

SEARCH PROFILE:

DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES



**CLAYTON
STATE
UNIVERSITY**

Dreams. Made Real.

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Clayton State University, part of the University System of Georgia, invites inquiries, nominations, and applications for the position of Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences. The University seeks an experienced and innovative leader who will champion the students served, implement and oversee strategies to strengthen the College's academic programming to meet market demands, and work with the President, Provost, and other senior leaders on campuswide initiatives designed to promote student success and increase community engagement.



THE UNIVERSITY

Clayton State University has built a strong reputation for being welcoming, vibrant, and opportunity-rich, while maintaining an unwavering commitment to student success. Founded in 1969 and repeatedly recognized as a “Top Workplace in Atlanta” by *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, the University cultivates an environment of engaged, experience-based learning enriched by active community service. Its 214-acre campus—home to six lakes and regarded as one of the most beautiful in the state—provides an inspiring setting for discovery and collaboration. Situated south of Atlanta, Clayton State draws over 6,300 students from 40 states and more than 30 countries.

The University serves a student body that is 69 percent female and 63 percent African American, and offers more than 100 degree, certificate, and professional programs across four academic colleges—the College of Arts & Sciences; College of Health; College of STEM; and College of Business. With accommodating class sizes, accessible faculty, an energetic campus culture, and an Honors Program, Clayton State excels in preparing students from a variety of backgrounds to thrive in a dynamic, global society. Guided by the mission of *Social Mobility*, Clayton State University empowers students from all backgrounds to achieve academic success, professional advancement, and personal fulfillment. The University transforms potential into achievement by expanding access, fostering integrity, and preparing graduates to positively impact their communities and the broader world.

Beyond the classroom, students at Clayton State engage in a vibrant campus life with more than 80 student clubs and organizations spanning academic, social, service, leadership, and recreational interests. The 62,000-square-foot Student Activities Center continues to be the central hub for gatherings, programming, events, intramural and club sports, fitness, and student organization operations. Through the Laker Life office, students find support in leadership development, volunteer engagement, advocacy initiatives, and coordinated campus events.

Clayton State’s Student Care & Support connects students with individualized, non-clinical case management, advocacy, and referrals to both campus and community resources to help them navigate experiences and challenges adjusting to college life. Embedded within this framework are specialized offices—Disability Services, the Care Center, and the Community, Belonging & Veterans Center—that ensure accommodations, emergency and basic needs support, and

USG Core Values

The University System of Georgia is comprised of our 26 institutions of higher education and learning as well as the System Office. Our USG Statement of Core Values are Integrity, Excellence, Accountability, and Respect. These values serve as the foundation for all that we do as an organization, and each USG community member is responsible for demonstrating and upholding these standards. More details on the USG Statement of Core Values and Code of Conduct are available in USG Board Policy 8.2.18.1.2 and can be found on-line at www.usg.edu/policymanual/section8/C224/#p8.2.18_personnel_conduct.

Additionally, USG supports Freedom of Expression as stated in Board Policy 6.5 Freedom of Expression and Academic Freedom found on-line at www.usg.edu/policymanual/section6/C2653.

Institutional Values

Clayton State University will have a positive impact on the State of Georgia and beyond by serving students and the community through broadening access to high-quality education and advancing workforce development. Our statement of core values is Adaptability, Collaboration, Excellence, Integrity, and People-centered. Each Clayton State University community member is responsible for demonstrating and upholding these standards. More details on Clayton State’s Statement of Core Values and Code of Conduct can be found online at www.clayton.edu/strategic-plan/mission-vision-values and www.clayton.edu/human-resources/current-employees/resources-policies

THE UNIVERSITY (CONT.)

spaces for identity, resilience, and belonging. While Student Care & Support serves as a safety net for non-clinical needs, the Health & Wellness Center provides on-campus medical and behavioral health services, offering confidential care both in person and virtually.

As an NCAA Division II institution and longstanding member of the Peach Belt Conference, Clayton State fields men's and women's teams in soccer, basketball, cross country, indoor and outdoor track & field, and cheerleading. In recent seasons, the men's soccer program advanced to the 2024 Elite Eight, marking its deepest postseason run in more than a decade. Meanwhile, under the current director of athletics, the department has celebrated successes such as the men's basketball placing second in its division in the latest season.

Clayton State University is committed to:

- Social mobility, making it a core part of its mission to help students improve their socioeconomic status through education.
- Creating an outstanding educational experience that stimulates intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, and innovation.
- Engendering a spirit of openness, understanding, collaboration, and mutual respect throughout the University.
- Fostering learning that engages students, faculty, staff, alumni, and the greater community.
- Expanding and allocating resources strategically, according to mission and values, to support overall institutional effectiveness.
- Providing an inviting and supportive campus community for faculty, staff, and students.



THE COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

The College of Arts & Sciences is the University's largest and most comprehensive academic unit, anchoring the liberal arts and social sciences core while driving innovation across multiple disciplines. Nearly half of all student credit hours at Clayton State are earned in the College, underscoring its central role in delivering both general education and advanced study.

Breadth of academic offerings: Degrees at the associate's, bachelor's, and master's levels as well as minors and certificates in varying disciplines such as communication & media studies, criminal justice, education, English, film, history, liberal studies, music, psychology, and sociology.

Professional accreditations: Endorsements from the National Association of Schools of Music, the American Bar Association (Paralegal/Legal Studies), the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (Teacher Education), and the Master's in Psychology and Counseling Accreditation Council.

Signature initiatives: The Alcohol and Other Drugs Education and Prevention Program, a community mental health initiative; the Laker Wildlife Initiative, a multidisciplinary summit advancing research and training in wildlife crime prevention; partnerships between Education and local school districts; internship requirements for professional programs; multiple programs in collaboration with the local film industry.

Faculty distinction: Recognition through College awards for scholarship, teaching excellence, and service.

Student achievement: Celebrations of success stories such as Madison Johnson (Psychology major), recipient of the Atlanta Women's Foundation's Yashoda Reddy Education Award, and Patricia Sas Ellis, who completed a bachelor's in criminal justice at age 79.

Central role in core learning: Nearly 50% of all University credit hours are earned within the College.

Modern learning environment: Facilities designed for active learning, collaboration, and integrated technology.



THE COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES (CONT.)

The College is home to a diverse range of programs that exemplify academic excellence, community engagement, and student success. Across its departments, the college fosters innovation, creativity, and collaboration, preparing graduates to make meaningful contributions in education, the arts, public service, private sector, and beyond.

The **School of Education** offers comprehensive teacher preparation programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels, equipping future educators with the knowledge and skills to make a lasting impact in classrooms and communities. Through its partnerships with local school districts, the School leads initiatives that connect theory with practice. The Clayton County Public Schools Partnership—a three-year collaboration—focuses on culturally responsive teaching, instructional coaching, and strengthening the teacher pipeline, while the DeKalb County IGNITE Teacher Residency provides an innovative MAT program in Elementary Education to address district needs. Together, these partnerships advance instructional excellence, literacy, and teacher leadership development.

The **Department of English** offers a broad range of programs including the BA, MAT, and MALS degrees, as well as combined and certificate options in Creative and Professional Writing, in seated, online, and hybrid formats. The department's Writers' Studio provides writing support across the University, while students and faculty collaborate on publications such as *Cygnets*, the student art and literary magazine; *Connections*, a recognized first-year writing textbook; and *The Vibrant Voice*, the department newsletter. Students gain hands-on experience through internships in publishing, editing, and digital writing, and participate in signature events including the Visiting Writers Reading Series, African American Read-In, and Winter Wonderland Book Giveaway.

In the **Department of Film, Communication, and Performing Arts**, creativity meets industry engagement. The Communication and Media Studies program prepares graduates for success in public relations, marketing, and media, with alumni working across diverse sectors—including as the official photographer for the Atlanta Braves. The Film Production program emphasizes hands-on learning through small classes and Georgia Film Academy certification, with student films showcased at more than 100 international festivals. The Division of Music and Music Education boasts a 100% job placement rate for its graduates and offers world-class performance opportunities in *Spivey Hall*, one of the nation's premier concert venues. A new Musical Theatre Certificate bridges the programs in Music and Stage and Screen, providing expanded opportunities for performance and collaboration. The Stage and Screen program has earned national recognition, including honors from the Kennedy Center and the Alex Trebek Fellowship, while graduates continue to appear in acclaimed productions in Atlanta and beyond. The Art program, supported by internationally exhibited faculty, offers a minor and student opportunities that have led to regional awards and artist residencies.

The **Department of Humanities** houses programs in History, French, and Spanish, offering flexible online and in-person options that reach students across Georgia and beyond. Its faculty are among the most published and long-serving at the University, playing a vital role in delivering the University's core curriculum and contributing to interdisciplinary programs such as Liberal Studies and Education.

The **Department of Interdisciplinary Studies** exemplifies the University's commitment to flexible, cross-disciplinary education. With undergraduate degrees in Interdisciplinary Studies and Administrative Management (transitioning to the College of Business in 2026), and graduate options through the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies, the department provides pathways that prepare students for an evolving workforce. Its minors in African American Studies, Women and Gender Studies, Aviation Administration, and Homeland Security/Emergency Management foster broad-based learning and career readiness.

In the **Department of Psychology and Human Services**, students are prepared for meaningful work in mental health and human services. The BS in Psychology and Human Services, offered in both traditional and online formats, includes seven specialized concentrations and a 150-hour internship requirement that strengthens career readiness. The MPCAC-accredited MS in Clinical/Counseling Psychology program prepares students for licensure as professional counselors. Faculty are deeply engaged in applied research, community initiatives, such as the Alcohol and Other Drugs Education and Prevention Program, and student mentorship, supported by external funding such as the Department of Education's CCAMPIS grant, which expands access to childcare for student parents.

The **Department of Social Sciences** integrates academic rigor with public impact. Offering degrees in Criminal Justice, Legal Studies, Government and Law, Sociology, and Public Administration, the department supports students pursuing service-oriented careers. The fully online Master of Public Administration program provides embedded certificates in Public Policy and Nonprofit Management, tailoring professional development to diverse career goals. Faculty-led initiatives such as the Mobility, Opportunity, Network, and Access Research Consortium (MONARC) advance research on social mobility and community well-being. The internationally recognized Laker Wildlife Initiative extends the department's impact globally through wildlife forensics, conservation education, and partnerships with Zoo Atlanta and the Atlanta Botanical Garden.

Together, these departments embody Clayton State's commitment to academic excellence, innovation, and public engagement—preparing graduates not only for successful careers but also for meaningful contributions to their communities and the world.



THE GREATER ATLANTA AREA

Clayton State University is located in Morrow, Georgia, just south of the city of Atlanta. Whether seeking quaint charm or dynamic city amenities, both are within easy reach. The city of Morrow, with a population of nearly 10,000 residents, has made the transformation from a rural railroad community to a modern center of art, education, music, history, and outdoor recreation. It is home to the National Archives at Atlanta and the Georgia Archives. The Reynolds Nature Preserve is a 146-acre preserve with three miles of hiking trails, a nature center with live animals, and preserved barn with farm equipment and a spring house that dates back to 1867.

Downtown Atlanta, the largest metropolitan city in the Southeast, is easily accessible by Interstate 75. Offering authentic Southern hospitality, the city's metropolitan area is home to six million residents. Its economy continues to grow as it attracts a broad range of industries and Fortune 500 corporations. The city has become a center for major film and television production and high-tech companies. One of the top transportation hubs in the nation, Atlanta is connected to the world. It fosters a strong sense of community and has outstanding cultural and performing arts venues, a wide range of professional sports, world-class cuisine, and an abundance of recreational opportunities. The Georgia Aquarium, the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Park, Zoo Atlanta, the High Museum of Art, the College Football Hall of Fame, and the Atlanta Botanical Garden are only a few of the favorites that attract millions of visitors each year.

UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP



Dr. Georj L. Lewis was appointed the sixth President of Clayton State University in February 2023. He brings more than 30 years of experience in higher education, including 20 years in senior leadership roles such as Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs at Indiana University, Vice President for Student Affairs at Armstrong State and Georgia Southern Universities, and Dean of Students at Georgia Southern. From 2019 to 2023, he served as President of Atlanta Metropolitan State College.

During his tenure at Clayton State University, he has spearheaded

a Strategic Plan to guide the University well into the 2030 academic year; served on a range of committees to support campus initiatives, and implemented partnerships with local, national, and global colleagues to advance the mission of social mobility and strengthen opportunities and resources for students.

Dr. Lewis is a graduate of Leadership Atlanta, the University System of Georgia's Accelerated Leadership Academy, and the Executive Leadership Institute. He is active in the Atlanta community through service on multiple boards and councils, including the Georgia Chamber of Commerce and the Aerotropolis Atlanta Alliance. His professional recognition includes the Pillar of the Profession Award from NASPA and the Paragon Award for New Presidents from Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society.

A native of Pennsylvania, Dr. Lewis earned a B.S. in Business/Accounting and an M.A. in Counseling/Student Personnel from Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Georgia Southern University.

Dr. Jill Drake joined Clayton State University on February 1, 2025, as the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. Dr. Drake brings more than 24 years of experience in higher education to her role at Clayton State. She is a transformational leader committed to advancing student success, driving innovation in academic programs, and cultivating strategic institutional partnerships. As Provost, Dr. Drake provides leadership for the institution's academic programs, faculty development, and student support services. Although Dr. Drake has not been with Clayton State long, she is already laying the foundations for top quality academic programs.

Prior to joining Clayton State University, Dr. Drake served as Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Georgia Southwestern State University. Earlier in her career, she held the position of Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs at the University of West Georgia. In these leadership roles, she spearheaded initiatives to enhance student retention, broaden academic offerings, and strengthen faculty development. Her work also advanced strategic priorities in new degree program creation, co-curricular integration, and instructional innovation.

Dr. Drake earned her Doctor of Education from the University of Georgia. She also holds an Education Specialist degree, a Master of Science degree, and a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education, all from Florida State University.





LEADERSHIP AGENDA FOR THE DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

The next Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences will join a college community that is deeply committed to its students, proud of its faculty, and hopeful for stable, visionary leadership. The College of Arts & Sciences has experienced an extended period of time without a permanent dean, and was restructured in recent years, resulting in a longing for renewed identity and direction. The College desires an approachable, active listener who is capable of bridge-building across departments and disciplines and working with chairs and faculty to ensure academic programs are innovative, current, and relevant.

The College seeks a leader who is authentic, communicative, collaborative, and grounded in integrity. Faculty and staff strive for someone who is both visionary and pragmatic—able to align aspirations with existing resources, while pursuing creative funding sources through grants, partnerships, and philanthropy. The next Dean should bring emotional intelligence, strategic thinking, and a strong external focus, engaging with local businesses, community partners, and alumni to expand opportunities and elevate the College's visibility and impact. Some programs face low enrollments, prompting a call for a leader who can advocate the value of the liberal arts in workforce and interdisciplinary innovation.

There is strong optimism around the new Provost, and the next Dean will inherit a talented, collegial, and energized group of faculty and staff ready to move forward—hopeful to be guided by a compassionate, decisive, and community-minded leader who can help the College fulfill its potential and leave a lasting legacy of student-centered excellence.

Reporting to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences will serve as the senior academic officer for the College. The Dean promotes excellence in curricula; teaching and learning; academic advising; scholarship and creative activities; professional development; the stewardship of financial and other resources. The Dean will also build external relationships and community partnerships, develop fundraising and alumni relations efforts, and advance a welcoming culture within the College and across divisions. The Dean will work with departments to ensure their majors

are relevant to today's students and potential employers. Other initiatives include supporting the University's [Strategic Plan](#) and working with the deans of other colleges to provide a seamless experience for students, at times through interdisciplinary programs. Additional essential functions and associated tasks include:

Administration of the College

- Working with department chairs and faculty to develop a vision for the programs within the College that is consistent with the University's strategic priorities: building academic and career pathways; driving student success and social mobility; growing enrollment; and increasing community and corporate engagement.
- Introducing strategies, systems, and initiatives that improve student retention and promote student progression and graduation.
- Overseeing course schedules to ensure offerings match student needs.
- Developing and administering policies that guide the consistent and responsible use of budgets within the College, including the strategic deployment of tenure-track faculty lines, the equitable allocation of operating funds across academic departments, and assisting department chairs in managing their budgets.
- Representing the University's academic interests to external stakeholders, including other educational institutions, industry partners, community organizations, and alumni, stimulating donor cultivation and fundraising as well as internship and employment partnerships.

Support for Academic Departments

- Working with department chairs and faculty to ensure that all academic programs meet the needs and demands of today's learners and employers in the CSU community. This may include new or updated curricular offerings that are responsive to student interests and emerging career opportunities.
- Supporting the academic departments in developing or revising majors that lead to positive enrollment growth.

LEADERSHIP AGENDA FOR THE DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES (CONT.)

- Assisting departments in enhancing their connections to alumni and friend raising.
- Supporting and enhancing the College's capacity to fund and conduct scholarly work and professional development.

Support for Faculty and Evaluation Processes

- Reviewing application portfolios in renewal, promotion, and tenure, as well as post-tenure assessments, and making recommendations to the Provost.
- Reviewing tenure-track position requests from departments and making recommendations to the Provost.
- Working with department search committees to evaluate candidates for faculty and staff positions to ensure the hiring of candidates who demonstrate a commitment to CSU's mission, vision, and values.
- Assisting departments in mentoring new faculty to maintain the sense of community and commitment to public education and social mobility that characterizes Clayton State.

- Supporting faculty scholarship and other creative efforts as well as grant applications.
- Working with Faculty Senate and other offices to develop and implement meaningful faculty development opportunities.
- When appropriate, holding the responsibility for hearing and responding to faculty or staff issues within the College.

Internal and External Relationship Building

- Enhancing existing community partnerships and developing new external relationships on behalf of the College, working in cooperation with the other deans, Division of University Advancement, Office of the Provost, and others.
- Nurturing and extending connections with alumni of the College.
- Establishing healthy relationships with faculty, staff, students, and others within the University.

QUALIFICATIONS

Required

- A terminal degree from a regionally accredited institution in a discipline represented in the College of Arts & Sciences.
- A record of distinguished teaching, research/scholarship, and service consistent with a tenured faculty appointment in a department of the College.
- A successful record of progressive experience in positions of increasing responsibility and leadership in higher education.

Preferred

- Understanding, appreciation, and enthusiasm for the University's identity, core values, community, and students served.
- Experience with the University System of Georgia or other large complex public university system.
- A demonstrated history of an open, collaborative, and collegial leadership style that exhibits a commitment to shared governance and engaging with others in ways that build trust.
- Capacity to lead actively, think strategically, and foster a culture of results grounded in cohesion and community among administrators, faculty, staff, and students.
- Significant experience in assessing current program offerings and designing new and revised academic programs that meet market needs and lead to increased visibility and enrollment.

- Evidence of a forward-thinking approach to curriculum development, interdisciplinary collaboration, and innovative programming and modalities.
- Demonstrated experience overseeing large, complex budgets, fiscal matters, strategic planning, personnel management, and program accreditation.
- A proven ability to balance multiple competing demands and priorities and a strong track record of problem solving and proactively addressing challenges.
- Demonstrated ability to cultivate external partnerships and engage with regional businesses and community stakeholders.
- A track record of fundraising, philanthropy development, and/or grant writing.
- Strong communication skills.





APPLICATION AND NOMINATION PROCESS

Clayton State University is being assisted by Academic Search. Prospective candidates may arrange a confidential discussion with Dr. Margaret Venable by clicking [here](#) or with Andrea Cowsert by emailing Andrea.Cowsert@academicsearch.org. Applications and nominations should be submitted electronically to CSUDean@academicsearch.org. Applications must include a cover letter that addresses the responsibilities and requirements described in this position prospectus; a curriculum vitae; and a list of at least five professional references with contact information, including telephone and email, and a note indicating the candidate's working relationship with each. References will not be contacted without the explicit permission of the candidate. The position will remain open until filled, but only applications received by **January 15, 2026**, can be assured full consideration.

Conditions of Employment

Offers of employment are contingent upon completion of a background investigation, including a criminal background check demonstrating eligibility for employment with Clayton State University, as determined by Clayton State University in its sole discretion, confirmation of the credentials and employment history reflected in application materials and, if applicable, a satisfactory credit check. Applicants may be subject to a pre-employment drug and alcohol screening. Candidate must disclose potential, actual, or apparent conflicts of interest in compliance.

Offers are made expressly subject to the applicable federal and state laws, statutes, rules, and regulations of this institution and the Bylaws and Policies of the Board of Regents (BOR) of the University System of Georgia (USG), which are available for your inspection upon request.

Equal Employment Opportunity

Clayton State University is an equal employment, equal access, and equal educational opportunity and affirmative action institution. It is the policy of the University to recruit, hire, train, promote, and educate persons without regard to race, color, national or ethnical origin, age, disability, gender, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status as required by applicable state and federal laws (including Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, Sections 503, and 504, AREA, ADA, E.O. 11246, and Rev. Proc. 75-50). Clayton State University is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Institution. For questions or more detailed information regarding this policy, please contact the Clayton State University Office of Human Resources at (678) 466-4230. For individuals requiring disability-related accommodations for participation in any event or to obtain print materials in an alternative format, please contact the Disability Resource Center at (678) 466-5445.

Clery Disclosure

This position may be considered a Campus Security Authority, CSA. A Campus Security Authority is a Clery-specific term that encompasses certain departments, groups, and individual employees who have a duty to report crimes they become aware of, as defined by the Clery Act.

To learn more about Clayton State University, please visit www.clayton.edu.

ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting Clayton State University in this work. For more than four decades, Academic Search has offered executive search services to higher education institutions, associations, and related organizations. Academic Search was founded by higher education leaders on the principle that we provide the most value to partner institutions by combining best practices with our deep knowledge and experience. Our mission today is to enhance institutional capacity by providing outstanding executive recruitment services, executive coaching, and transition support, in partnership with our parent organization, the American Academic Leadership Institute.

