

SEARCH PROFILE:

DEAN OF THE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES



TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT ST. JOHN FISHER UNIVERSITY	4
ABOUT ROCHESTER, NEW YORK	6
THE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES	7
LEADERSHIP AGENDA	9
QUALIFICATIONS	10
APPLICATIONS AND NOMINATIONS	11



St. John Fisher University invites inquiries, nominations, and applications for the position of Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences. The School of Arts and Sciences is the University's largest school, and the next Dean will lead it at a moment of strength and stability for the University and a desire for a fresh vision for the future of the School.

In recent years, the School has reorganized its departments into six interdisciplinary divisions and launched new majors and minors in fields such as actuarial science, athletic performance, cybersecurity, data analytics, neuroscience and behavior, and artificial intelligence literacy. Faculty across the School are deeply committed to their students and to one another and are eager to work with a new Dean to build on this solid foundation to advance the School.

The Dean is the chief academic and administrative officer of the School and reports to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Dean serves on the Provost's Council of Deans along with Deans from the University's other four Schools (the School of Business, the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. School of Education, the Wegmans School of Nursing, and the Wegmans School of Pharmacy) and works closely with the University's Senior Staff.

The Dean leads the School's six divisions and their faculty and staff, oversees the School's budget and academic programs, and represents Arts and Sciences across the University and to the wider community.



ABOUT ST. JOHN FISHER UNIVERSITY

St. John Fisher University is located on 164 acres in Pittsford, New York, about seven miles from downtown Rochester. It was founded in 1948 by the Basilian Fathers and the Diocese of Rochester as St. John Fisher College, a Catholic college for men, and became coeducational in 1971. On July 1, 2022, the institution earned University status, becoming in name what it had been in practice for many years. Today, Fisher remains rooted in the Catholic tradition and the Basilian heritage of goodness, discipline, and knowledge, and fully embraces its faith and values, including a strong institutional commitment to social justice and the success of first-generation students, the population of students for whom the institution was founded.

The University's mission is to foster a collaborative and inclusive community where students grow into purposeful leaders through a transformational educational experience rooted in its Catholic heritage and guided by its Basilian tradition.

In fall 2026, St. John Fisher enrolled more than 3,700 students, including nearly 2,600 undergraduate and 1,100 graduate students. The University offers more than 40 majors across its five Schools, taught by 222 full-time faculty, 74% of whom hold a doctorate or other terminal degree. The student-to-faculty ratio is 12:1.

The University's strategic plan, Fisher 2030: Pathways to Purpose, centers on three priorities: Student Success, Organizational Innovation, and Community Engagement. The plan emphasizes experiential

learning, diversified program offerings, and stronger partnerships with industry, community, and academic organizations across the region.

Over the last decade, Fisher has continued to invest in its physical plant with renovated and modernized technology-infused classrooms, including AR/VR and simulation spaces; in residential buildings; and throughout its athletic facilities and complexes. Most recently, Fisher created the Arts Center at Murphy Hall, a multi-purpose performing, visual, and literary arts center, and invested \$40 million in the renovation and modernization of Lavery Library.

Fisher is deeply connected with the Rochester, New York community, creating nearly \$120 million in annual economic impact in the region, and it is committed to serving as an anchor institution by engaging in purposeful and mutually beneficial partnerships to develop enriched learning opportunities and to broaden its impact in the Rochester area and beyond.

PHILANTHROPY

The University's Fisher Forward campaign, the largest in its history, closed in 2025, having raised just over \$139 million from more than 12,000 donors, surpassing a goal that grew from \$75 million to \$100 million over the course of the campaign. The campaign added \$26 million in new scholarships and helped grow the University's endowment from \$75 million in 2015 to more than \$161 million. The University is financially

ABOUT ST. JOHN FISHER UNIVERSITY (CONTINUED)

stable and well positioned to invest in new opportunities for growth, including within the School of Arts and Sciences.

LEADERSHIP

President [Gerard J. Rooney](#) has led St. John Fisher University for 11 years and has been part of the Fisher community for 30 years. Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs [Kevin Railey](#), Ph.D., has served in that role for 10 years. The University's Deans bring long institutional histories to their work: the newest member of the Deans' team has served three years, and others considerably longer, giving the University's academic leadership continuity and stability.

RECOGNITION

In its 2027 edition, *U.S. News & World Report* ranked St. John Fisher No. 22 among Regional Universities in the North and placed it among the top schools in the region for value and for support of military veterans. The University has also been named among the best colleges in the Northeast by *The Princeton Review*, and recognized among Colleges of Distinction. Finally, Fisher was once again selected among the more than 230 U.S. colleges and universities that have received the 2026 Carnegie Community Engagement (CE) Classification, an elective designation awarded by the American Council on Education (ACE) and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching that highlights an institution's commitment to community engagement.

ATHLETICS

St. John Fisher competes in NCAA Division III [intercollegiate athletics](#) as a member of the Empire 8 and the Eastern College Athletic Conference, fielding a broad roster of 28 varsity sports that recently expanded to include men's and women's ice hockey as well as women's flag football.





ABOUT ROCHESTER, NEW YORK

St. John Fisher's campus sits on 164 acres in [Pittsford](#), New York, a suburb approximately seven miles from downtown Rochester in the state's [Finger Lakes](#) region. [Rochester](#) has a deep history of innovation in imaging and optics, as the home of companies such as Eastman Kodak, Xerox, and Bausch and Lomb, and today anchors a strong healthcare and biotechnology sector built around the two area health systems—Rochester Regional Health and URochester Medicine.

The region offers a vibrant arts and culture scene, including museums, theaters, galleries, and a philharmonic orchestra, alongside a growing craft beverage and food community. Rochester's proximity to the Finger Lakes wine country provides year-round access to outdoor recreation, and the area's cost of living compares favorably to much of the Northeast.



THE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

The [School of Arts and Sciences](#) is St. John Fisher's largest School and is largely responsible for the University's Core Curriculum, teaching all undergraduate students who enter the University. The School offers 31 undergraduate programs spanning the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, mathematics, and the arts, with particularly strong enrollments in psychology, biology, sport management, athletic performance, and criminal justice. The School's curriculum is broad and mission-driven, reflecting Fisher's commitment to a liberal arts and sciences education for every student.

In 2024, the School reorganized its departments into six interdisciplinary divisions: Behavioral Sciences; Life Sciences; Social Sciences; Natural and Mathematical Sciences; Humanities; and Literature, Communication, and Arts. This structure has encouraged collaboration across traditional disciplinary lines and created a foundation for new, interdisciplinary programs.

The sciences are a particular strength of the School and a critical pipeline into the University's graduate and professional health sciences programs, including the Wegmans School of Nursing and the Wegmans School of Pharmacy. The School also collaborates with colleagues across the University to support Fisher's other graduate and professional programs, combining rigorous undergraduate preparation with pathways into advanced study.

The School recently launched new majors and minors in response to student and workforce demand, including actuarial science and artificial intelligence literacy, alongside recent additions in cybersecurity, data analytics, and neuroscience and behavior.

At the start of the decade, Fisher launched the iFisher: Next Generation Learning Initiative, becoming the first institution in upstate New York to provide iPads to all undergraduate students. The program focuses on strengthening collaboration, critical thinking, and

THE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES (CONTINUED)

creativity among students, faculty, and staff, as well as shaping students' 21st-century digital literacy skills.

To date, more than 300 faculty members have received Apple Teacher Certification through Fisher's Apple Academy. Most recently, Fisher earned its second designation term as an Apple Distinguished School (2026-2029), a designation given to schools that serve as centers of leadership and educational excellence, with a clear vision for how technology-rich environments support learning goals. In Apple Distinguished Schools, forward-thinking leaders and their communities work to inspire, imagine, and impact teaching and learning, and they have documented results of academic accomplishments.

As part of the initiative, Fisher has also invested in the transformation of more than 18,000 square feet of classrooms into innovative and flexible learning spaces.

A new Arts Center, supported in part by \$1.8 million in federal funding, opened in 2024 with a Black Box Theater, a dance studio, and a visual arts studio.

Faculty across the School have earned national recognition, including multiple Fulbright Scholar awards and a 2026 New York State arts fellowship.

Approximately 22% of the School's students identify as students of color, and the student body is drawn from a geographically diverse range of backgrounds. The School maintains strong connections to the greater Rochester community and serves as an intellectual gathering space for the public, consistent with the University's broader commitment to access, social justice, and the success of first-generation students.

With a committed faculty, a recently reorganized divisional structure, new academic programs, and new arts facilities, the School of Arts and Sciences enters the search for its next Dean from a position of strength and purpose. Moreover, the School is ready to embrace a new leader with the experience and skills required to successfully address the challenges facing the liberal arts and sciences in a changing higher education landscape.



LEADERSHIP AGENDA

The next Dean will join a School built on a strong foundation and ready to move forward with renewed vision. Taken together, the priorities below describe a leader who advocates for faculty and the liberal arts, builds trust through transparent communication, stewards resources wisely, and articulates a compelling future for the School of Arts and Sciences.

Expected leadership priorities include:

ADVOCATE AND SUPPORT FACULTY EXCELLENCE

- Serve as a visible, energetic advocate for the School's committed faculty.
- Support productive programs while thoughtfully pursuing new opportunities for growth.
- Ensure faculty voices are represented in institutional decision-making and that shared governance is respected and valued.
- Recruit, develop, and retain a committed and talented faculty, and support division leaders with clear structures and sustainable workloads.
- Build trust across the School's community through active listening, transparency, and consistent, two-way communication.

CHAMPION THE VALUE AND RELEVANCE OF THE LIBERAL ARTS MISSION

- Understand and embrace [Fisher's Basilian heritage](#) and its commitment to goodness, discipline, and knowledge, along with the University's broader commitment to social justice.
- Support both challenging undergraduate programs and effective pedagogical strategies to advance student success.
- Strengthen retention and a sense of belonging for all students, especially first-generation and underrepresented students.
- Build on the strength of the sciences as a pipeline into Fisher's graduate and professional health sciences programs.

- Partner with the Office of Admissions to develop and implement strategies for enrollment growth across the School's programs.

CREATE A SHARED VISION AND STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE

- Build and articulate a compelling, forward-looking vision for the School that unites its six divisions around a shared sense of purpose.
- Anticipate and respond to changes in higher education, including shifting demographics, enrollment pressures, and the growing influence of artificial intelligence.
- Identify and pursue new interdisciplinary programs, building on the School's recent work in fields such as cybersecurity, data analytics, and artificial intelligence literacy.
- Articulate the enduring, and increasingly distinctive, value of a liberal arts and sciences education in a changing economy.
- Strengthen connections between the School and Fisher's professional schools, recognizing that the liberal arts and sciences provide a foundation for the entire University.

ACQUIRE AND STEWARD RESOURCES FOR FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENT SUCCESS

- Manage the School's budget and resources responsibly while identifying strategic opportunities for investment.
- Pursue external funding through grants, as well as philanthropic support in partnership with the University's advancement office.
- Use data effectively to inform enrollment strategy and resource decisions.
- Partner with institutional efforts to invest in new programs, facilities, and faculty for the School.

FOSTER INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

- Foster an inclusive academic environment that values all those in our vibrant community.
- Strengthen the School's role as a center of intellectual life for the greater Rochester community.
- Encourage meaningful civic engagement and global awareness among faculty and students.





QUALIFICATIONS

REQUIRED

- An earned doctorate or other terminal degree in a discipline represented in the School of Arts and Sciences, with a record of teaching and scholarship meriting appointment as a tenured full professor.
- Progressively responsible academic leadership experience, such as service as a department chair, division leader, associate dean, or dean.
- A demonstrated commitment to the liberal arts and sciences and to the mission of a liberal arts institution committed to its Basilian heritage.
- Experience working effectively within a system of shared governance.
- Experience in budget management and strategic resource allocation.
- A record of building collaborative, transparent, and trust-based relationships with faculty, staff, and students.

PREFERRED

- Experience leading a large, multidisciplinary school or college, including through periods of organizational change.
- A record of successful fundraising, grant seeking, or donor engagement in partnership with an advancement office.

- Experience supporting first-generation and underrepresented students and a demonstrated commitment to access and inclusion.
- Experience developing new and interdisciplinary academic programs, including in emerging fields.
- An understanding of, and appreciation for, the role of a school of arts and sciences in supporting a university's professional and graduate programs, including the health professions.

DESIRED QUALITIES AND CHARACTERISTICS

- Strategic thinker, forward-looking, and innovative
- Trustworthy and ethical
- Excellent communication skills
- Demonstrated ability to build effective teams
- Leads with integrity and fairness
- Approachable, responsive, and accessible
- Collaborative decision-maker
- Collegial and respectful
- Transparent and candid, an active listener
- Encourages open dialogue and constructive feedback
- Strong financial acumen, uses data effectively to inform decisions
- Demonstrated commitment to equity and inclusion
- Values diverse backgrounds and perspectives



APPLICATIONS AND NOMINATIONS

St. John Fisher University is partnering with Academic Search in this national search. Senior Consultant Dr. Dan DiBiasio is available for confidential conversations with prospective candidates and nominees. All inquiries, nominations, and applications will be held in strict confidence. To schedule a conversation, prospective applicants may send a CV to SJFisherDeanSAS@academicsearch.org.

APPLICATIONS

Applicants should upload the following three documents, as separate PDFs, through the Academic Search online portal at <http://academicsearch.org/SJFisherDeanSASApply>:

- A cover letter addressed to the Search Committee describing specifically how you meet the required qualifications listed in the position description.
- A current curriculum vitae (CV) or résumé showing relevant administrative responsibilities and accomplishments.
- A list of five professional references, including each reference's name, title, institution or organization, email address, telephone number, and relationship to the candidate. References will not be contacted without the candidate's permission.

Although the search remains open until the position is filled, for full consideration by the Search Committee, candidates should submit all application materials by Thursday, December 10, 2026.

NOMINATIONS

Nominations are not required, but colleagues who know of outstanding candidates are welcome to submit confidential nominations to SJFisherDeanSAS@academicsearch.org. Please include the nominee's full name, position, institution, and email address.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

It is the policy of St. John Fisher University to provide Equal Employment Opportunity to all employees and applicants for employment in accordance with the applicable federal, state, and local laws governing non-discrimination in employment in each locality in which the University has employees.

The University does not discriminate against applicants or employees in hiring, promotion, termination, or the terms and conditions of employment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sex, perceived sex, gender identity, gender expression, the status of being transgender, sexual orientation, national origin, citizenship, age, disability, marital status, military status, veteran status, predisposing genetic characteristics or genetic information, arrest or conviction record, status as a victim of domestic violence, or any other characteristic protected by law.

The Title IX Coordinator is the designated University official with primary responsibility for coordinating compliance with Title IX and related federal and state laws. The Title IX Coordinator, Meg Flaherty, Ph.D., can be reached by phone (585-385-8232), email (titleix@sjf.edu), in person in Campus Center 209, or outside of business hours by contacting the Office of Safety and Security (585-385-8111).

ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting St. John Fisher University in this work. For 50 years 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.



academicsearch.org • 202-332-4049