



Dean, Levin College of Public Affairs and Education

Leadership Profile

June 2023



WittKieffer

Executive Summary

Cleveland State University seeks a dynamic, forward-thinking academic leader to serve as the next dean of the Levin College of Public Affairs and Education.

Founded in 1964, Cleveland State University (CSU) is a public, urban research institution that provides a dynamic setting for engaged learning. Serving a diverse population of nearly 16,000 students, CSU is the No. 1 public university in Ohio for social mobility. Approximately 80-percent of CSU graduates stay in Northeast Ohio, creating a talent pipeline with expertise and skills that align with high-demand fields.

Under the leadership of President Laura Bloomberg and Provost Nigamanth Sridhar, Cleveland State is reimagining its future with [CSU 2.0](#), an aggressive plan to become a stronger, more focused institution. CSU 2.0 outlines investments in research, curricular transformations and initiatives to advance student success, develop new programs and build new partnerships. A key strategic move for CSU was the realignment of academic colleges, which went into effect in Summer 2022. Included in this realignment was the creation of the [Levin College of Public Affairs and Education](#).

The Levin College prepares students to address societal challenges as they build and sustain complex urban systems. Levin encompasses the [School of Communication](#), [Maxine Goodman Levin School of Urban Affairs](#), [Department of Counseling, Administration, Supervision and Adult Learning](#), [Department of Criminology and Sociology](#), [Department of Curriculum and Foundations](#) and [Department of Teacher Education](#) – allowing for an innovative approach to learning within an urban research university. A powerful combination of instruction and real-world experiences ensures that Levin students graduate fully prepared to contribute to the civic, economic and educational development of the region and the world.

The next dean will articulate and execute a vision for the future of the Levin College, while simultaneously creating a dynamic, exciting and enriched work environment. This vision will champion the success of Cleveland State's diverse and inclusive student body, employing strategies to ensure the Levin College is a place where all have a sense of belonging and an opportunity to thrive. As chief academic officer for the College, the dean will develop strategies to recruit and retain a diverse and exceptional faculty, administration and staff. The dean will promote research in the College that advances communities and society through education and equitable economic and social development. The next dean of the Levin College will be actively involved in the civic, educational and public life of the University as well as the greater Cleveland region.

The ideal candidate will be an exemplary communicator and collaborator, who has shown the ability to lead in a multidisciplinary environment and work with diverse constituents. The candidate must show evidence of collaborative relationships across diverse academic disciplines, with the capacity to understand the issues, opportunities and challenges in unfamiliar areas of study to collaborate and advocate on behalf of all areas of the College. The ideal candidate should possess credentials suitable for the granting of academic tenure within the College, which may include a proven record of high-level leadership in the public or nonprofit sectors. All candidates must show a deep commitment and understanding of the future of higher education within an urban environment as well as an understanding of academic accreditation and licensure issues associated with relevant programs in the College.

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

Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

Reporting to the provost and senior vice president for academic affairs, the dean serves as the chief academic officer of the Levin College of Public Affairs and Education. The dean oversees a college that has over 2,300 students, 51 degree programs and 16 research and applied centers, with approximately 110 tenure-line faculty, 13 lecturers and 53 staff. The dean will have responsibility for administering a budget of approximately \$17 million.

The next dean of the Levin College of Public Affairs and Education will be expected to address the following leadership opportunities, among others:

Champion the success of Cleveland State's inclusive and diverse student population

The dean will support the College's and the University's commitment to student success by working with administrators, faculty and staff to ensure high-quality academic offerings with intellectually rich experiences and to enhance high-impact practices that produce transformational educational experiences for students. The Levin College's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion is at the core of its value system. Faculty, staff, students and alumni are engaged and responsive to inequality in Northeast Ohio and beyond. They are committed to the ongoing training and support of the great leaders (including many CSU alumni) who are, and have been, an integral part of public service, education, health and mental health service in diverse communities. The dean must champion this commitment as they lead a college that serves students with diverse personal and family backgrounds, unique pathways to higher education combined with varied academic interests and experiences. The next dean should foster an inclusive learning environment that serves all of CSU's students, ensuring they have what they need to be successful in obtaining their degrees.

The next dean will lead faculty, staff and students in the College's commitment to public service disciplines and education within diverse, urban communities. The College has worked together to establish a learning community that has stretched to consider ways in which they can advance the dialogue toward action. The dean will enjoy a strong partnership with the [Dean's Diversity Council](#) in their work to mitigate systemic racism and other barriers to success for diverse students. The dean will employ strategies to ensure the Levin College is a place where all have a sense of belonging and an opportunity to thrive.

Establish a vision and strategic priorities for the College

The new dean will join CSU one and a half years into the implementation of the College realignment. The College looks forward to a dean who will articulate and execute a vision for the future of the Levin College, while simultaneously creating a dynamic, exciting and enriched environment to do this work. Building on a history of engaged and collaborative scholarship, the newly formed college has the opportunity to find areas of synergy and collaboration among a broad group of academic disciplines to focus on societal issues including education, communication and criminology. The Levin College is not only providing transformational experiences for the students; as a college that is highly engaged in the community, Levin is transforming the city of Cleveland as well as communities beyond its borders.

The dean will invigorate the faculty and staff through the creation of a vibrant vision for this exceptionally interdisciplinary college. The dean will work alongside faculty, staff and students to share the unique stories of impact the College is making. As the nationwide demographic cliff has hit Northeast Ohio, the dean will find creative opportunities to enroll new students beyond the traditional undergraduate and graduate students.

The dean must develop a cohesive team among the faculty and staff, making all team members feel they are an essential part of the College by seeking their input and continuing to advance a culture based on mutual respect, compassion and trust. The dean will help faculty advance the College through promoting excellence in teaching and prioritizing student success in addition to supporting research that impacts the local communities and larger Cleveland area.

Recruit, develop and retain distinguished and diverse faculty, administrators and staff

Working in partnership with department chairs and other college leaders, the dean will develop strategies to recruit and retain a diverse and exceptional faculty, administration and staff. It will be key for the next dean to appropriately invest in mentorship and professional development to facilitate individual and collective excellence.

Of paramount importance for the dean will be to create and maintain an equitable and inclusive environment that allows all faculty, administrators and staff to thrive. The dean will ensure faculty are supported and have every opportunity for successful tenure and promotion. To accomplish this, the dean will develop the infrastructure in the College that supports faculty engagement and scholarly productivity. The dean will advocate on behalf of faculty, administrators and staff to create a supportive and equitable environment.

Advance scholarship and research

CSU faculty embrace a teacher-scholar model where faculty advance new knowledge and creative activity and integrate their scholarship in the learning experiences of students. The Levin College faculty are distinguished scholars who combine practical experience with research and theory, delivering excellence in teaching to prepare the next generation for successful careers. The College's engaged research addresses topical issues across academic areas of expertise, often shaping policy and actionable solutions while improving the quality of life for people and their communities.

As the University advances its research mission as an R2 institution, research in the College advances communities and society through education and equitable economic and social development. The new dean should be prepared to identify innovative ways to fund, sustain and build an ongoing commitment to this critical knowledge creation at the College and work to support such efforts. The dean will play a key role working with faculty, the provost and other administrators to establish a high standard for scholarly inquiry and productivity.



Strengthen and promote collaborations both externally and across the University

The Levin College community seeks a dean who will be actively involved in the civic and public life of the University and the community. Cleveland State is the largest landowner in Cleveland and the city's academic campus. The new dean has the opportunity to engage the full scope of the Greater Cleveland and Northeast Ohio communities for their benefit. They will enjoy engaging with leaders, educators, practitioners and workers in the community whose lives have been changed because of the education they received at CSU.

The dean will serve as a prominent and effective advocate for the College within CSU and in the larger community. They will be a leader in elevating the perception of the College not only internally at CSU, but also in the external communities. The dean is a leading figure in CSU's work to engage local policymakers, non-profits, educational and health systems, governmental agencies, the community, alumni and donors. Deepening regional partnerships amidst the competitive Cleveland marketplace to advance the mission will require the dean to also forge and sustain collaborative partnerships across all CSU colleges.

Identify new revenue streams through private philanthropy and other sources

The dean bears responsibility for managing the College's resources wisely and productively. The next dean will be charged with diversifying and creating new sources of revenue. The dean must be proactive and entrepreneurial in identifying compelling priorities for support and developing productive and enduring relationships with internal and external constituents. To that end, the dean will actively participate in development efforts to increase private support from individuals, foundations and corporations for initiatives that promote the quality of education, as well as internship and career opportunities for students. The dean will build new strategic alliances and create a culture of philanthropy among alumni.



Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

The dean of the Levin College of Public Affairs and Education is a leader of people and programs, with the ability to energize the College around a vision for its future within the context of CSU 2.0. The new dean will be an accomplished leader with five or more years of leadership experience in academia or may have relevant experience in the public or nonprofit sectors. The dean will be a strong communicator and collaborator, who has shown the ability to work with different disciplines and diverse constituents.

In addition, the ideal candidate will possess the following professional qualifications and personal qualities:

- **Academic stature:** The ideal candidate should possess credentials suitable for the granting of academic tenure within the College, which may include a proven record of high-level leadership in the public or nonprofit sectors. All candidates must show a deep commitment and understanding of the future of higher education within an urban environment as well as an understanding of academic accreditation and licensure issues associated with relevant programs in the College.
- **Leadership and vision:** The ability to engage constituents to understand the College and collectively envision opportunities for the future. A successful track record of shaping, implementing and assessing a strategic plan through a collaborative approach.
- **Collaboration and commitment to shared governance:** An inclusive, participative and collaborative leadership style. The ability to listen and communicate effectively to build consensus across a diverse range of constituencies. A commitment to transparency and partnership with faculty, staff and students through shared governance. Experience involving faculty, staff and students or other key stakeholders in decision-making, the ability to communicate decisions and a history of generating consensus.
- **Commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion:** A track record of leadership acting on these core values and a deep personal understanding of the essential roles they play in education and communities. An ability to work effectively in a diverse, urban campus and community setting.
- **Multidisciplinary orientation:** Evidence of collaborative relationships across diverse academic disciplines. Interest and intellectual curiosity in disciplines beyond one's own. Capacity to understand the issues, opportunities and challenges in unfamiliar areas of study in order to collaborate and advocate on behalf of all areas of the College.
- **Commitment to high-quality pedagogy:** An understanding of various pedagogical approaches and demonstrated support for faculty innovation and development in teaching. A strong supporter of academic freedom in the classroom.
- **Broad and inclusive view of scholarship and research:** Open-minded approach to supporting scholarly and creative research. An appreciation of the diverse forms that intellectual and educational pursuits can take and the value they hold, whether in the classroom, industry or non-profit and public sectors. A strong supporter of academic freedom for faculty in their research and scholarly pursuits.

- **Effective advocacy, interpersonal and relationship-building skills:** Experience building strong relationships internally with faculty, staff students and other constituents as well as externally with community organizations, corporate partners, educational systems, government agencies and individual leaders.
- **Ability to manage existing resources and identify new resources:** A track record of success aligning resources with priorities to accomplish organizational goals. Demonstrated success in securing new funding through new academic programs, grants, fundraising and other revenue streams.
- **Commitment to student engagement:** A record of commitment to enhancing student engagement and success. An ability and willingness to support and promote faculty-student engagement to enhance the student experience. An understanding of the diverse student populations that Cleveland State serves.
- **Operational and administrative acumen:** Successful administrative and management experience in a higher education environment or in the public or non-profit sectors. Experience managing personnel and complex budgets including facilities, IT and other infrastructure. Experience with a unionized faculty is preferred, but not required. An ability to empower a team and make informed, principled decisions.
- **Adaptability and agility:** An ability to lead and manage multiple initiatives and projects simultaneously and effectively. The capacity to pivot, change frames and respond nimbly to an ever-changing environment.



About Cleveland State University

Overview

Founded in 1964, Cleveland State University is a public research institution with nearly 16,000 students and more than 175 academic programs.

According to the Brookings Institution, CSU is No. 18 in the U.S. among public universities that fulfill a critical dual mission: providing upward mobility and conducting impactful research. CSU is the only Ohio university in the top tier of the Brookings list.

U.S. News & World Report consistently lists CSU among America's Best Colleges and Universities.

Bucking a national trend of declining college enrollment, Cleveland State University's overall undergraduate and graduate Fall 2021 enrollments increased about 1% over last year. Graduate enrollment at CSU soared by more than 20% to 4,352 students and the University welcomed 1,834 new freshmen to campus, a 5% increase from Fall 2020. CSU's student-success initiatives save time and money for students. The average CSU graduate's debt is nearly \$2,000 below the state average, and CSU's average student debt per borrower is the second lowest among Ohio public universities.

Engaged Learning connects CSU students with 3,000 co-ops, internships and other experiential learning opportunities with employers in virtually every industry, ensuring they graduate fully prepared to succeed in their chosen professions.

CSU recently was ranked No. 1 in the nation for increases in research expenditures, according to the National Science Foundation.

CSU's dynamic campus in the heart of downtown Cleveland continues to evolve. The Center for Innovation in Medical Professions opened in 2015 with state-of-the-art simulation labs and clinical spaces. In 2018, the University opened a striking addition to CSU's Washkewicz College of Engineering and unveiled CSU's new School of Film & Media Arts in the Idea Center at Playhouse Square. Julka Hall, which opened in 2010 on the CSU campus in downtown Cleveland, is home to the College of Education and Human Services and the School of Nursing. Designed by the Columbus, Ohio, office of the international architecture and design firm NBBJ, Julka Hall is named in honor of CSU alumnus Anand "Bill" Julka, founder of the Cleveland-based information-technology company Smart Solutions. Julka Hall was awarded the LEED Gold certification – the highest LEED honor yet for Cleveland State – and makes it the third LEED-certified building at the University, which has been transformed dramatically in recent years by a \$500-million architectural makeover.

CSU has strengthened its ties to Cleveland through a series of forward-thinking partnerships. Campus International School and MC2STEM High School provide pathways to college for young people, by way of the Education Park that CSU has created with the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. CSU has teamed up with Case Western Reserve University to lead the way in evolving the internet of things.

ENGAGE: The Campaign for CSU exceeded its goal – two years ahead of schedule – and raised more than \$114 million, largely to benefit scholarships and student success programs.

For more information, visit [About CSU – AT A GLANCE](#).

Academics

Cleveland State is a student-focused center of scholarly excellence that provides an accessible and exceptional education. A leader in innovative collaboration with business, industry, government, educational institutions and the community, Cleveland State is a critical force in the region's economic development.

Founded in 1964, Cleveland State University is a public research institution with nearly 16,000 students, 10 colleges and schools and more than 175 academic programs.

Colleges (newly realigned as of Fall 2022)

- [Cleveland State University College of Law](#)
- [College of Graduate Studies](#)
- [College of Arts and Sciences](#)
- [College of Health](#)
- [Mandel Honors College](#)
- [Levin College of Public Affairs and Education](#)
- [Monte Ahuja College of Business](#)
- [Washkewicz College of Engineering](#)

The Levin College of Public Affairs and Education

[The Levin College of Public Affairs and Education](#) (Levin) at Cleveland State University offers interdisciplinary undergraduate, graduate and doctoral degrees by offering tools to address complex urban, human and societal challenges.

Levin offers an innovative approach to learning within an urban research university. A powerful combination of instruction and real-world experiences ensures that our students graduate fully prepared to contribute to the civic, economic and educational development of our region and our world.

Levin students are afforded opportunities for scholarship, research, mentorship, experiences in the field and service to their community. Levin College programs offer wider and deeper collaborations in education (PK-12, Adult Education and Educational Leadership), economic development, city planning, communication, counseling and public safety.

Levin students are trained to address complex societal challenges that are inextricably linked but cannot be addressed in isolation. Their graduates will be deployed to address inequities (in education, health and mental health), public safety, technological advance and climate change as well as innovations in how to educate, train and re-train the workforce in a dynamic economy. Levin faculty and staff routinely put their knowledge into action, engaging with decision makers at the international, national, state and local levels. Their [centers and programs](#) have served as the focal point of applied research, technical assistance and public service for over 35 years.

Schools and Departments

- [The Maxine Goodman Levin School of Urban Affairs](#) is recognized as one of the best public affairs schools in the nation by *US News & World Report*. The School is ranked 3rd in the US in the specialty of Urban Planning and Policy, 7th in the specialty of Local Government Management, and maintains a strong standing in the specialty of Nonprofit Management.
- The [School of Communication](#) is a dynamic community of students, faculty and administrative support staff that exemplify the traditional university missions of teaching, research and service, while engaging with the community. Faculty bring real-world expertise to the classroom, deepening their student's understanding of theory and best practices reflective of the field of communication today, while providing real-life application of skills through hands-on learning opportunities.
- The [Department of Counseling, Administration, Supervision and Adult Learning \(CASAL\)](#) provides programs that engage students in real-world learning experiences. This department offers graduate degree, certificate and licensure programs in clinical mental health counseling, school counseling, counseling psychology, educational leadership and adult, professional and higher learning. Their students obtain employment in a variety of world-class healthcare organizations, community agencies, non-profit organizations, governmental agencies, school districts and higher education institutions.
- [The Department of Criminology and Sociology](#) applies an interdisciplinary approach to major social issues, contributing to societal transformation, facilitating greater well-being, enhancing public safety and maximizing the impact in the community and beyond. Their faculty and curriculum equip students with the analytical and critical thinking skills necessary to work in a wide variety of career settings, including government agencies, nonprofit organizations, social and community service organizations and health services.
- [The Department of Curriculum and Foundations](#) offers Master's Degree and endorsement programs such as the Master of Urban Secondary Teaching, Educational Research & Assessment, Gifted & Talented Education, Educational Technology and Chinese Language Licensure programs. Additionally, their faculty teach foundational courses and mentor students in undergraduate and graduate programs in CASAL and TE, as well as the doctoral programs in Urban Education.
- The [Department of Teacher Education \(TE\)](#) offers undergraduate programs, graduate licensure and degree programs, and certificate and endorsement programs. Our preparation programs are well designed for prospective and experienced educators. Teacher Education faculty are fully engaged in teaching, research and service that ensures quality preparation of our candidates across programs.

Research Centers

- [Center for Community Planning and Development](#)
- [Center for Economic Development](#)
- [Center for Population Dynamics](#)
- [Center for Urban Education](#)

- [Criminology Research Center](#)
- [The Diversity Institute](#)
- [Energy Policy Center](#)

Additional Centers and Programs

- [Center for Educational Leadership](#)
- [Center for Excellence and Innovation in Education](#)
- [Center for Public and Nonprofit Management](#)
- [Community Learning Center for Children and Youth](#)
- [CSUteach](#)
- [Office of Civic Engagement](#)

Leadership

Dr. Laura Bloomberg, President



Dr. Laura Bloomberg was appointed president of Cleveland State University (CSU) on April 26, 2022. She previously served as provost and senior vice president for academic affairs at CSU since September 2021.

Before Cleveland State, Bloomberg served eight years as dean and prior associate dean of the Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota. In that capacity, Bloomberg led the global expansion of the school, established a national pathway program for college students underrepresented in public policymaking, launched an internationally focused Human Rights degree and developed the Mandela Washington Fellowship program to support young leaders from countries across Africa. She successfully led the Humphrey School's \$20M Leading Together fundraising campaign.

Bloomberg is a three-time recipient of awards for graduate-level teaching and advising. Her academic research focuses on community-based leadership, program evaluation, creation of public value and P-20 educational policy. She is co-editor of the award-winning books "Public Value and Public Administration" and "Creating Public Value in Practice: Advancing the Common Good in a Multi-Sector, Shared-Power, No-One-Wholly-in-Charge World." Bloomberg has published dozens of peer-reviewed papers and made over 150 keynote and conference presentations about her work.

Bloomberg was the 2020-21 President of the International Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs and Administration (NASPAA), considered the global standard in public service education. In 2019 she was inducted as a lifetime fellow into the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA). Bloomberg holds a bachelor's degree in special education from St. Cloud State University, and master's degrees in psychometrics and educational psychology from Cornell University. She received her Ph.D. in educational policy and administration from the University of Minnesota.

Dr. Nigamanth Sridhar, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Dr. Nigamanth Sridhar serves as Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs at Cleveland State University. In this role, he serves as the Chief Academic Officer and oversees all academic offerings at the University. Previously, Nigamanth served as the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies at CSU, overseeing the University's graduate program offerings. Nigamanth also holds a faculty appointment in CSU's Washkewicz College of Engineering as Professor of Computer Science. Dr. Sridhar is a nationally known expert in computer science education and has served in a leadership role in the comprehensive design and integration of computer science instruction in K-12 schools.

From 2020 until 2022, Nigamanth served as Program Director in the Directorate for Education and Human Resources. At NSF, Nigamanth worked on the CyberCorps® Scholarship for Service (SFS) program, which is the federal government's primary program to train the future cybersecurity workforce for the nation. Nigamanth also worked on two programs focused on that support research on promoting inclusion and diversity STEM education and workforce development.

In addition to his responsibilities at CSU, Nigamanth is involved in several civic leadership initiatives in Cleveland. He serves on the Board of Education of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. He also serves as a member of the Greater Cleveland Partnership Technology Board and as a trustee for Urban Community School, the Cleveland Leadership Center, and the City Club of Cleveland. Nigamanth holds MS and PhD degrees in Computer Science from The Ohio State University and a bachelor's degree in information systems from BITS Pilani in India.



Cleveland, Ohio

One of the largest cities in the Midwest, Cleveland delivers on everything you'd expect from a major metropolitan area. Legendary institutions, such as the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, the Cleveland Orchestra and the Cleveland Museum of Art, attract millions each year. Eclectic neighborhoods offer inspired cuisine from a number of nationally recognized chefs. Cleveland is home to three professional sports teams — MLB's Cleveland Guardians, NFL's Cleveland Browns and NBA's Cleveland Cavaliers — as well as Playhouse Square, the largest performing arts center in the nation outside of New York City. The world renowned Cleveland Clinic, with headquarters and research labs just down the street from CSU, has earned #1 *U.S. News* ranking in Cardiology for 26 consecutive years and a top 5 overall hospital ranking for 22 consecutive years. Additional major healthcare systems include UH Cleveland Medical Center and MetroHealth, which is dedicated to serving underserved urban populations in Northeast Ohio. Nearly 60 percent of all U.S. Fortune 500 companies have a presence in Cleveland and top employers like Cleveland Clinic, Progressive Insurance and Sherwin-Williams are headquartered in the city.

Cleveland is nicknamed Forest City because of the award-winning park system, Cleveland Metroparks, and its 23,000 acres of nature preserves and 300+ miles of walking, biking and bridle trails. Its location on the shores of Lake Erie, one of the Laurentian Great Lakes, affords all-season recreation, an abundance of water and scenic vistas. Lake Erie has been the focus of decades of environmental improvement and the investment has paid off. The city's location on the restored Cuyahoga River has enabled growth of vibrant neighborhoods and entertainment areas.

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 Cleveland State University in this search. For fullest consideration, candidate materials should be received by September 4, 2023. Application materials should be submitted using WittKieffer's [candidate portal](#).

Application materials, nominations and inquiries can be directed to:

Lauren Bruce-Stets and Julia Bradley
CSULevinDean@wittkieffer.com

Cleveland State University is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer, committed to nondiscrimination. Males, Females, Individuals with Disabilities and Veterans are encouraged to apply for our vacant positions.