Tulane University

Department Chair, Computer Science
School of Science and Engineering

Leadership Profile

Fall 2025

WittKieffer

Executive Summary

Tulane University seeks a visionary scholar with a strong commitment to student success to serve as the next Chair of the Department of Computer Science within the School of Science and Engineering. This is a pivotal leadership opportunity to guide a dynamic and growing department known for its interdisciplinary research, collegial culture, and commitment to innovation. Applications, inquiries, and nominations are invited.

Founded in 1834 as the Medical College of Louisiana, Tulane became a private, nonsectarian institution in 1884 through the Tulane Education Fund, named after benefactor Paul Tulane. Today, Tulane is a member of the prestigious Association of American Universities and is recognized as an R1 institution. The University is organized into 10 academic divisions: Newcomb-Tulane College, A.B. Freeman School of Business, School of Architecture and Built Environment, School of Professional Advancement, School of Law, School of Liberal Arts, School of Medicine, Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, School of Science and Engineering, and the School of Social Work. This diverse mix of schools fosters rich opportunities for cross-disciplinary collaboration in both research and education.

Tulane offers a unique blend of rigorous academics and civic engagement, including a nationally recognized undergraduate public service requirement. Tulane plays a vital role in New Orleans' talent pipeline, with a significant number of graduates remaining in Louisiana.

Since its reopening in 2012, the Department of Computer Science has experienced remarkable growth in faculty, student enrollment, and research activity. The department has 18 core faculty members (14 tenure stream), 199 undergraduate students, 22 master's level students, and 41 Ph.D. students. The department is at the forefront of algorithms, artificial intelligence, computational biology, computer science education, computational geometry and topology, computer vision, data science and large data processing, game theory, image processing, machine learning, natural language processing, computer systems, networking, cloud computing optimization, privacy and security, scientific visualization, and software engineering. Furthermore, the CS department has strong interdisciplinary ties across medicine, public health, ethics, and community-engaged research. It offers a range of undergraduate and graduate programs and is home to leading initiatives such as the Center for Community-Engaged Artificial Intelligence and the Jurist Center for Artificial Intelligence.

Recent expansion, including multiple new faculty hires, the launch of a new major in Computer Science and a minor in Artificial Intelligence, and more than 120% increase in research funding over the past five years, makes this an ideal moment for a new Chair to build on the department's momentum. Additionally, the establishment of the LA.IO and AI Research Institute by the Louisiana Economic Development Office, with over $100 million committed to innovation, signals a vibrant and emerging regional ecosystem for AI research and development.

As part of Tulane University's strategic investment in research and faculty excellence, the incoming Chair will join a thriving academic community with the opportunity to build on strong institutional momentum. This role offers access to a wealth of university assets and interdisciplinary strengths, positioning the Chair to advance world-class scholarship in computing. Tulane's collaborative culture, civic-minded ethos, and accessible scale create an ideal environment for a leader focused on Computer Science innovation with social impact.

Reporting to the Dean of the School of Science and Engineering, the Chair will hold a tenured faculty position and will build on the department's great momentum by articulating a strategic vision aligned with university and school priorities, fostering excellence in scholarship, and expanding graduate enrollment. A strong emphasis will be placed on supporting early-career faculty through mentorship and professional development, while maintaining the department's collaborative and inclusive environment. The Chair will additionally serve as a compelling advocate for the department, elevating its visibility across campus and within the broader academic, philanthropic, and industry communities. This is a rare opportunity to lead a department poised for continued growth and

national distinction, within a university deeply committed to research, innovation, and community impact.

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

Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

Reporting to the Dean of the School of Science and Engineering, among the immediate opportunities and goals for the new Chair are the following:

- **Articulate a compelling vision for the department, aligned with priorities of the School and University**
  As the visionary leader of the Department of Computer Science, the Chair will engage faculty, staff, students, alumni, and industry partners in a collaborative process to shape a clear and forward-looking vision for the department. This includes identifying strategic growth opportunities, setting priorities, and aligning the department's goals with those of the School of Science and Engineering and the broader University.

  The Chair must champion an interdisciplinary approach to Computer Science, fostering innovation and collaboration across fields while ensuring the department remains responsive to the evolving needs of the tech industry, both nationally and within the New Orleans region. A strong understanding of industry trends and emerging technologies is essential to guide the department toward future relevance and impact.

- **Fostering excellence in scholarship and research**
  The Department of Computer Science is known for its collegial and collaborative culture, which has long supported high-impact research and academic excellence. The next Chair will build upon this strong foundation, continuing to foster an environment that encourages world-class scholarship and innovation. With research productivity as a hallmark of the department, the Chair will guide efforts to explore emerging areas of inquiry, promote interdisciplinary collaboration, and uphold the highest standards of scholarly achievement, ensuring continued growth and distinction in research.

- **Support enrollment growth**
  As the department continues its upward trajectory, a key priority for the next Chair will be to support and strategically grow enrollment, particularly at the master's level. The Chair will work to enhance the visibility and appeal of Tulane's graduate programs, attracting a talented pool of students seeking advanced training in Computer Science. This includes strengthening program offerings, building industry partnerships, and aligning graduate education with evolving workforce demands.

  In collaboration with university leadership and faculty, the Chair will ensure that both undergraduate and graduate students have access to high-quality academic experiences, professional development opportunities, and pathways to success in a rapidly changing technological landscape.

- **Guide the department's continued growth while preserving its strong culture of collaboration and cohesion among faculty**
  Since its reopening in 2012, the department has been on a steady and ambitious growth trajectory. The next Chair will be responsible for guiding this continued expansion with a clear strategic vision, ensuring that growth is supported by appropriate investments in faculty, staff, and infrastructure, and aligned with the University's broader priorities.

  As the department grows, maintaining its strong culture of collegiality, collaboration, and transparency will be essential. The Chair will work intentionally to preserve and strengthen this environment, fostering meaningful connections across faculty and staff and promoting shared goals.

  A key priority for the next Chair will be the recruitment, retention, and development of talented faculty and staff. With a significant number of early-career faculty, the department Chair will place a strong emphasis on mentorship, professional growth, and creating a supportive environment for early-career scholars. The Chair will ensure that faculty, at all ranks, have access to the resources and guidance needed to thrive. In close collaboration with school leadership and departmental stakeholders, the Chair will also champion student success, ensuring that retention, graduation, and a vibrant student experience remain central to the department's mission.

- **Champion the department, elevating its visibility and advancing the recognition of its quality and impact**
  The next Chair will be an energetic and persuasive advocate, dedicated to raising the department's profile, both within Tulane University and across the broader academic, philanthropic, and professional communities. They will clearly communicate the department's strengths and distinctions, actively promoting the excellence and impact of its programs, faculty, students, and staff. These efforts will inspire internal stakeholders and attract interest from prospective students, faculty, industry partners, funders, and collaborators.

  As a collaborative leader, the Chair will work closely with the School of Science and Engineering and university leadership to secure resources and ensure the department's achievements are recognized across campus. A key priority will be cultivating strategic partnerships with philanthropic organizations, federal funding agencies, and industry leaders to support the department's growth and long-term sustainability. The Chair will also lead efforts to pursue large-scale, center-level grants that elevate the department's research profile and expand its capacity for interdisciplinary innovation.

  Serving as the department's chief spokesperson, the Chair will position Computer Science at Tulane as a national leader, engaging researchers and external stakeholders around shared interests and emerging opportunities. Finding innovative and meaningful ways to connect with internal and external audiences will be essential to advancing the department's mission and expanding its reach.

Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

The Department of Computer Science seeks a leader to guide the department in advancing its academic mission, managing its operations, and fostering a culture of excellence and innovation.

The minimum requirements for the role are:

- A Ph.D. in Computer Science or a closely related field;
- A distinguished record of scholarly research, teaching, and service appropriate for appointment at the rank of Professor with tenure.

The preferred qualifications are:

- Demonstrated success in academic leadership, such as program or center direction, department administration, or large-scale research coordination;
- Vision to elevate the department by fostering innovation, enhancing collaboration, and driving excellence to achieve outstanding results and sustainable growth;
- Ability to discern future trends and capitalize on them for the benefit of Tulane, the School, and the department; the ability to envision, create, and capitalize on novel opportunities, especially as new trends emerge;
- Ability to represent the breadth and depth of the department's research interests, academic programs, and other activities, and to advocate effectively within the School and to external audiences;
- Demonstrated success in affecting positive changes in leading and mentoring faculty, staff, and students, both within their institution and at the national level;
- Proven commitment to interdisciplinary collaboration and team science;
- Strong communication, interpersonal, and organizational skills; the ability to engage faculty, staff, and students and to work effectively across the Schools, campus, and with external groups; and
- Personal qualities that include collaboration, transparency, intelligence, vision, compassion, courage, humor, and unquestionable ethics and integrity.

Department of Computer Science

Overview

The Department of Computer Science emphasizes both core Computer Science and its applications to related areas in the sciences and engineering, health and social sciences, and the humanities. Its mission is for faculty and students to be recognized both nationally and internationally for their interdisciplinary research, training the next generation of computer scientists who work at the interface of Computer Science and other disciplines. The department was founded in 2012. A former Department of Computer Science and Electrical Engineering existed but was removed following Hurricane Katrina. With an interdisciplinary focus, the department's academic programs have grown from an initial coordinate major to a newly created major and minor.

The Department of Computer Science is headquartered in the School of Science and Engineering (SSE) on Tulane's picturesque uptown campus, along with office, laboratory, and engineering facilities. Steven and Jann Paul Hall provides the latest in science and engineering infrastructure, including flexible laboratories, innovative classrooms, and collaborative spaces for increased student and faculty engagement and retention. The department is home to 18 faculty who have developed a strong expertise in algorithms, artificial intelligence, computational biology, computer science education, computational geometry and topology, computer vision, data science and large data processing, game theory, image processing, machine learning, natural language processing, computer systems, networking, cloud computing optimization, privacy and security, and scientific visualization. The department offers various programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels: an undergraduate CS certificate, an AI minor, an interdisciplinary coordinated CS major, a CS major, as well as a master's program (on-ground and online), and a Ph.D. program. The department serves a community of over 260 students, including roughly 199 undergraduate and 63 graduate majors. With the launch of the new B.S. in Computer Science, the department is well poised to grow.

The Department of Computer Science is leading the way in artificial intelligence explorations. Through the interdisciplinary nature of Tulane, researchers approach and tackle the challenges of their time from a diversity of backgrounds, skillsets, and lenses. Tulane is dedicated to finding AI solutions to the urban and societal challenges of today, taking an interdisciplinary approach to some of the community's most relevant issues. AI crossover opportunities with public health are rich and ripe for study. Other areas of interdisciplinary AI study include AI fairness and ethics, community engagement with AI in medical and biohealth, and urban AI and smart cities. The Center for Community-Engaged Artificial Intelligence, a multidisciplinary team of scientists, engineers, students, and community partners dedicated to innovating human-centered AI to benefit society, brings together a variety of AI research efforts and initiatives at Tulane. The Department of Computer Science is also home to the Jurist Center for Artificial Intelligence. Supported by the Harold L. and Heather E. Jurist NC'64 Endowed Fund, the Jurist Center supports research and education in artificial intelligence, machine learning, and data science, with a focus on using AI in applications that pave the way toward a healthier, more connected global community.

More information about the Department of Computer Science can be found at: https://sse.tulane.edu/cs.

Faculty and Staff Breakdown

- 4 full professors
- 6 associate professors
- 4 assistant professors
- 3 professors of practice
- 1 senior professor of practice
- 4 staff members

Degree Programs

Undergraduate Programs:

- Bachelor of Science in Computer Science
- Artificial Intelligence Minor
- Computer Science Certificate
- Computer Science Interdisciplinary Coordinate Major

Graduate Programs

- M.S. in Computer Science
- Ph.D. in Computer Science

Departmental Research Concentrations

- Artificial Intelligence and Machine learning
- Computational Biology
- Human-Computer Interaction and Visualization
- Software Engineering and Systems
- Theory, Algorithms, and Computational Geometry

Enrollment

- Undergraduate: 199
- Master's: 22
- Ph.D.: 41

Degrees Awarded

	CS Certificate	CS Coordinate major	Master's	Ph.D.
2022/2023	0	53	0	2
2023/2024	4	58	0	5
2024/2025	9	67	9	5

About the School of Science and Engineering

Overview

Created in 2006, the School of Science and Engineering (SSE) is unique as the only academic unit at a major research university to merge the behavioral sciences, physical sciences, life sciences, engineering, and mathematics, which provides an unusually rich environment for innovative programs and interdisciplinary research. SSE is a relatively young school that was developed strategically to capitalize on the natural synergies between science and engineering disciplines. It has pioneered a new model for integrated science and engineering education and research and positioned Tulane to be a leader in the STEM disciplines. It recognizes the role that information technology, biotechnology, and nanotechnology play in today's global economy and aims to provide its students with the necessary skills to be leaders in discovery and innovation.

SSE provides an environment in which scientists and engineers work together in an integrated organization on problems of mutual interests, where current research in engineering is informed by current research in science and vice versa, and where students, regardless of their major field of study, have the opportunity to explore concepts and methods of both science and engineering. The School comprises 11 academic departments: Biomedical Engineering, Cell and Molecular Biology, Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering, Chemistry, Computer Science, Earth and Environmental Sciences, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Mathematics, Physics and Engineering Physics, Psychology, and River-Coastal Science and Engineering. Faculty from a broad array of disciplines regularly organize around important research themes in centers and institutes such as the Tulane Brain Institute and the Tulane Bywater Institute. In addition, the School houses the Neuroscience Program, a Bioinnovation interdisciplinary doctoral program, and a Biological Chemistry Interdisciplinary bachelor's degree.

SSE has been an extremely successful hub of research on the Tulane campus. The faculty of the School expends approximately $30 million in research, generates over 500 articles in referred journals, and files over 15 new patents annually. In addition, SSE supports numerous opportunities for undergraduate research activity and is home to flourishing graduate programs. SSE graduates the largest number of doctoral students at Tulane. Among the 140 tenure-track faculty are 15 endowed chairs and 19 endowed professors. Many of these endowed positions are affiliated with the University's interdisciplinary research centers that capitalize on the close-knit and collaborative Tulane environment.

As part of the mission to engage in the local community, SSE supports a K-12 STEM Education Outreach program. The program exposes young students to STEM in meaningful and appealing ways with projects such as the Robotics Bayou Regional Competition.

Mission

Tulane School of Science and Engineering's mission is to provide outstanding opportunities for learning and discovery in science and engineering and to foster an environment that is student focused, research intensive, interdisciplinary, entrepreneurial, and responsive to the needs of the community.

Departments & Programs

- Bioinnovation Interdisciplinary Doctoral Degree
- Biological Chemistry Interdisciplinary Bachelor's Degree
- Biomedical Engineering
- Cell and Molecular Biology
- Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering

- Chemistry
- Computer Science
- Online Computer Science MS
- Earth and Environmental Sciences
- Ecology and Evolutionary Biology
- Mathematics
- Neuroscience Program
- Physics and Engineering Physics
- Psychology
- River-Coastal Science and Engineering

Strategic Plan

Dean Hridesh Rajan has developed a strategic plan for his first 1,000 days to strategically focus on SSE's efforts, which includes building faculty capacity and critical mass, investing in world-class core facilities, and forging strategic partnerships. His vision to be an interdisciplinary-first, translational School of Science and Engineering organizes efforts around five new transdisciplinary grand challenge clusters, with the aim that each will eventually grow into a center of excellence or institute.

Resilient Habitats and Communities cluster is focusing on growing the science and engineering fields needed to better understand and predict climate change and sustainability issues; then create biodiverse and resilient ecosystems, smart infrastructure, renewable energy systems, advanced and recyclable materials, and pollution mitigation/remediation platforms that allows communities to thrive.

Leveraging Tulane's proximity to NASA's Michoud Assembly Facility and Stennis Space Center, **Space Science and Engineering** is building on SSE's strengths in biomedical and biochemical systems (such as biomanufacturing) for space; energy and catalysis (both generation and storage of renewables and rocket fuel); and advanced materials for spacecraft, gear, and robotics.

The Cognitive Cyber Nexus thrust is studying the integration of human cognition, cyber systems, artificial intelligence, and physical environments.

Precision Health Diagnostics and Therapeutics is focusing on developing cutting-edge technologies that provide rapid diagnostic solutions and precise therapeutics for healthcare to enable early detection of diseases, personalized treatments, and improved patient outcomes. Development of next-generation tools and therapies is also leveraging advances in biotechnology, nanotechnology, and artificial intelligence.

The **AI for All** research thrust is exploring how artificial intelligence can advance interdisciplinary research and education in SSE and beyond and is serving as a unifying force that amplifies the impact of all other research areas.

Additional information about the School of Science and Engineering can be found at: https://sse.tulane.edu/.

About Tulane University

Overview

Tulane traces its origins to 1834, when it was founded as the Medical College of Louisiana. It was renamed the University of Louisiana by the state legislature in 1847. The legislature subsequently transferred it to the Board of Administrators of the Tulane Education Fund in 1884. With that transfer, Tulane University was established as a private, nonsectarian university and named in honor of benefactor Paul Tulane, a wealthy merchant who donated more than $1 million in land, cash, and securities. In 1886, the H. Sophie Newcomb Memorial College was established as Tulane's college for women. The unified Newcomb-Tulane College now enrolls all full-time undergraduates at the University.

Today, the University has an operating budget of just over $1 billion and an endowment of $2 billion. Tulane enrolls approximately 8,600 undergraduate and 5,900 graduate and professional students from every state in the U.S. and more than 85 nations worldwide. The Tulane faculty totals over 1,200 full-time members with a staff of approximately 2,900. The University is organized into 10 academic divisions: Newcomb-Tulane College, A.B. Freeman School of Business, School of Architecture and Built Environment, School of Professional Advancement, School of Law, School of Liberal Arts, School of Medicine, Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, School of Science and Engineering, and the School of Social Work. The mix of schools is an asset that is rich with opportunities for cross-school collaboration in research and education.

Tulane University is a member of the prestigious Association of American Universities, and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching ranks Tulane as a university with "very high research activity." Tulane attracts an outstanding student body that is both intellectually curious and driven by community engagement. The University's 8:1 undergraduate student-to-faculty ratio allows Tulane undergraduates to receive the personalized attention of a smaller liberal arts college with the resources of a major research institution. In 2006, Tulane became the first major research institution to require public service as a graduation requirement for undergraduates, which led to the Carnegie Foundation recognizing Tulane with its Community Engagement Classification. Tulane is also the most national university in the country, with its undergraduates traveling further to attend college, on average, than those of any other university. As such, it plays a valuable role in recruiting talent to New Orleans, as only 15% of Tulane's students are from New Orleans, and about 20% of all Tulane graduates stay in Louisiana after graduation.

For more information about Tulane University, please visit the Tulane website: https://tulane.edu/.

Mission

Tulane's purpose is to create, communicate, and conserve knowledge to enrich the capacity of individuals, organizations, and communities to think, learn, act, and lead with integrity and wisdom. Tulane pursues this mission in the context of its location in New Orleans and the city's unique qualities, and of the University's continual aspiration to be a truly distinctive international university.

Tulane cultivates an environment that focuses on learning and the generation of new knowledge – by expecting and rewarding teaching and research of extraordinarily high quality and impact, and by fostering community-building initiatives and scientific, cultural, and social understanding that integrate with and strengthen learning and research.

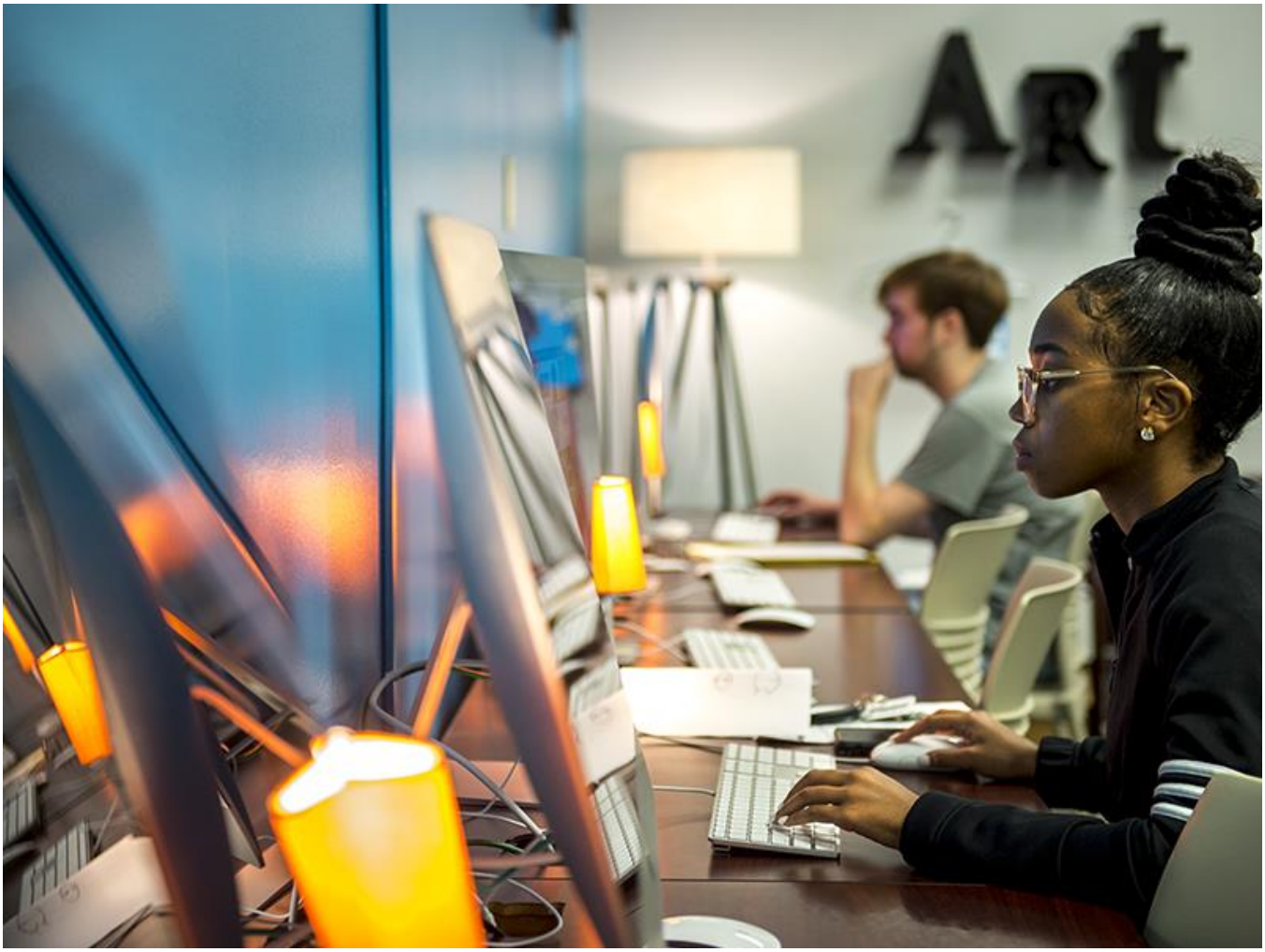
Core Values

The Tulane community embodies a set of shared values that support the University's mission, drive its decisions, and inspire its people to do and be more for the benefit of the global neighborhood it serves: Leading for a Better Tomorrow, Knowledge for Good, Unconventional Innovation, Welcoming Community, Collaborative Engagement, and Inspiring Excellence.

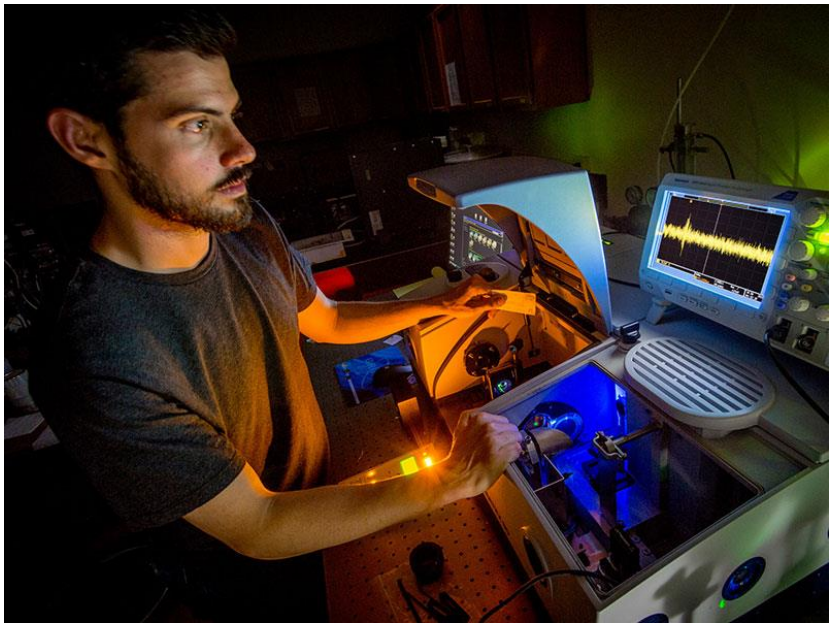
Academics

Tulane offers an exceptional learning experience that educates the whole person, intellectually, culturally, and socially. With mutual support and respect, Tulane teaches students to love knowledge for its own sake, and to use that knowledge to tackle the most pressing issues of their times.

Tulane pairs the resources of a large research university with the benefits of a small liberal arts college. Small class sizes are the norm, and faculty members are both accessible and approachable. The flexibility of Tulane's curriculum allows undergraduates to pursue double or triple majors across different schools. One-third of Tulane undergraduates have double majors while master's and doctoral candidates are encouraged to pursue questions that require interdisciplinary exploration.



Research and Innovation



Over the last decade, Tulane has seen a period of historic growth and has invested heavily in research, innovation, and entrepreneurship initiatives across the University. Tulane is committed to continuing strategic investments that deepen the University's commitment to world-class research. Nearly half of the $1.5 billion raised by Tulane's *Only the Audacious* fundraising campaign has been allocated to support research through investments in infrastructure and increasing the number of endowed faculty positions at the University. Building upon the success of the previous campaign, the next iteration, *Always the Audacious*, will support 21st-century advances in climate, river, and coastal sciences, emerging infectious diseases, brain health, healthy aging, health equity, and much more while expanding and increasing lab spaces and infrastructure for translational research.

The University continues to make major investments in infrastructure to keep up with the extraordinary growth in research activity and the ambitions of Tulane's faculty. Areas of investment include data sciences, artificial intelligence, and coastal mitigation. Recently, longtime Tulane supporters Libby and Robert Alexander donated more than $12 million to advance a university-wide data science initiative that will transform teaching and research across all disciplines at Tulane and position the University as a leader in data pedagogy. Tulane's Data Hub, founded in 2021, will be renamed the Connolly Alexander Institute for Data Science and will foster data literacy and science through education, research, and service to the community. In addition, the U.S. Economic Development Administration has designated the Gulf Louisiana Offshore Wind Propeller (GLOW), a consortium that includes Tulane University, as one of its 31 new Tech Hubs. Scientists, researchers, and scholars from Tulane's School of Science and Engineering, the A. B. Freeman School of Business, and the Tulane Center for Energy Law will all play a role in the Tech Hub. In partnership with Louisiana State University, Tulane University has been awarded $22 million by the National Academy of Science, Engineering, and Medicine to lead a 15-member consortium, the Mississippi River Delta Transition Initiative, to chart a new course for the Lower Mississippi River Delta and its fragile ecosystem.

Steadfast in its commitment to innovation, Tulane's downtown campus is home to the Tulane Innovation Institute, which will act as a combined technology and startup accelerator for faculty, researchers, staff, and students, as well as community members. By carefully assessing and investing in the commercial potential of basic and applied research, the Tulane Innovation Institute will "de-risk" discoveries and provide early-stage funding necessary to propel ideas to the next level, ultimately bringing new ventures to market, all while economically diversifying Greater New Orleans for future generations. Tulane also recently established the Tulane Ventures Fund, a $10 million fund to support business startups by women and minority entrepreneurs in New Orleans. These important efforts will help to transform the University's technological and entrepreneurial enterprises and will have a long-standing impact on the regional economy.

Leadership

Hridesh Rajan, Dean of the School of Science and Engineering

Dr. Hridesh Rajan is the Dean of the School of Science and Engineering at Tulane University, a position he has held since July 2024. As the leader of the second-largest school at Tulane, encompassing eleven departments ranging from biological sciences and chemical engineering to physics and psychology, Dr. Rajan oversees more than 60 academic programs enrolling 2,255 undergraduate and 473 graduate/professional students. He is deeply committed to building an interdisciplinary-first, translational School of Science and Engineering focused on better lives. A distinguished computer scientist and academic leader, Dr. Rajan's career spans extensive contributions in research, education, and higher education administration.

Prior to joining Tulane, Dr. Rajan served for nearly two decades at Iowa State University, where he was the Kingland Professor and Chair of the Department of Computer Science. In this role, he significantly enhanced the department's national standing by overseeing substantial growth in student enrollment, faculty size, and research funding. He led a comprehensive strategic planning process that positioned the department for long-term success, emphasizing academic excellence, interdisciplinary innovation, and institutional alignment. Dr. Rajan also launched pioneering interdisciplinary data science programs and founded the Midwest Big Data Summer School, expanding access to advanced research training. Widely recognized for his administrative acumen and collaborative leadership, he increased the representation of women in computing programs by 45% and fostered cross-disciplinary research efforts that secured significant external funding. His leadership consistently emphasized student success, equitable faculty workload, and fiscal responsibility.

Dr. Rajan earned his B.Tech. from the Indian Institute of Technology (BHU), Varanasi, and completed his M.S. and Ph.D. in Computer Science at the University of Virginia. His research has advanced the fields of software engineering, programming languages, and data science, notably through the creation of the Boa programming language, designed to democratize large-scale data analysis. He has held visiting positions at the University of Texas at Austin, Harvard University, and as a U.S.-UK Fulbright Scholar at the University of Bristol. His scholarly excellence has been recognized with numerous honors, including the NSF CAREER Award, a Fulbright U.S. Scholar Award, and election as a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). He also serves as a Commissioner on ABET’s Computing Accreditation Commission.

As Dean at Tulane, Dr. Rajan is committed to student success, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, enhancing research capabilities, and strategically growing the School of Science and Engineering’s national and global impact. Central to his leadership at Tulane is the ambitious 1000 Days Plan, a strategic initiative aimed at accelerating interdisciplinary and translational research, expanding academic programs, especially in engineering, expanding experiential opportunities for undergraduate students, and strengthening industry and community partnerships to elevate Tulane’s prominence in science and engineering education and research.

New Orleans, Louisiana

New Orleans is a city formed by the superstitions, traditions, and history of Creoles, Spaniards, French, Irish, Italians, enslaved Africans, and free people of color. To experience the city is to channel the generations of independent thinkers, creative spirits, and non-conformists whose legacies spanning the past 300 years have shaped what New Orleans is today.

Situated between the Mississippi River and Lake Pontchartrain, New Orleans is a city defined and shaped by waterways. Nicknamed the Crescent City because of its quarter-moon shape, New Orleans was isolated from the mainland for close to 250 years, making it a hotbed of cultural innovation and giving rise to jazz, Creole cuisine, gospel music, jazz funerals, and a sassy stew of cultures that are uniquely its own.

New Orleans' global allure brings more than 17 million visitors to the city a year. From its world-class gastronomy and eclectic art scene to its distinctive architecture and neighborhoods, New Orleans, and its jazzy soundtrack and tropical climate, is like no other city.

New Orleans boasts an eclectic hybrid of African American, French, and Spanish influences. The forced settlement of slaves from Africa and the West Indies introduced those cultures to the Creole residents – French or Spanish descendants born in the colony. The Cajuns of South Louisiana were originally French colonists who settled in Nova Scotia prior to their exile by the British. Understanding the roots of these two groups adds color and dimension to the vibrancy of New Orleans, a city with a rhythm, style, and attitude all its own.

A city of festivals, New Orleans is a place where pirates and ghosts have free rein, where cemeteries are above-ground cities of the dead, and Voodoo has its own royal queen. Carnival stretches for weeks, gumbo and crawfish recipes are family heirlooms, and neighborhood pride is touted in all corners of the Big Easy.

Learn more about New Orleans.

Procedure for Candidacy

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.

WittKieffer is assisting Tulane University in this search. For fullest consideration, candidate materials should be received by January 8, 2026.

Nominations and inquiries can be directed to:

Cathryn Davis and Corin Edwards

TulaneCSChair@wittkieffer.com

Tulane University is an Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action (EEO/AA) employer committed to maintaining a non-discriminatory, diverse work and learning environment. Tulane does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, military status, veteran status (or any other classification protected by applicable law) in any of its programs, activities, or employment. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation, and training.

Tulane encourages all qualified candidates to apply. The university intentionally seeks candidates who are committed to fostering equity, diversity, and inclusion in support of Tulane's Strategy for Tomorrow.