



Widener University

Dean of the
College of Arts and Sciences



Candidate for Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences

Widener University invites nominations and applications for the position of dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The dean is the chief administrative officer of the college, reports directly to the provost, serves with six other academic deans on the Provost's Council and on the President's Executive Team, and is the official liaison between the college's faculty and the provost.

Widener University, an independent, metropolitan, Carnegie-classified doctoral university with a strong commitment to undergraduate teaching, rigorous academic expectations, and leadership development, connects curricula to societal issues through civic engagement. Dynamic teaching, active scholarship, personal attention, and experiential learning are key components of the Widener experience. The university's robust diversity agenda embodies the values of access, inclusion, academic excellence, innovation, and leadership. The College of Arts and Sciences provides the foundation in the liberal arts and sciences for all undergraduate programs at the university, offering majors and minors in 20 departments. Students in the college benefit from a student-centered approach to learning that features a variety of active learning strategies in the classroom, as well as high-impact learning practices outside of the classroom. The members of the faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences are committed and passionate teachers as well as active scholars and researchers. The college seeks a dean with the ability to motivate, inspire, and advocate through passion, bold vision, a resourceful and entrepreneurial bent, and a commitment to collaborative decision-making. The dean will partner with the president, the provost, the leadership team, and faculty to drive the mission, vision, and strategic plan of the university.

About the University

Since its founding in 1821, Widener has undergone multiple transformations leading to its current position as a selective, nationally ranked, doctoral university. Widener offers associate's, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programs, as well as certificate programs, to 3,591 undergraduates and 2,811 graduate students across three campuses and online.

Widener's distinctive array of programs reflects its foundational commitment to the idea that the liberal arts and sciences and professional/pre-professional programs are mutually reinforcing. The university is proud to comprise the following:

- College of Arts and Sciences
- School of Business Administration
- School of Engineering
- School of Human Service Professions
- School of Nursing
- Delaware Law School (in Wilmington, DE)
- Commonwealth Law School (in Harrisburg, PA)

Widener has developed highly acclaimed interdisciplinary offerings, including a pioneering graduate program in human sexuality and innovative programming offered by the Oskin Leadership Institute.

Widener University's main campus in the City of Chester is located just off I-95 and I-476 and is only 20 minutes from Philadelphia, the nation's sixth largest city and home to world-class art, culture, sports, entertainment, and historic offerings. The main campus sits on 110 acres and has benefited from \$220 million in new construction and renovations over the past decade. Widener's location in metropolitan Philadelphia offers students numerous opportunities to work and learn in a variety of organizations, schools, businesses, and research facilities. Nationally recognized, award-winning writers visit Widener each semester as part of the Distinguished Writers Series. The university also sponsors the Philadelphia Speakers Series, which features Pulitzer and Nobel Prize winners, world leaders, statesmen, distinguished journalists, authors, and other celebrated personalities, and these speakers often present on campus prior to their nighttime lecture in Philadelphia.

Widener has the unusual distinction of hosting two law schools that operate independently of each other: Widener University Delaware Law School and Widener University Commonwealth Law School. Widener University School of Law was separated into the two independently accredited and operating law schools in 2015 in recognition that the two campuses had developed powerful and distinctive identities specific to their geographic locations. Widener University Delaware Law, the only law school in Delaware, has particular strength in corporate law and is an integral part of the legal community in America's corporate capital. Widener University Commonwealth Law is focused in particular on the interaction of law and government and leverages its location in the Pennsylvania state capital.



Mission and Values

A Commitment to Academic Rigor and Student Success

At the heart of a Widener education is the transformation of its students into scholars, leaders, and globally engaged citizens. Widener’s faculty, supported by staff and administrators, meet this goal in several ways. A 13:1 student-faculty ratio allows for close interactions between faculty and students and facilitates high-impact learning. Newly constructed buildings, such as Founders Hall and Freedom Hall, provide state-of-the-art facilities for a number of academic programs.



The richness of the student experience goes beyond a broad array of academic programs, up-to-date facilities, and small class sizes. Widener places the university’s values—experiential learning, community engagement, and preparation for meaningful careers—at the center of every program offered. These values are complemented by leadership programs that help students develop competency, character, and courage. A solid liberal arts and sciences core is the foundation for all undergraduate programs. At the graduate and professional levels, challenging and engaging classroom work is combined with real-world experience offered in a multitude of clinics and cooperative

ventures sponsored by the university. Throughout their studies, undergraduate and graduate students have opportunities to collaborate with faculty in cutting-edge research projects. A robust, donor-funded summer undergraduate research program continues to grow each year.

The university is committed to the highest levels of academic rigor. For example, Widener's master of social work program was ranked as the top online social work graduate program. Commonwealth Law School has been named as one of the nation's top 20 schools for government law and top five for bar exam preparation. The graduate physical therapy program was ranked among the nation's top 40. The School of Business Administration rates among the top 75 schools for financial planning, and our School of Engineering ranks as a top 100 engineering program in the country among universities with undergraduate and master's engineering programs. And, since 2013, the School of Nursing has been designated as a Center of Excellence for Advancing the Science of Nursing Education by the National League for Nursing, the oldest professional nursing organization in the United States.

A Commitment to Civic Engagement

Widener's commitment to civic engagement is recognized, valued, promoted, and lived by senior administrators, faculty, staff, and undergraduate and graduate students alike. Through its leadership and conviction to work both *with* and *in* the local community, Widener has created an environment of service and a commitment to engaging in partnership. This environment is enhanced by and reinforces the academic rigor and focus on student transformation that is at the heart of the Widener mission.

The Widener Partnership Charter School (WPCS), the state's first university-sponsored charter school, offers a holistic curriculum for grades K to 8; it has proven pivotal to increasing students' academic achievement within the local district. The university supports the charter school by providing management support (including strategic and day-to-day technology support), access to university facilities, and administrative assistance for fundraising. In turn, WPCS provides learning opportunities for Widener students in education, social work, clinical psychology, physical therapy, and nursing. Graduates from WPCS who meet criteria for admission to Widener University are guaranteed a generous financial aid package.

Widener University's civic engagement efforts in partnership with its surrounding communities have been recognized by publications such as *Newsweek* and *Washington Monthly*. The federal government has also used Widener as a case study on the positive impact colleges and universities can have in stabilizing and improving the nation's struggling communities. A 2013 report from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Office of University Partnership chronicles Widener's transformation into one of the nation's leading civic engagement institutions. It highlights such initiatives as the Widener Partnership Charter School, the growth of the university's service-learning courses and community-based learning, the university's strong relationship with city government, the university's role as an anchor institution in the Strong Cities, Strong Communities initiative, and the role that faculty have played in promoting civic engagement.

Widener has received national recognition for its achievements in civic engagement and service learning. The university has been placed on the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for six consecutive years, including as a President's Award finalist in 2013. In addition, The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching selected Widener for its "Community Engagement" classification, a distinction Widener earned through its sincere and extensive commitment to service within the local and global community. Widener also recently became a select member of the New American Colleges and Universities, a national consortium of 25 independent colleges and universities dedicated to the purposeful integration of liberal education, professional studies, and civic engagement.



A Commitment to Leadership Development

With leadership development as a strategic goal, Widener established the Oskin Leadership Institute in 2011. The institute aims to inspire students to be strategic leaders and responsible citizens who possess the character, competencies, and courage to affect positive change throughout the world. The Institute offers a certificate program and minor for undergraduates, special courses for selected high school students from the area, campus-wide lectures from distinguished scholars and corporate leaders, support for faculty and graduate student research on leadership issues, and leadership training for corporate executives.

Other leadership development initiatives include Organizational Development Services, a program supported by faculty and students in the joint PsyD and MBA programs who provide executive coaching to campus administrators, student leaders, and regional corporate executives.



University Leadership

Dr. Julie E. Wollman is the 10th president of Widener University, a role she assumed in January of 2016. For more than 25 years, she has been a passionate, fearless, and effective advocate for higher education. Guided by a relentless pursuit of excellence, she has articulated a clear vision and three distinct goals for the university that are focused on providing an unparalleled student experience. Under Dr. Wollman's leadership, Widener will first be a leader in project-based interdisciplinary learning to solve the world's most vexing problems. Second, every Widener student will engage in a global experience. Finally, Dr. Wollman hopes that every student will aspire to graduate with either a leadership certificate or a leadership minor.

Dr. Wollman leads with enthusiasm, authenticity, and a respect for others that draws people together. Since her arrival at Widener, Dr. Wollman has introduced a community-wide listening initiative and established transparent and regular communication through traditional and social media. In an effort to maximize the potential of the university's programs and people, Dr. Wollman also engaged in a review of all initiatives for financial sustainability and pertinence to the mission in order to enhance their effectiveness.

Dr. Wollman is committed to building community, bringing people from varying perspectives together to engage in conversation. She also supports her own communities, serving on the boards of several local, regional, and national organizations, including the Riverfront Alliance of Delaware County, an economic development organization; the New American Colleges and Universities; the Mid-Atlantic Conference of the NCAA; and the American Association of University Administrators.

Under the leadership of Dr. Wollman, Widener has garnered substantial regional and national recognition. The spring 2016 results of a national survey yielded the university's highest-ever levels of student satisfaction. Since then, the university has received the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award and notable rankings in *graduateprograms.com*, *gradschools.com*, *financialplanning.com*, *Taxtalent.com*, *lendEDU*, *U.S. News & World Report*, and the *Wall Street Journal*.

Dr. Wollman is a dynamic and experienced speaker on public policy issues related to education, higher education affordability, and leadership, and has published extensively on effective teaching practices.

Prior to joining Widener University, Dr. Wollman served as president of Edinboro University of Pennsylvania where she focused on academic excellence, faculty and staff development, and high-impact learning practices for all undergraduate students. Dr. Wollman significantly increased Edinboro's enrollment, retention, and student body diversity. She also established Porreco College, a highly successful partnership between the university and business community to improve workforce development and workforce readiness. During her tenure, Dr. Wollman increased private fundraising by 40 percent.

Dr. Wollman has held academic leadership positions at Wheelock College, Worcester State University and Rhode Island College. Dr. Wollman earned her undergraduate degree from Harvard University, her master of science in education from the University of Pennsylvania, and a doctor of philosophy in education from New York University.

Strategic Plan

After an inclusive, collaborative, and transparent planning process, the university's Board of Trustees approved the Vision 2021 strategic plan in May 2014. Vision 2021 outlines the University's goals through Widener's bicentennial. The arrival of President Wollman in January 2016 has inspired a fresh look at Vision 2021.

As the strategic plan reads, by 2021, Widener University will be a leader among metropolitan universities in promoting student transformation and success through:

- Rigorous academic expectations and high-impact educational practices that support intended learning outcomes.
- A dynamic campus environment that immerses students in meaningful curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular experiences.
- A culture of leadership that inspires students, faculty, and staff to have a positive influence on their workplaces, professions, communities, and the world.
- A diverse university community that champions a culture of respect, civility, and inclusivity.
- Scholarship by faculty and students that enriches learning and advances knowledge within and across disciplines.
- Civic engagement that furthers the university's national and global leadership in educating engaged citizens and in contributing to the vitality and well-being of the communities we serve.
- Institutional agility and innovation that make the university attractive, accessible, and sustainable.

THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

The College of Arts and Sciences provides a rigorous foundation in the liberal arts and sciences for all undergraduate programs at the university, offers more than 24 majors and 34 minors, and provides pre-professional tracks for law, health professions (medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, optometry, and veterinary medicine), and physical therapy. Also offered through the college are master's programs in criminal justice and public administration, as well as graduate certificates in non-profit leadership, urban studies, and diversity in the workplace. The college consists of three divisions—Humanities, Sciences, and Social Sciences—each of which is led by an associate dean who is elected by the faculty in the respective division and who reports to the dean of the college.



Student-Centered Academic Experience

Students in the College of Arts and Sciences benefit from a student-centered approach to learning that features a variety of active learning strategies in the classroom, as well as other high-impact learning practices such as collaborative group work, community-based learning, undergraduate research, capstone projects, practica and internships, and study abroad. Faculty are also actively pursuing the use of educational technology to foster students' engagement with the subject matter outside the classroom so that in-class meetings can be devoted to interactive activities that encourage deep learning. Academic advising is highly valued in the college, and faculty advisors work closely with students to tailor their studies to meet expected student learning outcomes as well as to promote the students' long-term educational objectives. Students are encouraged to work closely with the university's Career Services Office to plan their career trajectory, and increasingly Career Services professionals collaborate with faculty in the college on integrating career-preparation activities with course-related assignments. The college boasts high acceptance rates for its students who apply to law school, medical school, and to graduate schools in a variety of disciplines.

Living the Mission: Experiential Learning, Community-Based Learning, and Civic Engagement

The College of Arts and Sciences has been at the forefront of fulfilling mission-driven initiatives in experiential learning, community-based learning, and civic engagement. These also align with the college's commitment to high-impact practices and transformative student experiences. The college offers an array of service-learning courses and opportunities for students to participate in community-based learning and research, and members of its faculty are nationally recognized for their expertise and dedication in this area.



Recent examples of community-based and experiential learning in the college include: environmental science students working with farmers in Costa Rica to promote sustainable agricultural practices such as shade-grown, organic cultivation of coffee; political science students creating their own “Super PAC” to combat escalating college costs; English and creative writing students leading writing workshops for Chester High School students and participating in a writing exchange with inmates in a local prison; humanities and social sciences students participating in the Chester Made initiative, in which students partner with community artists and activists to re-envision urban planning through creative placemaking.

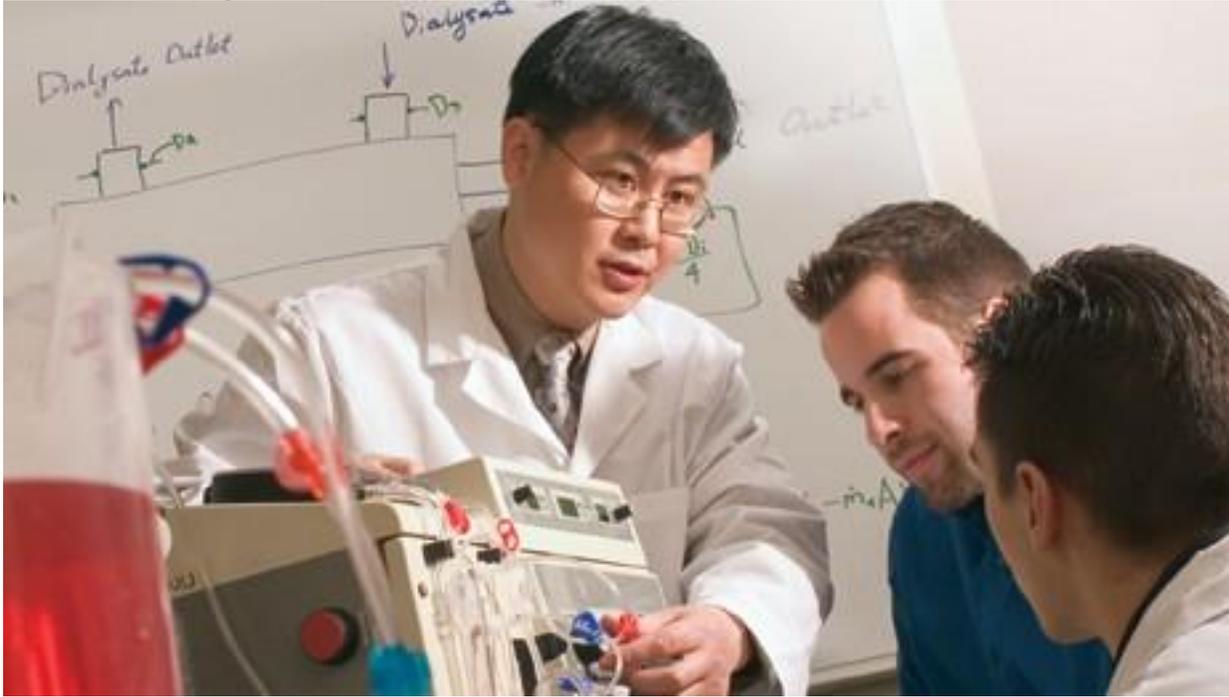
Study Abroad

The college offers students opportunities to travel and study in South America, Central America, Europe, and Asia. Options include an exchange program with Germany’s University of Greifswald, short-term study courses at the university’s international hub in Costa

Rica featuring a variety of sustainability-related projects, intensive research experiences in the rain forest of Peru, an interdisciplinary service-learning course in Trinidad and Tobago, and a yearly interdisciplinary culture and language course at Chongqing Technology and Business University in Chongqing, China.

Undergraduate Research

Students’ engagement in research with faculty mentors is a hallmark of the college. The university’s Summer Research Program began as a College of Arts and Sciences initiative, focusing on the creation of a summer learning community that supports the professional development of students through weekly programming that includes leadership development, incorporation of research into the résumé, interviewing skills, formal and informal presentation of research, and leveraging research skills in career development. The college provides summer housing for students in the Summer Research Program who wish to remain on campus through the summer months to pursue their research with their faculty advisors, and the research generated through this program is featured annually at the university’s student research symposium. The research of students in the college is featured annually at Student Project Day and during Honors Week presentations. The college also provides support for students to present their research at local, regional, and national meetings in their disciplines.



The First-Year Common Experience

The college plays an integral role in the university's common experience for all first-year undergraduates. Central to this experience is a first-year writing course intended to directly address, through challenging reading and writing assignments, students' engagement with the university's mission and their development of critical thinking skills as they work to refine their written communication. This course is anchored by a common theme and a set of core texts, and the English Department sponsors complementary events during the fall semester, including a consideration of how issues raised in students' reading and writing have implications across a range of disciplines. Recently, this work has been extended with a Bringing Theory to Practice grant from AAC&U that brings together a cross-disciplinary group of faculty members with an interest in the relationships among community, empathy, and the psychological well-being of students in order to explore the efficacy of pedagogical approaches such as "story circles" and learning communities. This work will play a role in ongoing efforts to establish additional common learning experiences across the four years of a student's tenure at the university.

Assessment of Student Learning

Faculty members of the college have played a major role in assessing the extent to which students are meeting expected learning outcomes. The Arts and Sciences Assessment and General Education Committee helped develop rubrics for the assessment of written communication skills and critical thinking, and college faculty have occupied leadership roles in the university-level Faculty Council, Student Learning Assessment Committee, and its General Education Subcommittee, as those groups have sponsored systematic analyses of students' work across all programs using the rubrics and have led faculty groups in planning changes to instructional practices and expectations so as to improve student learning outcomes. College faculty will continue to lead the implementation of this comprehensive assessment plan for all general education and institutional learning outcomes that the university currently has in place.

Leaders in Shared Governance

Faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences play a significant role in shared governance at Widener, in addition to holding many other key leadership positions. Members of the faculty from the college chair university-wide committees, design and implement key initiatives related to student learning and

transformation, and lead major endeavors such as the strategic planning process and self-study for regional reaccreditation. Robust participation in shared governance and commitment to the health of the institution through service are vital to the culture of the college.

Active Scholars and Researchers

Members of the faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences are not only passionate and committed teachers—they are also active scholars and researchers. Faculty pursue and are awarded hundreds of thousands of dollars in external grants, serve as leaders in their professional organizations, and contribute substantially to advancing their fields through publications and presentations both nationally and internationally.

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE DEAN

The academic departments in the college are grouped into three large divisions, each with its own interests and approaches, that work collaboratively to advance the mission of the college. The new dean will need to manage the diversity of programs and disciplinary cultures in the college, using keen interpersonal skills to nurture shared priorities relating to academic rigor, high-impact educational practices, and student success and transformation. The college's exemplary work in integrating civic engagement, undergraduate research, and experiential learning across a range of disciplines provides a strong foundation for continued efforts to promote interdisciplinary learning opportunities.

Faculty Support. The faculty and staff are eager to work with the new dean in that individual's role as promoter of and advocate for excellent teaching and scholarship and productive faculty careers. The dean can contribute to the existing strengths of the college through inspirational leadership, advocating for the faculty, and effective mentoring, particularly of new faculty. This is especially important for retention of strong faculty who are relatively early in their academic careers. The dean also has the opportunity to lead in the diversification of the faculty and staff in the college. Success in these regards will require teamwork within the college and collaboration with the other deans and senior administration, as well as respect for equity among the university's seven schools in terms of recognition and support.

Curriculum Development. The new dean is expected to lead in support of innovative teaching and the development of appropriate new curricular programs, as well as the effective use of technology to support learning. The college must strengthen the general education program, making it reflective of Widener's mission and goals. There are opportunities as well to expand undergraduate research. A related challenge is to determine and maintain an appropriate balance between courses offered in the college for its majors and those offered to support programs in other units, particularly the professional schools.

Student Recruitment. The dean will have the opportunity to collaborate with the faculty and the Admissions Office to continue to refine recruitment efforts, stressing the opportunities for experiential learning, including faculty-student research, that exist across the college. The dean will have the opportunity, as well, to take the lead in growing majors not yet at capacity in very strong departments. The new dean will also be able to build on recent successes in integrating Career Services into the promotion of majors in the college as preparation for a variety of successful and meaningful careers. The dean will be expected to pursue creative, interdisciplinary partnerships with other schools and programs at the university that will also assist in the recruitment of students.

Presence with Students. The new dean is expected to establish a significant presence among students, to be approachable and have frequent, direct interaction with them, and to solicit their input and feedback on the range of issues that affect their success and engagement with the university.

University Role. As part of the President's Executive Team, the new dean must collaborate with administrative leaders across the university on strategic initiatives. The new dean is expected to be an

institutional leader as well as leader of the college. As a member of Provost's Council, the new dean will interact regularly with the other academic deans and the provost's other direct reports in ways that will foster collegial relationships essential to effective leadership of the college. Included in the dean's university role is oversight of the Writing Center and ROTC.

University Profile. With robust enrollments and the stronger academic profile of matriculated students, Widener has a fine opportunity to capitalize on its inherent strengths and elevate its public profile. The new dean can play a role in this effort by reaching and influencing new audiences through academic presentations and publications, attendance at and participation in community events, the use of new and interactive media, and collaboration with University Advancement.

Leadership in Gaining Resources. In the context of the college's ambitions and the new strategic plan, Widener recognizes that new resources are required to accomplish all that may be envisioned. Specifically, fundraising for growth and development is an evident need. The dean has the opportunity to play an important role in cultivating a culture of philanthropy among alumni and friends of the college, working closely with University Advancement in seeking increased financial support.

Effective Communication. In all of the above, the opportunity exists for a new dean with exceptional communication skills as a speaker and writer to influence the college's and the university's direction and reputation, and to sustain a culture of transparency. An important aspect of this leadership is working effectively to maintain open and transparent communication with all college constituencies—faculty, staff, and students—about decisions made and those under consideration, in an atmosphere of openness and trust.

DESIRED ATTRIBUTES FOR THE DEAN

The successful candidate for dean of the College of Arts and Sciences will be an accomplished and creative leader, bringing a combination of professional capabilities and personal qualities that will enable that individual to address the opportunities and the challenges that exist for the college and the university. In addition to such expected personal characteristics as honesty, integrity, and exemplary moral and ethical character, Widener considers important the following:

Academic Credentials: A PhD in an arts and sciences discipline represented in the college's current program offerings. Also expected is a record of excellence as a teacher and scholar in a tenured faculty appointment with credentials that would qualify the individual for appointment as a full professor at Widener. Prior experience as a dean is preferred.

Experience and Accomplishments: Successful administrative experience and resulting expertise in leadership and management of academic programs at educational levels comparable to those offered in the college. It is desired that this experience include the following:

- *Mission:* accomplishments consistent with Widener's vision and mission.
- *Reputation:* demonstrated ability to raise the academic reputation of an institution, such as through pedagogical innovation, promotion of student retention, new approaches to scholarship, and other features resulting from strategic planning.
- *Liberal Education:* accomplishments in implementing and promoting for all undergraduate students' general education goals and objectives as well as common student experiences in the arts and sciences.
- *High-Impact Practices:* history of successful promotion of high-impact practices, experiential learning, and community-based learning.
- *Professional Education:* experience in supporting the role Arts and Sciences faculty play in offering coursework that sustains undergraduate programs in the professions—e.g., business, education, engineering, hospitality management, nursing, and social work.
- *Accreditation and Assessment:* successful experience with regional accreditation processes and the self-studies and assessment efforts that accompany them.

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- *Leadership in Higher Education:* evidence of effective leadership in faculty governance, administration, and professional associations.
- *Shared Governance:* appreciation for and experience with shared governance and collaborative leadership in pursuit of common purpose.
- *Innovation:* accomplishments in developing and implementing innovative academic programs, as well as innovative use of technology and educational delivery systems and leading others in their implementation.
- *Faculty/Staff Relations:* demonstrated record of recognizing the work of faculty and staff colleagues and showing appreciation for their contributions; experience in shaping appointment, promotion, and tenure guidelines in support of faculty development and the institution's mission; effectiveness in building consensus and addressing conflict.
- *Management and Mentoring:* evidence of accomplishment in establishing a culture of mentoring for new and existing faculty, effective management of personnel and support of professional development, and ability to inspire faculty and staff to strive toward achieving shared vision and goals based on institutional values.
- *Delegation:* ability to delegate responsibilities wisely, express expectations clearly, and hold faculty and staff colleagues accountable.
- *Budget Management:* a strong sense of fiduciary responsibility as well as experience in the effective management of budgets and stewardship of resources.
- *External Relationships:* interest in and energy for cultivating and nurturing relationships with alumni, prospective donors, and grantfunding agencies.
- *Commitment to Diversity:* demonstrated, intentional, and reflective leadership in recruiting, retaining, and supporting a diverse faculty, staff, and student body, and evident appreciation of the value of diversity in all of its manifestations in academic settings.

Inspiring Leadership: The ability to motivate and inspire through passion, bold vision, a resourceful and entrepreneurial bent, and a commitment to collaboration and consensus. This includes the ability to listen carefully, to be adaptable, to be firm yet transparent and collegial, and to be a natural unifier and team-builder.

Communication: Eloquence and forthrightness in speaking and writing, including the commitment to communicating frequently, clearly, and concisely with internal and external constituencies.

Interpersonal Skills. The dean should:

- be comfortable interacting with a wide range of people, permitting effective networking on behalf of the university.
- display a natural humility, allowing the spotlight to fall on others.
- possess emotional intelligence and appreciation for the perspective of others.
- embrace the role of an aggressive advocate on behalf of the college and its faculty.
- evidence a collaborative spirit and "forward thinking."
- enjoy engaging with students and celebrating their accomplishments.

Contact

For optimal consideration, nominations, applications, and queries in confidence should be submitted online to widener.edu/jobs by **15 October 2017**.

Widener University is an equal opportunity employer, dedicated to a policy of non-discrimination in employment practices on any basis including sex, race, national origin or ethnicity, religion, disability, status as a veteran of the Vietnam era or other covered veteran, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status or other protected status covered by federal, state, or local law.