

THE UNIVERSITY OF TAMPA

Vice Provost for Undergraduate Student Success and Dean of Academic Services

Leadership Profile

October 2025



Executive Summary

The University of Tampa (UTampa) seeks a strategic, student-centered, analytical, and forward-thinking academic leader to serve as its inaugural vice provost for undergraduate student success and dean of academic services.

Since 1931, the University of Tampa has been committed to providing exceptional learning experiences in a global context. Ideally situated on a beautiful 110-acre residential campus along the Hillsborough River, adjacent to Tampa's dynamic downtown business and medical districts, UTampa benefits from its location in a vibrant, diverse, and rapidly growing metropolitan area. The University reflects this energy through a distinguished faculty of approximately 900; a talented student body of 11,500 undergraduate, graduate, and professional students drawn from all 50 states and most of the world's countries; a dedicated full- and part-time staff of 540; and top-tier rankings in *U.S. News & World Report*, *Forbes*, and *The Princeton Review*.

UTampa is a highly attractive destination for students seeking a distinctive, high-quality education rooted in the liberal arts and enriched by access to internships, community engagement, and outstanding recreational opportunities. Its four-college model – the College of Arts and Letters, Sykes College of Business, College of Natural and Health Sciences, and College of Social Sciences, Mathematics, and Education – has enabled the University to maintain its close-knit academic community while navigating a trajectory of high growth and institutional strength.

This newly created role represents a pivotal opportunity to shape the future of undergraduate student success at UTampa. Reporting directly to Provost Michael T. Stephenson, the vice provost will lead a broad portfolio of academic program and support units – including academic advising, accessibility services, first-year studies, and academic success initiatives – with a mandate to unify and elevate these services into a cohesive, strategic division. The vice provost will be a critical partner to the provost in advancing a University-wide vision for undergraduate student success that spans undergraduate populations, improves retention and graduation outcomes, and enhances access to academic support across the student lifecycle.

The vice provost will join UTampa at a time of growth, momentum, and transformation, working in close partnership with Provost Stephenson to build institutional capacity, foster innovation, and strengthen the University's academic identity. This leader will be expected to champion data-informed decision-making, modernize systems and practices, and cultivate strong, collaborative relationships with faculty and staff. Experience in the classroom is a distinct asset, grounding the vice provost's leadership in a deep understanding of academic life and the student experience. The role calls for a visionary strategist with a deep commitment to student success, a collaborative spirit, and the ability to lead through change with clarity, empathy, and purpose.

To submit a nomination or express personal interest in this position, please see Procedure for Candidacy on page 15.

Role of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Student Success and Dean of Academic Services

The vice provost for undergraduate student success and dean of academic services at UTampa plays a key leadership role within the [Academic Affairs](#) division. Reporting directly to [Provost Michael T. Stephenson](#), the vice provost serves as the provost's principal deputy, playing a significant leadership role across Academic Affairs and working in close collaboration with the University's faculty. This individual will ensure alignment with the University's strategic goals and priorities for enhancing undergraduate education and student success. This individual will oversee a broad portfolio of academic programs and services that includes academic advising, academic integrity, academic success initiatives, student accessibility and academic support, the first-year studies, the Spartan Studies general education program, the center for teaching and learning, and military science.

Charged with developing and implementing strategies that promote academic success from enrollment through graduation, the vice provost will lead the creation of a more cohesive and integrated division that aligns a broad array of academic services under a unified vision. This includes strengthening coordination across departments and guiding efforts to define, measure, and improve student success outcomes. Acting on the provost's behalf when needed, the vice provost will ensure continuity of leadership and decision-making across Academic Affairs. The role calls for a leader who can navigate institutional change with clarity and empathy, build trust across campus, and champion established, student-centered practices.

Primary Responsibilities

- **Leadership and Strategy**
Provide visionary leadership for University-wide undergraduate student academic success initiatives. Develop and implement policies, programs, and services aimed at improving student retention, persistence, and graduation rates. Lead, guide, and supervise the strategic direction and day-to-day assignments of managers and staff in the unit. Address internal barriers to retention, such as unclear degree pathways and decentralized advising structures.
- **Collaboration**
Work closely with deans, department chairs, faculty, and other stakeholders to foster a collaborative environment that supports student success and interdisciplinary collaboration. Lead strategic efforts to increase academic readiness and – in partnership with the offices of Student Affairs and Access and Community Programs – foster belonging among newly enrolled students.
- **Student Programs and Support Services**
Oversee and enhance student support services, including academic advising, tutoring, first-year studies programs, and transfer student support.
- **Data-Driven Decision Making**
Utilize data and analytics to assess student outcomes, identify areas for improvement, and develop targeted interventions to identify and support at-risk students.
- **Program Development:**
Design and implement innovative programs and initiatives that promote student engagement, academic progression, career planning, and experiential learning opportunities.
- **Compliance and Reporting**
Ensure compliance with federal and state regulations related to student success and retention. Prepare and present reports on student success metrics to the University community.

Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

The vice provost for undergraduate student success and dean of academic services will serve as a key member of the provost's leadership team, helping to shape and advance a comprehensive vision for student success and academic services for the University. As a senior leader within Academic Affairs, the vice provost will play a unifying role – serving as a thought partner to the provost, bringing together members of the provost's team, and fostering alignment and responsiveness across the campus community. This individual will lead efforts to strengthen UTampa's academic support infrastructure, unify student success initiatives, and build a more integrated and strategic division and University-wide approach. Central to this work is the goal of achieving a highly effective, cross-institutional student success effort – one that drives a measurable jump in retention and graduation rates. The vice provost will play a pivotal role in enhancing the student experience, aligning services with institutional goals, and helping define a distinctive academic identity that reflects both the University's strengths and its aspirations for the future.

In addition, the vice provost will be expected to:

- **Strategically unify student success and academic services into a new, cohesive division**
Lead the formation of a more integrated division that aligns a wide range of academic services under a shared vision for student success. This includes not only coordinating units within the portfolio – such as advising, accessibility services, Spartan Studies, and ROTC – but also reaching across the campus to engage student support initiatives housed in other administrative units and within the colleges. Through leadership by influence, collaboration, and shared purpose, the vice provost will foster alignment and momentum across these efforts, ensuring that all units move together in the best interest of students. By enhancing coordination, clarifying roles, and aligning resources, this leader will help create a more seamless and supportive academic experience for every student.
- **Advance a comprehensive vision for undergraduate student success**
Develop and implement a comprehensive, University-wide strategy for student success that spans the full academic lifecycle and reflects the diverse needs of undergraduate students. While UTampa has made progress in first-year retention, the vice provost will expand the focus to include multi-year outcomes such as persistence and graduation rates. This effort will require a holistic and inclusive approach – one that aligns academic services with institutional goals and student needs, identifies and addresses any policies or practices that hinder progress, and ensures tailored support for students navigating complex academic pathways, cultural transitions, and specialized advising requirements.
- **Strengthen partnerships with faculty**
Foster meaningful collaboration with faculty and ensure that shared governance remains a cornerstone of UTampa's academic culture. By promoting mutual respect, transparency, and dialogue, the vice provost will help strengthen collaboration between faculty and administration, reinforcing UTampa's academic mission and enhancing shared efforts to support student success.
- **Lead through institutional change with clarity and vision**
Serve as a key leader in guiding UTampa through a period of transformation, helping the University evolve from a growth-focused model to a more strategic and sustainable framework. This includes developing a long-term vision for academic services, fostering a culture of adaptability and innovation, and aligning efforts with institutional priorities.

- **Modernize systems and practices through technology and data-informed decision-making**
Champion the adoption and effective use of existing integrated technologies that streamline communication, advising, and academic support. The vice provost will play a key role in encouraging faculty and staff to engage with centralized platforms – highlighting their potential to improve coordination, reduce complexity, and enhance the student experience. By fostering a culture of shared practices and systems, the vice provost will help ensure that data are consistently captured and used to inform decision-making across the University. This includes establishing clear metrics, promoting transparency, and enabling meaningful engagement with data to support student success. Through collaboration and influence, this leader will build momentum toward a more unified, efficient, and responsive academic support infrastructure.



Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

UTampa seeks in its inaugural vice provost for undergraduate student success and dean of academic services all or most of the following professional qualifications and characteristics.

- **Leadership and vision**

A strong, self-assured leader and scholar with the intellectual stature and professional gravitas to serve as the provost's principal deputy and inspire faculty, staff, and students with a sense of pride, purpose, and quality. A demonstrated ability to envision new possibilities for student success and translate them into strategic action. A deep understanding of the academic enterprise, the capacity to shape strategic academic directions, the ability to galvanize others and move forward with urgency, and an optimistic and forward-thinking view of the potential impact of a dynamic university focused on student achievement. This leader must also be visible and accessible, engaging regularly with students, faculty, and staff across campus to build trust, foster connection, and lead with authenticity.

- **Commitment to mission**

Experience fostering student-centered environments and implementing initiatives that promote student success. A strong record of supporting undergraduate education and a demonstrated belief in the power of experiential learning.

- **Management skills**

Demonstrated success in leading and managing academic programs and student success initiatives within complex institutions. A history of building high-performing teams, making data-informed decisions, and cultivating collaboration while remaining decisive and mission-driven.

- **Strategic planning expertise**

The capacity to lead the development and implementation of academic strategic plans and initiatives. Demonstrated ability to generate ideas, build consensus, and implement programs with measurable outcomes in environments with multiple stakeholders and competing priorities.

- **Strong analytical capacity**

Hands-on experience with student success technologies and platforms, including student information systems, advising software, and a learning management system. A track record of using data to identify trends, assess outcomes, and drive targeted interventions that improve student success.

- **Interpersonal skill**

Experience building strong relationships across diverse constituencies, including faculty, staff, and students. A history of fostering inclusive, collaborative environments and leading teams with empathy, transparency, and shared purpose.

- **Institutional agility**

Experience navigating multiple facets of university operations, including academic affairs, student affairs, access and community programs, and enrollment management. A record of adapting to evolving institutional goals and leading initiatives through ambiguity and change.

- **Student-Centered approach**

Experience working directly with students in both academic and co-curricular settings. Proven ability to design and lead initiatives that promote belonging, engagement, and success across all student populations.

- **Entrepreneurial spirit**
Experience driving academic transformation and leading change management efforts. A history of identifying opportunities, taking considered risks, and implementing innovative solutions.
- **Personal qualities**
A career marked by intellectual curiosity, integrity, and high standards for professional achievement. Resilience, creativity, a tolerance for ambiguity, and a sense of humor.
- **Academic credentials**
An earned doctorate or equivalent terminal degree is required. Experience in the classroom or as a faculty member is not required but is considered a distinct asset, offering valuable insight into the academic experience and strengthening the vice provost's ability to lead with credibility and connection.



About the Office of the Provost

Overview

The [Office of the Provost](#) serves as the University's chief academic officer and primary steward and champion of the University's academic mission. It is led by Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Michael T. Stephenson. Reporting to and in close partnership with the president, the provost has the lead role in visioning, developing, and executing an academic strategy for UTampa that aligns with the University's strategic priorities and reflects and extends existing areas of institutional strength, relevant programs in high demand, and economic and workforce development priorities. The provost – working closely with a talented academic affairs team – acts to support the University's teaching, learning, and research enterprise with the highest integrity and standards for academic excellence, and champions the University's commitment to a foundational liberal arts-based general education.

Reporting to the provost are the deans of each of UTampa's four colleges, as well as the library, the honors program, and a variety of other academic program areas. A chart of organization will be shared with semi-finalists.



About The University of Tampa

Overview

From the gleaming minarets of Plant Hall – Tampa’s signature [National Historic Landmark](#) – to the \$1.06 billion in new facilities and technology, the University of Tampa’s globally-connected campus is at the heart of a vibrant urban oasis. A distinguished faculty and approximately 11,500 students from all 50 states and most of the world’s countries are joined in a University ranked among the best by *U.S. News & World Report*, *Forbes*, and *The Princeton Review*.

UTampa is a comprehensive, independent University that delivers challenging and high-quality educational experiences to a diverse group of learners. Four colleges offer more than 200 programs of study through a core curriculum rooted in a liberal arts tradition. Beginning with an innovative first-year student experience, UTampa students explore global issues, examine career possibilities, and refine communication and critical-thinking skills. Graduate programs in each college, as well as a continuing studies program for adult learners, exemplify the University’s commitment to the professions and to the community.

The University’s 110-acre residential campus in downtown Tampa provides a historical and cultural setting for learning both on and off campus. Valuing the community’s global heritage, UTampa attracts students, faculty, and staff from around the country and around the world.

Visit UTampa's beautiful, urban campus through a [virtual tour](#).



History

Founded by community leaders in 1931 as Tampa Junior College, its purpose was to provide local students with access to higher education. Leading the new institution was Frederic H. Spaulding, the former principal of Tampa's Hillsborough High School and the man who had been the motivating force behind establishing the first local college for Tampa's high school graduates.

In 1933, the institution expanded to offer bachelor's degrees and was renamed the University of Tampa. Its campus moved from Hillsborough High School to what is now known as Plant Hall. Plant Hall, the main academic and administrative building for the University, already had an extraordinary history. Formerly the Tampa Bay Hotel, the building still remains a symbol of the city and its history.

Built between 1888 and 1891 by railroad and shipping magnate Henry B. Plant, the Tampa Bay Hotel was designed to surpass all other grand winter resorts. At a cost of \$86 million (in today's dollars), the 511-room giant rose to a flamboyant height of five stories, surrounded by ornate Victorian gingerbread trim and topped by Moorish minarets, domes, and cupolas.

Today, the University of Tampa is seeing its original mission realized as it has been transformed into a comprehensive, metropolitan university. What was once a campus of one iconic building now brims with 72 modern and renovated buildings and 12 residence halls.

Mission

The University of Tampa is a comprehensive, independent university that delivers challenging and high-quality educational experiences to a diverse group of learners. Four colleges offer about 200 areas of graduate and undergraduate study. The Spartan Studies general education curriculum helps to prepare students to be successful, contributing members of the global community. Graduate and continuing studies programs exemplify our commitment to the professions and community.

The University's 110-acre residential campus in downtown Tampa provides an exceptional setting for learning both on and off campus. Valuing the community's international heritage, the University attracts students, faculty and staff from around the world with diverse backgrounds to facilitate intercultural learning.

UT is committed to the development of each student to become a productive and responsible citizen. The University conducts classes in personalized settings in which learning is enhanced through application by balancing "learning by thinking" with "learning by doing." Students are taught by highly qualified faculty members dedicated to teaching, scholarship, advising and continued intellectual growth. Students participate in learning partnerships with faculty and the community through clinical and consulting assignments, internships and research experiences. Academic services and co-curricular activities support individual well-being and development, and provide leadership opportunities. UT strives to provide a rich and inclusive learning environment for all students to prepare them for careers and lifelong learning.

Core Curriculum

Spartan Studies is UTampa's general education program that is completed by all undergraduate students at the University except for students in the Honors Program or those earning their Bachelor of Liberal Studies. The mission of Spartan Studies is to prepare students to be successful, contributing members of the global community by providing a strong, liberal arts curriculum. The 14-course

curriculum is spread over four years, culminating in a multimodal senior-year project that ties together the general education experience and acquired expertise in a major area of study.

Academics

UTampa offers over 200 programs, 22 master's degrees, including four MBA programs (ten concentrations), 13 certificates, three doctorates, and [4+1 programs](#) in the MBA, M.Ed., M.A. in Social and Emerging Media, and M.S. in Accounting, Criminology and Criminal Justice, Cybersecurity, Instructional Design and Technology, and Marketing programs.

The University is comprised of four colleges:

- [College of Arts and Letters](#)
- [College of Natural and Health Sciences](#)
- [College of Social Science, Mathematics and Education](#)
- [Sykes College of Business](#)

In addition to the four colleges, UTampa has four major interdisciplinary areas that draw students, faculty, and resources from across the University and curriculum:

- [Continuing Studies](#) coordinates all-University programs for adult and part-time learners.
- [Spartan Studies](#) supports the general education program that is the liberal arts core required of all undergraduate students not participating in the Honors Program.
- [International Programs](#) oversees study abroad programs, international majors and certificates, and international student services.
- [Honors Program](#) offers an innovative curriculum, a close-knit community and undergraduate research experiences for high-achieving UTampa students (*note that the Honors Program is slated to become an Honors College*).

The University of Tampa has approximately 900 faculty (tenure line and adjunct), a 1:17 faculty-to-student ratio, and an average class size of 21.

Facts and Figures

- Approximately 11,500 students enrolled for Fall 2025
- 22 years of record enrollment since 1995
- Approximately 22% of undergraduates from Florida
- Students from 50 states and most of the world's countries
- About 1,200 international students
- A residential campus with 12 residence halls
- Over 2,700 degrees conferred annually

Cost and Financial Aid

- Average cost for full-time undergraduate students for the 2025-26 academic year: \$50,688.
- 90% of students receive financial [aid](#)
- \$124 million in institutional aid
- About \$275 million in total aid (includes grants, loans, and campus employment)

Financial Facts

- Projected annual revenue: \$429.5 million and \$1.08 billion in current assets
- The University has operated in the black since 1995, and employees have enjoyed annual pay increases without interruption by the Great Recession or the COVID-19 pandemic
- 540 full- and part-time staff
- 1,700 [students employed](#) on campus
- Fundraising: \$22.7 million (2024-2025)
- Endowment: \$90 million (May 2025)
- \$1.06 billion in [construction](#) completed since 1998

Additional facts on the University of Tampa may be viewed [here](#).



Leadership

Teresa Abi-Nader Dahlberg, Ph.D., President



Teresa Abi-Nader Dahlberg is the 11th president of the University of Tampa. Dahlberg came to UTampa from Texas Christian University (TCU), where she served as provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs. In addition to being TCU's chief academic officer, Dahlberg was also a professor of both computer science and engineering. She has 30 years of experience in higher education as a faculty member and an administrator and is known especially as an advocate for student success, innovative academic programs, and inclusivity initiatives. At TCU, she oversaw the start-up of the Burnett School of Medicine, increased faculty diversity, and served as chief fundraiser for college donors.

Prior to joining TCU in 2019, Dahlberg served as dean of the College of Engineering and Computer Science at Syracuse University (NY), where she launched strategic and advancement plans that focused on students' experience, research, and diversity and inclusion. She also created and led the college fundraising campaign which meaningfully contributed to Syracuse's \$1.5 billion Forever Orange capital campaign.

Before her position at Syracuse, Dahlberg served as chief academic officer and dean of the Albert Nerken School of Engineering at Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art (NY), and associate dean of the College of Computing and Informatics at the University of North Carolina Charlotte. At Charlotte, Dahlberg co-founded and directed the STARS Computing Corps, a National Science Foundation Alliance that engaged over 50 colleges and universities in service-learning, and led the Diversity in Information Technology Institute, an action research center that strengthened the STEM pipeline from K-12 to the professoriate.

In her academic career, Dahlberg has been the principal investigator for over \$20 million in external funding for projects in areas of computer education, broadening participation in computing and wireless networking research.

Dahlberg began her professional career with the IBM Corporation in North Carolina. She has a bachelor's degree from the University of Pittsburgh and earned both a master's degree and a Ph.D. from North Carolina State University, where she is a member of the Alumni Hall of Fame.



Michael T. Stephenson, Ph.D., Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Michael T. Stephenson is provost and vice president and professor of communication at the University of Tampa. Previously, he served as provost at Sam Houston State University and as vice provost at Texas A&M University. Stephenson earned his Ph.D. in Communication from the University of Kentucky and began his academic career at the University of Missouri.

Stephenson's primary research focuses on the media's role in changing or reinforcing health behavior. His research was recognized in seven "Top Paper" awards at national and international communication conferences. He has authored or co-authored over 40 peer-reviewed publications and book chapters. His research has been funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Division of Transplantation, and he has consulted on research projects funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse.





Tampa, Florida

The connection between UTampa and the Tampa community is especially strong. With 3.4 million people, the Tampa Bay area is West Central Florida's center of government, commerce, communications, business, health care, scientific research, sports, culture and entertainment. It is also home to beautiful beaches and pleasant year-round temperatures.

Tampa has experienced rapid urban growth in recent years, with major new developments downtown, including the Water Street neighborhood, the Heights District, Armature Works, and the Tampa Riverwalk, a 2.6-mile waterfront walkway linking downtown neighborhoods. Historic Ybor City, connected to downtown by a street trolley, is well known for its vibrant nightlife, dining and entertainment.

The David A. Straz, Jr. Center for Performing Arts, Tampa Museum of Art, the Glazer Children's Museum and the Benchmark International Arena are just five minutes from campus. Busch Gardens, ZooTampa and the Florida Aquarium are also popular Tampa attractions. Students are only a 30-minute drive from the beaches and cultural attractions of St. Petersburg including the Salvador Dali Museum, the St. Petersburg Museum of Fine Arts, the James Museum of Western and Wildlife Art, the Chihuly Collection, the Florida Holocaust Museum and others.

With plenty of sunshine, Tampa residents enjoy sports activities year-round. Bayshore Boulevard offers a 4.5-mile continuous waterfront sidewalk for walking, running, and cycling. Fans root for Tampa Bay Buccaneers football, Lightning hockey, Rowdies soccer and Rays baseball teams. The area has long been home to many major league baseball teams' spring training facilities, with Tampa serving as host for the New York Yankees.

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 the University of Tampa in this search. For fullest consideration, candidate materials should be received by December 1, 2025.

Applications, nominations, and inquiries can be directed to:

Robin Mamlet, Ashlee Musser, and Tyler Workman

UTAMPA-VPSSDAS@wittkieffer.com

The University of Tampa embraces diversity in its many forms, including but not limited to sex, race, color, national origin, disability, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, military or veteran status, marital status, genetic information, ethnicity, religion, spiritual belief, geographic origin, socio-economic status, language, political beliefs and first-generation status. UTampa seeks to enhance the diversity of its students, faculty and staff in the belief that doing so contributes to a more impactful learning environment for everyone in the UTampa community.