UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON
TACOMA

Dean, School of Engineering and Technology

Leadership Profile

Fall 2026



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Executive Summary

The University of Washington Tacoma (UW Tacoma) seeks a collaborative, forward-thinking, and externally engaged leader to serve as the next Dean of the School of Engineering & Technology (SET). As one of the institution's most dynamic and rapidly growing schools, SET plays a critical role in advancing UW Tacoma's mission as an urban-serving university dedicated to expanding access, fostering innovation, and strengthening the economic and social vitality of the South Puget Sound region. Deeply integrated with the City of Tacoma, the university's campus is woven into the downtown landscape, fostering strong partnerships with industry, government, community organizations, and civic leaders. This close connection to the city creates distinctive opportunities for experiential learning, applied research, community engagement, and workforce development, enabling SET to serve as a catalyst for innovation and regional impact. The next dean will have a unique opportunity to build upon a strong foundation of growth, scholarship, and community partnership while shaping the future of engineering and technology education at a pivotal moment of transformation.

SET has evolved significantly since its origins as a pioneering effort to expand access to computing and technology education across Washington State. Today, the school offers a comprehensive portfolio of undergraduate and master's programs spanning computer science, mechanical and civil engineering, electrical and computer engineering, information technology, cybersecurity, and related disciplines. As home to UW Tacoma's only PhD program, SET occupies a distinctive position within the campus and serves as a critical driver of research, workforce development, and regional innovation. SET is also the only engineering school in Washington State that is a partner institution in the Kern Entrepreneurial Engineering Network (KEEN), reflecting the school's commitment to preparing engineers who combine technical excellence with innovation, leadership, and an entrepreneurial mindset. Through strong partnerships with industry, government, community organizations, and educational institutions, the school provides students with practical, applied learning experiences while addressing complex challenges in areas such as artificial intelligence, sustainable infrastructure, intelligent transportation, and equitable computing.

The next dean will be charged with guiding SET through its next phase of organizational maturity and strategic growth. Building on a decade of remarkable expansion, the dean will work closely with faculty and staff to strengthen organizational structures, support effective governance, and ensure the resources and systems necessary are in place to sustain excellence and impact. At the same time, the dean will articulate a compelling academic vision that positions SET at the forefront of emerging technologies and workforce needs, advancing innovative degree programs, expanding enrollment, and thoughtfully integrating artificial intelligence and other rapidly evolving fields throughout the curriculum. The dean will also foster a diverse and inclusive academic community that supports the success of students, faculty, and staff and reflects UW Tacoma's commitment to access and opportunity.

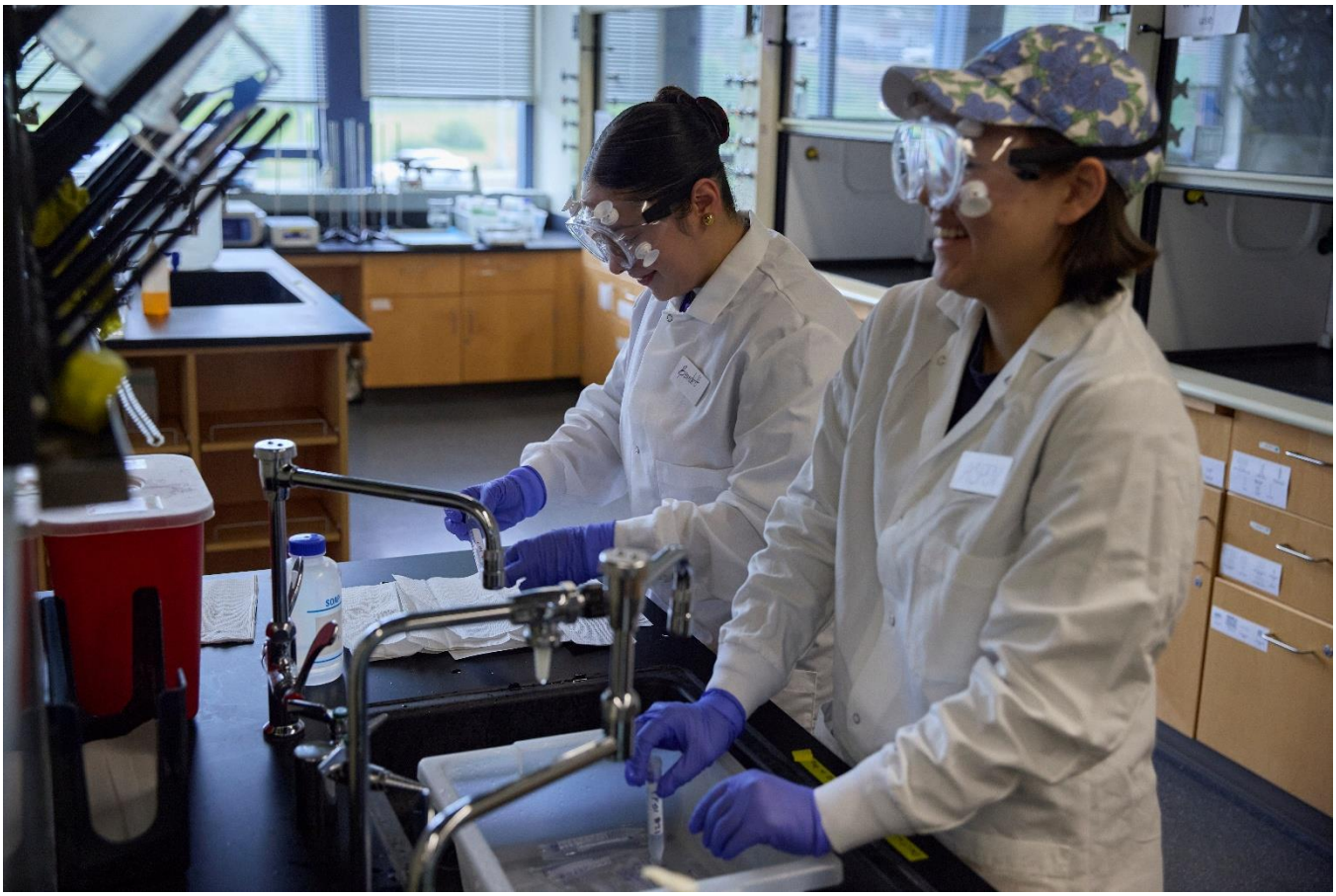
The dean will also serve as a highly visible ambassador, strengthening relationships across the University of Washington system while expanding partnerships with industry, government, community organizations, alumni, and philanthropic supporters. Through these efforts, the dean will help increase experiential learning opportunities, advance economic development throughout the South Puget Sound region, elevate the visibility of SET's accomplishments, and secure the resources necessary to support future growth.

The ideal candidate will be an accomplished academic leader who combines strategic vision with operational excellence, values collaboration and shared governance, and demonstrates a deep commitment to student success, innovation, and community engagement. The successful candidate will demonstrate a commitment to leadership in a diverse and inclusive academic community. The successful candidate should have an earned doctorate in a SET field or related discipline from a professionally accredited institution and academic credentials commensurate with appointment at the rank of tenured full professor within the school. This is an extraordinary opportunity to lead a thriving school with a clear trajectory of growth and impact while helping position UW

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Tacoma as a national model for accessible, workforce-relevant, and community-connected engineering and technology education.

Information about how to nominate a candidate or to apply for this opportunity can be found later in this document in the section entitled “Procedure for Candidacy.”



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Role of the Dean, School of Engineering and Technology

Reporting to the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the dean serves as the chief academic and administrative officer of the School of Engineering and Technology and is responsible for all educational, budgetary, and administrative matters within the school. The dean will provide the vision and leadership necessary for SET to excel while advancing the university's teaching, research, and service missions. As a member of UW Tacoma's academic leadership team, the dean will advocate for the interests of the school, and serve on campus and university committees that advance institutional priorities. Working closely with fellow deans, including partners in the Milgard School of Business, with which SET offers the MS in Cybersecurity and Leadership jointly, the dean will help advance interdisciplinary initiatives and strengthen SET's role across the campus and the broader University of Washington system.

The dean will lead the school's educational, research, scholarly, and public engagement activities through thoughtful planning, implementation, and evaluation that ensure SET's programs remain successful, relevant, and sustainable, which includes leading compliance with ABET standards. The dean will also be responsible for the recruitment, appointment, and retention of faculty, staff, and academic administrators, developing hiring plans that support the school's growth, mentoring the leaders of its academic units and programs, and reviewing faculty promotion and tenure cases.

Effective management of the school's financial and physical resources will be essential to sustaining SET's momentum. The dean will also prepare annual budget proposals, manage space allocation within the school, and ensure SET adheres to university policies and procedures. Just as important, the dean will foster a positive, inclusive, and collaborative environment through regular consultation with faculty, staff, and students and meaningful engagement with governance councils and committees.

The dean will serve as a highly visible ambassador for SET, building relationships with alumni, donors, employers of graduates, industry and government partners, and community organizations throughout the South Puget Sound region and beyond. Working closely with advancement partners, the dean will develop and implement fundraising strategies that secure philanthropic support for the school's priorities. Through these efforts, the dean will gather external input on SET's impact, represent the school at university and community events, and elevate its stature and reputation among peer institutions and the broader engineering and technology community.



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Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

Building on a strong foundation of growth and achievement, the next dean will guide the school through an exciting period of continued expansion, enhancing its reputation and impact while positioning it for even greater distinction.

In addition, the Dean will be expected to:

- **Advance Academic Innovation and Future-Focused Program Development**
  Rapid changes in technology, artificial intelligence, engineering practice, and workforce needs create a significant opportunity for the School to further distinguish itself within the region and beyond. The next dean will be expected to help define a compelling academic vision that positions SET at the forefront of emerging fields while maintaining its commitment to academic excellence.

  Key priorities will include supporting the development of new graduate opportunities, advancing planned programs in areas such as artificial intelligence and related fields, and ensuring that AI and other emerging technologies are thoughtfully integrated throughout the curriculum. The dean will also assess opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration across all schools, and will help shape academic offerings that respond to the needs of the South Puget Sound economy and future workforce.

- **Strengthen Research, Graduate Education, and Scholarly Excellence**
  As the home of UW Tacoma's only PhD program, SET occupies a distinctive position on campus and is poised to expand its role in graduate education and research. The next dean will be charged with sustaining the quality and momentum of existing graduate programs while helping chart a course for future growth.

  The dean will support faculty scholarship, research activity, and student success while fostering an environment that values a broad range of scholarly, applied, and community-engaged contributions. Working collaboratively with faculty and campus partners, the dean will help sustain a supportive academic environment, encourage opportunities for research and external engagement where appropriate, and ensure that graduate and doctoral education remain important elements of the school's evolving mission and aspirations.

- **Deepen Partnerships that Advance Student Success and Regional Impact**
  SET's success is closely tied to its relationships with industry, government, community organizations, and regional employers. The next dean will be expected to serve as a highly visible ambassador for the school and strengthen partnerships that create meaningful opportunities for students, faculty, and the broader community.

  This work includes expanding experiential learning opportunities, supporting internships and applied research, fostering collaborations with major employers and public-sector partners, and positioning the school as a driver of innovation and economic development throughout the South Puget Sound region. The dean will also help elevate the visibility and reputation of SET's programs and accomplishments within the broader University of Washington ecosystem and beyond.

- **Shape the School's Next Phase of Growth and Organizational Development**
  The School of Engineering & Technology has experienced extraordinary expansion over the past decade, evolving from a small academic unit into a comprehensive school serving undergraduate, master's, and doctoral students across multiple disciplines. Now at a pivotal moment in its evolution, the School is poised for its next phase of growth and impact. The next dean will be charged with sustaining its momentum while guiding its evolution into a mature, scalable, and enduring enterprise.

  Working closely with faculty and staff, the dean will provide clarity around organizational structure, decision-making processes, resource allocation, and administrative support. This work may include evaluating evolving governance and departmental models, establishing systems that support transparency and accountability, and ensuring the school is appropriately structured to meet future demands.

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- **Expand Philanthropic Support and External Engagement**
  The School enters an important period of fundraising and external engagement as UW Tacoma advances institutional development priorities and looks toward long-term growth. The next dean will play a leading role in strengthening the culture of philanthropy and identifying new sources of support for students, faculty, facilities, and strategic initiatives.

  Working closely with advancement partners, the dean will cultivate relationships with alumni, industry leaders, donors, and advisory board members while exploring opportunities to expand philanthropic investment in the school. Building a stronger network of engaged alumni and external stakeholders will be particularly important as SET plans for future growth and capital needs.

- **Align Resources and Talent to Support a Growing School**
  The next dean will inherit a school that has achieved significant enrollment growth while operating in a resource-constrained environment. Balancing growth, quality, and financial sustainability will require thoughtful planning and disciplined execution.

  The dean will be expected to guide strategic decisions related to faculty and staff hiring, enrollment management, program investments, facilities, and budget priorities. Ensuring that faculty, staff, and students have the support necessary to succeed, while addressing issues of capacity, retention, and operational effectiveness, will be essential to sustaining the school's momentum in the years ahead.



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Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

The deanship of the School of Engineering & Technology offers a rare opportunity to lead one of UW Tacoma's most dynamic schools at a pivotal moment in its development. After a decade of significant expansion, SET is entering a new phase of organizational maturity. It must now build the structures, systems, and partnerships that will sustain excellence as the school continues to grow. UW Tacoma seeks a dean who combines strategic vision with operational excellence. The ideal candidate will be a transparent, consultative leader who values shared governance, fosters a diverse and inclusive academic community, and builds trust across the school, the campus, and the University of Washington system. They will bring a genuine, long-term commitment to UW Tacoma's urban-serving mission, and serve the South Puget Sound region.

Candidates must hold an earned doctorate in a science, engineering, or technology field or related discipline from a professionally accredited institution (or foreign equivalency). They must also have academic credentials that qualify them for appointment as a tenured full professor within the school.

Key qualifications and attributes include:

- **Proven Academic Leadership:** Demonstrated success leading complex academic units through periods of growth, change, and organizational development. Experience advancing strategic priorities, implementing effective administrative structures, and managing accreditation processes such as ABET or comparable reviews.
- **Breadth of Academic Experience:** A record of leadership across engineering, computing, technology, or closely related disciplines. Experience supporting undergraduate, Master's and PhD programs and fostering interdisciplinary collaboration among faculty, students, and external partners.
- **Strategic and Operational Leadership:** Evidence of balancing long-term strategic planning with effective day-to-day management. Experience aligning organizational structures, staffing models, and operational processes to support institutional growth and evolving priorities.
- **Financial and Resource Management:** Demonstrated experience managing budgets and institutional resources in a complex organization. Ability to make informed, transparent decisions regarding financial investments, personnel, facilities, and other strategic resources.
- **Research Advancement and External Funding Support**: Established track record external research funding landscape and the factors that contribute to faculty success in securing sponsored research support, including familiarity with grant development, funding opportunities, research infrastructure, and experience fostering a culture of scholarly productivity and externally funded research.
- **Collaborative and Transparent Leadership Style:** A track record of working effectively within shared governance environments and building trust through open communication. Experience developing faculty, staff, and emerging leaders while navigating competing priorities and addressing challenges constructively.
- **Commitment to Faculty, Staff, and Student Success:** Evidence of fostering positive and inclusive academic communities that support faculty and staff engagement, student achievement, retention, and belonging. Experience serving and advocating for students from a wide range of educational, socioeconomic, and life experiences.
- **Partnership Development and External Engagement:** A demonstrated record of building productive relationships with industry, government, nonprofit, healthcare, military, and community partners. Experience leveraging partnerships to support research, workforce development, experiential learning, innovation, and economic impact.

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- **Fundraising and Advancement Experience:** Success securing philanthropic support and cultivating relationships with alumni, donors, advisory boards, corporate partners, and other external constituents. Experience contributing to fundraising initiatives, campaign efforts, or resource development strategies.
- **Innovation and Emerging Technology Leadership:** Experience advancing technology-enabled teaching, research, and workforce initiatives. Demonstrated understanding of the opportunities and implications of artificial intelligence, data science, and emerging technologies within higher education and applied fields.

School of Engineering and Technology

The School of Engineering & Technology (SET) at the University of Washington Tacoma prepares students to become leaders across computer, electrical, mechanical, and civil engineering. Graduates develop real-world solutions in embedded systems, information technology, and software design, grounded in a curriculum that balances theoretical depth with the practical skills of innovators and entrepreneurs. Through partnerships with area companies, SET connects students to hands-on experience and evolving industry needs, while strong support services attract and sustain students from diverse educational, economic, and ethnic backgrounds.

SET traces its origins to the Computing & Software Systems program, launched in 1999 through a collaborative effort among seven South Puget Sound community colleges to expand access to a four-year computer science degree. In 2001, responding to industry demand for skilled technology professionals, the Washington Legislature established the Institute of Technology at UW Tacoma through a public-private partnership. With a statewide mission and fifteen community and technical college partners, the Institute set out to grow the pipeline of graduates fueling Washington's high-tech economy and to extend opportunity to women and underrepresented groups.

Today, SET is where cutting-edge research meets community impact. SET houses the only PhD program on campus. Interdisciplinary teams of engineers, data scientists, designers, and community partners tackle urgent challenges including coastal resilience, sustainable infrastructure, intelligent transportation, and equitable computing. By combining fieldwork, applied labs, and partnerships with local industry and government, SET advances technologies built to serve people and places across the Pacific Northwest and beyond.

Academic Programs

Undergraduate Degree Programs

- BS in Civil Engineering
- BS in Computer Engineering
- BA in Computer Science and Systems
- BS in Computer Science and Systems
- BS in Electrical Engineering
- BS in Information Technology
- BS in Mechanical Engineering
- Double Major: Computer Engineering and Computer Science
- Minor in Applied Computing

Graduate Degree Programs

- MS in Electrical and Computer Engineering
- MS in Computer Science and Systems
- MS in Cybersecurity and Leadership*
- MS in Information Technology
- PhD in Computer Science and Systems

*Jointly offered in collaboration with the Milgard School of Business.

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About the University of Washington Tacoma

Overview

Established in 1990, the University of Washington Tacoma is an urban-serving university in the heart of downtown Tacoma, Washington. As part of the University of Washington, UW Tacoma combines the academic excellence of a globally recognized research university with a deep commitment to increasing opportunity for students, advancing social mobility, and strengthening the South Sound region.

Located on a 46-acre hillside campus overlooking the Port of Tacoma and Mount Rainier, UW Tacoma brings together diverse experiences and perspectives, where students discover new possibilities and education and research turn knowledge into community impact.

Serving more than 5,000 students, UW Tacoma is recognized for expanding access to higher education. In the 2027 U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges rankings, UW Tacoma ranks among the top regional institutions for social mobility in the Northwest. This recognition demonstrates UW Tacoma's commitment to developing pathways to educational achievement, career success, and economic opportunity.

UW Tacoma is comprised of eight schools and institutes: the School of Education, School of Engineering and Technology, Institute for Innovation and Global Engagement, School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences, Milgard School of Business, School of Nursing and Healthcare Leadership, School of Social Work and Criminal Justice, and School of Urban Studies. Together, they offer a broad range of undergraduate (50 majors and 33 minors) and 15 graduate programs, and opportunities for professional development. The campus also hosts the Center for Urban Waters, providing research and engagement opportunities in applied science and engineering around water issues in the Pacific Northwest.

As a member of the Coalition of Urban Serving Universities, UW Tacoma works in a network of public urban research universities committed to creating an educated workforce, building strong communities and improving the health of diverse populations.

Vision

The University of Washington Tacoma fosters a thriving and equitable society by educating diverse learners and expanding knowledge through partnership and collaboration with all of its communities.

Mission

As an urban-serving university, it:

- Expands access to higher education in an environment where every student has the opportunity to succeed
- Fosters scholarship, research and creativity to address the challenging problems of our time and place
- Partners and collaborates for common good
- Catalyzes the economic and social vitality of the region

Values

The University of Washington Tacoma values:

- Excellence
- Community
- Diversity

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- Innovation
- Access

Student Life

Since opening in 1990 as an upper-division institution, UW Tacoma has grown into a comprehensive university offering four-year undergraduate degrees, graduate programs and doctoral education. Today, more than 5,000 students bring a wide range of backgrounds and experiences to a campus defined by connection, opportunity, and purpose.

UW Tacoma has been designated a Veteran Supportive Campus by the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs and was recently recognized as the top school in Washington and the Pacific Northwest in the Military Times "Best for Vets" rankings; 19% of students are military-affiliated. The majority of undergraduates (56%) identify as persons of color, and 93% of students come from Washington. The average age of students is approximately 27 years, and 51% are first generation to college or to degree. Looking ahead, the university continues to invest in the student experience and campus life, with plans to add traditional residence hall-style housing in the coming years, further supporting student engagement, belonging, and enrollment growth.

Land Acknowledgement

UW Tacoma recognizes that all in its community learn, live and work on or near the ancestral homeland of the Coast Salish people. In particular, the campus is situated on the current and traditional land of the Puyallup. It also acknowledges the lands of the Muckleshoot, Nisqually, Suquamish, Duwamish and all other traditional lands it may reside on. As people on these occupied territories, UW Tacoma acknowledges the land, the ancestors who have cared for this land since time immemorial and all of its Native and Indigenous connections today. It also acknowledges the histories of dispossession and forced removal that have allowed for the growth and survival of this nation and institution. In light of this history, UW Tacoma has a responsibility to take active efforts to partner with our Native and Indigenous community members and neighbors to seek justice as it continues the work together as a community of learners, leaders and educators.

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Leadership

Sheila Edwards Lange Ph.D., Chancellor

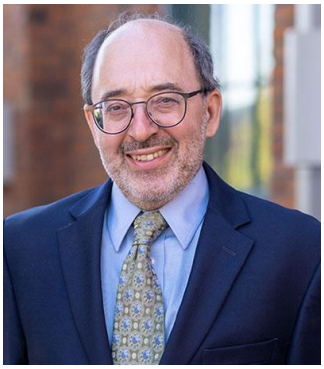


Dr. Sheila Edwards Lange has served as Chancellor of the University of Washington Tacoma since September 2021, providing leadership on all campus matters as chief executive officer. During her time at UWT she has focused on enhancing student success; strengthening fiscal vitality; broadening support for research, community engaged teaching and scholarship; developing a bold vision for expanding the campus footprint; and growing community partnerships.

She previously served as President of Seattle Central College and as Vice President and Vice Provost for Minority Affairs and Diversity at the University of Washington in Seattle. She serves on numerous non-profit boards including Washington Campus Coalition for the Public Good, AAA Washington and the Greater Tacoma Community Foundation. Her honors include the Washington State Association of College Trustees' 2020 CEO of the Year and Puget Sound Business Journal's 2021 Director of the Year.

Dr. Lange holds a bachelor's degree in social ecology from the University of California, Irvine, and a doctorate in educational leadership and policy studies and a Master of Public Administration from the University of Washington.

Andrew Harris, Ph.D., Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs



Dr. Andrew Harris has served as the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs since 2022. A historian by training, Dr. Harris earned his Ph.D. in History from Stanford University and his undergraduate degree from Pomona College. Before joining UW Tacoma, he was Dean of the College of Liberal & Creative Arts at San Francisco State University and previously held leadership roles at Keene State College and Bridgewater State University. Dr. Harris has championed initiatives to support student success and faculty development, recruit and retain an accomplished and diverse faculty, expand undergraduate research opportunities, and increase funding for research and scholarships.

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Tacoma, WA

Tacoma is situated on the traditional territory of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians, of central Puget Sound, the ancestral lands of the Coast Salish peoples. Tacoma, Washington, a midsized urban port city known as the “City of Destiny” is an attractive city, which offers affordable city life and access to an outdoors lifestyle. Located just 45 minutes outside of Seattle, Tacoma offers top-notch restaurants, museums, art galleries, performing arts centers and a wide variety of outdoor activities with over fifty parks and open spaces in Tacoma, including Point Defiance Park, one of the largest urban parks in the country (at 700 acres). With Mount Rainier as a backdrop, Tacoma is an ideal place for families to grow and businesses to expand. Public transportation in Tacoma includes buses, commuter rail, light rail and ferries.

It is the second-largest city in the Puget Sound area and the third-largest in the state. Tacoma also serves as the center of business activity for the South Puget Sound region, which has a population around 1 million. The largest employer in Tacoma is Joint Base Lewis-McChord.

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Procedure for Candidacy

All applications, nominations, and inquiries are invited. Applications should include, as separate documents, a CV or resume and a letter of interest addressing the themes in this profile.

WittKieffer is assisting UW-Tacoma in this search. For fullest consideration, candidate materials should be received by **January 4th, 2027.**

Application materials should be submitted using WittKieffer's **candidate portal**.

Nominations and inquiries can be directed to:

Jessica Herrington, Cathryn Davis and Ethan Robles at:

UW-TacomaSETDean@wittkieffer.com

The base salary range for this position will be $230,000 - $260,000 annually, commensurate with experience and qualifications, or as mandated by a U.S. Department of Labor prevailing wage determination.

Equal Opportunity

The University of Washington is committed to fostering an inclusive, respectful and welcoming community for all. As an equal opportunity employer, the University considers applicants for employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, citizenship, sex, pregnancy, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, disability, or veteran status consistent with UW Executive Order No. 81.

Benefits Information

The University is committed to providing excellent benefits to our faculty. For a summary of available benefits, please see UWHR benefits information.

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Privacy Notice

Your application materials may be used for employment consideration and shared in accordance with UW's Privacy Policy.

Disability Services

The University of Washington is committed to providing access and reasonable accommodation in its services, programs, activities, education, and employment for individuals with disabilities. To request disability accommodation in the application process, contact the Disability Services Office at 206-543-6450 or dso@uw.edu.

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