to service-learning and civic engagement. In 2015, the College received the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification.
ST. JOHN FISHER COLLEGE: AN OVERVIEW (cont.)

from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the New England Resource Center for Higher Education (NERCHE). This was the first time Fisher applied for the prestigious classification, and only the second round of national classification done by Carnegie and the NERCHE.

In July 2016, Fisher was named a Great College to Work® for by The Chronicle of Higher Education. And finally, Niche.com, a national college search website, ranked Fisher’s campus food No. 1 in New York State for the second year, and No. 6 in the country – moving up four spots from its 2018 ranking.

Academic Structure
In 2002, Fisher began to change the governance structure of its academic departments by creating Schools. The purpose of creating a School rather than maintaining individual departments was to afford the faculty and administration of the School more autonomy in curriculum development, hiring, and enrollment.

To that end, the College’s first School, the School of Business, was founded in October 2002. This was followed a year later by the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. School of Education, created in October 2003. With the announcement of Robert Wegman’s leadership gift to the College in January 2005, the Wegmans School of Pharmacy was established, followed by the School of Arts and Sciences in June 2005. The last School to be created, the Wegmans School of Nursing, was formed in March 2006, thanks to a second major gift from Robert Wegman.

THE RALPH C. WILSON, JR. SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. School of Education provides programs that prepare education professionals for teaching and leadership certifications and careers in schools, elementary through high school. With a full array of undergraduate teaching programs, master’s programs to become a teacher, master’s programs for current teachers, and a doctoral program, the School serves the teacher preparation and leadership needs of the greater Rochester area, as well as the Western New York region. The School’s most recent accreditation visit by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) occurred in fall 2019.

The School of Education also offers master’s degree programs at the professional certification level for teachers who hold initial certification. These programs include two education leadership programs at both the school building and school district levels, and an online program in library media.

The initial certification undergraduate and master’s degree programs are delivered by the faculty in the Department of Inclusive Education, at both the childhood and adolescence levels. The programs deliver a standards-based, culturally responsive teacher preparation pedagogy in coordination with clinical partners from area school districts.
THE RALPH C. WILSON, JR. SCHOOL OF EDUCATION (cont.)

The Dean of the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. School of Education

The Dean is the academic leader and chief administrative officer of the School and reports directly to the Provost for all aspects of the operation of the School, including its conduct and development as an instructional, research, and service unit. The Dean is the senior administrative representative of the School working with officers of the College and is responsible for communicating information concerning programs and departments between officers of the College and Chairs within the School.

The St. John Fisher College Faculty Statutes identify the following duties of School Deans:

1. Oversee the administrative aspects of the School, including but not limited to scheduling, course assignments, budget, and personnel, and lead by taking action and achieving desired results consistent with the goals of the School, the mission of the College, and established policies and procedures.

2. Oversee accreditation, program review processes, and other accountability measures.

3. Report at required intervals to the Provost and the School’s Chairs, Academic Program Directors, faculty, and staff, engaging in and facilitating honest, civil, and open communication.

4. Develop and maintain responsive, cooperative, and mutually beneficial relationships with persons within and outside the School in order to strengthen collaborations to other Schools and College departments as well as organizations in the community.

5. Support the recruitment and retention of diverse faculty, staff, and students and motivate others to peak performance, promoting the success of all.

MISSION

The mission of the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. School of Education at St. John Fisher College is to provide a quality educational experience that prepares candidates for distinguished careers in their chosen profession and for leadership roles in a diverse, rapidly changing, and increasingly technological society. To this end, we seek to:

- Prepare highly capable and ethically responsible professional educators who are committed to improving educational conditions, opportunities, and outcomes for all students.
- Prepare candidates who share the belief that all students can and will learn.
- Prepare candidates who understand educational theory, research, best practices, and the use of various technologies, and how to apply this knowledge in diverse school settings and communities.
- Prepare candidates to meet college, state, and national standards and requirements for graduation and certification.

Diversity in all its forms is an important value at the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. School of Education. The overarching theme of the School is “Educator as Advocate,” a distillation of the School’s vision, mission, beliefs, goals, and central philosophy. This theme emphasizes a central philosophy of social justice; the related tenets of diversity, achievement, compassion, knowledge, and service; and a constructivist instructional approach to help define who we are and what we are about as faculty, staff, and candidates in the School. This theme also connects directly to the greater Rochester metropolitan area’s needs, where many graduates of the bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral programs are employed after completing their degrees.
6. Evaluate faculty and staff yearly to document performance, provide feedback, and support the goals of the School and College.

7. Evaluate administrative faculty, such as Department Chairs and Academic Program Directors, according to the School’s evaluation criteria and processes.

8. Manage funds and other assets in a manner that is considered productive and in the best interests of the College, the School, and the students we serve.

9. Adjust to changing circumstances, and think creatively to overcome obstacles.

10. Implement the Strategic Plans of the College and the School.

11. Uphold College policies and processes articulated in the Catalog, and supervise faculty in their efforts to do the same.

12. Consult faculty and staff when hiring someone to take on a role that has implications over all department or program operations.
The search for the Dean of the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. School of Education at St. John Fisher College comes at an opportune moment. The School has recently gone through a successful CAEP visit, with formal results expected this spring. Enrollment has stabilized in recent years after a sharp decline—part of a nationwide trend of decreasing interest in teacher education. In addition, St. John Fisher College is exceptionally strong overall; the College enjoys a favorable reputation, a track record of student success, and consistent and growing financial stability.

The Qualities of the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. School of Education Dean

**Energetic, forward-looking, collaborative leader skilled in change management**

These are times of significant change within teacher education nationwide, within the State of New York, and in the greater Rochester area. As one long-time faculty member articulated, the new Dean will, “honor the past and present while charting a new direction.” The successful candidate will be a transformational leader who views these seismic changes within education as an opportunity to be embraced with courage and optimism. This person will engage effectively with multiple stakeholders, articulate a shared vision for the School within the context of the institutional Strategic Plan, and translate that vision into specific goals and a clear plan of action. The College is fortunate to have many long-serving faculty and staff, and the successful candidate will utilize an approachable, collaborative personal style to effectively leverage the strengths and experiences of these talented individuals in pursuit of that vision.

**Strong partner with local and regional educational systems**

The College and the School of Education have earned strong reputations in the local community and region. St. John Fisher College is in a geographically unique location. Urban, rural, and suburban school districts lie within its primary service area. This location provides the opportunity to prepare educators to work and lead effectively across a spectrum of settings, and to work in partnerships with a variety of school districts. The College continues to strengthen its role as an anchor to the local community, and accordingly seeks a Dean who views their role as a prominent leader and partner in the local community in addition to their position within the College and School—someone whose vision for impact extends well beyond the St. John Fisher College campus. In particular, Fisher’s long-standing commitment to social justice requires a leader committed to and adept in building inclusive learning systems and environments that strengthen educational achievement for populations not well served by current models, including racial and ethnic minorities.
Innovative leader in curriculum and instructional delivery

The School of Education faculty have been innovative in meeting emerging needs, adding online and hybrid options including an online program in library media. In addition to a variety of undergraduate and master’s programs, St. John Fisher College offers a doctorate in executive leadership on its main campus as well as in New Rochelle and Syracuse; this program serves leaders in a variety of non-profit sectors in addition to educators. Within a competitive environment for enrollment, the successful candidate will relentlessly seek ways to improve student learning, strengthen enrollment, and meet the needs of the local and regional education community. Accordingly, the Dean will sustain strong current practices, will enact changes to current offerings as needed to achieve these goals, and will cultivate an environment of innovation regarding potential programs, partnerships, credentials, and delivery modes.

Collaborative and strategic institutional leadership

Effective academic leaders successfully operate their schools as effective executive officers of their own area while not losing sight of the reality that they exist within a broader institutional context. At St. John Fisher College, that context includes a clear and inspiring mission and vision, a compelling Strategic Plan, and a shared financial standing. The successful leader will be skilled in working creatively within financial constraints and in developing models that illustrate the financial impact of potential ideas as well as their impact on students and the broader community. In addition, this person will be a willing and effective partner with leaders of the other Schools, will be a trusted colleague to fellow Deans, will provide sound advice to the Provost and the President, and will be an active participant in the campus community.

Required Qualifications

• An earned doctorate in a discipline appropriate to the School of Education,
• Demonstrated administrative leadership experience in education,
• A history of successful teaching, scholarship/research, and professional service.

Desired Characteristics and Attributes

• Experience in higher education and P-12 settings,
• Commitment to academic quality,
• Commitment to the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion,
• Experience with program accreditation and state standards,
• Experience in leadership and management, including working effectively with faculty and staff, budget development and financial management, program development and evaluation, problem-solving and conflict resolution,
• Successful experience with fundraising and grants,
• Ability to be an effective spokesperson and advocate for the School, the profession, and the College,
• Established record of successful partnerships with internal and external stakeholders, such as school districts and community organizations and connections to state agencies,
• Ability to cultivate a shared sense of purpose and to align resources and efforts accordingly in pursuit of School and College goals,
• Demonstrated experience in creating an inclusive work and learning environment,
• Ability to foster a culture of innovation and entrepreneurial thinking.
The search is being assisted by Academic Search, Inc. To arrange a confidential conversation about this position please contact the senior consultants managing the search, Dr. Eric Richtmyer (eric.richtmyer@academicsearch.org) or Dr. Scott Flanagan (scott.flanagan@academicsearch.org), or by phone at 202-332-4049. The position is open until filled, and applications received by March 1, 2020 are assured full consideration.

To apply, a candidate should prepare a thoughtful letter of interest addressing the leadership agenda and the required and desired qualifications. Include also a current, long-form resume or curriculum vita (showing relevant administrative responsibilities and accomplishments) and the names, phone numbers, and addresses of at least five professional references, with an indication of the candidate’s relationship to each reference. References will not be contacted until a later stage in the search, and only with the candidate’s foreknowledge. Nominations and application materials should be sent to FisherEducation@academicsearch.org.

St. John Fisher College is committed to Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), and its Senior Staff is responsible for taking steps to ensure Equal Employment Opportunity. It is the policy of St. John Fisher College to provide Equal Employment Opportunity to all employees and applicants for employment in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws governing non-discrimination in employment in each locality in which the College has employees. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment including, but not limited to, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation, and training. The College does not discriminate against applicants or employees in hiring, promotion, termination or the terms and conditions of employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, perceived sex, gender expression, the status of being transgender, national origin, citizenship, age, disability, marital status, military status, veteran status, predisposing genetic characteristics or genetic information, arrest or criminal record, status as a victim of domestic violence, or any other characteristic protected by law.
ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search, Inc. is assisting St. John Fisher College in this work. For more than four decades, Academic Search has offered executive search services exclusively to institutions of higher education. Academic Search was founded on the principle of strengthening higher education leadership through professional search services. We are the only search firm in the nation with a formal relationship to a premier leadership development program. As the subsidiary of the American Academic Leadership Institute (AALI), Academic Search provides substantial financial support to a number of leadership identification, development, and support programs across all sectors of public and private higher education. For more information, visit http://www.academicsearch.org/.

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