

# **UCLA** Extension

## **Assistant Dean of Academic Programs**

### Leadership Profile

February 2025



*WittKieffer*

## Executive Summary

UCLA Extension invites nominations and applications for a forward-thinking, inclusive, and visionary executive to serve as Assistant Dean of Academic Programs.

Excelling in quality, innovation, and impact, UCLA Extension (UNEX) is one of the nation's oldest, largest, and most comprehensive continuing and professional studies providers, offering programs and classes to more than 36,000 students per year. Adult learners choose from approximately 4,000 classes and certificate programs to meet their professional development, continuing education and personal enrichment needs. Alumni are leaders, change makers, and open thinkers whose creative impact effects positive change in local and global communities.

[UCLAx2028: The Future of Continuing Education](#) is UNEX's strategic plan to address urgent challenges facing higher education and society, from the effects of disruptive technology on global job markets to the essential need for more equitable and widespread prosperity for communities. Just as higher education is rapidly evolving, this is also time for considerable change at UNEX as the institution embraces innovation in programming, teaching and learning, and anticipates future trends to meet the evolving needs of our learners as part of a dynamic global workforce, thereby positioning it as a global leader in lifelong, inclusive education and professional development.

Reporting to the Associate Dean of Academic and Faculty Affairs, the Assistant Dean will oversee 10 academic portfolios, manage instructor recruitment and hiring, and deliver high-quality, innovative programs that meet the evolving needs of diverse learners. This position is responsible for driving the growth and excellence of a diverse portfolio of programs and classes, ensuring alignment with the institution's mission to serve lifelong learners in Los Angeles and beyond.

The ideal candidate will possess extensive experience in and be committed to professional and continuing education, adult learning, and academic affairs. The Assistant Dean will bring visionary leadership, guiding long-term strategic growth, portfolio development, and instructor recruitment. It will be important for candidates to demonstrate a strong understanding of curriculum development, program assessment, and staff development; and be highly knowledgeable of accreditation standards, regulatory compliance, and best practices in higher education. Excellent interpersonal communication and presentation skills; the ability to collaborate effectively with diverse stakeholders including instructors, staff, learners, and external partners; strong analytical and problem-solving abilities; a commitment to equity and inclusion excellence; and expertise in developing and implementing KPIs, tracking performance, and holding direct reports accountable for results will be essential for success.

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

## Role of the Assistant Dean of Academic Programs

The Assistant Dean of Academic Programs plays a critical leadership role in the Division of Continuing Education and UCLA Extension. This position is responsible for driving the growth and excellence of a diverse portfolio of programs and classes, ensuring alignment with the institution's mission to serve lifelong learners in Los Angeles and beyond. Reporting directly to the Associate Dean of Academic and Faculty Affairs, the Assistant Dean will oversee program portfolio directors, manage instructor recruitment and hiring, and deliver high-quality, innovative programs that meet the evolving needs of diverse learners.

The Assistant Dean directly supervises 10 academic Portfolio Directors and the Director of Program Operations, and indirectly the approximately 30 people reporting to the Directors.

Key responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:

### Academic Leadership & Strategic Direction

- Lead the development and implementation of strategies, programs, policies, and procedures for expanding educational offerings across programs, ensuring alignment with institutional goals.
- Develop and track KPIs for each Portfolio Director and the Director of Program Operations, holding them accountable for program growth, instructor recruitment, high-quality and nimble programming, and program balance and success.
- Foster a culture of innovation, strategic thinking, and collaboration among Portfolio Directors to drive product development and market relevance - overseeing revenue growth, enhancing curriculum offerings, academic staff consistency, and institutional collaboration.
- Guide the creation of new courses, certificates, and educational pathways that meet industry needs and increase learner engagement.
- Stay abreast of current trends and best practices in higher education, continuing education, adult learning, workforce development, and in targeted service areas to recommend market initiatives to enhance academic offerings.
- Ensure Portfolio Directors collaborate closely with the Marketing team to develop market-aligned, research-driven offerings and impactful messaging and learner recruitment strategies and tactics, including the development of annual marketing plans for programs.

### Administrative and Supervisory Oversight

- Oversee the day-to-day responsibilities of Portfolio Directors and the Director of Program Operations, providing guidance, mentorship, support, and resources to ensure effective portfolio management and program delivery.
- Collaborate with Portfolio Directors to develop annual strategic plans that align with the institution's overall strategic objectives, growth targets, and financial goals, ensuring progress is continuously evaluated.
- Allocate and manage resources to support academic program growth, monitoring budgets, and innovative uses of format and place for product offerings.
- Conduct regular performance reviews and assessments of Portfolio Directors and the Director of Program Operations, focusing on their achievement of strategic goals, recruitment of instructors, and program performance.

- Facilitate professional development and leadership growth for Portfolio Directors and the Director of Program Operations to enhance their effectiveness in managing their programs.
- Ensure compliance with university policies, accreditation standards, and regulatory requirements.
- Conduct regular performance reviews and assessments of the Director of Program Operations, focusing on the achievement of consistent and efficient use of systems' programming, trainings of program operations staff, and managerial leadership.

### **Instructor Recruitment & Availability**

- Oversee academic portfolios' recruitment and hiring activities - ensuring that Program Directors are actively recruiting and retaining qualified instructors to meet the instructional needs of their programs.
- Work with Portfolio Directors to establish and grow a deep, diverse, and qualified pool of instructors, focusing on areas of high demand and anticipated growth.
- Monitor and support efforts to ensure instructor availability aligns with program schedules and requirements, minimizing gaps in coverage.
- Partner with Portfolio Directors to assess and address gaps in instructor expertise or availability, facilitating timely recruitment efforts and onboarding processes.
- Collaborate with human resources and academic personnel to streamline instructor recruitment, ensuring compliance with institutional hiring practices and policies.
- Mentor Portfolio Directors for successful onboarding, development, and review of instructors and staff.
- Provide professional development opportunities to enhance academic staff effectiveness.
- Conduct performance evaluations and provide feedback to direct reports (Portfolio Directors and Director of Program Operations), recognizing excellence and SMART goals.

### **Learner Support & Engagement**

- Collaborate with enrollment and Student Services and academic advising to ensure comprehensive support services to students from academic affairs perspective.
- Foster a learner-centered approach, building opportunities for learner success, retention, professional outcomes, and certificate graduation.
- When appropriate, address learner concerns, ensure fair and consistent academic policies, and support academic integrity.

### **Portfolios**

- Business & Finance
- Computer Science
- Design Arts
- Education
- Engineering
- Entertainment
- Health & Physical Sciences
- Humanities & Social Sciences
- Legal
- Lifelong Learning

## Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

At UCLA Extension, the future of continuing education means opportunity and access for all. [\*UCLAx2028: The Future of Continuing Education\*](#) is UNEX's strategic plan to address urgent challenges facing higher education and society, from the effects of disruptive technology on global job markets to the essential need for more equitable and widespread prosperity for communities.

A top priority of the plan is "academic excellence, innovation, and scholarship." UCLA Extension will rigorously maintain challenging, accurate and evidence-based course content, ensure that our curricula remain relevant in an ever-evolving marketplace, embrace innovation in programming, teaching and learning, and foster an engaging learning environment that creates opportunities for all learners.

Within this context, the Assistant Dean of Academic Programs will engage with the following issues, ideas, and opportunities for UNEX.

- **Strengthen UNEX's position of excellence as a premier continuing education institution.**  
The world continues to rapidly evolve, and learners are looking for higher education institutions to lead the way in helping them adapt and develop on-demand skills. As one of the nation's largest and most comprehensive continuing education programs, UCLA Extension serves as a critical bridge between today's workforce and the job market of the future. Building upon this legacy with high-quality, evidence-based programs and centers ensures UNEX remains at the forefront as an innovative and entrepreneurial continuing education institution. The Assistant Dean will employ an innovative approach to identify and optimize growth opportunities for UNEX's academic programs. It will be important to work with leadership to examine programmatic offerings, assess the community's workforce needs, leverage the institution's strengths, and expand program options to be responsive help build the future for Los Angeles. The Assistant Dean will develop data-driven strategies and establish benchmarks, metrics, and timelines to ensure tasks are undertaken with discipline and intentionality and progress toward goals can be measured.
- **Extend and increase UNEX's impact on the communities it serves.**  
Too often individuals in Los Angeles and in communities across the globe have felt that higher education was out of their reach. UNEX is a critical resource of the UCLA campus because of its unique ability to extend and broaden local and global community access to innovative, high-quality, relevant educational opportunities. By exploring new ways to reach and engage current and future students with resources and tools that will ensure their success in current or future positions, UNEX can help the broader community thrive.
- **Enhance organizational effectiveness.**  
Transparency, responsiveness, and adaptability are important to UNEX's culture. The Assistant Dean will be critical in helping UNEX transition to a new program management structure, reducing 20 program units to 10 academic portfolios. It will be important for the Assistant Dean cultivate a culture of accountability, establishing specific KPIs, employing analytical tools, measuring the impact of quantitatively and qualitatively, using those data to support informed decision-making, and reporting on the results. The Assistant Dean will engage in proactive, equitable performance management and optimize practices and structures to build and promote a consistent student-centered experience and value-driven activities.

## Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

The Assistant Dean of Academic Programs will be a dynamic leader committed to advancing the Division's mission of providing transformative educational opportunities for all learners, ensuring that UCLA Extension remains a leading force in continuing and professional education.

The Assistant Dean will have the following professional qualifications and personal qualities:

- Master's degree in education, business administration, or related area and/or equivalent experience and training is required. Doctorate or terminal degree in education, business administration, or related area and / or equivalent experience and training is preferred.
- 8-10 years of career progression and experience in continuing and/or higher education administration, business administration, and/or academic program management.
- Demonstrated leadership experience in managing educational or academic programs, preferably with a focus on strategic growth, portfolio management, and instructor recruitment.
- Strong understanding of curriculum development, instructional design, program assessment, and staff development.
- Expertise in developing and implementing KPIs, tracking performance, and holding direct reports accountable for results, including instructor recruitment targets.
- Excellent interpersonal communication and presentation skills with the ability to collaborate effectively with diverse stakeholders including instructors, staff, students, and external partners.
- Proven ability to lead, inspire, and develop a high-performing team.
- Advanced project management skills with the ability to prioritize tasks, meet deadlines, and adapt to changing needs.
- Ability to provide visionary leadership, guiding long-term strategic growth, portfolio development, and instructor recruitment.
- High proficiency in leveraging data to inform decisions and drive program enhancements.
- Demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of program management and instructor recruitment.
- Highly knowledgeable of accreditation standards, regulatory compliance, and best practices in higher education.
- Demonstrate a commitment to professional growth and staying current in the fields of higher education, continuing education, adult learning, and academic affairs.
- Demonstrated experience and ability to provide strategic direction and implement change in a complex organizational environment with strong analytical and problem-solving abilities.

Employment is contingent upon the completion of a satisfactory background investigation. A Live Scan background check must be completed prior to the start of employment. Candidate(s) must be 18 years or older to be eligible to be hired.

## About University of California, Los Angeles

### Overview

For over a century, [UCLA Extension](#) has helped prepare people to live better lives through the power of education. UCLA Extension has a rich history dating back more than 100 years—1917 to be exact—when it took root in downtown Los Angeles before UCLA was founded in 1919. As one of the nation's oldest, largest and most comprehensive continuing and professional studies providers, UCLA Extension gives learners a wide range of options to advance in their career, switch careers, or achieve personal growth.

Excelling in quality, innovation, and impact, UCLA Extension (UNEX) is one of the largest providers of continuing and professional education in the United States, offering programs and classes to more than 36,000 students per year through approximately 4,000 classes and 100 certificate programs to meet the professional development, continuing education, and personal enrichment needs of the full spectrum of traditional, nontraditional, domestic, international, professional, and continuing education students throughout and beyond Los Angeles.

Access, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (AEDI) is one of UCLA Extension's guiding principles. We strive to extend access to UCLA, our programs, and services to underrepresented communities and populations, while serving as a model organization for AEDI in the field of continuing higher education. Committed to attracting and retaining diverse staff & instructors, UCLA Extension welcomes your experiences, perspectives, and unique identity.

### Mission

We are UCLA, offering exceptional continuing, lifelong, and professional education to empower individuals and organizations to thrive in an ever-changing world.

### Vision

We create innovative, socially just pathways to pursue knowledge and apply skills by connecting the resources of UCLA with diverse and worldwide communities. Our alumni are leaders, change-makers, and open thinkers, whose creative impact effects positive change in local and global communities.

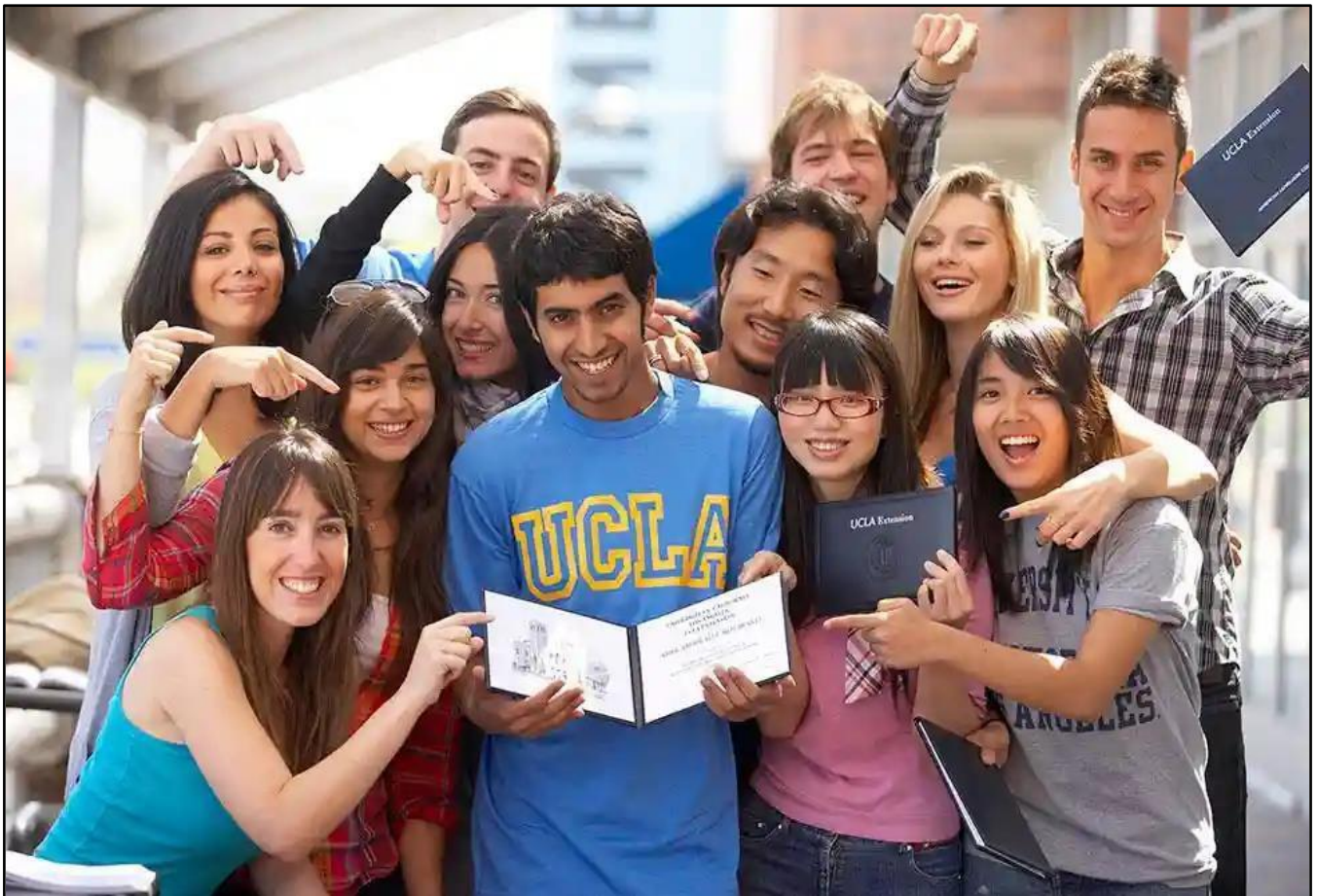
### Guiding Principles

Honoring our organization's rich history, we have developed a set of guiding principles to ground our daily work and serve as drivers for future growth and success.

Over the next decade, UCLA Extension will be guided by the following principles:

- **Excellence:** In academic programs, teaching, service, and learning outcomes.
- **Access, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion:** Extending access to UCLA, our programs and services through outreach to underrepresented communities and populations, while serving as a model organization for EDI in the field of continuing higher education.
- **Social Impact:** Leveraging our platform to tackle major social issues such as poverty, homelessness, climate change and inequality.
- **Local to Global Engagement:** Strategic community engagement to serve the needs of our constituents in Los Angeles and beyond.

- **Transparency:** Creating a culture and community of practice that values, embraces, and promotes transparency in all that we do.
- **Accountability:** Being accountable to our performance goals and each other.
- **Collegiality:** Working collaboratively across the organization and UCLA to achieve common goals.
- **Truth, Knowledge and Understanding:** Tackle the growing issue of misinformation by promoting the responsibility of professionals and organizations to uphold truth, knowledge, and understanding as a fundamental core value.





## Leadership

### **Eric A. Bullard, Ph.D.** **Dean, Continuing Education and UCLA Extension**



Eric Bullard, Dean of Continuing Education and UCLA Extension views his role at the university as a steward for public good. As a first-generation college graduate and alum of public higher education, he is committed to the public teaching and research mission of higher education, and sees public universities as change agents for individuals, families, cities, and society at large.

Previously Dr. Bullard spent five years as Associate Vice President of International Programs and Global Engagement and Dean of the College of Professional and Global Education at California State University – Los Angeles. In addition, he served as Associate Dean of the College of Continuing and Professional Education at California State University – Long Beach. He also spent five years at California State University – San Marcos as Assistant Dean and Associate Dean of Extended Learning.

*“I can think of no better place to advance the mission of continuing higher education than UCLA and UCLA Extension, an institution and academic community that are deeply committed to the university’s public research and teaching missions, access, equity, diversity and inclusion.”*

### **Leah J. Vriesman, PhD, MHA, MBA** **Associate Dean, Academic and Faculty Affairs**



Leah Vriesman is the Associate Dean of Academic & Faculty Affairs at UCLA Extension. Dr. Vriesman is also Professor at the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health's Department of Health Policy and Management.

She teaches Healthcare Strategy for the Executive Master of Public Health and in the Master of Healthcare Administration programs. In 2025, she has been selected for the Health Policy & Management Alumni Association’s Lifetime Service Award, the Ira Alpert Service Award.

As a 2010-2011 U.S. Fulbright grant recipient and German Scholar Exchange award winner, Dr. Vriesman spent a year in Neu Ulm, Bavaria. She was at the University of Applied Sciences teaching International Healthcare Management and Strategic Marketing to German physicians studying for their Healthcare MBA. She's traveled as a lecturer to Mzumbe University in Tanzania twice to bring these same topics to East African physicians studying for their MBA.

Dr. Vriesman was also President and Founder of Excel Research, LLC, a strategy and leadership development consulting firm from 2004-2022. Specializing in the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industry, Excel Research primarily conducts executive leadership, strategic analysis, and market trend projections. Prior to founding Excel Research, Dr. Vriesman was Senior Director of North American Business Development within the Medical Technology Practice at The Lewin Group, an international health policy and research corporation, and subsidiary of Quintiles Transnational.

She was UCLA's Co-Principal Investigator for the National Center for Healthcare Leadership, studying the relationship between graduate health management curriculums with educational outstanding new leaders in the field. Her other areas of career interest are comparative merger & acquisition theory between the public and private sectors, pharm-biotech market strategies, and innovative design workshops.



## Los Angeles, California

UCLA is a vital part of one of the world's most dynamic cities — Los Angeles. Los Angeles holds many distinctions and is considered the entertainment capital of the world, a cultural mecca boasting more than 100 museums, many of them world-class, and a paradise of idyllic weather.

Los Angeles County has the largest population of any county in the United States and is one of the most populous metropolitan areas in the world. Its nearly 10 million residents represent more than 140 cultures and speak an estimated 224 languages. With an average of 292 sunny days per year and UCLA's location five miles from world-famous Santa Monica beach, which includes access to a 22-mile-long path for bicycling, skating, jogging and walking, L.A. has much to offer in the way of a healthy and happy lifestyle. Home to the largest city park in the country, countless hiking trails and some of the nation's best music, theaters and farmers markets, Los Angeles is internationally recognized as one of the most livable cities in the world.



## 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 UCLA Extension in this search. The review of materials has begun and will continue until an appointment has been made.

Application materials, nominations, and inquiries materials should be directed to:

Charlene Aguilar, Ed.M. and Shelley Arakawa, J.D.

[UCLAx-AcademicProgramsAD@wittkieffer.com](mailto:UCLAx-AcademicProgramsAD@wittkieffer.com)

To be considered for this position, candidates must also apply online to the [UCLA Career Site](#).

*The anticipation compensation range for this position is between **\$180,000 to \$190,000** annually.*

*The University of California is committed to providing a workplace free of discrimination and harassment. The University prohibits discrimination against any person employed; seeking employment; or applying for or engaged in a paid or unpaid internship or training program leading to employment with the University of California. In addition, the University prohibits harassment of an employee, applicant, paid or unpaid intern, volunteer, person participating in a program leading to employment, or person providing services pursuant to a contract. The University undertakes affirmative action, consistent with its obligations as a federal contractor.*