

SEARCH PROFILE:

FOUNDING DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS



**STEPHEN F. AUSTIN
STATE UNIVERSITY**
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SYSTEM
NACOGDOCHES, TEXAS

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Stephen F. Austin State University welcomes applications and nominations for the founding position of Dean of the College of Health Professions. The dean will lead a new college that will expand pathways into high-demand health professions and strengthen the university's role as the leading rural-serving institution in East Texas.



ABOUT STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY

Stephen F. Austin State University, the newest member of The University of Texas System, began over a century ago as a teachers' college in Texas' oldest town, Nacogdoches. Today, it has grown into a regional institution comprising six colleges: Business; Fine Arts; Forestry and Agriculture; Sciences and Mathematics; Education, Humanities and Social Sciences; and the newly established College of Health Professions.

Accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, SFA provides the academic breadth of a comprehensive university with the personalized attention of a liberal arts college.

Nestled in a pine tree sanctuary, the main campus encompasses 421 acres that include 36 academic facilities, nine residence halls, and 68 acres of recreational trails that wind through six gardens. With the inclusion of its off-campus Todd Agricultural Research Center, DeWitt School of Nursing Complex, and aviation program hangars, SFA is spread across 1,210 acres of land in Nacogdoches County.

SFA continues to make substantial upgrades to campus infrastructure and technology to encourage academic innovation. Recent additions include the Naymola Basketball Performance Center, the Cole STEM Building with innovative makerspaces and cutting-edge technology, and a significant expansion of the Griffith Fine Arts Building, completed in 2023, that added a recording

studio, sound stage, audio and video editing rooms, and an art gallery, among several other cutting-edge features.

Most recently, SFA opened a 20,000-square-foot dining hall that offers flexible spaces for dining, outdoor seating, and campus events, including culinary expos. The building showcases southern yellow pine mass timber construction harvested within 500 miles of campus, underscoring the university's commitment to sustainability and community engagement. Looking ahead, the Arthur Temple College of Forestry and Agriculture will soon move into an \$85 million, state-of-the-art complex, and a new \$40 million facility will house the Greg Arnold Center for Entrepreneurship—an interdisciplinary hub for collaboration, innovation, and student venture creation. These projects reflect a bold vision for the future, one further reinforced by a recently announced campus master plan that calls for more than \$1 billion in facility enhancements and improvements over the next 15 years.

In addition, live performances, cultural programs, and special events occur throughout the year. The Micky Elliott College of Fine Arts presents nationally acclaimed artists, award-winning plays, and lively choreography through a lineup of concerts, performances, and exhibitions. The University Series, Children's Performing Arts Series, and a wide range of art, music, theatre, and dance events provide an outstanding cultural experience for students and the East Texas community.

ABOUT STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY (CONT.)

Fall 2025 enrollment was 11,178 – including the largest freshman class in SFA's history – with the following demographic breakdown:

- 37% male
- 63% female
- 21% Hispanic
- 15% African American
- 1% Asian

Over 41% of undergraduate students are the first in their families to achieve a four-year college education. Approximately 39% of AY 2023-2024 undergraduate students received a Pell grant.

PRESIDENT NEAL WEAVER

Dr. Neal Weaver began his tenure as President of SFA May 13, 2024. Previously, he was the President of Georgia Southwestern State University (GSW) for seven years.

Before his role at GSW, Weaver served as the Vice President for University Advancement and Innovation at Nicholls State University in Thibodaux, Louisiana. In this capacity, he provided leadership in fundraising, enrollment management and athletics while generating new revenue and improving retention, operating efficiencies and customer service. Weaver's previous

roles include Vice President for Institutional Advancement at West Texas A&M University and Vice President for University Relations at Northeastern State University in Oklahoma.

Weaver earned a doctoral degree in organizational leadership from The University of Oklahoma, a Master of Business Administration from Southeastern Oklahoma State University, and a bachelor's degree from Oklahoma Panhandle State University.

ATHLETICS

SFA's [athletic teams compete in 18 intercollegiate sports](#) – six men's, 10 women's, and two co-ed – in the Southland Conference at the NCAA Division I level.

Steeped in tradition, SFA athletics enjoy unwavering support from SFA students and the Nacogdoches community. The University's vibrant and passionate student fan base, known as the "Purple Haze," has its own special traditions during football and basketball seasons that create a unique and exciting atmosphere. With a history of notable achievements in football, basketball and track, and national championships in softball and women's bowling, the Lumberjacks and Ladyjacks are part of the fabric of the full SFA experience.





THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SYSTEM

Stephen F. Austin State University takes great pride in being part of The University of Texas System, known for its exceptional academic success, breakthrough research, and international reputation for excellence and innovation. It includes 13 other educational institutions throughout the state, including eight universities and five health institutions. For 140 years, The University of Texas System has improved the lives of Texans – and people all over the world – through education, health care and research. With an enrollment of more than 256,000 students at academic and health institutions across the state, as well as an operating budget of \$29.1 billion, the UT System is one of the largest public university systems in the nation and the world.

UT institutions are powerful drivers of economic and social mobility in Texas, producing more than 63,000 graduates annually, including more than one-third of the state's undergraduate degrees and more than 60% of the

state's medical degrees. Almost half of all undergraduate degrees are awarded to students who qualified for a Pell grant based on financial need while enrolled at a UT institution. The UT System is one of the largest employers in Texas, with more than 122,000 faculty, health care professionals, researchers, support staff and student workers.

More than three-fourths of undergraduate students secure jobs in Texas within a year after graduation, providing a skilled workforce and fueling the state's economy. In fact, UT students who entered the Texas workforce between 2002 and 2019 had cumulative earnings through 2020 of \$350 billion.

With the Texas population expected to grow dramatically in the years to come, the UT System will continue to lead in driving prosperity, innovation, and health for the people of the Lone Star State.



THE DIVISION OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

The University offers [more than 80 bachelor's degree programs, more than 40 master's degrees, and four doctoral degrees, covering more than 120 areas of study](#).

Class sizes, with a student-faculty ratio of 19:1, ensure students receive personalized attention from faculty members who are active mentors.

SFA's academic offerings have evolved with shifting industry expectations, and Academic Affairs is undergoing a broad academic reorganization that reflects SFA's continued commitment to meeting evolving needs of students, employers and the East Texas region. Within the past five years, SFA has launched an aviation initiative where students can graduate with a bachelor's degree and pilot's license in four years, an agricultural communications major, a Bachelor of Science in construction management, and a Bachelor of Business Administration in entrepreneurship. SFA added its fourth doctoral-level degree program in 2023 with the creation of the Doctorate in Social Work.

Opportunities for immersive learning prepare students to enter the workforce. A survey of SFA's May 2023 graduating class indicated that 94% of graduates self-reported positive career outcomes within six months of graduation. Also, related to student success are increased overall graduation rates over the last six years to 52%. The University is increasing degree completion numbers with high need populations, including more than 3,000 economically disadvantaged graduates over the last three years.

The University's commitment to academic excellence has garnered multiple distinctions, including being ranked in the top 12 public universities in Texas by educational rating agency Niche. *U.S. News & World Report* ranked SFA's Charter School the second-best charter elementary school in Texas in 2024. SFA's forestry program continues to achieve high rankings, named as the best in Texas by education technology firm Plexus.

There were 2,793 degrees awarded in AY 2022-2023, including:

- 2,096 Bachelor's
- 554 Master's

- 7 Doctoral
- The University has approximately 737 faculty and 895 staff.

COLLEGES

The [Nelson Rusche College of Business](#) has awarded nearly 20,000 degrees since 1940. Combining foundational business classes with a personalized classroom experience and experiential learning, the College's degree programs provide students the tools they need to launch careers and become industry leaders.

The [James I. Perkins College of Education](#) prepares competent, successful, caring, and enthusiastic education professionals from diverse backgrounds. The College is dedicated to responsible service, leadership, and continued professional and intellectual development in an interconnected global society.

The [Micky Elliott College of Fine Arts](#)'s academic programs are designed to provide a first-class education and develop the talents of its students. These programs equip students to compete successfully in the real-world arts marketplace for performing, teaching, or creating original art.

The [Arthur Temple College of Forestry and Agriculture](#) is home to one of the top forestry and agriculture colleges in the nation. The College's advanced technology and proximity to natural resources makes this the ideal University for students seeking hands-on field research. In addition, the College's science-based programs and experience-based learning prepare graduates for successful careers with top employers across the country.

The [College of Liberal and Applied Arts](#) provides students with the broad-based skills required to be successful over a lifetime. A combination of humanities and social sciences ensures that students communicate well, think critically, solve problems creatively, and value ethics.

The [College of Sciences and Mathematics](#) houses disciplines that are key to world-changing discoveries. The College's students have opportunities to participate with SFA faculty members in groundbreaking research – even at the undergraduate level.



THE COLLEGE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Effective July 1, the College of Health Professions will position the university as a regional leader in rural health workforce development and innovation by uniting programs in nursing, psychology, kinesiology, athletic training, public health, dietetics and nutritional sciences, counseling, social work, speech-language pathology, and family sciences, creating SFA's largest and most interdisciplinary academic unit. The college will be the largest on campus with over 3,000 students and will include two schools – the De Witt School of Nursing and the School of Social Work – as well as three departments – Allied Health Studies, Family Sciences, and

Psychological Sciences – and the advising function for students pursuing pre-health professions. The changes were officially approved by The University of Texas System Board of Regents in November 2025.

According to research from the T.L.L. Temple Foundation, all 24 counties in East Texas are designated health professional shortage areas, and many lack OB-GYN and pediatric services. Through new partnerships, enhanced simulation facilities, and collaborative research, SFA's new college will prepare graduates to meet the unique health and wellness needs of rural communities while supporting economic development across the region.

THE FOUNDING DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS

This is a full-time, twelve-month faculty position responsible for working with academic administrators and the academic council to provide responsible leadership within the college while also representing the college and university in administrative matters. Responsible for overseeing graduate and undergraduate education within the new College of Health Professions, the dean also promotes teaching, research, and other professional activities; facilitates planning and development of new programs; supervises the budget; and solicits funds from external sources. The dean is an administrator, the quality of whose performance has fundamental impact on the success of the institution in attaining its specific goals. The dean works under minimal supervision, with extensive latitude for the use of initiative and independent judgment and reports to the Provost and Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

- Exercises leadership in budget preparation.
- Establishes funding priorities.
- Monitors budget execution within the college.
- Coordinates fundraising activities.
- Keeps academic administrators informed of issues related to their programs and faculty.
- Oversees the process of hiring and evaluating faculty and staff.
- Facilitates college policy development.
- Advises the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs on matters affecting the instructional programs of the university.
- Oversees degree plan preparation and qualification for graduation.
- Facilitates program development, operation, and evaluation.

THE FOUNDING DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS (CONT.)

- Supervises, counsels, and evaluates academic administrators, faculty, and staff.
- Promotes excellence in faculty teaching, service, professional growth/development, and academic achievement.
- Provides leadership for enhancing the visibility, enrollment, and resources of the college both on and off campus.

NONESSSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

- Makes recommendations on all personnel actions within the college.
- Interprets policy and adjudicates appeals and exceptions.
- Teaches in college, as time permits.
- Participates in recruitment and retention activities, as appropriate.
- Performs other related duties as assigned.

GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS

Required Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Knowledge of, or the ability to learn, university policies and procedures.
- Ability to be classified as professor in one of the disciplines within the College.
- Ability to establish and maintain a good rapport with university faculty and staff, students, and the general public.
- Ability to work collaboratively and build strategic relations with colleagues, coworkers, and constituents.
- Ability to communicate effectively in both oral and written form.
- Ability to exercise sound judgment in making critical decisions.
- Ability to develop objectives, evaluate effectiveness, and assess needs.
- Ability to manage a budget and work within the constraints of that budget.
- Ability to solicit funds for the College and University.
- Ability to develop, interpret, and evaluate policies and procedures.
- Ability to supervise and train others.

Education

Terminal degree in an academic discipline tenurable at the rank of full professor within the College is required.

Experience and Training

Five years of administrative experience in academic administration, preferably at the academic unit head level or above, and qualifications for rank of professor with tenure in one of the disciplines of the College is required. Experience working to promote excellence in a variety of programs is required. A strong record of research and other scholarly achievements is also required.

LEADERSHIP AGENDA

Develop a compelling vision for a new college: As the founding dean in the new College of Health Professions, the College's new leader will need to work collaboratively with the college's faculty, staff, and students to forge a robust, mission-focused community within the new academic unit. The dean will also lead the college community in developing a strategic plan that will align with the university's institution-wide strategic plan, which is expected to be presented to the UT System Board of Regents this semester.

Support rural health in East Texas: Supporting and enhancing rural health care in Eastern Texas is a central element of the new College of Health Profession's mission. The founding dean will need a commitment to the development of rural health care workers and infrastructure in SFA's region. This mission will be through the college's academic programs, as well as additional state funding provided to support the college's rural health initiatives that the new dean will have the opportunity to strategically direct.

Lead on student success in growing environment: With a record freshman enrollment this year and this trend anticipated to continue in Fall 2026, the founding Dean of the College of Health Professions will need to make strategic decisions on how to support a growing student population in a environment in which the success and wellbeing of students is SFA's primary guiding value. Given the recent growth in the student population, SFA will cap the Fall 2026 freshman class at 3,000 but critical decisions will remain as the campus infrastructure expands to support this historic and increasingly selective student population.



HOW TO APPLY

Applications should consist of a substantial letter of interest, a CV, and a list of five professional references with full contact information and a note indicating the nature of your working relationship with each. No references will be contacted without the explicit permission of the candidate. Applications, nominations, and expressions of interest can be submitted electronically, and in confidence, to:

SFADeanHealthProfessions@academicsearch.org

The position is open until filled but only applications received by Wednesday, April 1, 2026, can be assured full consideration. The University is being assisted by Academic Search. Confidential discussions about this opportunity may be arranged by contacting consultants

Ann Hasselmo at Ann.Hasselmo@academicsearch.org and Chris Butler at Chris.Butler@academicsearch.org. Further information about Stephen F. Austin State University is available at <https://www.sfasu.edu/>.

Stephen F. Austin State University, an Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Employer and Educator, is committed to excellence. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to sex, race, creed, color, age, national origin, religion or physical or mental disability as required by law. If, because of an impairment or disability, you need accommodation during any part of the employment process, please contact Human Resources at 936-468-2304.

ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting Stephen F. Austin 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.

