OHIO UNIVERSITY

Dean, Russ College of Engineering and Technology

Leadership Profile

October 2026



WittKieffer

Executive Summary

Ohio University (OHIO) invites applications and nominations for the position of Dean of the Russ College of Engineering and Technology (the Russ College). As the College's chief academic and administrative officer, the Dean will serve as a visible champion for the College, an advocate within the University, and an effective ambassador to alumni, industry, government, and community partners.

The Russ College of Engineering and Technology has a proud history of preparing engineers and technologists to create meaningful impact across Ohio and beyond. The College serves more than 2,300 students, including 1,956 undergraduate, 258 master's, and 90 doctoral students, through a broad portfolio of programs spanning aviation, chemical and biomolecular engineering, civil and environmental engineering, electrical engineering and computer science, engineering technology and management, industrial and systems engineering, and mechanical engineering. Building on this strong foundation in education, research, and workforce development, the next Dean will work closely with internal and external constituents to shape and implement a compelling vision for the College's future. Key priorities will include strengthening academic programs and developing new educational offerings that respond to evolving student and workforce needs; advancing high-impact and externally funded research; fostering interdisciplinary partnerships; and securing the human, financial, and philanthropic resources necessary to support continued growth and innovation. The Dean will also align the College's priorities with the University's Dynamic Strategy, ensuring that the Russ College remains responsive to the needs of Appalachian Ohio and the state's emerging industries.

The College seeks a visible, approachable, and transparent leader who builds upon a culture of collaboration and shared purpose, engages the community through active listening and shared governance, and fosters an environment where faculty, staff, and students continue to thrive. The successful candidate should possess an earned doctorate in an appropriate discipline, qualifications for appointment as a tenured full professor within the College, and a demonstrated record of effective academic leadership. The next Dean will combine strategic vision with disciplined execution, advocate for the College with authenticity, cultivate enduring relationships, and inspire the Russ College community around shared aspirations for excellence, impact, and long-term success.

As the oldest public university in the state, Ohio University has long been a regional and state leader in preparing students for successful careers. OHIO's total enrollment is over 30,000 students across the state and online, including almost 1,000 international students from 102 countries. Approximately 20,000 students are studying at the residential campus in Athens, a quintessential college town nestled deep in the Appalachian foothills of beautiful Southeast Ohio. The University achieved R1 status in 2022, and the Russ College has been a significant participant in the continued advancement of OHIO's research efforts.

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.

Role of the Dean

The Dean, as chief academic and administrative officer of the Russ College of Engineering and Technology, promotes excellence in curricula, teaching, and learning; academic advising; interdisciplinary initiatives; research and scholarship; and the development of faculty and professional staff. This individual is responsible for providing innovative, effective, and dynamic leadership that supports the College's mission, values, and culture, thereby advancing the long-term success of the College and the University. The Dean serves as a champion and leading voice for the College, both within the University and with external constituents.

The Dean oversees strategic planning, fiscal resources, and personnel management. The Dean is responsible for ensuring best practices in recruiting, retaining, and developing faculty and professional staff; student recruitment and success efforts; resource development and advancement; and programming, education, advocacy, and engagement that cultivate inclusive excellence.

Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

The next Dean of the Russ College of Engineering and Technology will be expected to advance the following priorities, among others:

Shape a vision for the future and commit to implementing it. The Russ College has a long history of preparing engineers and technologists who create meaningful impact across Ohio and beyond. The next Dean will have the opportunity to build upon a strong foundation established through the College's 2023-2027 Strategic Plan, which emphasizes student success, high-impact research, professional education, and sustainable growth. Working closely with internal and external constituents, the Dean will guide the development and execution of a compelling vision that aligns with Ohio University's Dynamic Strategy while positioning the College to thrive in a rapidly evolving technological and economic landscape. This includes identifying opportunities for new academic offerings, stackable credentials, online and professional programs, and innovative approaches that respond to workforce priorities for the State of Ohio. The College seeks a Dean with an entrepreneurial spirit who will identify emerging opportunities, cultivate innovative partnerships, and translate promising ideas into sustainable programs and new sources of support. The Dean will have an opportunity to build upon the OHIO-led ASCENT partnership, an Intel-funded initiative that brings together educational and industry partners to expand semiconductor and microelectronics education, training, and workforce pathways across the region.

Located in Appalachian Ohio, the Dean must demonstrate an understanding of the institution's mission and demonstrate a passion for serving the region's students and communities. OHIO is an emerging R1 institution, and the Russ College has played a key role in the elevation of the University's research profile. The Dean will be expected to continue to identify areas of opportunity and build on areas of strength, including its nationally and internationally recognized centers and institutes. The Dean will have an opportunity to maximize the impact of the Russ Research Opportunity Center (a $35 million self-funded facility), leveraging the facility to expand research activity, foster innovation, strengthen industry partnership, and create new opportunities for student engagement and workforce development. The next Dean must be a strategic leader who has demonstrated experience and can translate vision into action through implementation, assessment, and adaptation of its strategy.

Advocate for the College while advancing the broader goals of the University and building collaborative partnerships. The next Dean will be expected to serve as a visible advocate for the College while also acting as a collaborative partner across the institution. The Dean will join a highly collegial and collaborative group of deans who work across academic boundaries to support one another's success and share responsibility for advancing institution-wide priorities. Success in this role will require the ability to navigate complex organizational environments, remove barriers, and partner closely with university leadership, administrative divisions, and other academic units. The Dean must be an effective advocate on behalf of the College as well as a proactive and

transparent communicator of institutional decisions to the College, ensuring faculty and staff remain informed and engaged. There will be significant opportunities to strengthen interdisciplinary partnerships, including collaborations with the Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine and other units where engineering expertise can advance education, research, and engagement. The Dean will be expected to work with university leadership to ensure the College has the necessary faculty, staff, and financial resources to support current and emerging priorities.

Identify resources to support the success of faculty, staff, and students. The Russ College benefits from a long history, loyal alumni, and a tradition of philanthropy that has shaped its trajectory for generations. The College received a transformational estate gift from the Russ family in 2008, which led to major investments in faculty (named professorships), researchers (the Russ Prize), and facilities (the Russ Research Opportunity Center), and it has obtained numerous other gifts that have created impactful programming in the College, including the Robe Leadership Institute. The Dean will be expected to be an effective steward of the generous support the College has received, as well as an active partner with University Advancement in cultivating new relationships and philanthropic support. The Dean should be able to engage effectively with alumni, corporate partners, and community stakeholders while also pursuing opportunities for external funding through state, federal, and industry-sponsored grants and research. Ohio's continued focus on advanced manufacturing, aerospace, energy, healthcare, transportation, and emerging technology sectors presents significant opportunities for partnerships and investment. The next Dean must be a relationship builder and fundraiser who can leverage the College's strengths for resources that further growth, innovation, and student success. The Dean will be expected to pursue resources that strengthen both people and place, including investments in modern instructional, laboratory, research, and collaborative spaces.

Foster an engaged, collaborative, and high-performing College community. The Russ College seeks a leader who will invest in its people, strengthen its collaborative culture, and help position the College for continued success. Faculty, staff, students, and alumni value a Dean who is visible, approachable, and transparent in communication and decision-making. The next Dean should be an active listener who values shared governance, engages broadly across constituencies, and creates opportunities for meaningful participation in advancing the College's priorities. Success will require fostering a culture that recognizes contributions of its people, supports professional growth, and empowers faculty and staff to excel in teaching, research, service, and student support. The Dean will champion the College's tradition of recognizing and developing student potential, ensuring they have the academic, experiential, and personal support needed to become successful engineers and technologists. The Dean should demonstrate an ability to unify diverse perspectives around common goals, encourage collaboration across departments, recognize accomplishments, and create an environment where talented faculty, staff, and students can excel. Through thoughtful leadership, authentic engagement, and a commitment to continuous improvement, the next Dean will help to advance the College's culture of excellence and position it for continued growth and impact.

Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

The successful candidate should have a demonstrated record of effective leadership, an earned doctorate in an appropriate discipline, and qualifications suitable for appointment as a tenured full professor within an academic department of the Russ College of Engineering and Technology.

Additionally, the successful candidate should demonstrate many of the following qualifications and personal qualities:

- An understanding of the future trends shaping engineering, technology, and higher education, and the ability to work collaboratively with a broad range of constituents to develop and implement a compelling vision for the College's future.
- A strategic and forward-thinking leadership style that balances vision with execution, including the ability to establish priorities, assess outcomes, adapt to changing circumstances, and ensure accountability in achieving strategic goals.
- A demonstrated commitment to supporting faculty and staff success through professional development, mentorship, transparent communication, and the cultivation of a positive and collaborative work environment grounded in trust and shared governance.
- Experience promoting excellence in research, scholarship, and creative activity, including an understanding of opportunities associated with a research-intensive university and the ability to support growth in externally funded research and interdisciplinary collaboration.
- The ability to align college priorities with broader institutional goals while serving as a strong advocate for the College and an effective partner with university leadership, administrative divisions, and other academic units.
- Demonstrated success building partnerships with industry, government agencies, alumni, community organizations, and other external stakeholders to advance educational, research, and workforce-development objectives.
- Experience engaging donors and philanthropic partners, stewarding resources effectively, and working collaboratively with advancement professionals to secure financial support for strategic initiatives, students, faculty, and facilities.
- A passion for student success and a record of supporting innovative educational programs, experiential learning opportunities, and pathways that prepare graduates for impactful careers and lifelong learning.
- Demonstrated excellence in written and verbal communication; a commitment to active listening; a visible, approachable leadership style; and the ability to engage effectively with faculty, staff, students, alumni, and external partners to build enduring relationships and advance the College's mission.



About the Russ College of Engineering and Technology

Overview

The Russ College has been breaking ground throughout its history. After Ohio University was chartered in 1804 - the first land-grant college in the Northwest Territory transferred to the United States in 1783 - surveying courses were offered to early students of the nascent institution.

Formal civil engineering courses first appeared at Ohio University before the Civil War, and four-year electrical engineering courses of study began here in 1890 - one of the first higher education institutions in the country to offer them.

Its technology program dates back to 1904, when "manual training" was offered as a summer course. When Ohio University reorganized in 1935, it established the College of Applied Science, which would later become the College of Engineering in 1963. By 1939, the College was producing both civil and electrical engineering graduates and, with the advent of flight training in 1940, aviation pioneers who helped build the country's infrastructure and industry following the Great Depression and into World War II. Following the industrial demand of the postwar years, mechanical engineering became a department in 1947, offering an optional program in industrial engineering. Industrial and systems engineering eventually became an independent department twenty years later. The College was on the cutting edge again in 1958, offering computer programming courses and establishing a distinct degree program in computer science by 1968.

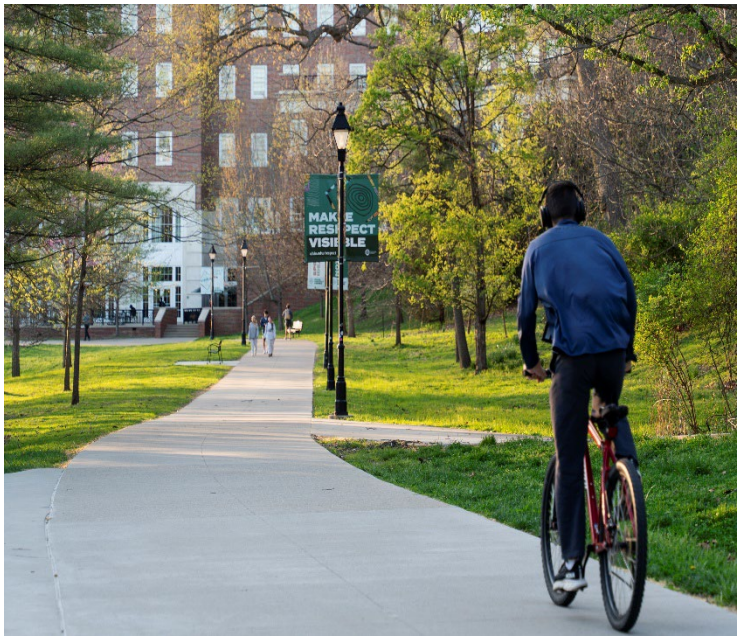
Following an $8 million bequest from Paul C. and Beth K. Stocker in 1979, renovations to the former Crook Hall dormitory on West Green began in 1982, and all the campus engineering education and research facilities were brought under one roof in Stocker Center in 1986.

The College was renamed in 1994 to honor devoted alumni Fritz J. Russ (BSEE '46, HON '75) and his wife, Dolores H. Russ, who bequeathed a transformational $124 million gift to the College. Their dedication to the profession of engineering, their belief in its ability to change lives, and their generosity allow the College to educate future engineers who work toward the greater good.

In 2010, the Russ College and the Ohio University Heritage College of Medicine unveiled the Academic & Research Center, a state-of-the-art learning and research facility built with private funding from the Osteopathic Heritage Foundations and alumni Charles R. (BSME '66, HON '05) and Marilyn Y. Stuckey. The building features modern learning studios and project rooms, connected laboratory suites, a three-story project hangar and an atrium living room with movable furniture, encouraging collaboration between the medical and engineering fields.

About Ohio University

Overview



As the oldest public university in the state, Ohio University has long been a regional and state leader in preparing students for successful careers. Ohio University's total enrollment is over 28,000 students across the state and online, including almost 1,000 international students from 102 countries. Approximately 20,000 students from Ohio are studying at the residential campus in Athens, a quintessential college town nestled deep in the Appalachian foothills of beautiful Southeast Ohio.

Founded in 1804 and guided by world-class faculty members, Ohio University is home to more than 250 academic programs across a wide range of fields, including business, communications, healthcare, medicine, social sciences, the arts, and STEM. The University's focus is ensuring student success through access to real industry and research experiences at an affordable cost. Ohio University was awarded the prestigious 2026 Carnegie Community Engagement Classification, affirming OHIO's role as an educational anchor and trusted partner across the region.

The University’s success in developing student potential is due to the richness of student-faculty engagement and the synergistic relationships between its exceptional undergraduate and graduate degree programs. The University leverages its partnerships and the knowledge generated from research and scholarly activities to enhance classrooms, learning communities, centers of excellence, guided research, artistic endeavors, and experiential academic opportunities.

The main campus of Ohio University is in Athens, Ohio, with five regional campuses (Chillicothe, Eastern, Lancaster, Southern, and Zanesville), as well as additional extension campuses in Dublin and Cleveland, and numerous competitive online programs. OHIO has 12 colleges, offering over 250 academic programs and over 130 master’s and 35 doctoral programs. In addition, OHIO offers more than 50 online programs, including certificates, associate's, bachelor’s, and master’s degrees.

OHIO students and alumni strive to make a difference in the world. Ohio University students consistently receive nationally competitive awards, such as the Fulbright U.S. Student Program, with 202 recipients since the program's inception in 1946. For six consecutive years, Ohio University has been awarded the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity award.

OHIO is uniquely positioned to provide a variety of services and programs to the southeastern Ohio Appalachian region. The University consistently ranks among the nation's highest-performing public universities in terms of actual versus predicted graduation rates, reflecting the remarkable depth and breadth of student-faculty engagement. Because of the level of the faculty's commitment to student success, OHIO's graduate and undergraduate programs, regional education, and outreach initiatives make substantial contributions to the furtherance of civic engagement and service in the realms of communication, the environment, technology, health and wellness, fine arts, and the liberal arts and sciences.

For more information about OHIO, please see the University's Office of Institutional Research Factbook, the Budget Book in the Office of Finance, or visit www.ohio.edu.

Mission and Vision

Ohio University's mission and vision statements encapsulate the University's purpose and goals. They also play an important role in defining the ties that link all members of our university community.

Mission Statement: To hold the door open to higher education so that all those eager to solve humanity's most urgent challenges might enter to learn, connecting them with experiences and discovery that will help make them think critically, care deeply, lead boldly, and ultimately depart to serve.

Vision Statement: To deliver the most valuable university education in Ohio, and lead as one of the most valued public universities in the nation.



Academics

Ohio University's degree-granting colleges serve as the home of academic departments, schools, and centers that deliver diverse programs, degrees, and majors. Each college has a unique community and culture that supports each student's specific personal, academic, and professional goals.

Colleges

- Chaddock and Morrow College of Fine Arts
- College of Arts and Sciences
- College of Business
- Graduate College
- College of Health Sciences and Professions
- Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine
- Honors Tutorial College
- The Patton College of Education
- Russ College of Engineering and Technology
- Scripps College of Communication
- University College
- Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Service

Dynamic Strategy

Ohio University President Lori Stewart Gonzalez led the campus in a yearlong planning process in 2023 to develop OHIO's strategic plan, the Dynamic Strategy. An innovative and responsive plan, it includes Learn, Discover, Engage, and Work pillars. Academic goals include helping to define what R1/T1 status would look like; further infusing experiential learning in students' curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities; and expanding OHIO's world-class research in healthy aging, energy, and the environment.



Athens, Ohio

Athens is a beloved town and is ranked as one of today's "50 Best College Towns to Live in Forever." Nationally recognized for its local food scene, Athens is located near some of the state's best hiking and mountain biking trails and parks and was named one of the Top 100 Art Communities in America. Athens has a long history of campus and city activism related to sustainability and social justice; it was an important stop on the Underground Railroad, and the United Mine Workers of America started as a gathering of coal miners in the area. Annual local events like the Nelsonville Music Festival and the Pawpaw Festival celebrate the area's natural beauty and reputation for not only being a growing tourist destination but also a family-friendly and safe place to live.



Procedure for Candidacy

All applications, nominations, and inquiries are invited. Applications should include, as separate documents, a letter of interest addressing the themes in this profile and a CV or resume. WittKieffer is assisting Ohio University in this search. For fullest consideration, candidate materials should be received by **January 13, 2027**. Application materials should be submitted using WittKieffer's candidate portal. Nominations and inquiries can be directed to Ryan Crawford, Lauren Bruce-Stets, and Tyler Workman at Ohio-RCETDean@wittkieffer.com.

Ohio University is committed to promoting and supporting a workplace and educational environment where healthy and respectful conduct is the cultural norm. In support of this commitment, Ohio University prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, age, national origin, ethnicity, national ancestry, sex, pregnancy, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, status as a parent or foster parent, military service, or veteran status, mental or physical disability, or genetic information. Ohio University's Equal Employment and Educational Opportunity Policy (40.001) and Sexual Harassment and Other Sexual Misconduct Policy (03.004) detail prohibited conduct.

University Equity and Civil Rights Compliance (ECRC) supports this purpose by monitoring the educational environment and workplace to stop, remediate, and prevent discrimination on the basis of protected status. We make policy recommendations, offer training, and provide avenues for resolving grievances based on protected status.

Should any member of the campus community experience discrimination or harassment based on a protected class status, including sexual harassment, other sexual misconduct, or retaliation due to a protected disclosure or activity, they are asked to contact the Director of Equity and Civil Rights Compliance and Title IX Coordinator. Further, reports may also be submitted for violations of the University's policy on freedom of expression.