



Dean, School of Nursing Leadership Profile

November 2025



WittKieffer

Executive Summary

University of Wisconsin–Madison (UW–Madison), considered one of the world's outstanding public research universities, invites nominations and applications for the position of Dean, School of Nursing.

The UW–Madison School of Nursing (SoN), established in 1924, has a mission to develop nurse leaders, innovators, and advocates for the profession and society through research, education, practice, policy, and outreach. The SoN is a leading nursing research institution in Wisconsin and the nation with a history of impact on health through nursing science and education, including neonatal and pediatric nursing, aging research, patient-centered intervention research, and health systems innovation. The SoN faculty and staff comprises more than 86 clinical and tenure-track faculty members and 75 staff. The SoN has an enrollment of more than 1,200 pre-nursing and matriculated nursing students, offering the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN), Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP), and Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing (PhD) degrees, as well as five certificate programs and continuing education programs.

The Dean, who reports to the Chancellor through the Provost, serves as the chief academic and executive officer of the SoN. Responsibilities include overseeing faculty and staff development; managing personnel; budget planning and management; overseeing research, curriculum, and student academic affairs; and fundraising efforts. The Dean plays a vital role in representing the SoN, developing and maintaining relationships with a variety of external stakeholders, constituents, and colleagues.

Qualifications include an earned research doctorate (PhD or equivalent) in nursing or a related field. If the research doctorate is not in nursing, candidates must hold a graduate degree in nursing. Candidates must have a demonstrated record of excellence in research, teaching, and service to ensure eligibility for tenure at UW–Madison. Eligibility for registered nurse licensure in Wisconsin is also required.

UW–Madison, the flagship campus of the Universities of Wisconsin, is a major land-grant university committed to excellence in teaching, research, and public service with an operating budget of \$4.9 billion, a student body of nearly 52,000, faculty/staff of approximately 27,000, and a campus environment that facilitates cross disciplinary collaborative research. The University has a long-standing commitment to shared governance. UW–Madison is ranked among the top universities in the world and is ranked #6 for research expenditures among U.S. universities.

The national executive search firm WittKieffer has been retained to assist the University of Wisconsin–Madison in this search. Information about how to nominate a candidate or to apply for this opportunity can be found later in this document in the section entitled "[Procedure for Candidacy](#)."



University of Wisconsin–Madison School of Nursing

The University of Wisconsin–Madison School of Nursing (SoN), established in 1924, has a mission to develop nurse leaders, innovators, and advocates for the profession and society through research, education, practice, policy, and outreach. The SoN is a leading nursing research institution in Wisconsin and the nation with a history of impact on health through nursing science and education, including neonatal and pediatric nursing, aging research, patient-centered intervention research, and health systems innovation. The SoN faculty and staff comprises more than 86 clinical and tenure-track faculty members and 75 staff. The SoN has an enrollment of more than 1,200 pre-nursing and matriculated nursing students, offering the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN), Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP), and Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing (PhD) degrees, as well as five certificate programs and continuing education programs. Nationally, the SoN is ranked at #8 in a 3-way tie, and lands in the top one percent of all eligible prelicensure BSN programs in the country in the recently-released 2026 rankings by *U.S. News and World Report*. Among public institutions, the SoN is tied for a ranking of #5.

The SoN operates in a state-of-the-art \$53 million facility, Signe Skott Cooper Hall (Cooper Hall). Cooper Hall, completed in 2014, is designed to advance nursing science and scholarship while supporting collaboration, mentorship, and best practices in innovative teaching and learning in nursing and interprofessional health education. Cooper Hall is also designed for quality and growth in faculty, research, programs, and enrollment. One of the highlights of Cooper Hall is the Center for Technology-Enhanced Nursing (CTEN). This innovative instructional and research unit includes five simulation environments, making it possible to simulate entire episodes of care utilizing clinic, hospital, home and e/health support environments. In addition, the SoN leads the development of team-based, problem-focused learning on campus in its 360-seat active learning classroom complex.

The SoN's robust and strategic research and scholarship enterprise contributes to a vibrant campus environment for interdisciplinary research in health care, interprofessional practice, and education. The School is an integral academic partner in the health sciences sector of campus with the Schools of Medicine and Public Health, Veterinary Medicine, Pharmacy, and Education; the University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics; the American Family Children's Hospital; and the William S. Middleton Veterans Administration Hospital.



Mission

To develop nurse leaders, innovators, and advocates for the profession and society through research, education, practice, policy, and outreach.

Vision

To make discoveries, enhance systems, and advance health and health equity for Wisconsin and beyond.

Information about the SoN's 2025-2030 Strategic Goals can be found [by clicking here \(PDF download\)](#).

Commitment to Inclusive Excellence

The School of Nursing is committed to inclusive excellence and advancing health equity. Advancing health equity is a fundamental part of our mission, reflected throughout our curricula, social and educational events, resources, and services. These values are central to creating a transformative culture that ensures equitable access to respectful and meaningful engagement for all community members.

Role of the Dean, School of Nursing

The Dean, who reports to the Chancellor through the Provost, serves as the chief academic and executive officer of the School. Responsibilities include overseeing faculty and staff development; managing personnel; budget planning and management; overseeing research, curriculum, and student academic affairs; and fundraising efforts. The Dean plays a vital role in representing the SoN, developing and maintaining relationships with a variety of external stakeholders, constituents, and colleagues.

Duties and responsibilities:

- Lead the faculty, staff, and school community in articulating and implementing a forward-looking mission, vision, and strategic framework that aligns with UW–Madison’s institutional goals and the future of nursing education, research, and practice.
- Provide comprehensive oversight of the SoN’s academic, administrative, and operational functions, ensuring excellence, efficiency, and alignment with University policies and values, as well as community priorities.
- Serve as the SoN’s chief academic officer, responsible for maintaining academic integrity and compliance with accreditation and regulatory standards for all nursing programs.
- Oversee the development and administration of complex, multi-unit budgets, ensuring responsible fiscal planning and resource allocation to support strategic priorities.
- Lead efforts to secure external funding from state and federal government agencies, foundations, corporations, alumni, and philanthropic partners to advance the School’s mission and impact.
- Collaborate effectively with other Deans, campus leaders, and Universities of Wisconsin partners to support interdisciplinary initiatives, shared governance, and institutional strategic priorities.
- Represent the School of Nursing in local, state, national, and international forums, including academic consortia, policy discussions, and professional organizations, to elevate the School’s visibility and influence.
- Advocate broadly for the role of nursing education and scholarship in meeting the demands of the nursing profession and meeting the complex needs of a broad range of populations.
- Provide leadership in the recruitment, development, evaluation, and retention of faculty and staff, while fostering a culture of excellence, equity, wellness, and ongoing professional growth.
- Partner with University and SoN faculty and staff to ensure robust data systems are in place to support continuous assessment, quality improvement, strategic planning, and evidence-informed decision making.
- Leads the development of new educational programs and initiatives that respond to emerging health care needs, community priorities, workforce trends, and technological advances, while evaluating current programs and initiatives for relevancy.
- Ensure all academic programs and administrative units in the School are reviewed regularly in accordance with University policies, accreditation standards, and processes for continuous improvement.

Key Relationships

Reports to: Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Direct reports: Associate Dean, Academic Affairs; Associate Dean, Administrative Affairs; Associate Dean, Faculty Affairs; Associate Dean, Health, Equity, Community Engagement; Associate Dean, Nursing Research, Sponsored Programs; Executive Assistant; Assistant Dean for Institutional Affairs; Strategic Communications, Engagements, and Special Projects Manager.



Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

The following expectations for achievement by the successful candidate during the early part of their tenure as Dean have been identified (not necessarily listed in order of priority):

Build a bold vision for the future and engage the support of the faculty, staff, students, alumni, and the community

Building on the strong foundation established by Dean Linda Scott and her predecessors, the Dean will articulate a compelling vision and corresponding strategic plan that will ensure that the UW–Madison SoN continues to be viewed among the premier nursing programs regionally, nationally, and internationally, as well as being viewed nationally as a leader in nursing education and research, committed to academic and clinical excellence.

The Dean will evaluate the SoN's current organizational structure, resources, and management, making appropriate changes as deemed necessary to support its continued growth. The Dean will engage faculty in assessing the curriculum and identifying the changes, enhancements, and additions that should be made to address current demand as well as the emerging needs of a rapidly evolving health care environment. This includes exploring interdisciplinary programs with other UW–Madison Colleges and Schools, as well as with external institutions in the region. The Dean will also identify opportunities to increase the School's revenue and funding, and identify opportunities to increase student enrollment, with particular attention to strategies that will increase the enrollment in students who, upon graduation, will remain in Wisconsin as part of the state's nursing workforce.

The Dean of the SoN will support the development of a culture in which faculty, staff, and students share a commitment to and are accountable for advancing the SoN's mission, as well as supporting inclusive excellence efforts, modeling fairness, and demonstrating respect for all. The Dean will foster a collaborative community that inspires and empowers each of its members to achieve their full potential.

The Dean of the SoN will promote unity and engagement, invigorating the faculty, students, and staff through creation of a vibrant and inclusive vision for a distinguished and contemporary School of Nursing. The Dean will develop a cohesive team among the School's faculty and staff, building an “esprit de corps” and making all members feel they are an essential part of the SoN by seeking their input and by continuing to advance an environment based upon respect, compassion, and trust.

Advance Scholarship and Research

The SoN has robust and strategic research and scholarship activity that includes six signature research areas: Aging & Care for Older Adults; Children, Families & Reproductive Health; Health Equity; Health Systems & Public Health; Mental Health & Substance Use; and Symptom Science & Palliative Care. Building upon the School's current research, the new Dean will foster innovative research and scholarship that contributes to the visibility of UW–Madison's R1 Carnegie Classification. The Dean will maintain a strong culture of research and scholarship among SoN faculty, providing a supportive environment that fosters research activity, facilitates achieving sponsored research funding, and promotes new research programs. This will include providing mechanisms to support early career investigators developing programs of research and mentoring junior faculty in their research efforts. During the current climate of reduced federal funding, the Dean will play a critical role in identifying opportunities for funding from a variety of sources.

The Dean will provide leadership in identifying opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration with other Colleges, Schools, Divisions and Institutes within the University, as well as with clinical partners and other external organizations, fostering the development of synergistic relationships that will contribute to and advance UW–Madison's research enterprise.

Recruit and Retain Strong Faculty and Staff

UW–Madison's SoN faculty, both tenure track and clinical track, are accomplished in their areas of expertise and continually strive for success at all levels. The Dean will continue developing a faculty of distinction, establishing the highest standards in faculty recruitment, appointment, tenure, and promotion to enhance consistent excellence in teaching, research, and clinical practice. This will include identifying recruitment needs to support curriculum changes and program expansion at the junior, mid-level, and senior faculty levels; and retaining and recruiting faculty with strong records in education, clinical practice, and research. The Dean will support the ongoing professional development of the faculty mentoring junior faculty, encouraging faculty to be active and valued participants in curriculum evaluation and new program development.

The Dean will also support the professional development of staff, providing opportunities to enhance their skills and prepare them for additional roles within the School as well as for opportunities for advancement across UW–Madison.

Maintain Strong Clinical Partnerships

The Dean of the SoN will provide leadership to help ensure strong partnerships with the leadership of the School's clinical partners, demonstrating entrepreneurship and innovation regarding how the SoN can help to address the health care needs of the state. This will include fostering strong partnerships with chief nursing officers and other leaders within the clinical partners and proactively identifying future opportunities to expand the School's programs that will address regional, national, and global workforce demands. The Dean will develop and maintain collaborative relationships with the leadership of local, regional and national clinics, hospitals, health systems, and other health care organizations to provide sites for student clinical rotations and other experiential learning opportunities in the field.

Advocate for the School

The Dean is expected to be a prominent and effective advocate for the School of Nursing. Serving as the executive representative of the School, the Dean will foster collaborative relationships with senior leadership throughout UW–Madison, establishing ways to align University priorities with those of the SoN. The Dean will seek opportunities to strengthen communication between the School's faculty and those of the other UW–Madison Schools and Colleges, as well as the larger community. It is expected that the Dean will work closely with other Deans at UW–Madison to ensure that the University's mission is met through a collaborative approach.

Act as the "face and voice" of the School

The Dean is expected to bring prominence to the SoN by actively participating in local, regional, state, and national health care and academic organizations (e.g. local hospitals and health departments; AACN, CCNE and other accrediting bodies; and professional nursing organizations at the state, national, and international levels). The Dean will lead efforts to identify ways in which the School can increase its visibility to prospective students and faculty regionally as well as nationally.

The Dean will seek opportunities to increase philanthropic support to provide scholarships and to support research, playing a significant role in fundraising and friend raising for the SoN. The Dean will actively participate in development efforts in order to increase private support from individuals, foundations, and corporations for initiatives that promote the quality of education as well as the continued quality of faculty research and clinical practice. The Dean will help build new strategic alliances and create a culture of philanthropy among alumni.

Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

The ideal successful candidate will preferably have the following competencies, knowledge, skills, abilities, and personal attributes:

Education and Experience

- An earned research doctorate (PhD or equivalent) in nursing or a related field from an accredited institution. If earned research doctorate is not in nursing, candidates must hold a graduate degree in nursing.
- Minimum of five years of experience in academic nursing and higher education administration.
- Eligible for licensure as a registered nurse in Wisconsin.
- Demonstrated record of excellence in research, teaching, and service to ensure eligibility for tenure at UW–Madison.

Desired Experience

- Demonstrated record of transformative leadership that fosters belonging in higher education with a commitment to advancing excellence in undergraduate, graduate, and professional nursing education across a broad range of learning environments.
- Deep understanding of the evolving challenges facing nursing education, research, and practice, and a vision for responding to these complex state, national, and global challenges to advance the nursing profession.
- Strong skills in strategic planning, financial stewardship, personnel management, and resource development, with a track record of leadership in aligning operations with mission-driven goals.
- Demonstrated ability to cultivate and sustain strategic partnerships with internal and external stakeholders—including academic, clinical, community, and policy leaders—to advance health, health equity, and interprofessional collaboration.
- Dedication to establishing a strategic vision for growth and expanded support for research and scholarship that drives knowledge creation, translation, dissemination, and policy impact, especially in the School's signature research areas of aging and care for older adults; children, families, and reproductive health; health equity; health systems and public health; mental health and substance use; symptom science and palliative care; as well as areas of clinical scholarship, community outreach and engagement, health systems and health policy, professional practice and education, and teaching and learning.
- Strong advocacy for interprofessional education and practice, with experience fostering collaboration across disciplines to prepare future health professionals for team-based care.
- Demonstrated commitment to shared governance.
- Proven ability to recruit, develop, and lead high-performing teams that foster a culture of excellence, effectiveness, accountability, and support for shared governance.

Personal Characteristics

A persuasive communicator with strong interpersonal skills who is an empathetic and respectful listener, can create an atmosphere that allows individuals to flourish works effectively with individuals at all levels within the University, and can identify and align key stakeholders to their cause.

A leader who can establish an inspiring vision for the SoN's future; is committed to the missions of the University and the School; is committed to growing and developing faculty, staff, and students; and is aligned with achieving prestige through the success of the School and its members.

- A team player and effective consensus builder who demonstrates a collaborative approach in working closely with members of the SoN and other constituents, including administration within UW–Madison, as well as outside organizations and individuals.
- A skilled negotiator and self-confident individual who is not afraid of criticism or challenge, can effectively manage conflict, and is able to work with multiple stakeholders to achieve a common goal.
- A decision maker with a commitment to achieve set goals and to establish a culture of responsibility and fairness.
- A confident manager and team builder with strong organizational and business skills who knows how to achieve goals in complex and evolving environments.
- A mentor with strong coaching skills to nurture the development of faculty into accomplished educators, practitioners, and researchers.
- An educator who is passionate about academic excellence and student success and who enjoys interchange with students and faculty.
- An individual of the utmost integrity with high levels of energy, maturity, and flexibility, and a reputation for fairness and idealism.
- A builder of organizations, teams, and programs; a developer and promoter of the strengths of the SoN and of individual colleagues.

About University of Wisconsin–Madison

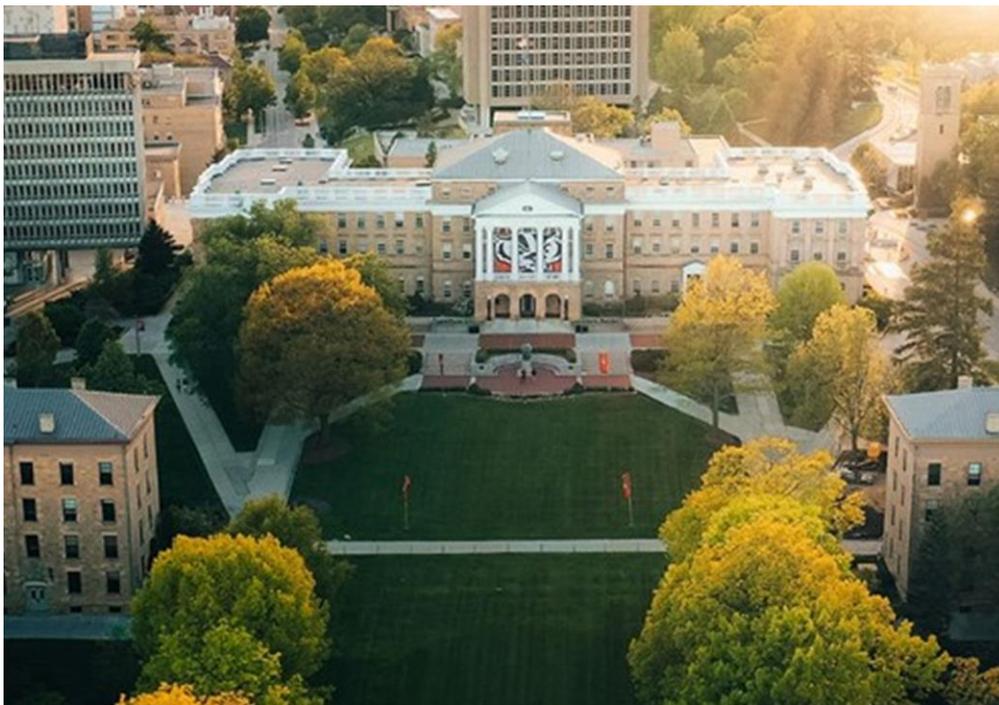
Overview

The University of Wisconsin–Madison was founded in 1848 as Wisconsin was granted statehood, making it the oldest and largest public university in the state. It became a land-grant university in 1866, was a founding member of the Association of American Universities in 1900 and serves as the flagship for the Universities of Wisconsin. Ranked 35th overall—and 12th among the nation's public institutions—by *U.S. News and World Report*, UW–Madison is one of the nation's preeminent research universities and plays a notable role in serving the residents of the state of Wisconsin. UW–Madison has an annual budget of approximately \$3.7 billion, a student body exceeding 50,000, and a community of more than 27,000 faculty and staff. Its identity and mission are informed by the [Wisconsin Idea](#), first formulated in the early twentieth century, which holds that education should influence people's lives beyond the boundaries of the classroom.

UW–Madison is currently in the fifth year of its [five-year \(2020-2025\) strategic framework](#). The strategic framework charts UW–Madison's path forward, building on its record of success and taking bold steps toward its vision of being a model public university in the 21st century. The strategic framework sets forth five priorities: excellence in teaching and educational advancement, excellence in research and scholarship, living the Wisconsin Idea, a vibrant campus community, and a high-performing organization.

Mission

The primary purpose of the University of Wisconsin–Madison is to provide a learning environment in which faculty, staff, and students can discover, examine critically, preserve, and transmit the knowledge, wisdom, and values that will help ensure the survival of this and future generations and improve the quality of life for all. The University seeks to help students to develop an understanding and appreciation for the complex cultural and physical worlds in which they live and to realize their highest potential of intellectual, physical, and human development.



It also seeks to attract and serve students from diverse social, economic, and ethnic backgrounds and to be sensitive and responsive to those groups which have been underserved by higher education.

To fulfill its mission, the University must:

- Offer broad and balanced academic programs that are mutually reinforcing and emphasize high quality and creative instruction at the undergraduate, graduate, professional, and postgraduate levels.
- Generate new knowledge through a broad array of scholarly, research, and creative endeavors, which provide a foundation for dealing with the immediate and long-range needs of society.
- Achieve leadership in each discipline, strengthen interdisciplinary studies, and pioneer new fields of learning.
- Serve society through coordinated statewide outreach programs that meet continuing educational needs in accordance with the University's designated land-grant status.
- Participate extensively in statewide, national, and international programs and encourage others in the University of Wisconsin System, at other educational institutions and in state, national, and international organizations to seek benefit from the university's unique educational resources, such as faculty and staff expertise, libraries, archives, museums, and research facilities.
- Strengthen cultural understanding through opportunities to study languages, cultures, the arts, and the implications of social, political, economic, and technological change and through encouragement of study, research, and service off campus and abroad.
- Maintain a level of excellence and standards in all programs that will give them statewide, national, and international significance.
- Embody, through its policies and programs, respect for, and commitment to, the ideals of a pluralistic, multiracial, open, and democratic society.

Strategic Framework

The 2020-2025 strategic framework charts UW–Madison's path forward, building on the success of its past priorities and taking bold steps toward its vision of being a model public university in the 21st century. It preserves its core legacy of research, teaching, and public service and promotes a campus environment where full potential can be met. A new strategic framework is expected to be released at the beginning of 2026.

Strategic Priorities

Excellence in Teaching and Educational Advancement

Provide access to a world-class, affordable educational experience.

- Strengthen educational outcomes, career development, and college experience for all students.
- Expand access to a UW–Madison education, leveraging new modes of delivery to engage with students throughout their lives.
- Expand educational programming in areas of high student demand, while maintaining the broad-based strength of our educational enterprise.
- Continue to grow faculty and staff teaching excellence.

Excellence in Research & Scholarship

Provide leadership for discovery, through support of the fearless sifting and winnowing of our world-class research enterprise and the dissemination of knowledge in its many forms.

- Grow UW–Madison’s research enterprise and expand its global impact, supporting the scholarship of faculty, staff, and students.
- Continue to grow faculty and staff research excellence.
- Provide a modern research support structure that fosters innovation, promotes interdisciplinary collaboration, and drives discovery on future research challenges.
- Ensure the continued vitality, competitiveness, and strength of our graduate and professional programs.

Living the Wisconsin Idea

Partner with the community and the state to extend and apply our research, education, and practice-based knowledge to foster learning and support innovation and prosperity throughout Wisconsin.

- Engage with the community to provide positive social, cultural, and economic impact in Wisconsin and beyond.
- Promote entrepreneurship, innovation, and economic development in Wisconsin and beyond.
- Share the benefits of a world-class teaching and research university throughout Wisconsin and beyond our borders.

A Vibrant Campus Community

Build an organizational culture and climate that fosters engagement, inclusion, diversity, and equity.

- Provide an inclusive, safe, healthy, and enriching environment for learning and working that promotes wellness among students and employees.
- Enhance the holistic development of students by combining learning in and out of the classroom that is steeped in the values of the University.
- Enhance diversity among our students, faculty, and staff and build upon our strong commitment to diversity to create a welcoming, empowered, and inclusive community.

A High-Performing Organization

Practice continuous improvement in all we do, for those we serve.

- Strengthen our financial performance, growing revenues, controlling costs, and delivering new and innovative ways to invest in our strategic priorities, while maintaining a commitment to the highest ethical standards.
- Build upon and further support our high-quality and committed workforce that advances our mission and reflects our values.
- Expand and deepen relationships with key partners and stakeholders critical to our success and maintain our commitment to shared governance.
- Practice sustainability principles in the stewardship of campus resources, recognizing our environmental responsibility to people and the planet.

Academics

UW–Madison offers approximately 600 undergraduate and graduate majors and more than 9,000 courses across its colleges, schools, institutes, and other programs. The world-class faculty focuses on student success. With 48,557 students attending a class of an average size of 33 students, their average time to earn a degree is 3.84 years.

Learn more about [UW–Madison's Academics](#).

Schools, Colleges and related Divisions

[College of Agricultural & Life Sciences](#)

[Division of the Arts](#)

[School of Business](#)

[School of Computer, Data & Information Sciences](#)

[Division of Continuing Studies](#)

[School of Education](#)

[College of Engineering](#)

[Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies](#)

[Graduate School](#)

[School of Human Ecology](#)

[Information School](#)

[International Division](#)

[School of Journalism and Mass Communication](#)

[Language Institute](#)

[Law School](#)

[College of Letters & Science](#)

[School of Medicine and Public Health](#)

[Mead Witter School of Music](#)

[School of Nursing](#)

[School of Pharmacy](#)

[La Follette School of Public Affairs](#)

[Sandra Rosenbaum School of Social Work](#)

[School of Veterinary Medicine](#)

Leadership

Jennifer L. Mnookin, Chancellor



Jennifer L. Mnookin is the 30th leader in the University of Wisconsin–Madison's 176-year history, and one of the nation's top legal scholars.

Chancellor Mnookin is dedicated to pushing boundaries to bring the University to new levels of excellence in research and education, and to energizing and expanding the Wisconsin Idea, UW–Madison's commitment to innovating for the public good.

She recently launched an ambitious cross-campus initiative called Wisconsin RISE (Research, Innovation, and Scholarly Excellence) to expand educational opportunities and research at UW–Madison around significant, complex challenges affecting Wisconsin and the world.

She also has championed initiatives to increase access to UW–Madison, creating Bucky's Pell Pathway, under which the University pledges to meet the full financial need of Wisconsin-resident undergraduates who qualify for Pell Grants. Nearly one-quarter of in-state undergraduates are now covered by one of the University's full-need programs.

In 2024, she announced the most comprehensive environmental sustainability initiative in UW–Madison's history and unveiled a new strategic vision to foster entrepreneurship and innovation across campus.

Prior to coming to Wisconsin, Chancellor Mnookin served as dean of the UCLA School of Law, where she spent 17 years on the faculty. Before that, she was a professor of law at the University of Virginia School of Law and a visiting professor of law at Harvard Law School.

Chancellor Mnookin is a nationally recognized scholar on the intersection of law and science. She served on the National Academy of Science, Engineering and Medicine's (NASEM) Committee on Science, Technology and Law, and recently co-chaired a NASEM report on Facial Recognition Technologies.

She received her AB from Harvard University, her JD from Yale Law School, and a PhD in history and social study of science and technology from MIT. She is an elected member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

She and her husband, political scientist Joshua Foa Dienstag, have two adult children.

John Zumbrunnen, Interim Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs



John Zumbrunnen began serving as UW–Madison's interim provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs in June of 2025, succeeding Charles Lee Isbell, Jr., who served as provost from 2023-2025. During his time at UW, Zumbrunnen has held a variety of academic and administrative leadership positions. Most recently, he served as senior vice provost for academic affairs and vice provost for teaching and learning, in which he oversaw and helped found the Division for Teaching and Learning.

Interim Provost Zumbrunnen is a professor of political science. He studies the history of political thought, democratic theory, and American political thought, with a particular interest in the challenges and possibilities of democratic citizenship. He has published two books, along with articles in top journals including *American Political Science Review* and *Political Theory*.

Zumbrunnen has long been passionate about teaching and about students' educational journeys. He previously served as an Educational Innovation Senior Fellow and as faculty director of Chadbourne Residential College and is a recipient of the Chancellor's Distinguished Teaching Award, the Phi Beta Kappa Excellence in Teaching Award and the Alliant Energy Underkofler Excellence in Teaching Award, among others. Alongside his administrative duties, he continues to lead international study abroad programs, including in Ecuador, Ireland, and Singapore.

A search for the permanent provost is currently underway.



Madison, Wisconsin

With a population of more than 285,000, Madison is Wisconsin's state capital and the hub of a large metropolitan area. Built on an isthmus and surrounded by lakes, UW–Madison and the city of Madison seamlessly blend together, creating opportunities and an atmosphere unlike any other campus.

As both a midsize city and college town, Madison has all the action and amenities of a major metro area without the inconveniences. Milwaukee and Chicago are short drives away, and the Dane County Regional Airport directly connects Madison to major cities around the country. With a robust arts and dining scene, thousands of acres of natural areas, top-rated health care and school systems, and a thriving economy and technology sector, Madison has been recognized as a “Best Place to Live” by numerous publications.

Madison by the numbers:

- 707,606: Madison metro population
- 20 minutes: average commute
- 200+ miles of off-road paths and trails
- 1 of 5 platinum-level bicycle cities in the nation
- 5 lakes and 12 beaches
- 260 parks comprising 6,000 acres
- 15 designated dog parks

Learn more about [Madison by clicking here.](#)



Procedure for Candidacy

Inquiries, nominations, and applications are invited. Candidates should provide a curriculum vitae and a letter of application that addresses the expectations and requirements described in this Leadership Profile. For fullest consideration, candidate materials should be received by January 9, 2026.

We would like to call your attention to the issue of confidentiality. The University of Wisconsin System will not reveal the identities of applicants who request confidentiality in writing, except the identity of the successful candidate will be released. See [Wis. Stat. sec. 19.36\(7\)](#). If you desire your candidacy be confidential, please submit your written confidentiality request when submitting materials for consideration.

Candidates should direct questions, nominations, and application materials to University of Wisconsin–Madison's consultants:

Claudia Teschky and Diane Smith, RN, BSN

UWMadisonDeanNursing@wittkiewer.com

The University of Wisconsin–Madison is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to, including but not limited to, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, pregnancy, disability, or status as a protected veteran and other bases as defined by federal regulations and UW System policies. The University of Wisconsin promotes excellence by acknowledging skills and expertise from all backgrounds and encourages all qualified individuals to apply.