



MISERICORDIA UNIVERSITY

DEAN OF THE COLLEGE
OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
SEARCH 2022



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MISERICORDIA UNIVERSITY DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Misericordia University announces a national search for its next Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and invites nominations, applications, and expressions of interest.

Misericordia University seeks an energetic, innovative, ethical, and inspirational leader for the position of Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Reporting to the Vice President of Academic Affairs, the Dean will advance intellectual leadership, pedagogical practice, administrative processes, reputation, and brand identity for the College. The Dean will be a student-centered, collaborative leader responsible for building enrollment, developing partnerships, and authentically interacting with faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, donors, and advisory council members to benefit the College. The University seeks a leader who possesses interpersonal wisdom, is mission centered, committed to high-impact educational experiences, and has demonstrable experience in building a culture of student and faculty engagement and success.

HISTORY AND MISSION

Misericordia was founded as a college for women by the Religious Sisters of Mercy in the tradition of their founder, Catherine McAuley. Founded in Dublin, Ireland, in 1831 with a mission to shelter and educate women and girls, the Sisters brought this mission to the United States and founded hospitals and educational institutions in service of those in need. In 1875, they came to the Wyoming Valley of Northeastern Pennsylvania and established a school for children and night classes for adults. Based on this experience, they saw the need for collegiate education for women. Having purchased land, their hopes finally were realized in 1924. College Misericordia, as it was then named, was Luzerne County's first four-year institution of higher learning. With a campus of 100 acres in Dallas, Pennsylvania, Misericordia (whose name means "heart of mercy") enrolled 37 students its first fall, focusing their studies on the Sisters' motto: Mulier Fortis, valiant women trained in scholarship and spirituality. Since its inception, the University's mission and culture have been defined by the Mercy Charisms of mercy, service, justice, and hospitality. In the 1970s, Misericordia became co-educational, and in 2007, it became a university and added additional graduate programs, both at the master's and doctoral levels. Two years ago, it created a satellite campus in Pittsburgh for its nursing program in partnership with Orbis Education. MU is a part of the 17-member Conference for Mercy Higher Education. Throughout its history and the changes it has undergone, Misericordia has remained faithful to its mission.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Misericordia enrolls about 1400 traditional undergraduate students primarily engaged in face-to-face instruction, as well as 400 graduate students, who learn in both remote and face-to-face modalities. Misericordia University lives a mission which seeks to cultivate a transformational educational experience, promoting intellectual curiosity and critical thinking in our students while supporting them in achieving a life of purpose. Misericordia gained university status in 2011 and has grown to encompass three Colleges – the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Business, and the College of Health Sciences and Education. There is also a Center for Adult and Continuing Education, addressing the needs of adult and non-traditional students. Misericordia offers approximately 40 undergraduate programs of study and roughly a dozen graduate programs in the Colleges of Business and Health Sciences and Education.

As a student-focused institution, Misericordia typically graduates over 70% of enrolled first-time, full-time undergraduates and has committed to supporting students on the autism spectrum through an Autism Center administered through the College of Health Sciences and Education, as well as an Alternative Learners Program for





students with cognitive or physical disabilities sponsored by our Student Success Center. Enhancing the challenge and rigor of Misericordia's programs of study, the university honors program provides a 36-credit enriched general education experience in the humanities and social sciences. For students wishing to participate in undergraduate research, the summer Student Undergraduate Research Fellows Program (SURF) presents students with a residential research experience for undergraduates for 10 weeks each summer. As befits a Mercy Institution, service learning can be infused in courses at the discretion of the faculty and Misericordia's many community partner organizations. Through all of these experiences, students develop academically as well as personally so that they may live a life of purpose and consequence.

Misericordia University supports faculty through annual Faculty Research Grants awarded by a committee comprised of faculty from all Colleges. In addition, Misericordia supports faculty development through deans' funds that allow faculty to attend or present at a conference or workshop. Smaller grants in pedagogical development or curriculum development are also offered through the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning from time to time. Reassigned time for scholarly endeavors and other projects is also available to those pursuing research and pedagogical interests.

The College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) provides undergraduate experiences in majors across the disciplines of Biology; Chemistry and Biochemistry; English; Environmental Studies; Government, Law, and National Security; History; Mathematics and Computer Science; Medical and Health Humanities; Philosophy; and Psychology. The College also offers instruction in Religious Studies, Physics, and Fine Arts and pre-professional tracks including pre-DPT, pre-medical, pre-dental, pre-PA, pre-optometry. It is home to the honors program as well as the 49 credit Core Curriculum, which fosters critical thinking while providing breadth to a student's education. The College graduated just over 100 majors in 2020 and 2021, and it enrolls 80 students in the honors program from across the University. As the home of general education at Misericordia, a university in which humanities, mathematics, natural sciences, and social sciences infuse the professional majors in the College of Business and the College of Health Sciences and Education, the impact of CAS on students and the institution is far larger than its 41 full-time faculty might suggest. Faculty in CAS have embraced interdisciplinary study, having recently launched two programs (Medical Health and Humanities, and Environmental Studies) that are garnering significant student interest. Both programs secured NEH Education grants to pursue faculty study and curriculum development funds for the development of these majors. Throughout the core, class sizes are relatively small, faculty are engaging and dedicated, and preparation for a life of purpose is paramount.

Faculty in CAS are active scholars, strengthening the University environment by publishing scholarly work and providing other contributions to their disciplines. Dedicated research laboratories in the newly renovated and



expanded Henry Science Center provide exceptional opportunities for students in biology, chemistry, and physics. In addition, first-rate library services along with computer laboratories provide the necessary support for faculty and students to conduct their research. Many faculty involve students in their scholarly endeavors.

Medical Health and Humanities allows Misericordia University to offer courses in disabilities and the arts, as well as in more traditional art history and studio courses. Environmental Studies has brought philosophers together to teach with biologists. CAS has an internal synergy that has significant potential in the current higher education environment that looks for partnerships across disciplines and Colleges. The College regularly hosts scholars and guest speaker events for the both the community and the whole of the university. Speaker series on DEI topics, women's history, health disparities, and the Holocaust have engaged many faculty in the region and the nation. The University's art gallery, the Pauly Friedman Gallery, also contributes to the vibrant educational ecology of the College; its exhibitions are frequently integrated into course work across the curriculum. Engendering curiosity and the pursuit of critical thinking promotes student-focused work in the university theater and a range of

academic student clubs and societies sponsored through the College's major programs.

The College of Business offers undergraduate majors in Accounting, Business Administration, Healthcare Management, Mass Communication and Design, Professional Studies, and Sport Management. On the graduate level, the College recently redesigned and consolidated the Organizational Management degree with the MBA. The College also offers a 4+1 program that enables students to obtain a bachelor's and master's degree in five years. Several undergraduate programs as well as the MBA can be completed online through our accelerated program. The curricula are based on Misericordia's mission and core values of mercy, justice, service, and hospitality. With an emphasis on experiential learning, the College is committed to creating learning opportunities for students both in and out of the classroom. This includes internships, service-learning projects, fieldtrips, active student clubs, and the recent establishment of a distinguished speaker series. Led by an accomplished, committed, and engaged faculty, the College of Business provides a transformative business education developing students into high-performing members of business, civic, and social segments of the global community.

The College of Health Sciences and Education (CHSE) is dedicated to the education of future and post-professional health care practitioners and educators through both traditional and graduate programs, certificates, and flexible alternative education options. The College works as an inter-professional unit and encourages faculty and students to work with and learn from each other in different programs in CHSE as well as with those in the Colleges of Liberal Arts and Sciences and Business. CHSE graduates the largest number of health science professionals in Northeastern Pennsylvania constituting the majority of practitioners/clinicians. Through a rich education through clinical and fieldwork experiences, service-learning, interprofessional engagement and research endeavors CHSE students can experience international service and research as a component of their education.

MISERICORDIA TODAY

Misericordia is a small comprehensive institution with a strong commitment to liberal arts education. Misericordia University lives a mission which seeks to cultivate a transformational educational experience that promotes intellectual curiosity and critical thinking in our students while supporting them in achieving a life of purpose.

It is located on a 123-acre campus in Dallas, Pennsylvania, with a satellite location in Pittsburgh. It enrolls 1,274 full-time and 348 part-time undergraduates and 247 full-time and 209 part-time graduate students. Eighty-four percent

of first-year students live on campus as do 37 percent of upper-class students. Forty-five percent of its first-year, full-time students and 35 percent of all full-time undergraduates are student/athletes. It enrolls few international students.

Misericordia's students are taught by 125 full-time faculty who teach four courses per semester, creating (currently) a 10:1 student-faculty ratio and an average undergraduate class size of 19. This low student/faculty ratio also sustains the faculty's commitment to a student-centered, individualized, and high-impact educational experience and their own considerable work and growth as scholars and researchers. Eighty-nine percent of the faculty are white; the largest minority group is Asian. Ninety-six percent of the staff are white. The University consists of three Colleges: Arts and Sciences, Business, and Health Sciences and Education. Misericordia is accredited by the Middle States Association and is scheduled for its next reaffirmation in 2023.

Through the Division of Student Life, Misericordia maintains a residential student experience for freshman and sophomores, as well as opportunities to participate in leadership, student government, mission-focused service, and athletics. Misericordia is a Division III NCAA school in the MAC, and roughly forty percent of the traditional student body engages in competitive athletic pursuits.

CAMPUS FACILITIES

Located in a scenic section of Northeastern Pennsylvania, Misericordia's main campus and expanding lower campus, just a short walk away, feature two dozen well-maintained buildings and athletic facilities.

The infrastructure of the University is in good shape and up to date. The newest building, the \$45-million Frank M. and Dorothea Henry Science Center, was completed in 2021 following the largest capital campaign in Misericordia's history. The Science Center is now the largest academic building on campus. Including the renovation of the existing Science Hall wing, it provides 85,900 square feet of state-of-the-art laboratories, technology, and learning spaces.

The Baloga Hall renovation, which provides facilities for the Physician Assistant program and the Center for Adult and Continuing Education, was completed within the last two years as was a renovation of McHale Residence Hall. The University planning group is completing plans for an athletic dome as well as new health science infrastructure in a 50,000 square foot building that formerly housed a nearby commercial printing facility.



DALLAS

Settled in 1797, Dallas is located in the Back Mountain region of the Wyoming Valley in Northeast Pennsylvania. It was named after Alexander J. Dallas, the Sixth United States Secretary of the Treasury. The University's upper and lower campuses straddle the border between the Borough of Dallas and Dallas Township. Dallas is 10 minutes from Harvey's Lake, the largest natural lake in Pennsylvania and a popular recreation spot for swimming, fishing, and boating.

The Back Mountain region is a mostly residential, suburban area of about 32,000 people residing in several municipalities and two school districts, the Dallas Area and Lake Lehman School Districts. Northeastern Pennsylvania is known for its beauty and outdoor activities in all four seasons, including hiking, skiing, minor league hockey, and baseball, as well as concert venues and fine dining. The major industries in the area are healthcare and small business. Misericordia is the largest employer in Dallas. Racially, the Back Mountain area is preponderantly white (96 percent).

The campus is a 15-minute drive from the City of Wilkes-Barre and is about 30 minutes from the City of Scranton. The Wilkes-Barre/Scranton area is much more ethnically diverse. Including Misericordia, Wilkes-Barre/Scranton is home to several private institutions of higher education: Wilkes University, the University of Scranton, King's College, and Marywood University. In addition, one can find three satellite campus of the Penn State system in Luzerne and Lackawanna Counties as well as Luzerne County Community College, Lackawanna College, Johnson College and Keystone College. Misericordia is a two-hour drive from New York City and Philadelphia.



CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

To optimize the opportunity for next steps in the College of Arts and Sciences' (CAS) future, the successful Dean will need to be an uncommonly attentive listener at the outset of this assignment and throughout their tenure. Establishing a full understanding of the people, programs, and relationships that constitute the Misericordia community, building and sustaining relationships with and between these groups, and operating with transparency will be key to successfully providing leadership at the College.

LEADERSHIP

Working closely with the Dean of the College of Business, the Dean of the College of Health Sciences and Education, the Vice President of Academic Affairs, and the new President, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences will bring leadership and a crucial perspective and voice to issues that affect the entire institution. An ability to work cooperatively as a member of the President's Advisory Council while bringing strong advocacy for the College of Arts and Sciences that focuses on the strategic plan and mission of the University, will enhance the new Dean's effectiveness while simultaneously fostering collegiality, culture, and engagement.

Maintaining Visibility and Accessibility – The highly personal nature of the Misericordia community calls for the Dean's consistent presence in the community and life of the University and College. The Dean should be visibly engaged in the programs of both the curriculum and the co-curriculum.

Trust, Collaboration, and Engagement – One of the new Dean's first tasks will be to understand the College's culture and establish a sense of shared trust between herself/himself and the people they leads. Building of relationships based on trust, transparency, and accountability, improving morale, and facilitating increased collaboration and engagement is a priority.

ACADEMIC PLANNING

While the new Dean will empower current faculty and support current programs, there is also a need to bring vision and creativity to the College of Arts and Sciences. They must bring a familiarity of academic administration and best practices towards the collaborative development of innovative approaches to addressing the changing needs of the students.

Core Curriculum – The Core curriculum is primarily taught out of the College of Arts and Sciences; it is currently a traditional core and distribution model. The new Dean will join in the ongoing work and progress to modernize, strengthen, and revise the core in a manner that elicits good ideas and moves these much-needed conversations forward to action.

Staffing – In 2021, the Board suspended tenure and made cuts to both faculty and staff. The vast majority of the layoffs were in the arts and sciences, creating significant, ongoing staffing challenges (both faculty and staff vacancies). In addition, these difficult losses have caused low morale, distrust, and deep silos. The new Dean must address the immediate staffing needs and begin to bridge the tensions across the Colleges.

Liberal Arts Advocate – The new Dean will be asked to aggressively embrace and actively interpret the value of the liberal arts (Humanities & Fine Arts, Natural Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences). This advocacy will help prospective students (and their families) understand the relevancy of the liberal arts and the Misericordia curriculum as a tool to empower undergraduates and graduates for global citizenship. The Dean should also be an effective advocate for CAS faculty and programs with respect to staffing, budget, and other resources.

ENROLLMENT IN THE ARTS AND SCIENCE

As in the case of nearly all small private colleges, Misericordia's marketplace is extremely competitive, a phenomenon made even more acute by the challenges of the ongoing pandemic. The next Dean must work effectively with the enrollment and marketing teams to strategically market CAS, highlight the exciting successes within this College, champion, and recruit for the liberal arts.

DESIRED ATTRIBUTES AND SKILLS

Misericordia University is on a quest to find a new Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences who is an innovative and visionary leader with formidable interpersonal skills who inspires trust by authentic relationship building. The successful candidate will be a courageous, diplomatic advocate for the College with senior administrators, colleagues, and external stakeholders.

The new Dean will exhibit an enrollment mindset that leads to collaborative initiatives aimed at (i) strengthening existing programs to match the evolving world of work; (ii) remarketing current offerings through social media and other means; and (iii) introducing new market-demand offerings.

The College of Arts and Sciences includes a wide array of undergraduate majors in Biology; Chemistry and Biochemistry; English; Environmental Studies, Government, Law, and National Security; History; Mathematics and Computer Science; Medical and Health Humanities; Philosophy; and Psychology. The College also offers courses in Religious Studies, Physics and Fine Arts and is home to the Honors Program. An earned doctorate in one of these disciplines is required.

A minimum of ten years of successful college teaching, scholarship, and progressively responsible administrative and academic leadership experience is preferred.

The successful Misericordia University Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences will also:

- Be an exceptional communicator in all forms, including an appropriate emphasis on face-to-face interaction
- Regularly communicate and collaborate with the College on important issues and decisions
- Spend considerable time listening and learning about all the College's academic programs as well as faculty and staff roles
- Based on experience, adeptly grasp the effects of recent reductions in faculty and staff, the suspension of tenure and the competitive higher education market the College faces and serve as a healing force in moving the College forward
- Skillfully partner with faculty and staff to look to the future with optimism, embrace change, and take action while respecting the College's traditions
- Support and empower faculty and staff to build a better future for the University
- Celebrate effective teaching, scholarship, advising and service
- Champion interdisciplinary collaboration in the College as well as such partnerships with the College of Business and the College of Health Sciences and Education
- Understand the potential of learning technology as well the well-reasoned questions faculty pose about these tools
- Lead the effort to maximally leverage the potential of the \$45 million Frank M. and Dorothea Henry Science Center by (i) partnering with faculty to enhance the programs in this magnificent facility and (ii) collaborating with enrollment management/marketing to promote these offerings aggressively
- Creatively nurture and leverage existing strengths in the Humanities and Social and Behavioral Sciences
- Build upon the natural linkages between the College and the vital areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion through language, actions, and resources
- Be a key leader in completing the revision of the Core Curriculum to connect this integral educational experience with future aspirations



- Exhibit the highest standards of integrity, ethics, and transparency
- Lead the work to improve the College's exemplary student success and retention results
- Be a firm decision maker, when appropriate, with the skill to explain the rationale for decisions
- Demonstrate a deep understanding of accreditation issues
- Possess a very high energy level
- Have a track record of financial stewardship and acumen
- Have achieved grant success
- Demonstrate superb problem-solving skills and flexibility
- Demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to shared governance

APPLICATIONS AND NOMINATIONS

The Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences Search Committee will begin reviewing candidate materials in early April 2022. Although applications will be received until the position is filled, materials should be submitted by Friday, April 8, 2022, to receive the most favorable consideration. Final selection and announcement of the next Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences is expected to be made by mid-May and the new Dean will be invited to begin work on or about July 1, 2022.

Misericordia University is committed to recruiting a diverse, high-quality workforce dedicated to meeting the higher education needs of our community. Women and persons from underrepresented groups are strongly encouraged to apply.

All application materials will be received in full confidence and should be submitted electronically to:

MisericordiaAS@agbsearch.com

Please address the letter of candidacy to Dr. Allan Austin and Dr. Patricia Thatcher, Co-Chairs, Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences Search Committee.

Applications must include:

- A letter of candidacy that responds directly to the items in the leadership agenda in this prospectus and the list of desired attributes identifying the candidate's experiences in the context of the opportunities for the new Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences;
- A complete CV or resume;
- The names, phone numbers, and email addresses of five references, none of whom will be contacted without permission of the candidate.

Inquiries and nominations should be directed to:

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Information on the search is also available at www.misericordia.edu or <https://www.agbsearch.com/active-searches>

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