The Search

Purdue University seeks an innovative and visionary leader to serve as its next Suzi and Dale Gallagher Dean of the College of Education.

Purdue is Indiana’s land-grant university and one of the top public research universities in the country, recently ranked #17 by U.S. News & World Report. The next Dean of the College of Education will join a top-ranked, highly regarded program with a strong foundation, a deep bench of talented and committed faculty and staff, a dynamic and diverse student body, and an academic community where innovation is the norm, not the exception. The Dean will continue the College’s trajectory of excellence, building upon recently established initiatives and a strategic plan designed to leverage the College’s strengths and assets, to provide a real-world impact in the state of Indiana, the nation, and beyond.

Formed in 1989 and ranked 47th in the nation in graduate education programs by U.S. News & World Report for 2023, the College of Education is a flourishing academic community embedded in an outstanding innovation focused University, making major contributions to educational scholarship and human talent development. Home to over 1520 students, over 90 faculty, and over 160 staff, the College’s mission is to discover and develop human potential through educator preparation, professional development, world-class centers, and groundbreaking educational research. Faculty represent an impressive group of scholars, researchers, and practitioners, actively working to make education more effective, accessible, and equitable for all students. A hallmark of the College is its commitment to removing barriers to quality education, to help students achieve to the best of their ability and to provide the opportunities that education affords to all.

As the College’s chief academic and administrative officer, the Dean’s primary role is to provide exceptional vision and leadership and to foster a culture of academic excellence and innovation appropriate for a land grant university in the 21st century with on-campus, hybrid, and online education programs. The new Dean will be a leader capable of helping the College refine and deliver on its Innovation Initiative, taking the College to the next level of excellence and impact as an academic unit by carving out a distinctive niche in crowded education landscape in the state, building on the unique strengths of Purdue - including its reputation as one of the world’s leading STEM universities. Recognized as one of the most innovative universities in the U.S., Purdue University is seeking a candidate who will lead this College toward that same designation among Colleges of Education nationally.

Purdue University has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in this search. All applications, inquiries, and nominations, which will remain confidential, should be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.
Purdue University was founded in 1869 as Indiana’s land-grant institution and one of the nation’s leading research institutions with a reputation for excellent and affordable education. The Purdue University system serves students through its flagship campus in West Lafayette, a network of regional campuses and technology centers across Indiana, and now Purdue Global, which provides education for adult learners that can be accessed online at any time. The University has a total budget of approximately $2 billion, student enrollment of more than 49,000 and 10 academic colleges with 2,700 faculty members, and 8,000 staff. All 50 states and 130 countries are represented with about 1000 student organizations and Big Ten Boilermaker athletics.

Purdue University's schools include: agriculture; education; engineering; liberal arts; management; pharmacy; health and human sciences; science; the polytechnic institute; and veterinary medicine as well as the Honors College and the Libraries and School of Information Studies. Purdue offers 6,700 courses in 200 specializations. For more than a quarter century, Purdue University has been the largest or second largest in undergraduate engineering enrollment in the country. Purdue research exceeds $435 million a year. The University Libraries and School of Information Studies system includes six subject-oriented libraries, the Hicks Undergraduate Library, and the Virginia Kelly Karnes Archives and Special Collections Research Center. The library system includes 3.3 million printed volumes and electronic books; over 200 thousand electronic and print journals; and government documents and microforms in excess of 400 thousand.

In April 2017, Purdue reinforced its status as one of the world's most innovative universities by announcing it would acquire Kaplan University, a longtime leader in online adult education, and create a new, public institution—which is now Purdue Global.

In April of 2021, Purdue’s Board of Trustees voted to approve Purdue’s Next Moves, representing five new strategic imperatives including Plant Sciences 2.0, National Security and Technology Initiative, Purdue Applied Research Institute, Transformative Education 2.0, and the Purdue Equity Task Force. The Next Moves will leverage distinct strengths and harness the power and the people of Purdue today to advance the university, community, and the world toward a safer, more sustainable and equitable place.

Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr. is the 12th president of Purdue University and the former governor of Indiana. He was elected Indiana’s 49th governor in 2004 in his first bid for any elected office, and then re-elected in 2008. At Purdue, Daniels has prioritized student affordability and reinvestment in the university’s strengths. Breaking with a 36-year trend, Purdue has held tuition unchanged from 2012 through at least the 2023-24 academic year. In recognition of his leadership as both a governor and a university president, Daniels was named among the Top 50 World Leaders by Fortune Magazine in 2015 and was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2019. Daniels earned a bachelor's degree from Princeton’s Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs and a law degree from Georgetown. He is the author of three books and a contributing columnist in the Washington Post.

Jay Akridge serves as provost and executive vice president for academic affairs and diversity, with a faculty appointment as professor of agricultural economics. As Purdue’s Chief Academic Officer, he is responsible for all academic programs; academic strategy and priorities; faculty-related matters; student academic/co-curricular activities; and diversity and inclusion initiatives. In this role, he is responsible for academics and diversity and leads 10 academic colleges, the Graduate School, Honors College, and Purdue
Dr. Akridge previously served as the Glenn W. Sample Dean of Agriculture. He received his master’s degree and doctorate in agricultural economics from Purdue University and his bachelor’s degree from Murray State University.

The College of Education

The College’s vision is to be a national leader in modeling inclusive excellence and nurturing sustainable, high-impact educational practices and systems for a just society and better world; the scholarship of discovery, learning, and engagement; and the development of human potential. The College’s mission is to advance inclusive and sustainable learning communities through high impact scholarship, inspirational teaching, vision-driven service, and collaborative community engagement at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Two interdisciplinary academic departments form the administrative structure of the College. The Department of Curriculum and Instruction offers undergraduate programs in teacher education, as well as residential and online graduate programs in social studies education, career and technical education, curriculum studies, and learning, design, and technology. The Department of Educational Studies offers programs in the areas of applied behavior analysis, counseling psychology, educational psychology, research methodologies, gifted education, special education, as well as educational leadership and policy studies.

The College provides leadership for interdisciplinary educator preparation programs from the six colleges that collaborate on educator preparation at Purdue University: science, agriculture, liberal arts, health and human sciences, and the Purdue Polytechnic Institute. Many faculty hold joint appointments in these partner colleges. The College recently completed a total restructure of educator preparation programs across the university. This restructure, the Innovation Initiative (more information below), has a goal of graduating the most classroom-ready teachers in Indiana and the nation and preparing graduates to be significant contributors in whatever setting they choose. The College community is excited and motivated by the future of this program and its potential to shape P-12 education. In addition to preparing the educators of the future, the College’s nationally ranked graduate programs prepare students for their professional education careers in a wide range of settings that include school administration, higher education finance, mental health counseling, educational measurement and assessment, and learning design technology.

The College hosts a group of interdisciplinary, academically rigorous and top-ranked on campus graduate, licensure, and certificate offerings housed in both departments. With an eye towards complimenting these programs, ensuring access, and pursuing innovation, the College has launched rapidly growing – and nationally ranked at #22 – online education programs at the M.S. level in recent years and has built a national leadership position in this space. A highly diverse group, graduate students are actively engaged in research and teaching alongside world-renowned faculty mentors and take advantage of experiential opportunities to well-position them to significantly impact the field of education both inside and outside of the classroom.

The College is comprised of over 1,520 students (629 undergraduate; 892 graduate), over 90 faculty (66 tenured/tenure track), 166 staff and 18,000 alumni. An additional 328 students are enrolled in interdisciplinary educator preparation programs across campus. The College is also home to the following nationally and internationally recognized centers focused on integrated STEM education, gifted
education, civic and citizenship education, literacy, technology, and evaluation and learning research: the James F. Ackerman Center for Democratic Citizenship; the Center for Advancing the Teaching and Learning of STEM; Indiana GEAR UP; and the Serious Gaming Center.

It is projected that for 2021-2022 external research funding will be close to $10 million. Nearly all tenured and tenure track faculty as well as many clinical faculty members are productive scholars with national and international reputations in their fields. An interdisciplinary college, research strengths include gifted and talented (high ability) education; special education, autism, and applied behavior analysis, STEM education; English language learner education and bilingual education; learning design and technology; and educational assessment and measurement.

The College is accredited at the initial-licensure level by CAEP, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation. Purdue earned this national recognition by demonstrating excellence in the areas of content and pedagogy, clinical experiences, selectivity, program impact, and capacity for continuous improvement for initial licensure within the educator preparation program. Advanced educator licensure programs were reviewed in the spring of 2022 and were recommended for full accreditation. Those programs are educational leadership, high ability, English language learning, career and technical education leadership, and special education.

The budget of the College is $30.2 million. College budgets within Purdue are allocated on a historical basis with revenue sharing options available for online programs.

The Innovation Initiative

Grounded in the pursuit of resiliency and reflection, the College’s Innovation Initiative is the most comprehensive change in two decades for the curriculum for educator preparation. Faculty are collaborating to infuse the new curriculum with advances that answer the needs of future educators, the children and youth they will educate, and an evolving society. This fresh focus began in fall 2021.

Six hallmarks of the Innovation Initiative were approved in April 2020 by the Teacher Education Council (TEC). Created in 1963, the TEC is comprised of representatives from all colleges with teacher licensure programs at Purdue, as well as student representatives, and serves as the review and approval body for all new educator preparation programs.

Hallmarks of the Innovation Initiative:
1. Pathways to Additional Licensure and/or Specialized Preparation
2. Expanded Field Experiences
3. Year-Long Student Teaching
4. Community-Based Learning Experience
5. Virtual Educator License
6. Induction and Mentoring

Attentive to Purdue’s land-grant mission, the Innovation Initiative team is ever-mindful of what the state needs for its educators, focusing on tough challenges and smart solutions to help future educators move the world forward by compassionately educating our children and youth.

More about the Innovation Initiative can be found online [here](#).
College of Education Strategic Plan

 Completed and launched in the fall of 2021, the College has taken on an ambitious and future oriented five-year strategic plan focused on inclusive excellence and sustainability in education. The strategic planning process engaged constituents across the College community and the final plan is well supported across the College. The strategic plan goals are supported by discovery, learning, and engagement and are aligned with the College’s values, vision, and mission to take decisive steps to ensure the future success of the College and its students.

Goals:
1. Implement teacher education innovation as a means of improving sustainable practices in education that impact the world around them.
2. Increase student enrollment and retention with recruiting emphasis on historically underrepresented groups.
3. Promote positive climate practices that value and showcase work in support of inclusive excellence.

More information about the Purdue University College of Education may be found at http://www.education.purdue.edu.

The Role of Dean of the College of Education

Reporting directly to the Provost, the Dean works closely with the College’s associate and assistant deans, department heads, faculty, staff, and student leaders to ensure the College’s teaching and research activities operate at the highest levels of excellence. The Dean will strive to ensure the College is at the leading edge of innovation, while working to address the current and future challenges facing P-12 education and higher education in the state of Indiana and nationally. The Dean will continue to engage the College in university wide initiatives, striving to elevate the College’s outstanding undergraduate and graduate programs, including Purdue’s vital Transformative Education 2.0 initiative as well as increased collaboration with and investment in Purdue’s Polytechnic High Schools.

An important responsibility for the Dean is to secure financial resources both within and outside the University to support the many programs, faculty, and facility needs. The Dean actively represents the College to a variety of constituencies internal and external to the University, including working collaboratively with local, state, and national educational leaders to advocate for equitable and high-quality education for all children and youth in Indiana and across the country.

The next Dean will position the College of Education to ensure that it remains at the forefront as a strong undergraduate and graduate program of education, maintaining and driving enrollment growth across offerings, while proactively differentiating the College from others in a crowded educator preparation marketplace. Through innovative, dynamic, open, transparent, and respectful leadership and management, the Dean will work to strengthen the already successful academic programs in the College, grow enrollments and online programming, ensure that sustainable resources exist to enable the College to meet its goals and objectives of the Innovation Initiative and strategic plan, and grow beyond the boundaries of educator preparation. The successful candidate will possess the ability to persuasively advocate for the College in a variety of contexts, to speak the language of different disciplines, to promote and support interdisciplinary research, to effectively lead and inspire a talented team of staff, to engage
multiple communities, and to stimulate learning that capitalizes on the diversity of the college. The Dean will demonstrate a commitment to excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service and support faculty members striving for excellence in these domains. The Dean will ensure the community is an inclusive one that values and celebrates the contributions of all faculty, staff, and students.

The Dean’s position is endowed as Suzi and Dale Gallagher Dean, and the endowment proceeds are available to the Dean to invest in college initiatives.

Leadership Opportunities and Challenges

The next Dean of the College of Education will be charged with addressing the following opportunities and challenges:

Propel the College into the national spotlight through innovation and distinction

Purdue’s rich academic and research culture is steeped in innovation. The Dean will look to distinguish the College from its peers to become one of the most innovative colleges of education in the nation and serve as a thought leader in education. Through the identification and cultivation of programs that have distinct competitive advantages, the Dean will lead the College in its continued pursuit of excellence with innovation at the foundation of all it does.

The Innovation Initiative is a result of Purdue’s pursuit of excellence and innovation. It was designed and defined collaboratively, gathering the support of students and faculty within the College and university and members of the broader community as it was envisioned. The Dean will continue to foster this culture to discover new programs as well as support the continued growth of the Innovation Initiative as it moves into its second year. The new Dean will understand and maximize the Innovation Initiative’s distinctive potential, championing the Initiative beyond the College and investing financial and personnel resources to ensure its success.

In addition to pursuing distinction in undergraduate offerings, the Dean will continue to invest in graduate programs and students to strengthen and elevate their visibility on a national and international scale. Through the support of research, extramural funding, and the revitalization of the doctoral programs the Dean will ensure innovation and distinction at all levels of the College.

Unite the College around a shared vision and identity, building on existing momentum

The College of Education is at the forefront of educator preparation in Indiana, and the next Dean will continue to support and strengthen the work of the faculty and staff by collaboratively shaping a shared common purpose and identity while building upon the newly instituted strategic plan of the College. The Dean will engage stakeholders in the College of Education community in a broad conversation focused on understanding the current state of affairs, identifying areas of potential distinction and future growth, and shaping a clear vision to guide implementation of strategic priorities. The opportunity exists to review the current College structure to determine the best path forward for the departments, with a particular focus on ensuring the inclusion of faculty and staff from disciplines outside of educator preparation and building partnerships with collaborating colleges.
Strengthen partnerships and interdisciplinary research and collaboration within the College and across campus

The College of Education has a strong reputation for exceptional and externally supported research in a number of key areas. The next Dean will bring an understanding of the complexities of working in a major research university and will work to strengthen the research enterprise and infrastructure of the College, cultivating and expanding new research opportunities while supporting a diverse portfolio of faculty research and scholarship. The College engages with more than 24 faculty across the university through joint appointments and collaborative relationships with educator preparation programs, which provides fertile ground for expanding interdisciplinary programs and research.

The Dean will also work across the University to build interdisciplinary, high-impact research, amplify and expand the College’s centers and institutes, and enhance educational partnerships, joining a cadre of dynamic and collegial peer deans with a strong commitment to cross-institutional efforts. In addition, with a focus on maintaining and growing enrollments across all programs as well as with an understanding of how online education is evolving and growing, the Dean will provide leadership in how to best serve on campus, hybrid, and online students in both well established and emerging programs.

Advance the College’s commitment to building a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community

Members of the College are deeply committed to building an environment that prioritizes the success of all students, faculty, and staff. Working collaboratively across the College and the University, the Dean will increase success, access and retention of students, faculty, and staff from historically underrepresented groups, and ensure that all members of the College community feel welcomed and valued. A specific focus here is cultivating and deepening the College’s relationship with the Purdue Polytechnic High Schools. These efforts will require ongoing attention and resources, as well as a clear and personal leadership commitment on the part of the Dean. The Dean will be a skillful communicator who effectively advances crucial conversations around inclusive excellence and will bring a track record of experience and a nuanced understanding of the critical role equity plays in the education sector and national discourse.

Raise the visibility of the College and its expertise in the field by serving as an engaging and credible external representative

In alignment with Purdue’s land grant mission, the College of Education is deeply committed to strengthening public education within the state of Indiana and beyond. As such, the Dean must lead the College in addressing key issues facing the education sector and educator preparation programs, particularly the teacher shortage. As an ambassador for the College, Purdue, and beyond, the incoming dean will amplify the College’s national and global reputation as a leader and voice of excellence and expertise in education. In the state, the Dean will continue to foster the College’s longstanding connections to school districts, nonprofits, government agencies and other organizations, while also leading efforts to form new partnerships at the state government level that will help the College meet its mission and goals. Throughout external interactions, the dean will persuasively and compellingly communicate the strategic vision of the College to current and potential partners.
Recruit, retain, and mentor faculty and staff in a teaching and research environment ensuring academic quality and distinction

In collaboration with the College’s leadership team, the Dean will lead efforts in the recruitment, retention, and professional development of an exceptional faculty. A critical part of this effort will include attracting increasingly distinguished and diverse faculty to the College of Education – faculty who bring deep professional experiences, excellent records of high-impact scholarship, and a firm commitment to student success and innovation.

The College benefits from a large group of dedicated and talented staff members who are integral to the daily work of the College and bring their expertise and exceptional service to bear in support of the College’s mission. To maintain this high bar, the Dean will work to provide appropriate recruitment and retention initiatives to attract talented staff and advocate for resources to support professional development and mentorship.

The Dean will also foster an environment of inclusivity and belonging to ensure retention of current and future faculty and staff and create an atmosphere of collegiality, cohesiveness, and partnership while instilling a culture of mentorship to buoy the success of all members of the college.

Provide leadership in fundraising, revenue generation, and resource allocation to support the College’s aspirations and priorities

The Dean will be a compelling, tenacious, and persuasive champion for the College internally and externally and will strategically manage the College’s financial resources. As the face of the College, the Dean must be an effective advocate, emissary, and public speaker who will further enhance the College’s profile and resourcing. As a key partner with Advancement, the Dean will be expected to develop and foster relationships with critical stakeholders such as alumni, funding agencies, policymakers, local educational partners, and donors to articulate unique opportunities for collaboration and areas for investment. The Dean will fundraise to support key priorities, including faculty research and teaching, centers of excellence, and graduate students. In addition to philanthropic priorities, the Dean will bring an entrepreneurial vision to develop new and innovative revenue streams.

Essential Qualifications:

- Earned doctoral degree or appropriate terminal degree.
- A proven record of outstanding leadership with evidence of successfully working with university and state level leaders including building a shared vision and the ability to set priorities, allocating resources, creating a collaborative environment, engaging in strategic planning, and achieving specific goals.
- Ability to demonstrate and foster creativity and innovation to bring new thinking about ways to improve P-12 and higher education, educational attainment, and the change management skills to implement new ideas.
- A strong academic record of achievement as a scholar and educator appropriate for a tenured full professorship within one of the College’s departments, exemplifying the caliber of scholars the College expects to attract to Purdue is required.
- An exceptional communicator and consensus builder who listens and communicates clearly, inclusively, and persuasively.
• Deep knowledge of, commitment to, and extensive experience with P-12 and higher education.
• A strong commitment to diversity and inclusion and expertise in addressing the needs of diverse faculty, staff, and student populations.
• A strong commitment to foster and protect freedom of inquiry and diversity of viewpoints within the College.
• An effective fundraiser who can secure, grow, and allocate resources to support quality undergraduate and graduate instruction, research, public service, and outreach activities.
• Substantial experience with the national research funding environment.
• An advocate who clearly articulates the goals of the College by connecting with all constituencies served by the University.

To Apply

The search will remain open until a hire is made, but for fullest consideration, applications should be submitted by June 25th. All inquiries, applications (including a statement of interest in the position that briefly expresses their concept of a College of Education within a comprehensive university, curriculum vitae, and the names and contact information of five references), and nominations should be submitted electronically and in confidence to www.imsearch.com/8477.

Initial nominations and inquiries will be kept confidential, and references will be contacted only upon approval by the applicant. A background check is required for employment in this position.

Natalie Leonhard, Partner  
Cati Mitchell-Crossley, Partner  
Robin Dougherty, Senior Associate  
Isaacson, Miller  
www.imsearch.com/8477

Purdue University is an EOE/AA employer. All individuals, including minorities, women, individuals with disabilities and veterans are encouraged to apply.