



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
COMMERCE

Dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources

Position Prospectus



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Position Prospectus

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources

Texas A&M University-Commerce seeks an outstanding and experienced leader to serve as Dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR).

The Dean, who reports directly to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, is responsible for all aspects of academic life within the College, including teaching, research, personnel matters, and budgets. The Dean serves as the chief academic and administrative officer of CASNR, overseeing operational, fiscal, and strategic matters of the College. The Dean develops and maintains the highest standards for academic excellence and accomplishment and serves as the spokesperson of the College to external partners.

THE UNIVERSITY

A&M-Commerce is a rapidly growing university, with a rising profile, making positive strides toward innovation and the future. Driving the ascending trajectory is the university's commitment to providing high-quality educational opportunities that prepare students for success, including those from low-income and first-generation backgrounds. Located just outside of Dallas, the university offers 130 affordable degree programs and is becoming the school of choice for urban and rural Northeast Texas. Embracing a mission to transform lives, A&M-Commerce has seen a 7% increase in overall enrollment compared to the same time last year, with 11,983 students enrolled for Fall 2023, including over 8,200 undergraduates and 3,740 graduate students. The most significant increase was among first-time freshmen, a remarkable 22.1% increase over last year. This is a significant increase and one of the highest across the Texas A&M University System.

The main campus, located in the city of Commerce, covers 2,094 acres. The new 8750 North Central Expressway location in Dallas invites an urban audience, for whom convenience and accessibility are important considerations. Additional education sites include Bryan, Corsicana, Dallas, Frisco, McKinney, Mesquite and online.

Students work with world-class professors who dedicate themselves to excellence in teaching and research. The university maintains strong relationships with local industries to create relevant academic programs and valuable internship and networking opportunities that prepare career-ready graduates. As an Adobe campus, focus is given to digital literacy, with an approach to career preparedness that begins at the time of enrollment. Student success remains at the core of this university, offering students the opportunity to work with academic advisors, college life coaches, and career navigators.

With the focus on belonging, A&M-Commerce is one of the most diverse universities in the A&M System. The institution aims to transform the lives of students, faculty, and staff. All enjoy the opportunity to continue their education and take advantage of professional development opportunities, such as the courses offered each semester through the Presidential Initiative, "[Investing in Us](#)."

The Lion Athletics program recently joined NCAA Division I, competing in 14 sports. The university supports a thriving Greek system and more than 140 clubs and organizations.



THE COLLEGE

MISSION

The College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources is committed to experiential and pragmatic learning with rigorous educational programs, courses and experiences enriched by quality instruction. CASNR offers diverse, high-quality farm and ranch enterprises that create opportunities for teaching and scholarly activities. The College fosters positive relationships among faculty, staff and students and maintains a strong public presence on campus, in the community and throughout the state and agricultural industry. Students are prepared to become competent professionals through the sharing and discovery of knowledge across the varied fields of agriculture. As the only agricultural college in the region, CASNR is uniquely situated to serve the rural and urban agricultural workforce need in Northeast Texas.

ACADEMICS

Undergraduate

- Agribusiness (BS)
- Agricultural Science and Technology (BS)
 - Agriculture Leadership and Communications Emphasis
 - Agriculture, Food, and Family Emphasis
 - Industry Emphasis
 - Ornamental Horticulture Emphasis
 - Teaching Emphasis
- Agricultural Sciences (BS)
- Animal Science (BS)
 - Pre-Vet Concentration
 - Biosciences Concentration
 - Industry and Production Concentration
- Equine Studies (BS)
- Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems (BS)
- Veterinary Biomedical Technology (BS)
- Wildlife and Conservation Science (BS) Agriculture Track



Minors

- Food Studies
- Agriculture
- Agribusiness
- Agricultural Economics
- Agricultural Education
- Agricultural Leadership and Communications
- Agronomy
- Animal Science
- Equine Science
- Family and Consumer Sciences
- Horticulture
- Plant and Soil Science

Graduate

- Agricultural Sciences (MS)

Certificates

- Agribusiness Graduate Certificate
- Family and Consumer Sciences Alternative Teacher Certification
- Plant and Soil Science Graduate Certificate
- Sustainable Food Systems Graduate Certificate

CASNR serves 664 students, 616 undergraduates and 48 graduate students. Thirty percent are first generation. Twenty-five percent of the students are of Hispanic origin, with 11% identifying as Black/African American.

Seven competitive teams include Livestock Judging, Meat Judging, Horse Judging, plus a Show Team, an Equestrian Team, a Stock Horse Team and a Rodeo Team.

For more information about CASNR, please visit <https://www.tamuc.edu/college-of-agricultural-sciences-and-natural-resources/>



COMMERCE, TEXAS

The city of Commerce is located in Northeast Texas, about 60 miles northeast of Dallas. With a population of 9,293, Commerce is a close-knit community of involved citizens. The city's historic downtown features family-owned boutiques, a coffee shop and eateries. Commerce has a high school, middle school and elementary school close to A&M-Commerce's campus. The area is a peaceful and rural region.

VISION, CORE VALUES AND COMPETENCIES FOR THE DIVISION OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Texas A&M University-Commerce's Division of Academic Affairs oversees administrative support and results-based accountability to ensure academic excellence and nurture a sense of belonging. Our mission is to empower individuals to explore and pursue their passions, transforming their lives for the better. We achieve this by investing in an array of teaching, classroom experiences, research, service, partnership, and professional development initiatives that encourage innovation. We strive to create a conducive environment where our faculty and staff can prepare students with the necessary skills and behaviors to become career-ready graduates of the 21st century. Through our collaborative efforts, we aim to add value and impact to the Northeast Texas region.

Four competencies (observable skills and behaviors) anchor our collaborative efforts and decision-making:

- Results-based accountability that establishes clear responsibilities, sets expectations for performance monitoring, measures results accurately, and incorporates feedback loops into work.
- Empowerment that fosters collaboration, ideation, and information sharing for team engagement.
- Excellence that shows personal commitment to the division's vision, creating measurable milestones to garner support.
- Customer focus that prioritizes the unique needs of TAMUC faculty, students, and staff, providing valuable insights to cultivate a sense of belonging.



EXPECTATIONS FOR COLLEGE LEADERSHIP

The Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs has published seven clear expectations for leadership at the Dean level. In the coming year, the expectations for driving results through ambiguity to bring about change are:

1. ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

Our University's ultimate objective is to transform lives through higher education by enabling access and ensuring success. This can be achieved by increasing enrollment, recruitment, and retention, while also securing the university's financial stability. College leadership teams will work towards this goal by setting specific enrollment and retention targets for each department and program using a funding formula to determine the necessary resources.

2. DEVELOPING A CULTURE OF MENTORING

Investing in the professional development of academic faculty and administrative staff is crucial in creating a culture of mentoring that fosters high-quality pedagogical experiences for students. This also helps in pursuing research and external funding, as well as developing leadership skills to enhance academic departments. Collaborating with highly effective staff can result in a proactive and efficient team, leading to the overall optimization of Academic Affairs.

3. OPTIMIZING WORK PROCESSES

To enhance our operations and productivity throughout the department, it is essential to establish robust business practices that utilize our resources (people and finances) effectively. Our primary focus should be on delivering student-centered services while working collaboratively and fulfilling our fiduciary obligations.

4. INNOVATION AND RELEVANCE

We aim to increase the significance of our division by remaining agile, nimble, and defining, recognizing, and implementing innovative ideas. This means consistently being future looking, forward leaning, engaged in cutting-edge thinking, and willing to take calculated risks.

5. STRENGTHENING HUMAN RESOURCES

Enhance employee engagement, recruitment, and retention by effectively managing our people to align with our strategic plans, optimizing our staff/faculty, resources, and systems.

6. SENSE OF BELONGING

It is important to create a workplace environment that fosters a sense of belonging for everyone, including students from diverse backgrounds and a faculty and staff that mirror our student body. This will allow for a wider range of life experiences, skills, and perspectives, ultimately leading to increased productivity.

7. ACADEMIC PLATFORM FOR THE DALLAS SITE

A primary objective is to cater to the educational unmet needs and requirements of the Dallas community, and we aim to achieve this by establishing an active academic program in Dallas. It is imperative that we develop numerous options for students, and without delay address this matter working together towards realizing this goal.

Deans are expected to embrace these expectations in the course of making difficult choices, implementing effective budget strategies and facilitating professional development opportunities for faculty and staff. The goal is leadership that is proactive and adaptable, able to achieve positive outcomes in today's volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) environment.



LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Provide Forward-Focused Leadership

A successful dean needs to communicate effectively with a diverse rural population of stakeholders who take pride in Northeast Texas. There is no doubt the next dean will need to be comfortable with the region and its culture. At the same time, the dean will need to provide transformative leadership for CASNR at a time when increased competition for students and funding renders “the way we’ve always done it” unsustainable.

The dean will provide leadership to initiatives such as the Dallas site that foster and enhance student and faculty engagement with the urban community. Looking beyond Commerce, the dean will engage academic and non-academic stakeholders in planning for the future. The dean will be a representative and enthusiastic spokesperson for CASNR and the university at the local, regional and national level.

Within the college, the dean will provide leadership and mentorship to the associate dean, faculty, staff, and students. The dean will foster an environment of integrity and united purpose that contributes to the development of new academic programs within the college and multi-disciplinary pursuits across the university.

Strengthen Resource Acquisition, Allocation and Management

The dean will identify, attract, and strategically manage financial resources for CASNR. This begins with effectively managing an approximately \$2 million annual budget, a faculty including 18 tenured, tenure track and adjuncts, and a staff of 11.

Understanding that maintaining state-of-the-art programs and facilities is essential, the dean will assume responsibility for community outreach and engagement on a significant scale. The dean will build on past successes and engage in fundraising.

Building Academic Excellence

The dean will apply cutting edge knowledge of regional and national trends and priorities for CASNR related fields to develop new and improved academic programs and continuing education opportunities. This includes focused efforts to attract and retain quality faculty and students.

The dean will ensure that all regional and peer accreditation requirements continue to be met.

The dean will ensure ongoing quality and continuous improvement in the college’s academic program array at both the undergraduate and graduate level, and in in-person, hybrid and online programs, by supporting and advancing progressive assessment efforts and strategies. The dean will continue to build CASNR’s research portfolio while enthusiastically supporting the school’s teaching mission.

Effectively Utilizing the Land Owned by the University

The university owns significant tracts of land adjacent to and near the Commerce campus. This includes a working farm with livestock, row crops and horticultural crops. CASNR operates one of only three agricultural programs in the USA to offer hands-on practicum to grow your own wheat, cotton or corn crop. There is a 100+ head commercial cow herd, three modern greenhouse facilities, remodeled facilities including classrooms for animal and equine science, a swine barn and a rodeo barn. There is an equine facility with riding and training pens and a newly remodeled covered arena. CASNR oversees wildlife wetland areas on its property. One large tract is set for the development and construction of an agricultural exposition center. Other land is undeveloped.

The new dean will build upon past accomplishments, developing additional research partnerships through grants and contracts, and repurposing the land to fit changes to the curriculum.

Overseeing Construction and Operation of the Agricultural Exposition Center

The exposition center, as currently envisioned, will serve as both an education and community resource, hosting events throughout the year. It will be a centerpiece for the CASNR program, attracting community partnerships and drawing research grants. Effectively employed, it should assist in attracting and retaining students to CASNR programs.

The dean will take the lead in nurturing community support and developing funding for construction and future operation.

Achieving Efficiencies Among Diverse Academic Disciplines

The significant diversity of academic disciplines across CASNR – and specialties within those disciplines – require faculty with increased specialization, stretching human resources to provide adequate teaching coverage, while potentially limiting opportunities for interdisciplinary cooperation and coverage.

The dean will face the challenge of growing overall college enrollment while making strategic adjustments to the faculty mix to ensure proper coverage within disciplines.

Developing Urban Agriculture

TAMUC has opened the Dallas site and expanded the operation to include undergraduate and graduate programs that appeal to both traditional and non-traditional learners. The establishment of a significant urban footprint is now an important component to future program growth. The first CASNR program in Dallas is urban agriculture, a program that offers experiential learning in controlled environment agriculture (CEA) and more.

The dean will find ways to expand offerings at Dallas, effectively coordinating with programs on the Commerce campus and field sites, finding ways to attract students in the Dallas area while remaining consistent with the values of agriculture in Northeast Texas.

Commitment to Enrollment Growth and Student Success

CASNR has had success in growing enrollment and improving retention over the past five years. Growth has not been consistent across disciplines, with slippage in some areas and problems with limited capacity in others.

Ask students what they value most about CASNR and the consistent response will be that faculty embrace rural students as they are, understanding what draws them to CASNR programs and what they see as their future lives. Students cite examples of faculty members offering assistance and support in the classroom and through experiential learning that prepares them to secure employment following graduation and achieve success in their careers. They recount stories of teachers who listened to their non-academic concerns and helped them find answers.

The dean will value the extraordinary relationships faculty and staff maintain with students and will be committed to supporting the special bond between faculty, staff and students that is the hallmark of a CASNR education.

Students still enroll in CASNR to become agriculture teachers in K-12 systems and because of the strong identification of CASNR programs with the operation of farms and ranches in Northeast Texas. That said, there is increased competition for those students. The dean will recognize the need to maintain the traditional inflow of students, while seeking additional means to attract and retain students. Development and maintenance of relationships with high school agriculture teachers and academic counselors is an important part of this process.

The dean will need to actively promote the relevance of CASNR programs to the economic viability of Northeast Texas, demonstrating the intrinsic value of CASNR programs, while pursuing cross-disciplinary alliances that enhance CASNR majors. To continue to grow enrollment among non-traditional adult learners the dean must be prepared to expand the reach of CASNR's in-person, online and hybrid programs, both credit and non-credit.

The dean will engage in strategic enrollment management planning and implementation as a key function of the position.



DESIRED QUALITIES, EXPERIENCES AND CREDENTIALS

The successful candidate will be an entrepreneurial, innovative visionary who values all CASNR programs, students, faculty, and staff and celebrates their successes. Candidates with significant academic leadership success are welcome to apply. A terminal degree in a CASNR field is required and credentials that merit appointment at the rank of full professor.

The Dean will practice results-based accountability, drive engagement by empowering others, drive vision and purpose to achieve excellence, and promote access through customer focus.

In addition, the new dean will exhibit the following qualities and experiences:

- High academic standards that support rigor in the classroom.
- Demonstrated enhancement of student success.
- A proven track record of publications (preferably first-authored) in prestigious journals in candidate's discipline.
- An action-oriented focus on solutions, driving results.
- The appropriate balance between teaching and research.
- Significant executive experience in leadership roles, including effective hiring.
- An inspirational, empowering, approachable style that builds relationships with faculty, staff, and students– a team player who is collaborative, interpersonally skilled, inclusive and committed to bringing others along with them.
- Effective communication in all forms, including deep listening to various points of view; flexibility, fairness, and clear explanations for decisions.
- Skilled in managing complexities and navigating ambiguous environments
- A track record of working successfully in a shared governance context.
- Understand how to proactively work with public policymakers who scrutinize higher education.
- Supports educational opportunities for all.
- A commitment to set and meet high expectations with complete accountability.
- A keen business insight that will lead to the development and successful launch of market demand programs.
- Evidence of fundraising success or the aptitude for this vital area and history of working collaboratively with fundraising staff.
- Strong fiscal stewardship.
- Superb organizational skills with excellent execution of plans and priorities.
- A strategic thinker who remains aware of higher education trends, including learning technology.
- Capacity to navigate complex and fast-paced organizational dynamics, including the understanding of policies, processes, and people.
- Ability to work with community outreach and extension services.
- The highest standards of integrity, ethics, and transparency.
- Confidence, humility and welcoming of challenge and feedback.
- Places a high priority on mentorship and developing others.
- Familiarity with rural populations and cultures such as areas like Northeast Texas.

NOMINATIONS AND APPLICATIONS

To ensure full consideration by the CASNR Dean Search Committee, applicants should apply by April 12, 2024. The search will continue until a new Dean is appointed.

Interested applicants should submit:

- A detailed letter of interest that addresses the key elements of the profile;
- A curriculum vitae, and
- The names, email addresses, and phone numbers of three references (none of whom will be contacted without the permission of the candidate)

All application materials should be submitted through the AGB Search Portal System at: [Texas A&M University-Commerce-Agriculture](#).

Questions regarding the application process should be directed to TAMUC-agriculture@agbsearch.com.

Nominations and inquiries should be directed to:

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