



Berkeley
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Dean of the Division of Biological Sciences

Leadership Profile

June 2026



Executive Summary

The University of California, Berkeley (UC Berkeley), the nation's leading public research university, seeks a visionary, entrepreneurial, and inclusive leader as its next Dean of the Division of Biological Sciences.

UC Berkeley is internationally renowned for excellence across disciplines, for the opportunities it affords students of all backgrounds, and for scientific discovery, innovation, and cultural creativity. Ranked nationally as the No. 1 public university by U.S. News & World Report Rankings 2025–2026, the Berkeley campus is home to over 33,000 undergraduate students and more than 12,800 graduate students, as well as approximately 1,600 tenured/tenure-track faculty across 16 schools and colleges. Berkeley's professors are highly distinguished researchers, scholars, and experts in their field, as attested by their many Nobel Prizes, other distinguished awards, and memberships in the most prestigious learned societies.

UC Berkeley's [Division of Biological Sciences](#), a unit of the [College of Letters & Science](#), generates profound shifts in our understanding of the function and behavior of living organisms. CRISPR genome engineering, immuno-oncology, telomeres and telomerase, the proto-human “Ardi,” and the molecular behavior of insulin are examples of world-altering achievements associated with Berkeley. With over 150 active faculty and affiliates in [three departments and one program](#), and a range of [centers, institutes, and museums](#), the Division's undergraduates and graduate students learn from and work with some of the world's leading scientists, deciphering the interplay of living systems from the intracellular to the ecosystemic to the planetary. The Division's alumni are among the most influential leaders in academia, the life sciences industry, and other fields.

Within the University of California's shared governance structure, the Dean serves as the Chief Academic Officer and Executive of the Division, reporting directly to the [Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost](#). The Dean also works in close collaboration with the deans of the [other divisions](#) that constitute the UC Berkeley College of Letters & Science in support of the College's research and teaching missions, and partners with deans across campus to advance institution-wide priorities and initiatives. The Dean provides leadership and is responsible for all matters relating to the administration of the Division, including academic programs, personnel, budgets, alumni engagement, fundraising, and government and industry relations.

The new Dean will lead a world-class enterprise at an important moment of transition, using this moment to reflect on strengths, set a clear strategic direction, strengthen financial sustainability, and amplify impact. The Dean will be charged with articulating and implementing a forward-looking vision, working in close collaboration with faculty to shape and advance shared “big ideas” that align the community, fostering greater cohesion across departments and units, positioning the Division for emerging opportunities in areas such as AI and interdisciplinary science, and positioning it for shifts already occurring in research funding and graduate education. Central to this role is diversifying revenue streams beyond federal funding through philanthropy, partnerships, and innovative academic programs, while fostering cross-campus collaboration to elevate Berkeley's leadership at the intersections of biology, technology, and global challenges. The Dean will also play a critical role in reimagining higher education in the biological sciences to better serve an evolving student population, enhancing coherence, access, and sustainability. As an advocate and ambassador, the Dean will represent the Division's priorities within the University and nationally, securing resources, strengthening infrastructure, and shaping broader conversations about the future of science and higher education. Finally, by more fully integrating Berkeley's distinctive assets and telling a cohesive story of its contributions, from fundamental discovery to societal impact, the Dean will unlock new opportunities for growth, visibility, and influence.

The ideal candidate will be a decisive leader who can advocate for the Division's needs and earn the trust and confidence of the faculty through scientific stature, transparency, and responsiveness. They will demonstrate a deep commitment to shared governance, with the ability to partner effectively with faculty and the Academic Senate through transparent decision-making, inclusive consultation, and mutual respect. A doctoral degree, either a Ph.D., M.D., or equivalent international degree, and a distinguished record of excellence in teaching, research,

and significant professional activity appropriate for a tenured faculty appointment at the level of full professor at UC Berkeley are required.

To submit a nomination or express personal interest in this position, please see Procedure for Candidacy at the end of this profile.

Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

UC Berkeley's Division of Biological Sciences stands at a pivotal moment, defined by extraordinary intellectual strength and impact, yet also by significant shifts in the external research, funding, and educational landscape. The next Dean will lead a community of world-class faculty, highly engaged students, dedicated staff, and distinctive assets, alongside pressing challenges that require thoughtful prioritization, coordination, and innovation.

Against this backdrop, the Dean is expected not only to steward the Division's continued excellence but also to shape its future by clarifying direction, aligning efforts, and positioning Berkeley to lead in a rapidly evolving scientific and academic environment. The following opportunities reflect the key areas where the Dean's leadership will be most critical in advancing the Division's mission and impact.

▪ **Shape and Implement a Forward-Looking Strategic Vision**

The Dean will be responsible for leading a clear-eyed, forward-looking strategy that positions Berkeley's biological sciences to thrive amid significant uncertainty and rapid change. This includes developing and advancing a multi-year divisional plan that identifies priority areas for research growth, investment, and differentiation, building on current efforts already underway across departments and units and aligning them with campus-wide priorities. Central to this work is convening faculty to define and organize around "big ideas" that can guide hiring, fundraising, and program development, while ensuring that the Division is prepared to capitalize on future opportunities as funding landscapes evolve. The Dean will also anticipate and plan for structural shifts affecting the Division, from the sustainability of graduate education to the impact of AI and changing workforce needs, ensuring that Berkeley not only adapts to these changes but helps shape them nationally. In doing so, the Dean will play a key role in strengthening alignment and collaboration across the Division's departments and programs, building a unified and integrated strategy that reflects the full breadth of Berkeley's biological sciences.

▪ **Diversify and Strengthen the Division's Financial Model**

The next Dean must lead a concerted effort to shift how the biological sciences at Berkeley are funded, reducing reliance on federal research dollars while building a more diversified and resilient financial model. This includes advancing new approaches to philanthropic engagement, cultivating partnerships with industry and foundations, and enabling departments to generate revenue through well-conceived self-supporting initiatives. The Dean will help faculty better articulate the external value of their work and position Berkeley's biological sciences as a compelling investment opportunity, while also developing a long-term financial plan that supports research, graduate education, and modernizing research infrastructure and shared core facilities.

▪ **Advance Cross-Disciplinary Science and Institutional Collaboration**

Berkeley's biological sciences are uniquely positioned to lead at the intersections of disciplines, and the Dean will play a central role in organizing and amplifying this work. This includes catalyzing collaborations across units such as the School of Public Health, the Rausser College of Natural Resources, and emerging campus-wide efforts related to human health, as well as leveraging existing strengths in organized research units, institutes, and centers. The Dean will help identify and elevate, with faculty, emerging big ideas – from bio-AI convergence to global change biology – that can align faculty, attract funding, and enhance Berkeley's leadership on addressing

society's most urgent challenges. Critically, the Dean will support the Division's largely bottom-up model by recognizing promising faculty initiatives and helping to scale them into more visible, coordinated efforts.

- **Advance Education and the Student Experience**

In a rapidly changing educational and workforce landscape, the Dean must lead efforts to rethink how Berkeley delivers education in the biological sciences. This includes addressing structural challenges in graduate education, particularly the rising cost and sustainability of Ph.D. education, by advancing more stable and predictable funding models for graduate students, including fellowships, graduate student instructor (GSI) support, and research appointments. The Dean will ensure that faculty are able to recruit and support vibrant research groups while exploring new instructional models that incorporate advances in AI and respond to evolving student needs. At the undergraduate level, the Dean will work to foster a more coordinated, student-centered experience that supports the success of all learners across the Division. With extraordinarily high student demand in the biological sciences – including large and growing populations in pre-health pathways and the recently launched neuroscience major – the Dean will help bring greater coherence and intentionality to how students are supported across departments. Expanding and integrating master's and other cohort-based programs will be an important opportunity to enhance both the student experience and financial sustainability.

- **Champion the Division Across Campus and Beyond**

The Dean will serve as a compelling advocate for the biological sciences within Berkeley and externally, ensuring that the Division's priorities are well represented in campus decision-making and resource allocation. This includes navigating complex institutional dynamics—working across the College of Letters & Sciences, other schools and colleges, and central administration to balance shared priorities and resource needs—to secure investment in facilities, address deferred maintenance and seismic needs, and improve administrative infrastructure in support of hiring and research productivity. Beyond campus, the Dean will elevate Berkeley's voice in national conversations on science policy, research funding, and the future of graduate education, while strengthening relationships with policymakers, donors, and partners. The role calls for someone who can both represent the Division's needs and position it to shape broader agendas.

- **Leverage Berkeley's Distinctive Assets and Expand Its Impact**

UC Berkeley's biological sciences encompass an extraordinary range of assets, from academic departments to globally recognized centers such as the Innovative Genomics Institute. The Dean has the opportunity to more fully integrate and elevate these resources to enhance research, education, and fundraising strategies. The Dean will also help tell a more cohesive story about Berkeley's breadth and distinction across the biological sciences, spanning fundamental discovery to real-world impact in areas such as climate science, genomics, neuroscience, and global health, ensuring that the Division's work is both widely understood and impactful. By connecting Berkeley's field stations, natural reserves, museums, and core facilities more intentionally within the Division, to campus priorities, and to external audiences, the Dean can unlock significant new opportunities for growth and influence.

Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

The ideal candidate will embody the mission and ethos of the University of California, Berkeley, reflecting its passion for critical inquiry, debate, discovery, and innovation, and its deep commitment to ensuring that students thrive and graduate ready to do meaningful work. A doctoral degree (Ph.D., M.D., or equivalent international degree), prior leadership experience, and a distinguished record of excellence in teaching, research, and significant professional activity appropriate for a tenured faculty appointment at the level of full professor at UC Berkeley are required.

Strong candidates will have many of the following qualifications and personal characteristics, in no particular order:

Academic and Research Excellence

- **Research record:** A record of distinguished sponsored research and deep knowledge of the internal and external mechanisms required to sustain and grow a world-class research enterprise.
- **Interdisciplinary focus:** The desire and ability to support and provide collaborative leadership for work across the varied spheres and disciplines of the Division, including museums and research units, the College of Letters & Science, and biology-intensive activities across the institution.
- **Faculty recruitment, retention, and development:** Demonstrated success in recruiting, retaining, and supporting outstanding faculty; commitment to mentoring faculty at all career stages; and dedication to developing the next generation of collaborative, interdisciplinary leaders in order to continue the level of academic and research excellence for which the Division is internationally known.

Strategic Leadership and Institutional Stewardship

- **Leadership:** Demonstrated success as an academic leader—for example, as a department chair, associate dean, institute/center director, or other senior academic administrative role.
- **Management:** Demonstrated success managing staff and overseeing personnel matters; ability to lead teams effectively by delegating and achieving results through others; commitment to supporting professional development and fostering an environment in which individuals and teams can excel, innovate, and think creatively; a willingness to embrace forward thinking and out of the box approaches to problem-solving; and sound judgment in making and standing by difficult decisions.
- **Financial acumen:** Proven financial management experience with the ability to ensure transparency and ethical management around the allocation of resources and budgeting decisions.

Fundraising and External Engagement

- **Fundraising:** Experience building and sustaining strong external partnerships; ability to cultivate a visible external presence and clearly articulate a compelling vision; capacity to engage alumni, foundation partners, and the broader biological sciences community; and keen understanding of the evolving federal funding landscape and its implications for diversifying and strengthening revenue streams.
- **Outreach and engagement:** Commitment to Berkeley's public research mission and engagement with communities across the state and beyond to help inform and advance research and education priorities and collaborations.

Collaboration, Governance, and Inclusive Excellence

- **Shared governance:** Demonstrated experience in and commitment to service, collaborative and shared governance, and clear, transparent, and effective communication.
- **Collaboration:** Ability to inspire diverse constituencies to work together in advancing institutional priorities; dedication to participatory leadership and fostering an inclusive, collaborative environment that values varied perspectives.
- **Diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and justice:** Demonstrated success advancing institutional diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and justice; commitment to valuing diverse perspectives; and experience fostering an inclusive, welcoming environment that promotes broad access and equitable opportunities.

Communication and Interpersonal Skills

- **Student-centered:** A steadfast commitment to a student-centered approach to education, including a focus on post-graduation readiness and career placement.
- **Interpersonal skills:** Exceptional relationship-building and interpersonal skills; vibrant and persuasive communication abilities; and the capacity to engage effectively with faculty, staff, students, and external partners.
- **Personal qualities:** High degree of self-awareness and emotional intelligence; optimism and openness to new ideas; persistence and flexibility; a collegial, accessible, and consultative approach; a strong sense of integrity, and sound judgment.

Links of Interest

- [UC Berkeley Leadership and Organizational Charts](#)
- [Division of Biological Sciences Homepage](#)
- [Division of Biological Sciences Departments, Programs & Research Centers](#)
- [Division of Biological Sciences Centers, Institutes, & Museums](#)

Procedure for Candidacy

All applications, nominations, and inquiries are invited. The search will remain confidential until the Dean is named. Applications should include, as two separate documents, a CV/resume and a letter of interest. Review of applications has begun and will continue until the position is filled. For fullest consideration, all materials should be received by August 10, 2026.

Application materials should be submitted through the [WittKieffer Candidate Portal](#). Candidates can also find this portal via the [WittKieffer website](#) by selecting the "Become a Candidate" button. Applicants must also [apply directly to UC Berkeley](#).

Nominations and inquiries can be directed to the WittKieffer consultants assisting UC Berkeley with this recruitment:

Suzanne Teer, Lauren Bruce-Stets, and Randi Miller

suzanne.teer@wittkieffer.com | lstets@wittkieffer.com | rmiller@wittkieffer.com

The posted [University of California Deans' Salary Bands](#) set the pay ranges for deans. The Division of Biological Sciences dean position is included in Band 2: \$239,600-\$611,100. The minimum salary that UC Berkeley expects to pay for this position is \$450,000.

The University of California, Berkeley is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, age, or protected veteran status. See the complete [University of California nondiscrimination and affirmative action policy](#).

This position is a sensitive position and is subject to a criminal background check. Questions may be referred to Sumali Tuchrello at sumali@berkeley.edu.