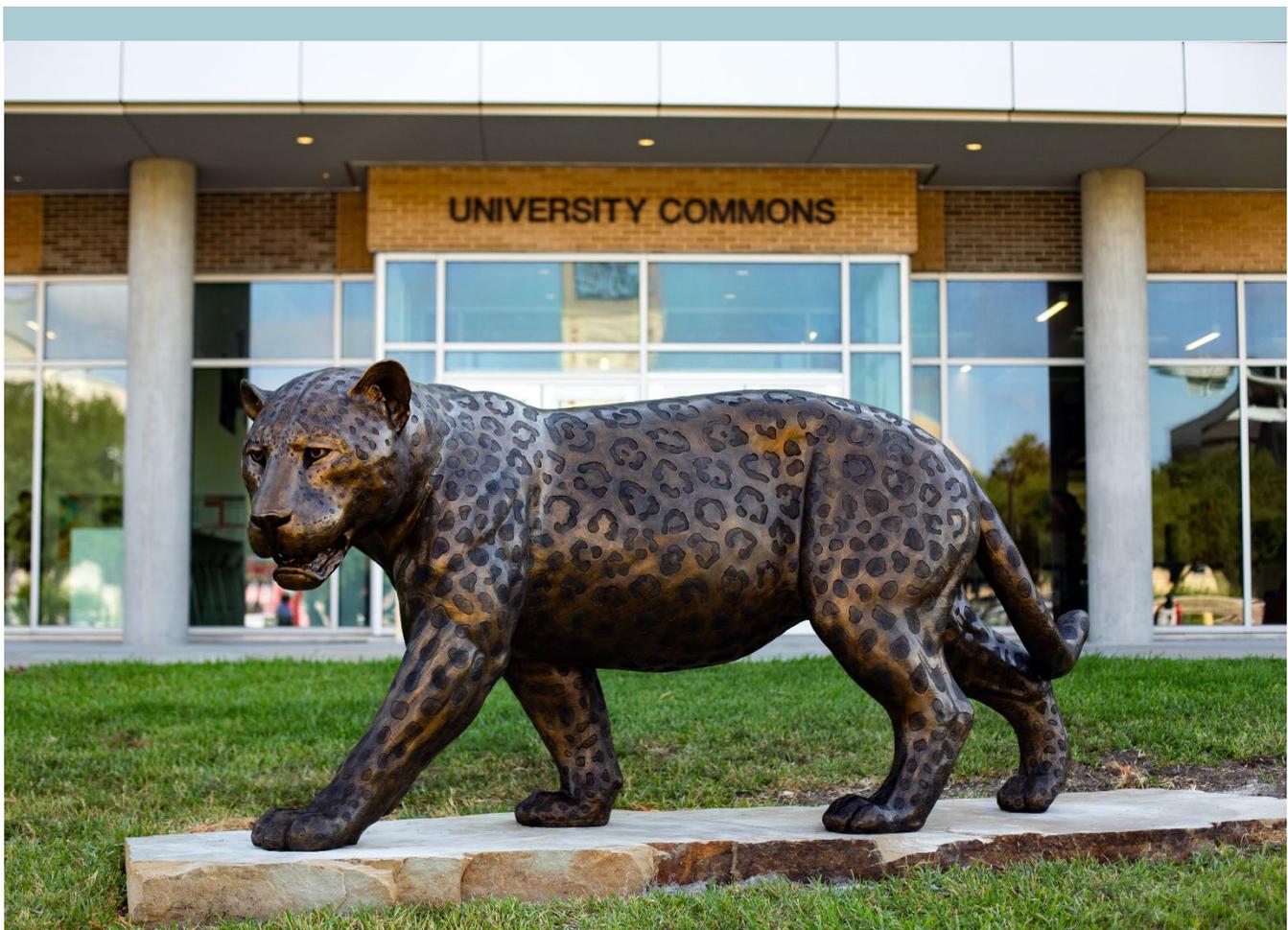


TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY **VICTORIA**

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Leadership Profile

December 2025



WittKieffer

Executive Summary

Texas A&M University–Victoria (A&M-Victoria) seeks an accomplished academic leader to serve as its next Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. This role comes at a pivotal moment in the institution’s history: A&M-Victoria recently joined the Texas A&M University System and welcomed a new president, creating a unique opportunity to build on this momentum and shape the University’s future. As the chief academic officer, the Provost will play a central role in advancing academic excellence, fostering a collaborative culture, and ensuring student success across diverse populations.

The next Provost will be expected to lead with vision and strategy in several key areas. First, they must build on recent institutional progress by strengthening enrollment, enhancing academic offerings, and cultivating a forward-looking culture. Second, they will evaluate and expand A&M-Victoria's academic portfolio, leveraging state funding and system resources to launch new programs in aviation, agribusiness, and engineering while balancing online and on-campus modalities to meet regional and student needs. Additionally, the Provost will champion innovation in pedagogy and technology, including the integration of emerging tools such as artificial intelligence.

Student success is at the heart of A&M-Victoria's mission. Serving a student body that represents a range of backgrounds—approximately 65% first-generation and many from rural communities—the Provost must demonstrate a strong record of supporting academic achievement and retention. This includes breaking down silos, promoting best practices in teaching, and communicating the value of higher education to a region where college-going rates fall below the state average. The Provost serves as an advocate for faculty and staff and will be expected to foster a vibrant and engaged academic community.



Ideal candidates must have a terminal degree, a distinguished academic record, and proven experience in academic leadership. They should exhibit collaborative and transparent decision-making, data-informed planning, and the ability to engage constituents locally and regionally. A commitment to integrity, innovation, and student-centered leadership will be essential as the University continues to grow its impact as a dynamic destination institution within the Texas A&M University System.

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 Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs will be expected to advance the following priorities, among others:

- **Build on recent momentum as the University moves towards a new future.**
The new Provost will join after an academic year where the University has seen significant and positive changes: it officially became a part of the Texas A&M University System in September and welcomed a [new President](#) in November. This creates a unique opportunity for the Provost to work with President Hardigree, 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 University's academic offerings. A&M-Victoria has experienced challenges in recent years, including cuts in budgets, faculty, and staff, and the next Provost 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. There are a number of [leadership positions in Academic Affairs](#) that are currently held by interims, providing an immediate opportunity for the Provost to build a team that can support this continued cultural change.
- **Evaluate A&M-Victoria's academic portfolio and advance new offerings.**
This individual must gain an understanding of the needs of the region and the students the University serves and ensure the institution's academic portfolio has the right programs offered through the right mix of modalities. The Golden Crescent region of South Texas has an economy with a large emphasis on agriculture, construction, education, healthcare, and petrochemicals. A&M-Victoria has a unique opportunity to leverage the strength of the Texas A&M University System and \$25 million appropriated by the state legislature as it builds new academic programs (aviation and agribusiness programs are expected to start in Fall 2026 and engineering programs in Fall 2027). Under the University of Houston System, the University saw an increase in the percentage of online courses offered in recent years. The Provost will work closely with academic leadership and faculty to assess the appropriate balance of modalities that ensures a relevant educational platform for students while also creating an environment that promotes engagement and a vibrant campus culture in Victoria. This individual should bring an understanding of the trends and technology impacting higher education, including artificial intelligence, and work with campus to evaluate what will promote student learning and best prepare students for future careers.
- **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 Provost must have a record of effectively supporting the success of these student populations and helping students navigate the various challenges they might face. This individual must have a holistic understanding of how all parts of the University work together to advance student success; the ability to break down silos that inhibit units from collaborating; a record of supporting best practices and innovation in pedagogy; and a passionate focus on ensuring the success of all students. 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.**
As A&M-Victoria's chief academic officer, the Provost plays a critical role in supporting the success of faculty and representing a significant number of staff in academic affairs. One of the immediate challenges this individual will face is reengaging faculty who might be more disconnected from the University because of geography. Over the past 15 years, the University has expanded online offerings and also built two successful satellite campuses in the Houston suburbs, but the programs on those satellite campuses transitioned (at various times) to oversight by the University of Houston System. Over time, this led to a relatively dispersed

base of faculty. The Provost must be able to effectively engage faculty in the life of the Victoria campus, as well as address areas impacting faculty and staff such as compensation, workload, professional development, and support for research and scholarship.



Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

The next Provost must have a demonstrated record of successful academic leadership, a terminal degree, and an academic record suitable for appointment as a full professor at Texas A&M University-Victoria. 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 administrators from across campus and at all levels to set strategies that advance the University 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 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 and encouraging deans and faculty to be actively involved in similar activities.
- Strong communication skills and a demonstrated commitment to building relationships across a variety of constituents.
- The highest levels of personal and professional integrity.

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, a dynamic destination institution serving Texas and the world, is dedicated to providing every student educational and leadership opportunities to become a successful professional and an engaged global citizen. Innovative educational activities challenge students to make meaningful connections between their learning and their lives in a complex world. Texas A&M University-Victoria promotes economic development and advances quality of life through teaching, research, and service excellence.

Core Values

Academic Excellence: Academic excellence accessible to a diverse community.

Continuous Improvement: Continuous improvement and responsiveness to engaging issues.

Free Expression: Freedom of inquiry and expression of truth in a culture of mutual respect, cooperation, and teamwork.

Ethics: The highest standards of ethics, integrity, and accountability.

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).

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

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 Texas A&M University-Victoria in this search. For full consideration, candidate materials should be received by February 2, 2026. Application materials, nominations, and inquiries should be directed to Ryan Crawford and Jenna Brumleve at TAMUV-Provost@wittkieffer.com.

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