

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY **VICTORIA**

Dean, College of Education and Health Professions

Leadership Profile

Fall 2026



WittKieffer

Executive Summary

Texas A&M University–Victoria seeks a Dean of the College of Education and Health Professions (COEHP) at a pivotal moment in its history. Following its 2025 transition into the Texas A&M University System and the recent appointments of a new President and Provost, the University is positioned for renewed growth and transformation. The next Dean will play a central role in helping shape this future by advancing strategic priorities, strengthening academic programs, and contributing to a culture of collaboration, innovation, and student success.

The Dean will be responsible for building on the College's longstanding impact in educator preparation, health professions, counseling, and related fields while ensuring programs remain responsive to regional workforce needs. Working closely with faculty, staff, and community partners, the Dean will advance academic quality, support accreditation efforts, evaluate opportunities for new and expanded programs, and help address critical shortages in education and healthcare throughout the region. Serving a student population that includes a high percentage of first-generation, transfer, and non-traditional learners, Texas A&M University–Victoria is deeply committed to access and opportunity.



The successful candidate will be an accomplished academic leader with a collaborative, transparent, and data-informed leadership style; a record of supporting faculty excellence; and the ability to build strong relationships across the University and region. This individual will have the vision, integrity, and strategic acumen necessary to strengthen the College, enhance its impact on students and communities, and help advance Texas A&M University–Victoria's mission during a period of exceptional opportunity and momentum.

For information regarding how to apply, submit nominations, or inquire about the role, please see the section "Procedure for Candidacy" at the end of this document.

Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

The next Dean of the College of Education and Health Professions will be expected to advance the following priorities, among others:

Build on recent momentum as the University moves towards a new future.

The new Dean will join at a time where the University has seen significant and positive changes: it officially became part of the Texas A&M University System in September 2025 and welcomed a [new President](#) in November 2025 and a [new Provost](#) in July 2026. This creates a unique opportunity for the next Dean to work with President Hardigree, Provost Kiesow, campus leaders, faculty, and staff to build on the momentum generated by these changes to identify opportunities to grow enrollment and impact students and the region through the College's academic offerings. A&M-Victoria has experienced challenges in recent years, including cuts in budgets, faculty, and staff, and the next Dean must seek to understand and demonstrate sensitivity to that recent history while building a collaborative, forward-looking culture that helps to move the institution successfully into the future.

Ensure alignment of academic offerings with regional needs.

This individual must gain an understanding of the needs of the region and the students the University serves and work with faculty to ensure relevant and impactful academic programs. The Dean will need to promote effective structures to evaluate curriculum, adapting where needed to prepare students for their future careers and building a culture of continuous assessment. The College maintains a number of accreditations, including the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Educational Psychology (CACREP) and the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), and ensures teacher preparation programs are aligned with standards of the Texas Education Agency (TEA). The Dean must have a strong understanding of the accreditation process and demonstrate a record of success supporting faculty and staff in maintaining necessary accreditations. Opportunities exist to expand the College's academic portfolio and further its reach as the University works to address the region's teacher shortage and growing demand for healthcare professionals.

Improve student outcomes and promote the impact of higher education.

Beginning in 1973, the institution offered upper-level undergraduate courses as part of the University of Houston and was approved by the state legislature to become a degree-granting institution in 1983. In 2010, the University went through downward expansion to add courses at the freshman and sophomore levels. Subsequently, the University enrolls a wide range of traditional, transfer, and non-traditional students – many of which come from the region's rural communities and approximately 65% of whom are first-generation students. The Dean must have a record of effectively supporting the success of these student populations and helping students navigate the various challenges they might face. The percentage of students in the region who pursue higher education falls below the state average, requiring University leaders who are strong communicators of the value of higher education and who ensure the University is effectively meeting the needs of the communities it serves.

Support and advocate for the needs of faculty and staff.

The Dean plays a critical role in supporting the success of the College's faculty and staff and building a positive, student-centered environment. Over the last decade, the University's growth in online programs and its addition of satellite campuses in the Houston suburbs led to a relatively dispersed base of faculty. The University's new leadership has brought faculty back to its Victoria campus to create a more vibrant, engaging experience for students. The new Dean must be able to build a sense of community among faculty and staff, as well as address areas impacting faculty and staff such as compensation, workload, professional development, and support for research and scholarship.

Build effective partnerships with the community and external partners.

As the greater Victoria community looked towards the future needs of the region, it pushed for the University's move to the Texas A&M System and the opportunities to expand academic offerings. The next Dean must be able

to capitalize on this positive momentum in the community and help deliver outcomes that benefit the region. This will require close partnership with community leaders and educational partners, including Victoria College and local school districts. This individual should be skilled at building lasting relationships and mutually beneficial partnerships with constituents outside the university and will be expected to engage in fundraising activities with donors, alumni, and community partners.

Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

The next Dean must have a demonstrated record of successful academic leadership, a terminal degree, and an academic record suitable for appointment as a full professor in one of the College's departments. Additionally, the successful candidate should demonstrate the following qualities and qualifications:

- A passion for the range of student populations that A&M-Victoria serves, including first-generation students, and a demonstrated record of advancing student success for traditional, transfer, and non-traditional students.
- A forward-looking understanding of higher education and the ability to shape strategies that ensure impactful academic offerings, support faculty excellence in pedagogy, and effectively incorporate new technologies into student learning.
- A leadership style that is collaborative, transparent, and decisive, bringing together faculty, staff, and students to set strategies that advance the College and holding individuals accountable for the effective implementation of those strategies.
- A willingness to take calculated risks and the ability to evaluate and adapt as needed.
- A record of supporting the success of faculty in teaching, research, and service and ensuring a positive, student-centered culture among faculty and staff.
- Demonstrated success evaluating academic offerings and modalities to ensure programs that meet student and regional needs.
- A data-informed approach to recruiting and retaining students, assessing the efficacy of programs and maintaining accreditations, and assuring that limited resources are being used to advance institutional priorities.
- The ability to engage locally and regionally to understand the communities the University serves; promote the impact of higher education; build partnerships and programs that impact students and the region; and partner with Advancement on priority fundraising needs, including engaging donors and community members.
- Strong communication skills and a demonstrated commitment to building relationships across a variety of constituents.
- The highest levels of personal and professional integrity.

About the College of Education and Health Professions

Overview

For over 50 years, COEHP has been integral to Texas A&M University-Victoria, molding the future of education and healthcare. Established in 1973, the College has evolved from a small teaching center to a dynamic college offering diverse programs tailored to workforce demands. From teacher training to nursing and counseling, the College continuously adapts and innovates, ensuring our graduates thrive in their respective fields.

Undergraduate Degrees

- Bachelor of Science in Health Studies
- Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology
- Bachelor of Science in Education
- Registered Nurse to Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Graduate Degrees

- M.Ed., Administration and Supervision
- M.Ed., Adult and Higher Education
- M.S., Clinical Mental Health Counseling
- M.Ed., Curriculum and Instruction
- M.Ed., Education Technology
- M.S., Professional Counseling
- M.Ed., Special Education
- M.S., Sport Management

Certificates

- Teaching Certification
- Dyslexia Education Certification
- Educational Diagnostician Certification
- Principal Certification
- Reading Specialist Certification
- Special Education Teacher Certification
- Superintendent Certification



About Texas A&M University-Victoria

Overview

Texas A&M University-Victoria is the most recent addition to the Texas A&M University System. The University was founded in 1973 as part of the University of Houston System and was transferred to the Texas A&M University System during the 89th Texas Legislative Session. A&M-Victoria is the only four-year university in a 100-mile radius and is just 30 miles from the Texas Gulf Coast. The University is a Hispanic-Serving Institution located in the Coastal Bend region of Texas. It serves the educational needs, promotes economic well-being, and advances the community and region's quality of life through teaching, research, and service excellence. The university is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), and it offers more than 50 academic programs, as well as concentrations and certificates. The university also has several accreditations for specific areas and programs, including from the AACSB, ABET, CACREP and CCNE. In addition to its recent transition into The Texas A&M University System, A&M-Victoria is in the process of adding academic programs in three major areas: aviation, agribusiness, and engineering.

In addition to academic excellence, A&M-Victoria has a thriving Athletics program that offers six competitive teams: baseball, softball, men's and women's soccer, and men's and women's golf. The Jaguars are part of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics, and the baseball, softball and soccer teams compete in the Red River Athletic Conference. The golf teams compete in the Association of Independent Institutions Conference. Learn more about Texas A&M University-Victoria's history, academic programs, and campus facilities [here](#).

Mission

Texas A&M University–Victoria empowers students through transformative education and engaged scholarship, transforming lives and strengthening South Texas.

Core Values

- Wisdom
- Excellence
- Respect
- Integrity
- Students
- Empathy



Leadership

Christian Hardigree, President

In October 2025, the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents voted unanimously to approve Christian E. Hardigree, J.D., as the next president of Texas A&M University–Victoria.

Hardigree comes to Victoria from the University of South Florida, where she served as Regional Chancellor of the St. Petersburg campus and as a member of the OneUSF executive team, overseeing academic programs, operations, and a \$130 million capital portfolio. Under her leadership, USF St. Petersburg increased enrollment by 26 percent, secured \$59 million dollars in support for students and faculty, and forged new partnerships with the U.S. Navy and local employers.

A seasoned higher-education leader and attorney, Hardigree previously served as the founding dean of the School of Hospitality at Metropolitan State University of Denver and as the founding director of the Michael A. Leven School of Culinary Sustainability & Hospitality at Kennesaw State University. She holds a Juris Doctor from Mercer University and a B.S. in Hotel Administration (cum laude) from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and is a Fulbright Scholar (2024).

Alyssa Kiesow, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

In March 2026, The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents approved the nomination of Alyssa Kiesow to the post of Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Texas A&M University–Victoria.

Kiesow joins the University after having served as Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Northern State University in Aberdeen, South Dakota. Under her leadership, Kiesow has led campuswide initiatives focused on student admissions, built relationships with industry partners to create opportunities for student internships, secured scholarships and funding for new faculty and a nursing program, and collaborated to create revenue-generating research with businesses. She also has experience developing degree programs, including biochemistry, global languages and culture, nursing, and science education.

She brings with her a 20-year career in academia, as well as experience working in the field as a wildlife biologist. Kiesow earned an Associate of Arts in liberal arts from Winona State University in 1997, followed by a Bachelor of Science (2000) and Master of Science (2003) in biology from South Dakota State University. She later completed her Ph.D. in biology at the University of South Dakota in 2008.

Texas A&M University System

The Texas A&M University System is one of the largest and most impactful higher education systems in the country, with an annual budget of \$7.3 billion. Its statewide network includes 12 universities, a comprehensive health science center, eight state agencies, Texas A&M–Fort Worth and the Texas A&M–RELLIS. The System serves nearly 170,000 students and reaches millions more through service, research and outreach programs each year. With nearly \$1.6 billion in annual research expenditures, the System fuels innovation, supports communities and drives Texas' economy forward.



Procedure for Candidacy

Applications, nominations, and inquiries can be submitted through the [WittKieffer Candidate Portal](#). Applicants should submit, as separate documents, a CV or résumé and a letter of interest that addresses the themes outlined in this profile. WittKieffer is assisting Texas A&M University-Victoria in this search. For full consideration, candidate materials should be received by **September 24, 2026**.

Nominations and inquiries can also be directed to Ryan Crawford and Jenna Brumleve at TAMUV-COEHPDean@wittkieffer.com.

The Texas A&M University System is an Equal Opportunity/Veterans/Disability Employer.