



AUBURN UNIVERSITY

Dean, College of Nursing

Leadership Profile

Executive Summary

Auburn University invites nominations and applications in its search for the next Dean of the College of Nursing. The Dean serves as the College's chief academic and administrative officer and provides vision and leadership that enhances its tradition of excellence in research, scholarship, instruction, and outreach. The Dean reports directly to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The College of Nursing is recognized as a leader in nursing education. In the 2026 U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges rankings, Auburn's nursing program is ranked 25th among public universities and 40th among national universities. In addition, the College of Nursing's online master's programs ranked 81st nationally and 6th nationally for the Graduate Nursing–Nurse Practitioner/Family program and tied for 4th in Graduate Nursing–Nursing Education. The College of Nursing has approximately 1,300 undergraduate students (over 690 pre-nursing students and over 580 majors), admitting up to 220 undergraduate students to the major each year. Additionally, the College has more than 90 graduate students. The College currently offers the traditional BSN, RN-BSN, MSN, post MSN certificates, DNP, and a newly created Ph.D. The College of Nursing has 39 full-time faculty, 29 staff, and 88 clinical associates. The 2026 budget showed \$23 million in revenue from all sources.

Auburn University is one of the nation's premier public land-grant institutions, ranking 49th among public universities U.S. News and World Report's 2026 "Best Colleges" edition. Auburn, an R1 research university, maintains high levels of research activity and high standards for teaching excellence, offering bachelor's, master's, educational specialist, and doctoral degrees in the arts and sciences, agriculture, engineering, nursing, veterinary medicine, and pharmacy. Its fall 2025 enrollment of 35,172 students includes 28,953 undergraduates and 6,219 graduate students. Organized into 12 academic colleges, Auburn's more than 1,500 faculty members offer approximately 285 educational programs spanning undergraduate, graduate, and professional education. The university is nationally recognized for its commitment to academic excellence, positive work environment, student engagement, and beautiful campus.

The next Dean must have a demonstrated record of strategic leadership in higher education and the skills required to oversee an evolving college. The successful candidate must possess a Ph.D. or D.N.P., a graduate degree in nursing, and academic and professional accomplishments that are sufficient to merit appointment with tenure at the rank of professor. This individual will play a critical role in maintaining the College's record of excellence in the education of its students, evaluating its efforts in research and scholarship, and furthering its impact in communities throughout the state of Alabama and beyond.

For information regarding how to apply, submit nominations, or inquire about the role, please see the section "Procedure for Candidacy" at the end of this document.

About the College of Nursing

The College of Nursing is recognized as a leader in nursing education. In the 2026 U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges rankings, Auburn's nursing program is ranked 25th among public universities and 40th among national universities. In addition, the College of Nursing's online master's programs ranked 81st nationally and 6th nationally for the Graduate Nursing–Nurse Practitioner/Family program and tied for 4th in Graduate Nursing–Nursing Education. The College of Nursing has approximately 1,300

undergraduate students (over 690 pre-nursing students and over 580 majors), admitting up to 220 undergraduate students to the major each year. Additionally, the College has more than 90 graduate students. The College currently offers the traditional BSN, RN-BSN, MSN, post MSN certificates, DNP, and a newly created Ph.D. The College of Nursing has 39 full-time faculty, 29 staff, and 88 clinical associates. The 2026 budget showed \$23 million in revenue from all sources.

The College is housed in a 90,000 square foot state-of-the-art facility adjacent to other health-related buildings. The EAGLES Center has earned full accreditation through the Society for Simulation in Healthcare, the first college of nursing to do so in the state of Alabama.

Recent increased attention to the research mission of the College has provided budgeted funding and infrastructure to enhance the faculty's work. The College has an extensive outreach program including 36 programs reaching over 22,000 people throughout Alabama and beyond, including recent efforts related to maternal health, a partnership with the telehealth company OnMed, and its work with local health clinics.

Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

The next Dean of the College of Nursing will be expected to advance the following priorities, among others:

- **Shape a vision for the College's future.**

The College of Nursing has continued to evolve in recent years, taking on a number of significant projects including a recent revision of curriculum to align with the American Association of Colleges of Nursing's Essentials, the establishment of a new Ph.D. program, and accreditation by the Society for Simulation in Healthcare. Additionally, the College has been impacted by challenges faced by the nursing profession during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, including a decrease in demand for graduate programs. The next Dean will be expected to work closely with faculty, staff, students, and external partners to ensure the College's vision aligns with the University's [2035 strategic plan](#).

- **Support the success of all faculty and staff.**

The Dean will play a key role in creating an environment that attracts, retains, supports, and celebrates individuals representing a range of roles: tenured and tenure-track faculty, clinical professors, clinical associates, and staff. The College has a history of excellence in teaching and service and has been building its research and scholarly activity, which has increased 55% over the last three years. This individual will be expected to foster relationships and projects between tenure-track and clinical-track faculty, ensuring that teaching assignments are aligned with faculty members' areas of expertise. Additionally, this individual should be able to facilitate enhanced growth of research and scholarship that contributes to the visibility of Auburn's prestigious R1 Carnegie Classification and advances its land-grant mission. This includes experience with pre- and post-award support, faculty mentorship, and interdisciplinary collaborations with other disciplines outside of nursing.

- **Continued commitment to academic excellence and to providing exceptional student experiences.**

The College of Nursing has a history of excellence in undergraduate education exhibited by its 100% NCLEX passage rate by BSN graduates in 2026. The undergraduate experience is supported by excellent instruction, up-to-date curriculum, strong clinical partnerships, and a state-of-the-art simulation center. In addition to the new Ph.D., the College has strong MSN and DNP programs at the graduate level and offers post-graduate certificates. The Dean must be able to

understand the needs of programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels and support the success of all students.

- **Enhance external partnerships.**

The College has a strong network of clinical partners, a necessity since Auburn does not have its own medical center. The Dean must be skilled at maintaining and building relationships with clinical partners, as well as identifying opportunities for other partnerships that advance the University's mission. This includes engaging in Auburn's Rural Health Initiative that leverages the University's land-grant identity and extension system throughout the state of Alabama. This individual must also be able to engage alumni and donors by clearly communicating the College's mission and vision and identifying areas of alignment with their philanthropic goals. In addition, the new Dean should establish a national presence, serving as the primary representative of the College of Nursing at the national level.

Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

The next Dean must have a demonstrated record of strategic leadership in higher education and the skills required to oversee an evolving college. The successful candidate must possess a Ph.D. or D.N.P., a graduate degree in Nursing, and academic and professional accomplishments that are sufficient to merit appointment with tenure at the rank of professor. Additionally, this individual should have:

- An understanding of the trends impacting healthcare, the nursing profession, and nursing education and the ability to engage internal and external constituents to ensure the College of Nursing is responding to a dynamic environment.
- A leadership style that is collegial, collaborative, and committed to shared decision-making and strong management skills, including experience with budgets and personnel.
- A record of advancing academic excellence across undergraduate and graduate programs and a deep commitment to student success.
- Experience supporting the success and development of tenured, tenure-track, and clinical faculty and the ability to create a culture that recognizes the contributions of faculty.
- An understanding of how to support faculty, staff, and students in an environment with greater expectations for research and scholarship and a relatively new Ph.D. program.
- Exceptional relationship building skills, including the ability to engage external partners to understand their needs, create partnerships, and advocate for philanthropic support for known and emergent needs in the college.
- Strong written, verbal, and interpersonal skills and the ability to inspire others through authenticity and relationships.
- Impeccable personal and professional integrity, strength of character, ethical qualities of the highest order, and alignment with the Auburn Creed.
- The ability to play a key role in University leadership, advocating for the College, forging advantageous and strategic connections across colleges, and an ability to work collaboratively with other deans and campus units to further the goals and objectives of the College and Auburn University.

About Auburn University

Overview

Auburn University is one of the nation's premier public land-grant institutions, ranking 49th among public universities U.S. News and World Report's 2026 "Best Colleges" edition. Auburn, an R1 research university, maintains high levels of research activity and high standards for teaching excellence, offering bachelor's, master's, educational specialist, and doctoral degrees in the arts and sciences, agriculture, engineering, nursing, veterinary medicine, and pharmacy. Its fall 2025 enrollment of 35,172 students includes 28,953 undergraduates and 6,219 graduate students. Organized into 12 academic colleges, Auburn's more than 1,500 faculty members offer more than 250 educational programs spanning undergraduate, graduate, and professional education. The university is nationally recognized for its commitment to academic excellence, positive work environment, student engagement, and beautiful campus.

University Vision and Mission Statement

Auburn University will emerge as one of the nation's preeminent comprehensive land-grant universities in the 21st century. Central to all its functions will be the University's historic commitment of service to all Alabamians as the state becomes a part of a global society with all of its challenges and opportunities.

Leadership

President Roberts

Dr. Christopher B. Roberts officially became Auburn University's 21st President on May 16, 2022, beginning a new era of continued excellence for the University he's called home for nearly three decades. He began his career at Auburn in 1994 as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Chemical Engineering and became Department Chair in 2003. He was named Dean of the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering in July 2012.

Dr. Roberts earned a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from the University of Missouri in 1990 and master's and doctoral degrees in chemical engineering from the University of Notre Dame in 1992 and 1994, respectively.

Provost Nathan

Dr. Vini Nathan began serving as Auburn University's Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs in May 2023 after serving as Interim Provost since March 2022. Prior to her current role, Dr. Nathan was Dean and McWhorter Chair of the College of Architecture, Design and Construction (CADC) from 2011–2022. She is also a tenured professor of architecture and interior architecture and is a Senior Fellow of the Design Futures Council (DFC). Dr. Nathan previously served as the Dean of the School of Architecture at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia and has held faculty positions at New York Institute of Technology and Michigan State University.

Dr. Nathan earned her master's degree from Virginia Tech in 1990 and her doctoral degree in architecture from the University of Michigan in 1994.

Auburn, Alabama

Auburn residents enjoy a thriving community, recognized as one of the “best small towns in America,” with a moderate climate and easy access to major cities, beaches, and recreational mountain facilities. Situated along the rapidly developing I-85 corridor between Atlanta, Georgia, and Montgomery, Alabama, the combined Auburn-Opelika, Alabama, and Columbus, Georgia, statistical areas have a population of over 500,000, with excellent public-school systems, outstanding recreation areas, and an exceptional regional medical center.

Procedure for Candidacy

The Search Advisory Committee invites letters of nomination and applications (letter of interest, full resume/CV, and contact information of at least five references) to be submitted to the search firm assisting the University. Review of materials will begin immediately and continue until the appointment is made. It is preferred, however, that all nominations and applications be submitted before August 10, 2026. Please submit electronic applications directly to Parker Executive Search. For additional information, please contact:

Porsha Williams, Vice President and Managing Director
Jacob Anderson, Senior Principal
Julia Butler-Mayes, Ph.D., Associate
Parker Executive Search
Five Concourse Parkway, Suite 2875
Atlanta, GA 30328
(770) 804-1996 ext.: 111

pwilliams@parkersearch.com || janderson@parkersearch.com || jbutler-mayes@parkersearch.com

Equal Opportunity Compliance Statement

It is our policy to provide equal employment and education opportunities for all individuals without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, age, disability, protected veteran status, genetic information, or any other classification protected by applicable law. Please visit the Office of Equal Opportunity Compliance's [website](#) to learn more.