



Dean of the College of Business Administration

SEARCH PROSPECTUS



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The Opportunity

Abilene Christian University (ACU) invites applications, nominations, and expressions of interest for Dean of the College of Business Administration (COBA). ACU has, during the past decade, grown to national university status as a Carnegie classified doctoral/professional institution; established an online branch campus based in Dallas that has more than 2,000 students enrolled; launched more than 30 new academic programs; emerged into NCAA Division I play; seen the University endowment grow to \$750 million; become a top producer of Fulbright Scholars; and has been ranked in the top 50 nationally for undergraduate teaching and research by *U.S. News and World Report*.

Abilene Christian has an ambitious strategic plan which includes as its first pillar elevating ACU's academic brand to that of a world-class, faith-based national university. As part of that initiative, the University recently reorganized its residential academic departments to create a College of Health and Behavioral Sciences, the Onstead College of Science and Engineering, and the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences to complement the long-standing colleges of Business Administration and Biblical Studies.

The COBA Dean will have the unique opportunity to build on decades of strength and a recent infusion of support from the university's largest academic gift to date, a \$29 million gift for the Dukes School of Finance. The College includes the Department of Management Sciences, Department of Accounting, Dukes School of Finance, and School of Information Technology and Computing. The College currently enrolls approximately 780 undergraduate students and 130 graduate students in seven undergraduate programs and two graduate programs, led by more than 40 full-time faculty and staff. The business programs in COBA are accredited by AACSB.

ACU is seeking a scholar and leader enthusiastic about the remarkable leadership possibility this role represents at a uniquely innovative and forward-looking university, and the opportunity to lead in an educational environment where the University's mission of cultivating Christian service and leadership is a shared commitment of the entire community.

The University

Abilene Christian University was founded in 1906 as Childers Classical Institute, with 25 students in 11 primary and secondary grades. The school—by then known as Abilene Christian College (ACC)—was accredited as a junior college in 1914 and as a senior college in 1919, by which time ACC was serving more than 300 students. In 1929, classes commenced on the current Abilene campus location. From those modest beginnings, the University has continued to pursue its mission while expanding its impact through growing enrollment, widening the geography of students it serves, building and maintaining world-class educational facilities, and continuing to garner financial strength.

MISSION

The mission of ACU is to educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world.

PROMISE

ACU is a vibrant, innovative, Christ-centered community that engages students in authentic spiritual and intellectual growth, equipping them to make a real difference in the world.



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Now, well into a second century, a culture of innovation and creativity is at the heart of ACU. The University continues to invest in groundbreaking learning initiatives and technological advancements to serve the success of its students, whether on campus or online.

In 2010, with Dr. Phil Schubert as the University's 11th president and an award-winning mobile-learning initiative making headlines in the education world, ACU became one of the few Apple Distinguished Schools recognized internationally, a designation representing an exemplary learning environment for innovation, leadership, and educational excellence.

On campus, the Brown Library was revitalized in 2006 with the addition of the Learning Commons, then again in 2011 when the cutting-edge AT&T Learning Studio opened for integration of media and academic materials with the latest technology and tools. More campus improvements followed, including the Hunter Welcome Center in 2009, the Royce and Pam Money Student Recreation and Wellness Center in 2011, and the renaming of the Phillips Education Building (formerly Burford Music Center) in 2013. Also in 2013, the first students enrolled in the School of Nursing, and a year later the first cohort in the Master of Science in Occupational Therapy program began to meet.

In 2019, ACU became the first university in Texas to be designated an Adobe Creative Campus. Students learn, create, research, and develop in cutting-edge spaces such as the Nuclear Energy eXperimental Testing Laboratory (NEXT Lab), Maker Lab, and Griggs Center for Entrepreneurship and Philanthropy.

The ACU Dallas campus and the College of Graduate and Professional Studies launched in 2015. Beginning Fall 2024, the College of Graduate and Professional Studies will expand into three distinct colleges:

- College of Learning and Development
- College of Health and Human Services
- College of Leadership and Professional Studies

ACU expanded its faculty-led Study Abroad programs with the purchase of a villa in Leipzig, Germany, in 2017 and the purchase of a Victorian-era property to house students and faculty in Oxford, England.

Thanks to a \$95 million Vision in Action initiative, five new or renovated facilities changed the face of campus in ways not seen in more than 50 years. ACU constructed a new Elmer Gray Stadium for soccer and track and field, and renovated Bennett Gymnasium – one of the eight original structures on The Hill – into a physics and engineering laboratory space. Wildcat Stadium, ACU's first on-campus football venue in five decades, held its opening Gameday in 2017. The Halbert-Walling Research Center also opened in 2017, bringing ACU's science facilities into the 21st century by providing an innovative, collaborative, and sustainable place for students to research and learn. In 2018, the Robert R. and Kay Onstead Science Center, formerly the Foster Science Building, opened for classes.

ENDURING CORE VALUES

ACADEMIC INNOVATION

Rigorous critical thinking and academic exploration shape our calling to teach, research and mentor.

SPIRITUAL DEPTH

Missional living and spiritual formation are centered in our campus culture.

RELATIONAL FOCUS

Fortified and nurtured relationships become deep bonds between students, faculty, staff and alumni.

INTENTIONAL DIVERSITY

Members of our community from all ethnic, racial and gender backgrounds are created and beloved in God's image.

SUSTAINABLE EXCELLENCE

Evidence-based decisions undergird our commitment to economic, high-quality programs.



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In 2022, Moody Coliseum and the Boone Family Theatre reopened after renovations. The \$9.5 million renovated Boone Family Theatre was a tremendous enhancement to the performing arts at ACU, providing an acoustically redesigned hall and state-of-the-art theatrical equipment that supports a variety of full-scale productions. The Gayle and Max Dillard Science and Engineering Research Center (SERC) – home of Abilene Christian University’s Nuclear Energy eXperimental Testing Laboratory and the future home of one of the first advanced reactors in the United States – opened in 2023.

The Higher Ground campaign helped create the Freshman Village with the opening of Bullock Hall in 2021 and Wessel Hall in 2023. Wessel is the home of the Honors College Living-Learning Community. Also in 2023, the Petty Atrium was dedicated in the newly renovated Mabee Business Building.

Abilene Christian continues to expand its influence through a holistic view of education and innovative programs that prepare students for a rapidly changing global environment. The University’s strategic growth in recent years dovetails with the unprecedented recognition received in the 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 rankings by *U.S. News and World Report* in which ACU was the highest-ranking university in Texas in a benchmark focused on student success. Graduates step into the professional world as changemakers dedicated to building community, deepening faith, and propelling ACU’s mission of transforming all those they encounter through Christian service and leadership.

The University has surpassed the \$250 million-dollar goal of the Higher Ground comprehensive campaign and continues to focus on raising funds to support academic excellence and program expansion.

About Abilene

Abilene, Texas, is a vibrant city of approximately 125,000 people located 150 miles west of the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex. Residents enjoy cultural events, a thriving arts scene, unique museums, sporting events, parks, children’s activities, hunting, fishing, and much more. These, combined with a low cost of living, warm climate, and a short commute time, make for a hard-to-beat quality of life. Abilene home prices are nearly 35% below the U.S. average.

In addition to two highly regarded public school systems, Abilene has six institutions of higher learning and nearly 15,000 students pursuing higher education. The city’s cost of living is 93% of the U.S. average, according to the Council for Community and Economic Research.

Abilene is known for its vibrant downtown featuring small businesses, the Abilene Convention Center, the 12th Armored Division World War II Museum, The Grace Museum, Center for Contemporary Arts, National Center for Children’s Illustrated Literature, the beautifully restored Paramount Theatre, and a storybook sculpture garden.

PROFILE

Location: Abilene, Texas

Year Founded: 1906

Student Enrollment: 6,219 total; 4,196 undergraduates; 2,023 graduates generally from 51 states and territories, and 45 nations.

Faculty: 266 full-time faculty members with 96 percent of tenured or tenure-track faculty holding terminal degrees. ACU has a student-to-faculty ratio of 15:1.

Operating Budget: \$240 million

Endowment: \$750 million

Instruction and Research Budget: \$47 million

Academic Colleges:

College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences; College of Biblical Studies; College of Business Administration; College of Health and Behavioral Sciences; College of Graduate and Professional Studies; Onstead College of Science and Engineering; and Honors College

Mascot: Wildcats



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As the Storybook Capital of America, Abilene's downtown is populated with storybook sculptures of characters from children's books, and the city hosts the Children's Art and Literacy Festival every June.

The average commute time of 17 minutes is significantly less than the U.S. average of 25 minutes. With prime land and scenic lakes, the Big Country boasts a solid reputation for hunting and fishing. Sports enthusiasts can enjoy playing one of several championship golf courses or finish a set at one of the tennis centers. The state-of-the-art \$11 million Dodge Jones Youth Sports Center opened its doors in 2020 and offers a 55,500-square-foot multipurpose space.

The College of Business Administration

The College of Business Administration (COBA) is composed of the following departments, schools and academic centers:

- Department of Accounting
- Department of Management Sciences
- Dukes School of Finance
- School of Information Technology and Computing
- Griggs Center For Entrepreneurship & Philanthropy
- Lytle Center for Faith and Leadership

Abilene Christian University has embarked on a quest to elevate ACU's academic brand to that of a *world-class, faith-based national university*. Central to this plan is investing in market-facing centers of excellence to serve as academic anchors for the university's growth and reputation, and ACU's College of Business Administration is poised for distinct advances in COBA's mission *to educate business and technology professionals for Christian service and leadership throughout the world*.

Under the 2022 Strategic Plan, COBA:

- *Renewed its portfolio of academic programs*, with the most substantial business curricular changes in decades, an expanded lab for the internationally-ranked Digital Entertainment Technology program, and new online undergraduate business majors for adult learners
- *Enhanced student engagement*, introducing the Heacock Scholars program and the Compass professional development program for residential students
- *Upgraded resources*, including a \$9 million renovation of the Mabee Business Building and growing endowments by \$53 million, due in part to the largest academic gift in ACU history, \$29 million to establish the Dukes School of Finance.

With increased university aspirations and college resources, COBA is well positioned to achieve heightened levels of impact through the following 2026 strategic plan initiatives:



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1. Elevate academic programs, positioning among the top 10 in Texas and top 5 Protestant Christian universities in the nation
2. *Broaden student/alumni engagement*, building on relationships that make ACU unique to support lifelong learning and holistic development for students and alumni
3. *Deepen societal impact*, implementing a focused plan to increase access to economic and educational opportunity
4. *Strengthen enabling resources*, adding substantial endowment growth to bolster faculty, staff, and students

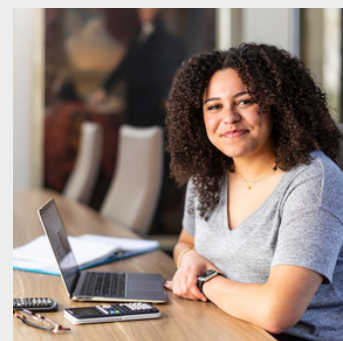
The Dean

The Leadership Opportunity/Essential Job Functions

Reporting to the provost, the Dean ensures the academic and spiritual integrity of the College, is responsible for all program activities; provides intellectual and spiritual leadership to faculty, staff, and students to ensure fulfillment of the mission of ACU and the College; and is central to cultivating relationships with external constituents and developing support for the College. The Dean is responsible for the College's strategic planning; program development, assessment, and continuous improvement; fundraising; alumni relations; and administrative affairs, including the recruitment and retention of faculty and students. Responsibilities include strategic leadership; academic oversight; student success and spiritual formation; Christian faculty recruitment; community engagement and fundraising; and resource management.

Key Goals

- Provide strategic leadership for the College. Develop and articulate a visionary strategy for the College, aligning with the university's mission and goals. Lead the development and implementation of initiatives to enhance the academic quality and reputation of the College of Business Administration. Foster a collaborative environment that promotes innovation, interdisciplinary collaboration, and a commitment to Christian values.
- Provide academic oversight. Provide leadership in curriculum development, program assessment, and accreditation processes within the College. Collaborate with faculty to enhance existing academic programs and explore opportunities for new academic offerings. Support faculty in their professional development, research endeavors, and engagement with the business community.
- Ensure student success and spiritual formation. Champion initiatives to enhance student engagement, retention, and success within the College. Integrate Christian values into business education, promoting an environment that fosters ethical leadership and social responsibility. Collaborate with other university leaders and faculty to provide a holistic and enriching educational experience for students. Implement mentoring programs to guide students in their academic and personal growth. Cooperate with University partners in marketing, recruitment, and advising.



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- Recruit, hire and develop exceptional Christian faculty in support of world-class academic programs.
- Prioritize community engagement and fundraising. Cultivate relationships with business leaders, alumni, and industry partners to enhance the College's impact and visibility. Develop and execute fundraising strategies to secure resources for the College's initiatives. Engage with donors and stakeholders to build a strong network of support for the College.
- Manage the College's resources. Manage the fiscal and human resources of the College effectively and efficiently. Work collaboratively with university administration to secure external funding and support for the College's initiatives.

Qualifications

Required Qualifications

- Abilene Christian University is affiliated with the fellowship of the Church of Christ. All qualified applicants for these positions will be professing Christians and willing to support the Christian mission and purpose of the University.
- Earned doctorate from an accredited institution in a discipline within the College or an eligible area into which the College could expand.
- Faculty experience at the rank of associate professor or higher.
- Progressively responsible leadership experience including budgetary oversight.
- A strong belief in and desire to serve the mission of ACU.

Characteristics of the Ideal Candidate

- Dynamic and visionary business leader.
- Collaborative nature and excellent interpersonal abilities, with the ability to build consensus within teams and diverse groups of people.
- Outstanding organizational and project management skills with the ability to consistently meet deadlines.
- Highly self-motivated with strong problem-solving skills, asking for input and initiating solutions as appropriate and reasonable.
- Ability to consistently make sound decisions and exercise good judgment in a variety of circumstances.
- Ability to view and manage role and responsibilities in relation to the larger mission, goals, and perspective of the University.
- Ability to provide or direct faculty development to connect faculty with resources to improve teaching and scholarship or creative activity.
- Understanding and use of technology within higher education contexts.
- Familiarity with the expectations of disciplinary accreditors and accreditation compliance.
- Demonstrated value of shared governance in a university environment.
- Demonstrated commitment to supporting a diverse environment.





ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

OUR PROMISE

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