

EMBRY-RIDDLE

Aeronautical University

Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

Leadership Profile

Fall 2025



WittKieffer

Executive Summary

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University is the foremost institution in the nation focusing on aviation and aerospace. With campuses in Daytona Beach, Florida, and Prescott, Arizona, – plus the country's number one-ranked undergraduate online program and multiple on-site locations around the world – Embry-Riddle is in many ways a model for the future of higher education.

Embry-Riddle seeks a Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences for its flagship Daytona Beach campus. The new Dean will lead a unit that is central to the university's academic offerings, providing the bulk of general education courses across the university while at the same time growing its own majors, creating new graduate programs and enabling groundbreaking scholarly research and creative activities. The Dean will have the opportunity to galvanize the college behind a vision for its future, to plan out that future strategically and to advocate for the resources necessary for that vision to become a reality. In pursuing these directions, the Dean will benefit from a strong core of institutional leaders.

The successful candidate will demonstrate outstanding capacity to provide leadership for the College's broad spectrum of academic activities, an engaging vision for the future of COAS, a demonstrated record of supporting student success, a commitment to the principles and practices of shared governance, strong fiscal and personnel management skills, an ability to enhance research, and success in fundraising.

To accomplish these goals, the ideal candidate for the deanship will be an experienced leader of people and programs with a successful history of collaboration and communication. The ideal candidate will have the credentials to be tenurable at the rank of full professor. Leaders with superior communication skills, including the ability to listen actively and well will be at an advantage. The ideal candidate will have a personal interest in aviation and aeronautics and the ability to relate well across a wide range of academic disciplines.

Embry-Riddle is a higher education success story, and its new Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences for the Daytona Beach campus will have the opportunity to sustain and advance its commitment to student success and scholarly attainment.

Recruitment will continue until the position is filled. Information regarding the process for nominations and applications for this opportunity may be found near the end of this document in the section titled "Procedure for Candidacy."

About Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

Overview

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University is a nonprofit, private institution offering more than 100 associate's, bachelor's, master's, and doctorate degree programs. The University is the leader in aviation and aerospace higher education. Its mission is to teach the science, practice, and business necessary to prepare students for productive careers and leadership roles.



Embry Riddle is positioned to be the leading source of innovation and excellence in aerospace education and research. It will stand as the unquestioned global leader in aviation and aerospace higher education, known for its commitment to the success of all students through personalized attention. The Prescott campus will focus on undergraduate education with an emphasis on problem-based discovery, becoming a top-ranked destination for undergraduate STEM programs. The Worldwide campus will be recognized as the premier institution for online and distance education. The Daytona Beach campus will be distinguished for its leadership in select areas of research, aerospace innovation, and student success, all firmly rooted in a problem-based discovery approach.

The University traces its roots back to December 17, 1925, when T. Higbee Embry and John Paul Riddle formed the Embry-Riddle Company at Lunken Airport in Cincinnati, Ohio. The following spring the company opened the Embry-Riddle Flying School and later moved to Miami, Florida.

In 1965, President Jack R. Hunt moved the campus to Daytona Beach, Florida, and in 1970, Embry-Riddle gained university status and was renamed Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University with the Prescott, Arizona campus opening in 1978 to establish a western presence.

Today, the University is dedicated to education, outreach and engagement, and knowledge discovery across a wide range of academic disciplines. Embry-Riddle is committed to teaching excellence that reflects creative thought and innovation, giving its students the knowledge and experience for personal fulfillment and professional success. Like the aviation and aerospace industries it serves, Embry-Riddle is dynamic, constantly evolving to serve the educational needs of those who will be future industry, academic, and policy leaders.

Strategic Plan

Through a 10-month collaboration between students, faculty, staff, administration, and community stakeholders, Embry-Riddle created a [Strategic Plan \(2023-2028\)](#) that guides the institution's efforts to be true to its mission, advance its vision, and honor its values. Each of the five key pillars, The Student Experience, Enrollment Management, Academic and Faculty Excellence, Research and Innovation, and Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement is supported by a Strategic Implementation Team tasked with the ongoing identification of best practices, key goals, success metrics, and next steps.

One University, Three Campuses

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University is organized into three campuses. Providing traditional education in a residential setting are two campuses, in Daytona Beach, Florida and Prescott, Arizona. The University's Worldwide Campus provides instruction to students through top-ranked online learning and in classrooms at more than 110 centers across the U.S., in Europe, Asia, and South America.

The three campuses of Embry-Riddle are defined by a common purpose and dedication to student success. Integrating resources and programs across campuses is a priority that allows the University to leverage competitive advantages. This gives the University a unique opportunity to optimize strengths and distinctions[~~start~~ example] Metropolis University provides an inclusive, transformational education in the arts and sciences, business and public and international affairs to students from across the state and around the world and creates new knowledge through scholarship and research.

Daytona Beach, Florida Campus

Embry-Riddle's 185-acre eastern campus is located along Central Florida's I-4 corridor, a short drive from Orlando and the Space Coast.

Serving more than 7,700 undergraduate and 800 graduate students from 50 states and nearly 100 countries, the Daytona Beach campus is also home to the university's administrative headquarters. Adjacent to Daytona Beach International Airport, the campus offers undergraduate and graduate degrees from four colleges: [Arts and Sciences](#), [Aviation](#), [David B. O'Maley College of Business](#) and [Engineering](#).

The striking new Mori Hosseini Student Union, at the heart of campus, has become an iconic image representing Embry-Riddle's spirit of ingenuity. Daytona Beach is also home to the university's research park, the John Mica Engineering and Aerospace Innovation Complex (MicaPlex). This state-of-the-art building is a 50,000-square-foot innovation hub with ten specialized labs and a nearby subsonic wind tunnel.

Prescott, Arizona Campus

Located approximately 100 miles north of Phoenix, the university's western residential campus currently serves approximately 3,000 students distributed among four colleges. Established in 1978, the campus is an integral part of the Prescott community and has quickly gained a reputation as one of Arizona's top STEM universities. The campus has a rolling, long-term strategic plan that aligns with and supports the university's five-year plan. The Prescott campus has roughly 122 full-time equivalent faculty.

Geographically, the campus covers more than 500 acres of scenic western terrain. Campus life is centered in a one-square-mile area that centralizes academic, residential and recreational resources.

The Prescott campus, led by Chancellor Dr. Ken Witcher, has experienced significant growth and record enrollment over the past ten years. The campus offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in the [College of Aviation](#), [College of Arts & Sciences](#), [College of Engineering](#), and since the fall of 2021 as a result of a merger between the [School of Business](#) and the [College of Security & Intelligence](#), the newly formed College of Business, Security & Intelligence.

Worldwide Campus

Embry-Riddle Worldwide was established in 1970. Today it serves more than 23,000 students online and in classrooms globally. More than 130 locations and online courses deliver flexibility to students across the country and the world.

Led by Dr. John Watret, the campus offers more than 50 undergraduate degrees, graduate degrees and certificate programs. Degree programs include aviation, business, communication, computer science, emergency services, engineering, human factors, management, safety, security, logistics and unmanned systems.

These diverse and dynamic programs support and connect students in a virtual learning community through web-based support groups and online forums. Embry-Riddle Worldwide also offers professional education programs to ensure the workforce builds critical skills.

In recognition of the quality of education and level of student engagement, U.S. News & World Report ranked Embry-Riddle number twelve in their 2025 list of best online bachelor's degrees in the nation (the highest ranking private institution), and number five for the most outstanding online bachelor's degree programs for veterans. Embry-Riddle Worldwide has held the U.S. News & World Report ranking of number one or two spots for best online bachelor's degrees in the nation for the last nine years.

To extend Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University's opportunity for delivering higher education and research in aviation and aerospace in key countries of the Asia Pacific Region, [Embry Riddle Asia](#) was founded in 2010. The university offers degree programs through partnerships in Singapore – a global aerospace hub.

Additionally, [Embry-Riddle's Central & South America](#) staff in Brazil support local and regional aviation growth with a variety of education, applied research and training options to choose from.

Embry-Riddle Asia

Embry-Riddle Asia was founded in 2010 to deliver higher education and research in aviation and aerospace in key countries of the Asia Pacific Region. Six degree programs are offered through partnerships in Singapore – a global aerospace hub. In association with the Singapore Aviation Academy (SAA), Embry-Riddle offers part-time, blended delivery graduate programs specifically designed for working professionals. A second partnership with ERC Institute (ERCI) enables the university to offer part-time and full-time undergraduate degrees to students while working or before entering the workforce.

The partnership with ERCI also enables Embry-Riddle to bring international students from the surrounding region to Singapore to earn a degree. In 2019, a subsidiary private education institution, ERAU Asia Institute, was created to replace the partnership with ERCI. Students are expected to begin transition to ERAU Asia Institute in 2022. Total campus enrollment currently stands around 500 students with an accelerating growth profile.



Accreditation

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University – including the Daytona Beach Campus, the Prescott Campus and the Worldwide Campus – is accredited by the Southern Associations of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award degrees at the associate, baccalaureate, master's and doctoral level. Degree/certificate programs at both the Daytona Beach and the Prescott campuses in flight (private, commercial, instrument, multi-engine, flight instructor and instrument flight instructor ratings) and flight dispatch are additionally approved by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

Leadership

Dr. P. Barry Butler, President



In 2017, Dr. P. Barry Butler became the sixth president of Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Under his presidency, Embry-Riddle continues to expand discovery-driven degree programs and its research programs include aerospace innovation labs, technology transfer projects, startups, business consultancies, and the award-winning gravitational wave research (LIGO). Butler has encouraged collaboration with industry, resulting in expedited hiring initiatives with leading aviation and aerospace industries. He is expanding the University's interest in aviation cybersecurity, aviation data analytics, and autonomous vehicles. The University also created new partnerships to prime the aviation/aerospace pipeline.

Dr. Kelly Austin, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost



Dr. Kelly Austin serves as Embry Riddle's Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost. Dr. Austin's responsibilities encompass critical areas affecting academic matters and student success at the world's leading higher education institution focused on aviation, aerospace and research. He provides leadership related to academic programs, faculty affairs, university centers of excellence, academic assessments and accreditation, international education, library and scholarly communications, office of the registrar, and strategic plan implementation in the areas of student success and academic/faculty excellence.

College of Arts & Sciences

The College of Arts & Sciences (COAS) is a diverse learning community comprising five academic departments – Human Factors & Behavioral Neurobiology, Humanities & Communication, Mathematics, Physical Sciences and Security Studies & International Affairs. The ever-evolving academic programs, state-of-the-art facilities and bright, enthusiastic students are all part of an outstanding learning environment in the COAS. Their faculty, more than 160 strong, are leaders in their fields and consistently recognized for outstanding teaching, research and service.

The College of Arts & Sciences delivers most of the foundational curriculum, providing vital course work during the first two years for all Embry-Riddle students. College faculty seek to develop students' ability to think critically and analytically and to accept responsibility. Students are expected to master the skills that enable them to communicate clearly and to interact with people different from themselves.

Faculty are highly involved in research and scholarly activities that often involve undergraduate and graduate students. The Space Physics Research Lab, the Atmospheric Physics Research Lab (APRL) and the Human Factors and Systems Research Lab are operated by faculty and provide many opportunities for faculty and student research. The Honors Program provides students with exceptional backgrounds the opportunity to enhance their learning in their programs of study. The Honors Program Distinguished Speaker Series brings stimulating speakers to campus each year.

Departments

Human Factors & Behavioral Neurobiology

The Department of Human Factors and Behavioral Neurobiology helps students understand the interactions of humans with other elements of a system. Embry-Riddle is the only university in the U.S., and possibly the world, offering a master's and a Ph.D. degree program in Human Factors as well as bachelor's degrees in Human Factors Psychology and in Aerospace Physiology.

Humanities & Communication

The Department of Humanities and Communication offers a full spectrum of courses in communication, literature, ethics and other areas that complement the technical skills students develop elsewhere on campus. This department offers a Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies and a Bachelor of Science in Communication, as well as minors in Arabic Studies, Communication and Broadcast Media, Latin American Studies, Russian Studies and Humanities.

Mathematics

The Department of Mathematics offers a Bachelor of Science in Computational Mathematics degree with two tracks – Data Science and Engineering Applications – as well as two minors, Applied Mathematics and Computational Mathematics. They also offer a Master of Science in Data Science, currently one of the most in-demand career fields.

Physical Sciences

The Department of Physical Sciences is home to several degree programs: Bachelor of Science in Astronomy & Astrophysics, Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics, Bachelor of Science in Space Physics, Master of Science in Engineering Physics, and Doctor of Philosophy in Engineering Physics.

The programs offer a unique balance of engineering and physics curriculum so students can focus on the scientific challenges and planning associated with mission design and space exploration, along with engineering fundamentals.

Security Studies & International Affairs

The Department of Security Studies & International Affairs offers a broad, applied social science approach to security and global conflict studies, providing hands-on processes starting early in a student's career. The department offers a Bachelor of Science in Global Conflict Studies and a Bachelor of Science in Homeland Security, and minors in Cybersecurity Application and Management, Cybersecurity, Emergency Management, Forensic Accounting, Global Conflict Studies, Homeland Security and Terrorism Studies.

College of Arts & Sciences Labs and Facilities

Embry-Riddle is part of the SARA Consortium (Southeastern Association for Research in Astronomy) composed of more than 13 member colleges. The SARA consortium operates three telescopes: the 0.9-m SARA-North at Kitt Peak in Arizona, the 0.6-m SARA-South at Cerro Tololo in Chile and the 1-m SARA-RM in the Canary Islands.

- Advanced Physics Laboratory
- Anatomy and Physiology Lab
- Applied Cognition & Training Science Lab
- Applied Perception and Performance Lab
- Astrophysics Lab
- Biology and Organic Chemistry Lab
- Chemistry Lab
- Cybersecurity and Assured Systems Engineering (CyBASE) Center
- Diffuse Emission from Astrophysical Plasmas Lab
- Engineering Physics Propulsion Lab
- ERAU Campus Observatory
- Game-Based Education & Advanced Research Studies (GEARS) Labs
- General Physics Laboratory
- Integrative AAerospace and Exercise Physiology Laboratory (IAEP)
- Laboratory for Exosphere and Near-Space Environment Studies (LENSES)
- Laboratory for Solar-Magnetosphere-Ionosphere Research (LASMIR)
- Modern Physics and Microelectronics Laboratory
- Nonlinear Waves Laboratory
- Omics Lab for Health and Human Performance
- Physics & Astronomy Lab, Observatory Control Room & Workshop
- Research Engineering and Applied Collaborations in Healthcare (REACH) Lab
- Research in User eXperience Lab (RUX)
- Small Teams Analog Research Lab
- Southeastern Association for Research in Astronomy (SARA)
- Space and Atmospheric Instrumentation Laboratory
- Space Microbiology Lab
- Space Physics Research Lab (SPRL)

Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC)

ROTC is a four-year college elective program that trains students to become Air Force, Army, Navy, or Marine officers. Air Force, Army, and Navy ROTC programs offer you a chance to develop skills for success needed in both the military and civilian worlds, such as confidence to lead, motivation, strategic planning, and the ability to make decisions.

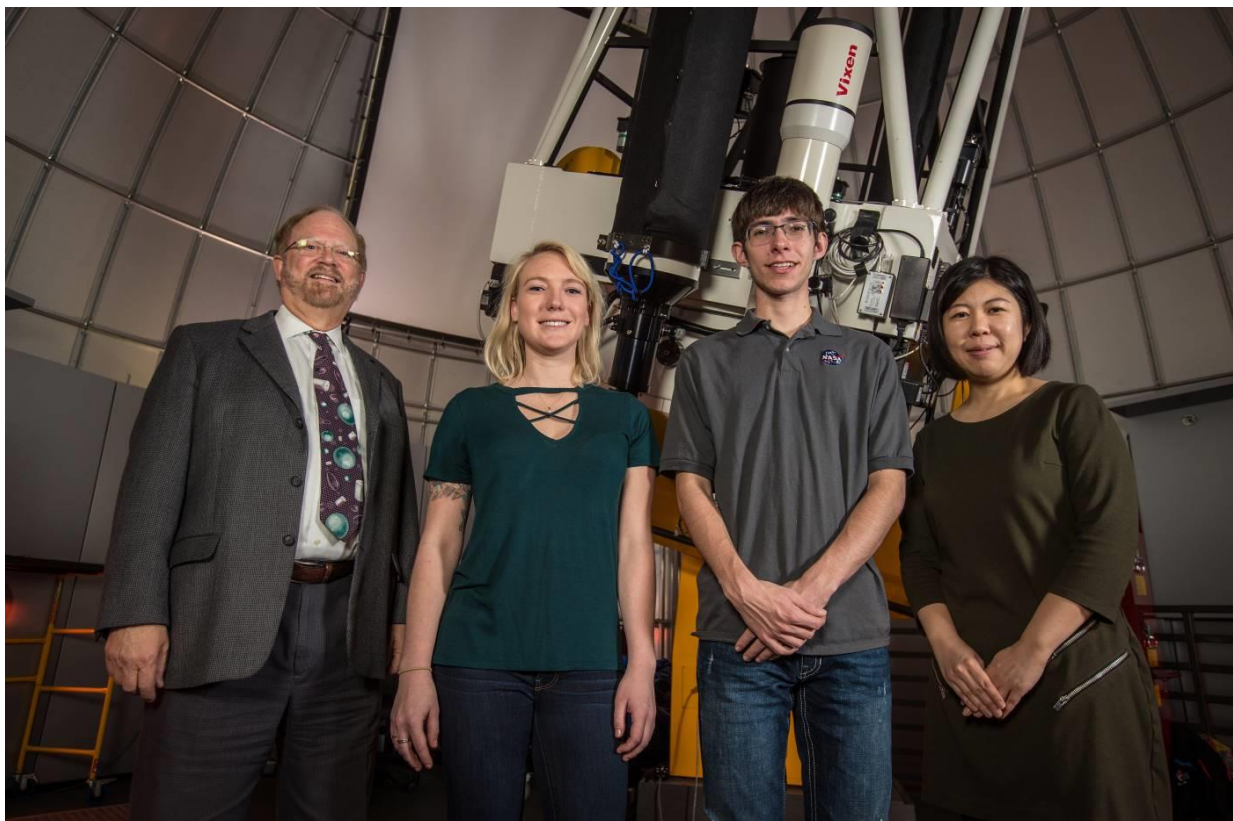
Center for Space and Atmospheric Research (CSAR)

The [Center for Space and Atmospheric Research \(CSAR\)](#) studies the fundamental physics of planetary atmospheres and space environments. These systems include the complex and highly-coupled Atmosphere, Ionosphere and Magnetosphere (AIM) systems of Earth and other planets. Members of CSAR bring scientific expertise spanning the realms of theory, modeling, observation and experiment as they apply to each region of the AIM system.

Role of the Dean, College of Arts and Science

The Dean of the [College of Arts & Sciences \(COAS\)](#) serves as the chief academic and administrative officer of the college and reports to the senior vice president for academic affairs and provost. The Dean will lead approximately 150 full-time faculty of broad disciplinary diversity to serve over 900 undergraduate majors and over 120 COAS graduate students. The leadership team of the college includes the Dean, the chair of each department, three associate Deans and administrative/educational support staff. The college's annual operating budget (including salaries and benefits) is approximately \$20 million.

As the senior academic officer of the COAS, the Dean shall be responsible for the effective leadership, administrative oversight, resource allocation and management (including fiscal/budgetary issues and workload) related to the delivery of instructional programs and the oversight of scholarly activities and service. The Dean is also responsible for liaising with the Embry-Riddle senior administration and communicating the vision and goals of the COAS to internal and external constituencies. The Dean shall be responsible for the administration and efficient conduct of the educational program and scholarly activities of the college and for integrating the plans of the college with those of the university.



Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

The following represent some of the immediate opportunities the new Dean will address during the first two to three years in office. They are presented here in no particular order.

Provide visionary leadership for the College of Arts and Sciences.

Embry-Riddle's College of Arts and Sciences is evolving quickly. The university and the COAS enrollments have nearly doubled over the past decade, while at the same time research productivity among the faculty is also on the rise. The college takes great pride in its place at the core of the university's general education enterprise while simultaneously developing majors and graduate programs of distinction. Under new leadership, the college would benefit from a widely held vision for its future, one that would articulate aspirations in teaching, research and service that will rally faculty, students, staff and university leadership behind those ambitious goals.

Build from that vision to develop a strategic plan.

From the articulation of that vision, the college would be positioned to develop and to commit itself to a strategic plan. The priorities and ideas memorialized in that plan will guide institutional decision-making and resource allocation moving forward. The plan must, of course, dovetail with the university's [strategic vision and plan](#). The new Dean will ensure that the plan reflects the aspirations of and garners consensus support from the entire COAS community.

Promote and support collaboration.

The Dean will serve as a visionary academic leader, fostering collaboration across colleges and with university leadership, industry, and community partners. The next leader must be a skilled communicator, adept at building strong relationships across diverse audiences and articulating the college's vision with clarity, purpose, and impact. The Dean must also embrace the distinctive needs of each of the five academic units, the research laboratories and centers and the ROTC program.

Foster a culture of student success.

Students frequently come to Embry-Riddle for the University's distinctive mission, and for the personal connections they will have with one another and with Embry-Riddle's dedicated faculty and staff. The Dean will bring a student-centered approach, always placing the wellbeing of students first and serving as an advocate on their behalf. The Dean will be present and active within the life of the institution and show genuine interest in engaging with students, encouraging their personal and professional growth, and supporting the policies, infrastructure, and resources that lead to greater student success.

Further develop the academic programs.

Part of any visioning and strategic planning must be the identification of new academic programs or existing programs that are ripe for further development. Particularly as the university plans for demographic shifts and changes in the employment marketplace, the COAS' curricular offerings must evolve. Of particular import is the college's role in driving retention and student success, both in its own majors and also as the key enabler of general education across the university. Another driver will be the increasing level of research productivity in many COAS disciplines, commensurate with the continuing development of the COAS graduate programs. The Dean will be purposeful in continually reviewing and assessing the academic program in juxtaposition with these institutional goals.

Invest in people.

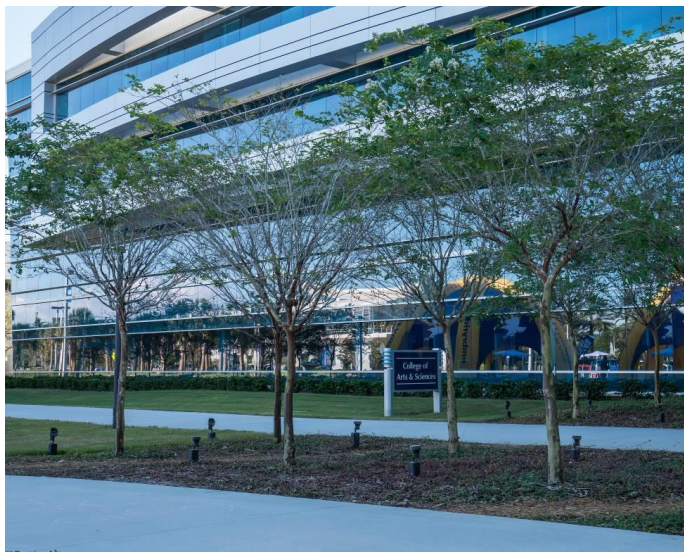
The Dean is, first and foremost, the leader of the COAS faculty and staff, responsible for ongoing recruitment and retention. The Dean will prioritize the professional growth and well-being of faculty and staff, creating opportunities for development and recognition. To do so successfully, the Dean must foster an environment that promotes exceptional faculty hiring, teaching and scholarship and be able to communicate the mission and vision of COAS in a compelling way that attracts leading teaching scholars to join the institution. Similarly, the Dean will be charged with building, supporting, and advancing an environment that attracts and retains an outstanding and committed staff.

Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

The Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University will be an experienced leader who demonstrates a track record for galvanizing a diverse community in the pursuit of common goals. To this end, the successful candidate will demonstrate a professional history of collaboration and inspiration leading to institutional progress and student success. The next Dean must hold an earned doctorate and a distinguished record of academic, teaching, and research achievements worthy of appointment as a professor with tenure in an academic department in the College.

In addition, the individual must possess administrative experience and the ability to:

- Lead the development and implementation of a College of Arts and Sciences strategic vision that supports ERAU's Strategic Plan and propels the College to the next level of success in student success, research and scholarship, external reputation, and philanthropy.
- Lead and support the College faculty to further enhance ERAU's reputation as a student-centered university to improve student retention and graduation rates.
- Demonstrate a strong commitment to strengthening the College's partnerships with industry.
- Exceptional communication skills, including listening with care and working collaboratively with senior leadership, partners across the institution, alumni, donors, and community partners;
- Ability to inspire trust and build cooperative relationships across constituent groups; evidence of working collaboratively, transparently, and productively with all constituencies;
- Work closely with faculty and staff leaders to promote a commitment to shared governance.
- Budget and administer the College's academic programs and related activities and working in partnership with the Campus Chancellor and Campus Chief Budget Officer, strategically identify and manage fiscal priorities.
- Collaborate with faculty and administration across the three campuses to innovate, implement, and coordinate academic programs in support of the ERAU Strategic Plan. This may include proposing new programs or tracks/areas of concentration to existing academic programs that are aligned with the University's strategic enrollment management plans.
- Manage the day-to-day operations of the College.
- Work with the University's Office of Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement to develop and participate in fundraising efforts on behalf of the College of Arts and Sciences.





Daytona Beach, Florida

More than 60,000 residents and 8 million annual visitors enjoy year-round moderate weather, quality educational choices, recreational activities, professional sports – including NASCAR's premiere track, Daytona International Speedway, and LPGA headquarters – an active arts community and family-friendly beaches.

Daytona Beach, located on Florida's east coast in Volusia County, is internationally known for its beaches and its automobile racing roots, but it also boasts historical properties, an aggressive redevelopment strategy, exciting residential and economic development opportunities and thriving business establishments.

Situated along Central Florida's I-4 corridor, Daytona Beach is just a short drive from Orlando and major theme parks (about one hour) and within three hours of Florida's west coast (Tampa, St. Petersburg).

To learn more about the greater Daytona Beach area, please visit the Daytona Regional Chamber of Commerce website: www.daytonachamber.com



Procedure for Candidacy

WittKieffer is assisting Embry-Riddle in this search. 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. For fullest consideration, candidate materials should be received by **October 10, 2025**.

Applications, nominations and inquiries can be directed to:

Jessica Herrington and Natalie Song

Embry-RiddleCOASDean@wittkieffer.com

Embry-Riddle is committed to fostering a workplace where all individuals are valued and respected. We strive to ensure that all faculty, staff, and students are treated fairly and provided equal opportunities for employment, advancement, compensation, training, and other benefits of employment. Embry-Riddle makes employment decisions — including hiring, promotions, compensation, and other terms of employment — based on individual merit, qualifications, and abilities. Embry Riddle is strongly opposed to discrimination and harassment, and such behavior is prohibited by university policy. Embry Riddle does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, veteran status, predisposing genetic characteristics, age, religion, or pregnancy status, or any other status protected by federal, state, or local law, in its employment, educational programs, admissions policies, financial aid, or other school-administered programs or activities.