



Tarleton State University
Vice President for Research and Innovation

About Tarleton State University

Established on September 4, 1899, Tarleton State University (Tarleton State) offers the value of the Texas A&M University System with its own brand of personal attention, individual opportunities, history, and community. Tarleton State is an energetic, comprehensive Carnegie R2 Doctoral University with the elective Community Engagement classification and a member of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU). The fastest-growing public institution in Texas, Tarleton State has experienced record enrollment growth and now serves approximately 21,000 students across multiple campuses and locations. The university offers 90 bachelor's, 44 master's, and six doctoral degree options through a broad array of academic colleges and programs. As a proud member of the Texas A&M University System, Tarleton State combines a student-focused mission with a rapidly expanding research enterprise and growing national prominence.

Position Summary

The Vice President for Research and Innovation (VPRI) serves as the University's Chief Research Officer and provides executive leadership for all research and innovation activities. This role is responsible for advancing the institution's research enterprise and fostering a culture of scholarship and innovation. The VPRI serves as a member of the President's Executive Team and collaborates with academic, industry, and government partners to expand research capacity, secure external funding, and enhance interdisciplinary initiatives.

Duties and Responsibilities

Executive Leadership & Strategy

- Provide strategic leadership and vision for the university's research, innovation, and economic development enterprise.
- Lead institutional planning efforts for research growth, sponsored programs, and technology transfer.
- Serve as a key advisor to the President on research priorities and emerging opportunities.

- Participate in executive decision-making regarding university planning, budgeting, and policy development.

Research Administration & Program Oversight

- Oversee the planning, coordination, and administration of all research and economic development initiatives.
- Lead the Division of Research, Innovation & Economic Development, including affiliated research centers and programs.
- Facilitate multidisciplinary research and campus-wide initiatives.
- Promote faculty and student research at both undergraduate and graduate levels.

Sponsored Programs & Funding

- Oversee grant development, submission, and negotiation of contracts for complex research initiatives.
- Ensure effective pre-award and post-award administration of sponsored programs.
- Expand external funding through federal, state, industry, and private sources.

Compliance & Regulatory Oversight

- Ensure compliance with federal, state, and system-level research regulations and policies.
- Oversee research compliance programs including IRB, IACUC, Conflict of Interest, Institutional Biosafety Committee, and Export Controls.
- Coordinate with system and governmental entities on research-related requirements.

Innovation

- Lead initiatives that drive innovation and community engagement at regional and national levels.
- Partner with industry and community stakeholders to align research with workforce and economic needs.

Partnerships & External Relations

- Build and sustain strategic partnerships across academia, industry, and government.
- Serve as an ambassador for the university's research mission.
- Collaborate with peer institutions and research leaders to advance shared initiatives.

Minimum Requirements

Required Education & Experience

- Doctoral degree in a relevant discipline.
- Minimum of 10 years of leadership experience in research administration and sponsored programs to include:
 - Demonstrated success in securing and managing externally funded research.
 - Experience leading cross-disciplinary research initiatives.

Required competencies, knowledge, skills, and abilities

- Demonstrated strategic and visionary leadership with the ability to execute and drive organizational outcomes.
- Proven ability to lead and manage complex research portfolios, including oversight of budgets, personnel, and operations.
- Strong financial, analytical, and problem-solving skills, with the ability to make data-informed decisions.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, including the ability to build relationships, collaborate effectively, and influence diverse stakeholders.
- Ability to establish and maintain positive, productive working relationships with students, faculty, staff, administrators, and external partners.
- Demonstrated integrity, professionalism, sound judgment, and commitment to ethical leadership and confidentiality.
- Knowledge of research administration, including compliance, export controls, and environmental health and safety regulations.
- Ability to manage multiple priorities, work collaboratively, and operate effectively in a complex organizational environment.
- Entrepreneurial and innovative mindset with the ability to foster growth, partnerships, and new opportunities.
- Demonstrated commitment to promoting and advancing student engagement in research at all levels.

Preferred Qualifications

- Experience in economic development, particularly rural or regional initiatives.
- Track record in technology transfer and commercialization.
- Experience working in a multi-campus or system-based institution.
- Experience transitioning an institution from R2 to R1 status.

Key Impact Areas

- Expansion of externally funded research portfolio
- Growth in interdisciplinary and collaborative research initiatives
- Strengthened institutional reputation in research and innovation

Institutional Profile

Tarleton State University is an energetic, comprehensive Carnegie R2 Doctoral University with the elective Community Engagement classification, and a member of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU). The fastest-growing public institution in Texas, Tarleton State has experienced record enrollment increases in each of the last six years — increasing enrollment 48.58% since fall 2022, well above the state total for public institutions at 6.36%. With the success of our dual-enrollment program Tarleton State Today, we saw another all-time high enrollment in Fall 2025 at approximately 21,000 students. Our enrollment surges are proof that Tarleton State is quickly becoming one of the country’s fastest growing comprehensive public universities in enrollment, research and national prominence.

The university offers 90 bachelor’s, 44 master’s, and six doctoral degree options. For their majors, students choose from 10 academic colleges — College of Agriculture and Natural Resources; College of Education; College of Liberal and Fine Arts; College of Science and Mathematics; Dr. Sam Pack College of Business; College of Leadership and Military Studies; Mayfield College of Engineering; College of Graduate Studies; Honors College; and the College of General and Applied Studies — as well as three colleges within the Division of Health Sciences, which includes the College of Nursing, College of Kinesiology and Sport Science, and the College of Health and Clinical Professions.

Tarleton State University is a proud member of the Texas A&M University System, and serves students on the main campus in Stephenville, its growing Fort Worth campus, in Waco, on the A&M RELLIS campus in Bryan, globally online, and through the Tarleton State Today dual-enrollment program.

NCAA Division I membership, rural healthcare education, and the ongoing expansion of our Fort Worth campus collectively position Tarleton State as a frontrunner for those aspiring to attain a university degree. To see how Tarleton State University is working to become the premier student-focused and value-driven institution, view our mission statement and goals.

Mission

Tarleton State University, a founding member of the Texas A&M University System, transforms generations by inspiring discovery, leadership and service through educational excellence.

Core Values

Tarleton State Texans embrace a culture of:

- Excellence – Pursuing greatness in all efforts, promoting a spirit of leadership, adaptability, and innovation for exceptional outcomes and a better world.
- Integrity – Upholding the highest ethical standards and commit to serving others through transparency and accountability in everything we do.
- Respect – Creating a thriving community by embracing varied perspectives with civility, honoring tradition, and promoting collaboration so everyone thrives.

Research Activities

Tarleton State supports outstanding research through 13 academic centers and institutes, including the Texas Center for Rural Research, Innovation & Economic Development, the Institute for Biotechnology, and the Texas Institute for Applied Environmental Research, which has generated more than \$88 million in research funding.

Since 2019, Tarleton State has increased research expenditures by 120%, helping Tarleton State earn the elevated designation of High Research Spending and Doctorate Production by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. Tarleton State now operates as an EDA University Center, the only one in the region and one of just 73 nationwide. To bring new industrial collaboration and more research dollars to the state, a state-of-the-art Research and Economic Development Building was recently opened in 2024.

Student Body

Nearly 50% of Tarleton State students are first generation with no family tradition of seeking a post-secondary degree. Others are legacy students following their parents, grandparents and even great-grandparents as proud defenders of the purple and white.

Almost 40% of Tarleton State students report an ethnicity other than white and hail from all parts of Texas (230 counties), 50 states and over four dozen global countries. Nearly 80% receive some form of financial assistance, and almost 40% are Pell Grant eligible. They love the university — its people, its traditions, its commitment to student triumphs in and out of the classroom.

The Texas A&M System

Tarleton State University is proud to be part of The Texas A&M University System, one of the largest and most powerful systems of higher education in the nation. With a \$9.1 billion operating budget, 12 universities, a comprehensive health science center, eight state agencies, Texas A&M-Fort Worth, the RELLIS Campus and system office, the A&M System educates approximately 175,000 students and reaches millions more through service, research and outreach programs each year. With nearly \$1.6 billion in annual research expenditures, the A&M System fuels innovation, supports communities and drives Texas' economy forward.

The system support brings additional strength, stability, and national credibility. It means institutional backing at scale, access to statewide influence and the long-term security of competing within a system committed to excellence, accountability and growth. At Tarleton State, we compete with the power of the Texas A&M System behind us.

Main Campus in Stephenville

Tarleton State's campus is more than a place to learn: it's home.

Nestled in the heart of scenic Central Texas, the Stephenville campus blends quiet rural beauty with an intimate, connected atmosphere that feels both purposeful and personal. Towering oak trees, open green spaces and iconic architecture create a setting that calms the mind and fuels ambition where student-athletes can focus, grow, and thrive.

Life on campus is vibrant. Our student center is a daily hub of community. It's a space to gather, recharge and connect with teammates, classmates and colleagues. Modern dining options ensure that students fuel their bodies with variety, convenience and quality, from grab-and-go favorites to comfortable social dining spaces where friendships are strengthened over shared meals.

Tarleton State's student housing reflects a commitment to comfort, privacy and community. From suite-style living to contemporary residence halls, every space is designed with the student experience in mind. Whether walking to class through shaded pathways, sharing a meal with teammates, or unwinding after practice to a Texas sunset, the Stephenville campus offers a beautiful, supportive home that champions academic success, athletic excellence, and lifelong belonging.

Stephenville, Texas

Stephenville is located at the intersection of US-281, US-67 and US-377 and 25 miles south of IH-20 and 70 miles southwest of the Dallas / Fort Worth Metroplex. Stephenville is the retail center for a trade area population of approximately 80,000 Texans.

Agriculture is the leading industry, with Erath County in the top 10% in overall agriculture production and ranking No. 2 in milk production in the State of Texas. In addition to farmers and ranchers, Fortune 500 companies provide a strong manufacturing diversity to the economy. Stephenville serves as a regional medical and retail center for the area with many family-owned businesses thriving as they draw from a strong, diverse workforce, educational opportunities and family-oriented atmosphere.

As the 'Cowboy Capital of the World', Stephenville is uniquely home to more professional rodeo cowboys and cowgirls than any other place in the world. And the equine industry continues to grow throughout the surrounding County. The 'City of Champions' designation reflects the commitment as a community to excellence in youth and civic organizations. The community

strongly believes that investing in their youth is a wise and worthwhile endeavor. Families seeking a positive place to raise kids will find an excellent school system, civic organizations dedicated to youth programs, numerous sports leagues, and family fun events at parks, museums, and churches throughout the year.

Stephenville is a special place that reflects pride in the community's rich heritage and commitment to the future. Spend a little time and you will see why Stephenville has been listed as one of 'The 100 Best Small Towns in America!'

Application Process

Tarleton State University 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 are submitted before August 18, 2026. Please submit electronic applications directly to Parker Executive Search. For additional information, please contact:

Porsha Williams, Vice President
Jacob Anderson, Senior Principal
Julia Butler-Mayes, Ph.D., Associate
Parker Executive Search
Five Concourse Parkway, Suite 2875 | Atlanta, GA 30328
(678) 775-4564
pwilliams@parkersearch.com || janderson@parkersearch.com || jbutler-mayes@parkersearch.com

Electronic submission of materials required.

Tarleton State University provide equal opportunity to all employees, students, applicants for employment, and the public regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, or veteran status. Tarleton State University will promptly and thoroughly investigate all complaints of discrimination, sexual harassment, and related retaliation in accordance with applicable federal and state laws, A&M System Policy 08.01, and Regulation 08.01.01, and university rules and/or procedures.