

EASTERN

CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

Dean of the School of Arts & Sciences

Leadership Profile

Fall 2021



Eastern Connecticut State University, Connecticut's only public liberal arts institution, seeks an innovative and collaborative leader who will bring scholarly and administrative skills to the role of Dean of the School of Arts & Sciences. The Dean will have the opportunity to lead a talented group of faculty in Eastern's most diverse school in terms of the breadth of disciplines represented. Eastern has just over 4,000 undergraduate students and about 200 graduate students across seven professional graduate programs. The Dean will supervise the Associate Dean, the academic department chairs, and fourteen other full-time support and technical staff. The Dean manages a significant budget and provides leadership to the School of 145 full-time, tenure/tenure-track faculty and a comparable amount of part-time faculty.

The Dean will be a champion of the liberal arts, leading the faculty in developing a compelling vision for what it means to provide a public liberal arts education in disciplines ranging from Data Science to Music. The Dean must provide active leadership for the School's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and promote an environment that advances inclusive excellence and actively opposes discrimination and intolerance. The Dean will work with the campus community to sustain a learning environment that recognizes the value of a liberal arts education and the value of a transformative education for Eastern's diverse student body. The Dean will also maintain a quality assurance system for continuous program improvements.



About Eastern Connecticut State University

Eastern Connecticut State University was founded in 1889 as the Willimantic Normal School. The name was changed to Willimantic State College in 1959, Eastern Connecticut State College in 1966, and Eastern Connecticut State University in 1983. In 1998, the Board of Trustees for the Connecticut State University System approved changing Eastern's mission to be a public liberal arts institution and the University joined the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges in 2004.

While Eastern's definition of what it means to be a public liberal arts institution will continue to evolve, that identity has become fully accepted both within the university community and throughout the state and region. As the mission statement notes, Eastern Connecticut State University engages students from diverse backgrounds in a transformative, liberal arts learning experience that provides knowledge and skills to lead enriching, purposeful lives.

Eastern makes its home in historic Willimantic in the rural northeast region of the state. Former home to the American Thread Company, at one time the largest thread manufacturer in the world, today's Willimantic features cultural diversity, unique community events, Victorian homes and other interesting sights and sounds. Eastern is surrounded by the wooded hills and pastures of Connecticut's "Quiet Corner," a piece of rural New England full of traditions and natural beauty. At the same time, Eastern is a day trip away from Vermont's ski slopes, Cape Cod's beaches, and both New York City and Boston.

Role of the Dean of the School of Arts & Sciences

Reporting to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Dean of the School of Arts & Sciences will serve as the senior academic officer for the school. The Dean promotes excellence in curricula; teaching and learning; diversity, equity, and inclusion; academic advising; scholarship and creative activities; professional development; and the stewardship of financial and other resources. The Dean develops faculty leadership within the school and enables faculty to develop their scholarly and pedagogical visions to fully realize their strengths.

The new Dean will need to provide leadership in several significant initiatives that are currently underway at Eastern and within the School. These include the implementation of the University's new Liberal Arts Core Curriculum (LAC) and the accompanying Academic Plan in each department. The LAC is Eastern's general education requirement centered on five student learning outcomes chosen by the faculty in 2020. The Academic Plan will require each department to embed those learning outcomes across their curricula and ensure their majors are relevant to the 21st Century student. Other initiatives include supporting the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan and continuing to foster Eastern's culture of assessment of both student learning outcomes and academic advising. The Dean will also assist in refining our professional graduate programs to better meet the interests and needs of today's market.



Additional essential functions and associated tasks include:

Administration of the School:

- Works with department chairs and faculty to develop a vision for the programs within the School that are consistent with Eastern's public liberal arts mission, the University's strategic plan, and the Academic Plan of the Division of Academic Affairs.
- Shares the University's deep commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, while working to introduce strategies, systems, and initiatives that work to counter the systemic biases within higher education.
- Works with the Provost and other Deans to develop and administer policies that guide the consistent and responsible use of budgets within the School. This includes the strategic deployment of tenure-track faculty lines, ensuring the consistent allocation of operating funds across academic departments, and assisting department chairs in managing their budgets.
- Continuously reviews the organizational structure and operations of the School to enhance efficiency and respond to opportunities.

Academic Department Support:

- Works with department chairs, program directors, and faculty to ensure that all academic programs meet the needs and demands of today's 21st Century learners. This may include new curricular offerings that are responsive to student interests; diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts; and emerging career opportunities. It may also include enhancing Eastern's professional graduate program offerings.
- Works with academic departments to develop effective assessment plans that measure the quality and effectiveness of the curriculum.
- Assists departments in enhancing their connections to alumni.
- Supports and enhances the School's capacity to fund and conduct research and creative activity.



Faculty Support and Evaluation:

- Reviews application portfolios in Renewal, Promotion, and Tenure, as well as six-year professional assessments, and makes recommendations to the Provost.
- Reviews tenure-track position requests from departments and makes recommendations to the Provost.
- Works with department search committees to evaluate candidates for faculty and staff positions to ensure we hire high quality people who share our commitment to the liberal arts.

- Assists departments in mentoring new faculty to maintain the sense of community and commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and the liberal arts that characterizes Eastern.
- Supports faculty scholarship and other creative efforts, and assists with grant applications.
- Works with appropriate University Senate committees and other offices to develop and implement meaningful faculty development opportunities.
- When appropriate, holds the responsibility and shares governance for hearing and responding to faculty or staff grievances.
- Evaluates staff and makes recommendations for advancement.



Professional Qualifications and Experience

- Earned terminal degree in an academic discipline appropriate to the School of Arts & Sciences.
- A distinguished record of teaching, peer-reviewed scholarship or creative activity, and service to an institution of higher education.
- Evidence of a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and experience with programs and pathways to support historically underrepresented groups.
- A demonstrated history of open, collaborative, and collegial leadership style that demonstrates a commitment to shared governance and the ability to earn the trust of faculty, students, staff, and administrators.
- Ability to work collaboratively with academic departments and faculty to ensure academic programs are innovative, current, and relevant.
- Experience developing professional graduate programs that serve recent graduates and working adults.
- A record of progressively substantial and successful experience in academic administration including but not limited to budgeting, strategic planning, and personnel management.
- Evidence of an ability to balance multiple competing demands and priorities and a strong track record of problem solving and proactively addressing challenges.
- Evidence of a commitment to the liberal arts and the ability to articulate its value.



Application Process:

All applications, nominations, and inquiries are invited. Applications should include a letter of interest addressing the themes in this profile, a curriculum vitae, and the names and contact information for five professional references. References will not be contacted without the approval of the candidate. Nominations, inquiries, and application materials should be forwarded to Amanda Irwin, Administrative Assistant to the Provost, at: artsandsciencesdeansearch@easternct.edu.

For fullest consideration, candidate materials should be received by the January 17, 2022 priority deadline.

Eastern Connecticut State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, age, gender, gender identity or expression, national origin, marital status, ancestry, present or past history of mental disorder, learning disability or physical disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, genetic information or criminal record. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: LaMar Coleman, Vice President for Equity and Diversity, 860-465-5112, colemanla@easternct.edu.