



Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

American University (AU) invites applications and nominations for the position of Dean, College of Arts and Sciences (CAS). Reporting to the Acting Provost and Chief Academic Officer, the Dean serves as the chief academic and executive officer of AU's largest school. The new Dean will have a tremendous opportunity to build the College's strengths in line with the University's current strategic plan. Thus, the University seeks a visionary leader who will support faculty, staff, and student success and advocate for a liberal education as the foundation for global citizenship.

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY

Chartered by Congress in 1893 and located in Washington, DC, American University is a student-centered research institution with highly ranked schools and colleges, internationally renowned faculty, and an emphasis on creating meaningful change in the world. AU's students distinguish themselves by their service, leadership, and ability to rethink global and domestic challenges and opportunities.

With [eight schools and colleges](#) and more than 170 programs, American University enables students to choose a personalized curriculum of theoretical study and experiential learning taught by internationally recognized faculty, in courses that take them from the classroom to opportunities in the nation's capital and all around the globe.

In fall 2019, AU's enrollment was approximately 14,300, with 7,600 degree-seeking undergraduates, 4,200 degree-seeking graduate students, 1,400 law students, and 1,100 students in non-degree certificate programs, the Washington Semester program, or AU Abroad. AU offers 79 bachelor's degrees, 98 master's degrees, 11 doctoral degrees, JD, LL.M, SJD, and MLS degrees, and certificates and associate degrees. Online, AU offers more than 20 master's degrees and graduate certificates. In the 2019–20 academic year, AU enrolled 7,146 students in online courses (not accounting for every section in spring 2020 that changed course delivery modality due to the pandemic), of which 49 percent were graduate students, 36 percent undergraduate, and 14 percent non-degree.

In response to COVID-19 health and safety conditions and guidance, fall 2020 classes are being held almost entirely online. Typically, face-to-face courses run on a 15-week semester basis in fall and spring, with shorter summer-term classes. In addition, AU offers study abroad programs and alternative breaks. Ninety-one percent of undergraduates participate in at least one internship during their time at AU, and 55 percent of students participate in study abroad. AU's undergraduate first-year retention rate is 87 percent, and 80 percent of students graduate from AU within six years.

AU's campus-based student body is globally diverse, with all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and more than 130 countries represented. Sixteen percent of undergraduates and 13 percent of graduate students are international.

The University's mission is carried out by 936 full-time faculty and more than 1,700 full-time staff. Ninety-three percent of full-time faculty hold the highest degree in their field. Among AU's more than 700 adjunct faculty are policymakers, diplomats, journalists, artists, writers, scientists, and business leaders.

The Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences joins the deans of the [Kogod School of Business](#), [School of Communication](#), [School of Education](#), [School of International Service](#), [School of Professional & Extended Studies](#), [School of Public Affairs](#), [Washington College of Law](#), the [University Librarian](#) and the acting provost on the Deans' Council. This group of academic leaders works collaboratively with one another and with academic and administrative personnel across the University to drive progress toward the University's goals. Relative to other research institutions, American University enjoys a flatter administrative structure and culture, making frequent communication and social ease the norm in the many cooperative efforts of Deans' Council members. In many ways, this is the daily expression of the University's identity as a college-centered research university expressly committed to the power of collaborative community.

AU's recent accolades and recognition include the following:

- No. 76 Best National University, and No. 25 for Best Undergraduate Teaching (*US News & World Report* 2021);
- No. 6 Best College (Princeton Review, *The Best 384 Colleges* 2019);
- No. 51 Best Private College Value (Kiplinger 2018 Best College Value);
- In 2017, AU was a top producer of Boren Scholars and Fellows (No. 1), Presidential Management Fellows (No. 4), and Udall Scholars (No. 2);
- No. 2 Most Peace Corps Volunteers (for medium-sized schools in 2019);
- No. 5 Most Politically Active Students (Princeton Review);
- No. 7 Most Active Student Government (Princeton Review);
- The first university in the US to be carbon neutral (announced in April 2018); and,
- A1 Moody's rating and an A+ S&P rating.

MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

American University's mission is to advance knowledge, foster intellectual curiosity, build community, and empower lives of purpose, service, and leadership.

American University is a leading student-centered research university where passionate learners, bold leaders, engaged scholars, innovators, and active citizens unleash the power of collaborative discovery. AU partners with key organizations in the Washington, DC, region and around the globe to better the human condition, create meaningful change, and address society's current and emerging challenges.

The core values that underpin the University's mission and vision include: integrity; excellence; human dignity; community; diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusive excellence; free inquiry and seeking the truth; and impact.

HISTORY

American University was founded by John Fletcher Hurst, a Methodist bishop who dreamed of creating a university that trained public servants for the future. Throughout its history, AU has been defined by its groundbreaking spirit. Before women could vote, they attended American University. The Law School was the first coeducational institution founded by women for the professional study of law. During the period when the District of Columbia was segregated, 400 African Americans called American University home. As AU continues to grow in reputation and stature, it remains grounded in the ideals of its founders as it continues to be a leader for a changing world.

While Bishop Hurst was widely respected and while his vision led to many of the above-mentioned groundbreaking firsts, AU also recognizes his [complicated history](#). While Hurst himself was recorded as arguing in favor of abolition, he likely inherited wealth that was built upon the labor of enslaved people. Furthermore, the land Hurst chose for AU was on the rural fringe of the nation's capital and had likely been farmed by enslaved people and expropriated from native Americans. College of Arts and Science faculty are instrumental to an ongoing project to reflect on this history.

To read more about AU's history and its legacy of leadership, please visit:

<https://www.american.edu/about/history.cfm>.

LEADERSHIP

[Sylvia M. Burwell](#) took office as American University's 15th president on June 1, 2017. A visionary leader with public and private sector experience, she is the first woman to serve as AU's president. She brings to American University a commitment to education and research, the ability to manage large and complex organizations, and experience helping to advance solutions to some of the world's most pressing challenges. Burwell served as the 22nd secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services from 2014 to 2017. During her tenure, she managed a trillion-dollar department that includes the National Institutes of Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Food and Drug Administration, and the Medicaid and Medicare programs; oversaw the successful implementation of the Affordable Care Act; and led the department's responses to the Ebola and Zika outbreaks. Before that, she served as the director of the Office of Management and Budget, working with Congress to negotiate a two-year budget deal following the 2013 government shutdown. In both roles she was known as a leader who worked successfully across the aisle and focused on delivering results for the American people. Her extensive government experience includes former roles as deputy director of the Office of Management and Budget, deputy chief of staff to the president, chief of staff to the secretary of the Treasury, and special assistant to the director of the National Economic Council. Burwell has held leadership positions at two of the largest foundations in the world. She served 11 years at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, including as chief operating officer and president of the Global Development Program. She later served as president of the Walmart Foundation and ran its global Women's Economic Empowerment efforts. She earned a bachelor's degree in government from Harvard University and a BA in philosophy, politics and economics from the University of Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar.

[Peter Starr](#) is acting provost and chief academic officer at American University and a professor of literature. Prior to assuming this role, Dr. Starr served as dean of AU's College of Arts and Sciences for 11 years. As the College's dean, Dr. Starr co-led the development of the AU Core curriculum, the first substantive revision of the University's general education offerings in 27 years. He also made significant contributions to the path-breaking Reinventing the Student Experience (RiSE) project and raised nearly \$100M to further the College's goals. In his time at AU, Dr. Starr has helped to increase external funding of faculty scholarship and overseen the establishment of such highly productive research entities as the Antiracist Research and Policy Center; the Center for Neuroscience and Behavior; the Center on Health, Risk and Society; the Institute for Integrated Space Science and Technology (with NASA); and the AU Game Lab. Prior to joining the Eagle family, Dr. Starr was a professor of French and comparative literature at the University of Southern California. He served as interim dean of USC's College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences from 2006 to 2007. Dr. Starr holds a BA with distinction from Stanford University, as well as an MA in French and PhD in comparative literature from The Johns Hopkins University.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

American University's five-year strategic plan, "[Changemakers for a Changing World](#)," builds on the University's legacy of leadership, scholarship, and service as a college-centered research institution. The plan has created nine imperatives organized under the three broader fields of scholarship, learning, and community. These imperatives include:

- Pursuing strategic areas of academic focus;
- Increasing and diversifying research and scholarship;
- Enhancing the student experience;
- Strengthening learning for undergraduate, graduate, and professional students;
- Expanding lifelong learning;
- Fortifying inclusive excellence;
- Deepening partnerships within Washington, DC;
- Broadening partnerships across schools at AU and between AU and the public, private, and nonprofit sectors; and,
- Improving processes and infrastructure to support work, collaboration, and innovation.

The plan's success is being measured across four impact goals: improve retention and graduation rates; achieve operational excellence throughout AU; enhance AU's reputation; and diversify and grow revenue.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

American University values open and honest inquiry, servant leadership, and the affirmation of the human dignity of all. American University envisions a thriving community where individuals of all identities and experiences are understood, appreciated, and fully included, and where equitable treatment, opportunities, and outcomes prevail.

AU's [Plan for Inclusive Excellence](#), adopted in January 2018, reflects the University's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion—the cornerstone for achieving institutional and educational excellence.

While there is work ahead, AU has identified programs that support the University's commitments in these areas. Among them are the founding of the President's Council on Diversity and Inclusion, new hiring and training programs that have led to significant results in faculty hiring, new course offerings (including the creation of the Department of [Critical Race, Gender, and Culture Studies](#)) that bring racial identity and cultural competency to the core curriculum, new centers of scholarship like the [Antiracist Research and Policy Center](#), a new major in African American and African Diaspora Studies, and the most diverse Alumni Association Board in AU's recorded history.

AU recognizes that inclusive excellence must be expressed not just in rhetoric, but in the actions the University takes. With that in mind, the plan sets out a series of concrete steps, organized under five goals:

- Goal 1: Training, learning, and development to equip members of the community to lead change in a complex world.
- Goal 2: A focus on campus climate, culture, and community, so that all community members feel safe, satisfied, and that they belong.
- Goal 3: Changes to systems, policies, and procedures to promote diversity, inclusion, transparency, and accountability.
- Goal 4: Access and equity in recruiting, hiring, training, developing, evaluating, and recognizing faculty, staff, and administrators.
- Goal 5: A focus on curriculum and instruction to seek to ensure that the core curriculum demonstrates critical inquiry, intellectual engagement, and respectful discourse.

As part of the plan to take actionable steps, the University has laid out a timeline of implementation, allocated needed resources, and articulated how to measure success.



CAMPUS

Nestled in a residential district of Washington, DC, American University's 90-acre, [carbon-neutral](#) campus (100 percent of its electricity comes from renewable sources) provides students with the advantages of a traditional college setting combined with access to the energy, culture, and opportunities of our nation's capital. According to *Best Choice Schools*, AU has the fourth most beautiful urban campus in the country.

AU is an intimate community within a metropolitan setting, where the stunning sights of the city are never far from view. Community members can relax on AU's [beautiful grounds](#) one moment and take an impromptu trip to the National Mall the next. Whether learning in AU's century-old structures and state-of-the-art facilities, experiencing the arts in its museums and theatres, or venturing out into the city, American University offers endless opportunities.



COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

The College of Arts and Sciences is the centerpiece of American University's identity as a college-centered research institution. The largest school at the University, CAS teaches approximately 40 percent of the University's classes. Sixty-six percent of current CAS students identify as women, 30 percent as students of color, 10 percent as first-generation, and 13 percent as international. Dedicated to excellence in teaching, scholarship, the arts, and engagement with its local, national, and international communities, the College provides a rich education in the arts, humanities, social sciences, and sciences for all of American University's undergraduate students. The College further offers challenging programs of study for its undergraduate and graduate majors and fosters outstanding research, practice, and creative activity.

Students enjoy small class sizes (averaging 23 students for undergraduates and just 12 students for graduates), and the College's diverse scholarly community offers outstanding opportunities for hands-on and interdisciplinary research, internships, and creative expression. The College features more than 100 [degree programs](#) that span the arts, humanities, sciences, and social sciences, including five doctoral degrees, 30 master's degrees, 50 undergraduate degrees, 21 graduate certificates, 13 undergraduate certificates, and 53 minors.

CAS offers students ample opportunities for interdisciplinary study as well. For example, a BA in communications, legal institutions, economics, and government (administered by the School of Public Affairs) prepares students to participate effectively in decision making for public affairs and deal with social problems as social issues, while a BS in business and music (housed in the Kogod School of Business) is ideal for a for-profit music industry career. Students can also design personalized programs leading to a BA or BS in interdisciplinary studies.

Experiential opportunities supplement classroom learning. Fifty-five percent of undergraduates take advantage of study abroad opportunities. With 100+ programs in 41 countries, some at the world's most prestigious universities, students can earn credit toward their degree, whatever their major. The College also emphasizes [internship experiences](#), and, given its Washington location, opportunities for such experiences abound. Students may earn academic credit for internships that are approved by faculty and an academic advisor.



Research, Centers, and Initiatives

CAS spearheads initiatives that strive to effect significant impacts on scholarship and public understanding of pressing issues. Much of this work and cross-department collaboration occurs through the College's centers and initiatives. Work can involve a single principal investigator or a team of collaborators. The College proudly supports the following centers and initiatives:

- [Alper Initiative for Washington Art](#)
- [Antiracist Research & Policy Center](#) (with the School of International Service)
- [Care Work and the Economy](#)
- [Carmel Institute of Russian Culture & History](#)
- [Center for Neuroscience and Behavior](#)
- [Center for Israel Studies](#) (CIS)
- [Center for Language Exploration, Acquisition & Research](#) (CLEAR)
- [Center on Health, Risk & Society](#) (CHRS)
- [American University Game Lab](#) (with the School of Communication)
- [Humanities Lab](#)
- [Info-Metrics Institute](#)
- [Initiative for STEM Education, Equity and Ethics](#)
- [Integrated Space Science and Technology Institute](#) (ISSTI)
- [Nuclear Studies Institute](#)

Faculty and Staff

As the largest school at AU, CAS is home to approximately 410 full-time faculty members and 460 adjunct faculty members. 95 percent of full-time faculty hold the highest degrees in their fields. Fifty-three percent of the College's faculty identify as women, and 22 percent identify as faculty of color. Fifty-one percent of CAS faculty are tenure line, and 49 percent hold term appointments.

Dedicated teachers in the classroom, faculty also lead rich research and creative endeavors as scholars and artists. Of particular note, science is the fastest-growing area of undergraduate study at American University. Over the past several years, College of Arts and Sciences faculty have grown their research funding by more than 100 percent, securing more than 50 unique awards from the National Institutes of Health and National Science Foundation. A full listing of current faculty achievements can be accessed [here](#). American University also recognizes faculty achievements through the annual [University Faculty Awards](#) program.

One-hundred-and-one talented and dedicated staff members support faculty research, student success, and the College's general smooth running. In recognition of the vital role staff play in CAS's success, the University recognizes staff through an annual Staff Recognition Week and runs an annual [Staff Performance Awards Program](#). [Award-winners](#) are recognized formally with an award certificate, invitation to an Awards Luncheon, a day off from work, and monetary awards. Twenty-three percent of staff identify as people of color.



Facilities of Note

The College of Arts and Sciences strives to support disciplines across divisions to provide students with a well-rounded liberal education. While both AU and the College have long-standing reputations for strengths in policy and social sciences broadly, recent investments have brought accolades to the College in the arts, humanities, and natural sciences as well.

The University's growing reputation in the creative arts was underscored with the opening of the 296-seat [Harold and Sylvia Greenberg Theatre](#) in 2003 and the [Katzen Arts Center](#) in 2005. With 130,000 square feet of space, the Katzen includes a 30,000-square-foot art museum. The museum recently acquired the \$31M [Corcoran Legacy Collection](#). With three floors of exhibition space, the AU Museum is both the Washington area's largest university facility for exhibiting art and the preeminent guardian of Washington, DC's rich tradition in the visual arts.

The recently opened [Hall of Science](#) is the latest development in AU's ambitious commitment to further scientific research to address some of the world's most pressing problems, from environmental degradation to disease and health disparities. The 125,000-square-foot facility houses AU's biology, environmental science, chemistry, and neuroscience departments. It joins the [Don Myers Technology and Innovation Building](#), which was completed in 2017 and houses physics, mathematics and statistics, computer science, the [AU Game Lab](#), the [Kogod Center for Innovation](#), and the [Design and Build Lab](#).

THE ROLE OF THE DEAN

Reporting to the Provost and Chief Academic Officer, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences serves as the College's chief academic and executive officer and oversees more than 850 full- and part-time faculty and 100 staff. Direct reports to the Dean currently include:

- Associate Dean, Budget and Administration
- Associate Dean, Graduate Studies
- Associate Dean, Research
- Associate Dean, Undergraduate Studies
- Assistant Dean, Development (dotted-line report)
- Assistant Dean, Communication and Outreach
- Director and Curator, AU Museum
- Director, Special Events
- Special Assistant to the Dean

The College's total annual operating budget for 2020-2021 stands at approximately \$51M, including salaries.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The next Dean will have the opportunity to build upon the successes of former Dean Peter Starr, who is now serving as the University's Acting Provost. Working within the broader parameters of the University-wide strategic plan and the institution's identity as a college-centered research university, the next Dean will embrace the following opportunities and challenges:

- **Leverage the College's profile and strengthen and diversify curricular offerings:** CAS offers a distinctive blend of strong individual departments and a highly inter- and cross-disciplinary environment. Recognizing that the College occupies a unique space at AU as the central academic body, possessing scholarship and teaching reach to all of the University's other schools and colleges, the Dean will leverage the combination of nimbleness and resources the College's size provides to enhance its academic strengths and reputation. The Dean will bolster the College's graduate program offerings, invest in lifelong learning opportunities, deepen commitments to online programming, and broadly create a more flexible and increasingly interdisciplinary learning environment for all students.
- **Prioritize and build upon the University's Plan for Inclusive Excellence:** The College's community recognizes that embracing a plethora of ideas, backgrounds, and personal experiences is fundamental to creating a robust learning environment. In addition to supporting the initiatives laid out by the University in its [Plan for Inclusive Excellence](#), the next Dean will ensure their implementation and success within the College. The Dean will work collaboratively to continue to identify additional areas of focus for College leadership. This will include an ongoing and determined effort to diversify the College's faculty.

- **Secure additional resources for the College:** The Dean will actively engage stakeholders, including alumni, foundations, corporations, and the local community, to secure support for the strategic vision and plan of the College. Although details and specific priorities are still being finalized, the College will be responsible for securing a significant portion (\$100M+) of the University's upcoming projected \$500M comprehensive campaign. Without doubt, the next CAS Dean will have the opportunity and responsibility for tethering the strategic plan and campaign pillars to the College's initiatives and future. The next Dean will have the ability to envision an even more vibrant future for CAS, develop steps for achieving it, and passionately communicate to internal and external members of the community that they have important contributions to make to CAS's journey. With remarkable growth in faculty research in the last decade, including steady increases in external funding, the next Dean will have many compelling stories to share with these audiences.
- **Support and value all faculty across their careers:** As the College's chief academic officer, the next Dean will work to ensure that structures and policies best support CAS faculty. Particular attention should be given to balancing support of tenured and tenure-track faculty with the sizeable number of outstanding term faculty employed within the College, ensuring equity in promotion and evaluation processes; professional development opportunities; and support for teaching, scholarship, and service. The availability of high-quality term faculty is one of many ways that CAS benefits from the University's location in Washington, DC. The next Dean will continue to ensure that AU excels at recruiting DC-area talent *and* retaining those scholar-teachers through meaningful support and demonstrated appreciation of their efforts.
- **Grow sponsored research:** As part of the University's initiative to increase and diversify scholarship and research, the Dean will lead the charge in enhancing sponsored research within the College of Arts and Sciences. Working closely with faculty and students, the Dean will identify sources of funding to help build the research capacity of the College, including support from federal agencies, corporations, and other funding sources. The Dean will prioritize increasing research across all disciplines within the College, including leveraging the facility resources available to the natural sciences through the recently completed and state-of-the-art Hall of Science.

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The ideal candidate to become the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences will hold a terminal degree in their field, qualify for appointment at the rank of full professor with tenure, and demonstrate effective leadership and management experience within an academic setting. In addition, the ideal candidate will possess many of the following qualities:

- An approachable, inclusive, engaging, and transparent leadership style;
- Ability to work across all academic areas and support faculty in the unique ways that are dictated by their disciplines;
- Ability to work collaboratively within administrative structures to advance the interests of CAS programs and students;
- A balanced perspective that enables both the development and implementation of vision;
- Deep managerial experience within an academic environment, including extensive budget oversight and management experience;
- Collaborative decision-making style that emphasizes close listening balanced with the ability to make an informed decision;
- Transparent and frequent communication style;
- Desire to engage with and seek input from CAS students;
- Commitment to supporting and enhancing a strong shared governance environment;
- Unwavering commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and antiracism, as well as a record that evinces success in enhancing these principles;
- Capability to be a dynamic and influential advocate for the College, its faculty, and its academic programs and centers, both internally and externally;
- Entrepreneurial capabilities and a growth mindset for creatively expanding the reach and impact of CAS's work;
- Ability to advance research activity while balancing faculty commitments to teaching and service;
- Record of successful donor engagement and a desire to fundraise;
- History of reviewing and evaluating promotion and tenure processes, preferably across a variety of disciplines; and,
- High energy, exquisite listening skills, intellectual curiosity, emotional intelligence, and passion for the work of a college-centered research university.

For best consideration, please send all nominations, expressions of interest, and applications electronically and in confidence to:



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