



## TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTIAL OPPORTUNITY

Texas Southern University (TSU), a student-centered, comprehensive doctoral university, nestled in the heart of Houston's historic Third Ward, is launching a search for the next president of institution. A distinguished educational pioneer since 1927, Texas Southern is one of the most diverse and respected institutions in Texas.

TSU'S academic and research curricula are committed to ensuring equality, offering innovative programs that are responsive to its urban setting, and transforming diverse students into lifelong learners, engaged citizens, and creative leaders in their local, national, and global communities. TSU offers more than 100 undergraduate and graduate programs and concentrations – bachelor's, master's, doctoral and professional degrees – organized into 10 colleges and schools on a 150-acre campus.



The successful candidate for President of Texas Southern University will evidence the following attributes in current and prior positions:

- 1. Proven, Mission-Driven Leadership** who is inspiring, thoughtful and enthusiastic about the opportunity to lead a major, significant, urban HBCU in Houston, Texas. The candidate must exhibit the character, commitment and courage of a strong, disciplined leader. The new president must understand the culture of HBCUs in general and the impressive history of this strategically positioned institution. The candidate will demonstrate a history of assembling and motivating a dedicated, focused, powerful and dynamic team with a record of accomplishment related to approved goals. The candidate must have demonstrated the ability to enable an institution to flourish even in stressful and unexpected situations. The candidate must be an adaptive and innovative leader able to delegate available resources (human, physical, and financial) to their most productive use. The presidential candidate must be a firm but fair leader.
- 2. Student-Focused Leadership** addressing the comprehensive services needed by and the holistic needs of a large and diverse student population. The new president must be student-centered and understand the essential components of impactful student services. The new president must pursue data-driven decisions to secure and strengthen admissions, financial aid, retention, transfer and graduation rates. The new president must engage in consistent mutual communication with students to build community and stay abreast of administrative and campus issues. The new president is expected to engage all stakeholders to determine how to improve recruitment, retention and graduation rates, and aid in securing students' entry into graduate/professional opportunities and careers.
- 3. Proven Capacity as a Fundraiser and Economic Driver** with a track record for substantive fundraising from diverse sources. The successful candidate must show a history of effective and direct engagement with legislators (state, local and federal), donors, major foundations and corporations. The new president, as the visible embodiment of the university, must present a favorable reputation with all stakeholders and potential sponsors. A successful candidate must have demonstrated the financial acumen to administer a multi-million-dollar enterprise.
- 4. Be a Strategic Convener** who has an appreciation for the value of shared governance and support a collegial atmosphere across all constituent groups and stakeholders. A positive, strong working relationship with the Board of Regents is essential for success and for effective, efficient operations. The next president is expected to have strong engagement with the Third Ward in particular, Houston at large and beyond as a force for community and economic development.



5. An Equity and Inclusion Ambassador who advocates, practices, and promotes engagement across diverse stakeholder and affiliate groups. The new president must be an effective leader who is committed to promoting equity and inclusion in conjunction with a safe campus environment and community.
6. Leadership Attuned to the Evolving Environment in Higher Education with a demonstrated track record of transformational leadership in large complex organizations and versatility in resource development. The successful candidate must be knowledgeable about Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) compliance and other accreditation and compliance requirements for all academic programs. The successful candidate must exhibit a visionary ability to enable the institutional community to imagine the university beyond its current position. The successful candidate should demonstrate an ability to work with appropriate teams to lead an assessment of current programs, offerings and services, anticipate new needs and initiatives, and solidify the institution for the future.
7. Be a Bridge-BUILDER and Chief Advocate who is an outstanding communicator with excellent written, oral, and interpersonal skills. The successful candidate will serve as an energetic chief spokesperson to promote the strong history of Texas Southern University. The successful candidate must demonstrate a compelling presence, be an effective negotiator, a distinguished thought leader and a community-focused individual. The new president must embrace active leadership in the community and across the region and state.
8. Skilled, Adaptive Change-Leadership and Administrator with the ability, insight and organizational skills needed to develop talent, build and empower effective teams, and incorporate best practices. The successful candidate must operate all processes with transparency and hold faculty, staff and students accountable for execution of duties and responsibilities. The new president must be prepared to engage with appropriate teams to update procedures and policies as required and boldly address infrastructure needs.

Texas Southern University is prepared to receive candidates with diverse backgrounds within and outside higher education given the expected qualifications and experiences detailed above. Progressive positions of leadership will be expected. The university community prefers candidates with terminal degrees.



## Opportunities

The Texas Southern University Community expects its next president to immediately address several important components for university success and improvement. All critical issues for Texas Southern University require a president adept at efficient budget management, targeted fund development and obtaining external support for increased capacity.

The University Community has a strong desire to improve its enrollment trajectory and focus on student retention, student success and preparation for graduation. Improvements are needed in the student services platform, including more efficient processes in financial aid and scholarship services, more responsive and structured academic advising and pathways, and career preparation.

Recruitment of students from targeted population centers as well as a new emphasis on local school relationships is a critical part of the university's immediate plan. Building a more responsive and speedy recruitment enrollment process is required. These accomplishments will require the new president's attention to systems, personnel, resources, and policies.

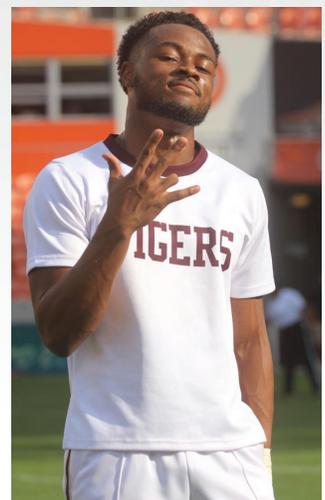
TSU needs a comprehensive and rigorous program review. Revised course offerings and scheduling patterns with faculty and academic leaders will lead to improved student scheduling and smoother, efficient pathways to graduation.

TSU's academic community needs collaborative leadership to explore and plan development of new program initiatives as well as developing plans for increasing and improving existing academic programs. There is a necessity for innovative curricula, instruction, and research capacity. Academic focus areas include health care, energy, social work, and technology with some enhancements in engineering. Several strong and popular programs will benefit from obtaining professional accreditations.

The university boasts a unique set of professional programs at the undergraduate and graduate/professional levels. However, student passage rates on professional examinations are below expectations. Leadership, for TSU to remain competitive in academics, must have the skill and capacity to impact passage rates through curriculum alignment and enhanced preparation. All of the above efforts will require strategic resources.

A renewed focus should be placed on institutional branding and managing the public narrative of Texas Southern University. Media relations and a strategic marketing plan will be a critical factor in the university's growth and trajectory. All marketing must focus on the historic and contemporary strengths of TSU while change and improvements are taking place.

The entire TSU community has expressed a strong need for cultural renewal. Building a transparent, collaborative environment will increase student commitment, staff and faculty morale, and bridge gaps with leadership. The cultural tradition of TSU requires solid connectivity between the president and the student body. Greater accountability at all levels of the university is expected. Transparency and strategic focus will foster a climate of success. New measures in these areas will enable the development of strong direction and pride among all stakeholders.



The COVID-19 pandemic exposed shortcomings in technology infrastructure, policy, and programmatic capability. Increased faculty-staff development and support are needed for effective execution. The next president will need to oversee infrastructure processes and ensure capability for more online and hybrid instruction in the current and post-COVID-19 era.

New societal attention on HBCUs should enable a new president to strengthen relationships with the university's donor community and to seek relationships with new major donors. The Board of Regents and numerous alumni are poised and positioned to assist in this effort. Fund-raising success will require attention and leadership regarding fund management policies and procedure with both the university and its foundation. The configuration and infrastructure of the university's advancement component requires extensive review and new resources.

TSU's student population is becoming more diverse while remaining a predominately African-American institution. Enhancing programs related to diversity, equity and inclusion can position the university to increase internal cohesion and community leadership and remain an inclusive and supportive campus.

## **Challenges**

The incoming president of Texas Southern University will face major issues in funding, infrastructure, community relations, and policy and process. This person must demonstrate a significant grasp of contemporary higher education and lead the pivot to a more forward-focused, innovative, and nimble institution, capable of adjusting to new and sometimes unforeseen conditions.

Allocation of funds from the State of Texas is inadequate for the proper operation and elevation of the university. The next president must join the Board of Regents in the ongoing work to seek increases in state support. It is recognized that Texas has reduced revenues due to the economic impact of COVID-19 pandemic, however, efforts must continue to address the fairness of allocations to TSU as a state-supported institution of higher education.

Strategic budgeting is another critical component for institutional viability and faculty stability. Operational budgets that include salary equity and professional development are important for service units to provide effective student support. Achieving a more comprehensive university community will require improved research facilities and an increase in student residential capacity.

There is an urgent need to review and overhaul academic operational policies and procedures. Faculty, staff, students, and alumni are seeking systematic and predictable internal resource allocation formulas. This includes governance around faculty hiring, allocation and promotion, tenure and evaluation, and the implementation of post-tenure review policies.

The president will be charged to increase donor activity and generation in the areas of increased grantsmanship, new corporate partnerships, endowments, major funds, and student scholarships. This effort is necessary to increase student retention, enable continuous and full enrollment for students, enhance recruitment of students and reduce student debt upon graduation.

The current infrastructure poses numerous challenges, including major deferred maintenance in university facilities. Technical infrastructure will require upgrades to enhance the institution's range and magnitude. TSU does not have capacity for physical expansion and there is a need to review its use of existing land and holdings and explore the concept of satellite campuses in other population centers. An increasing expectation in university communities around the nation is to connect its growth and development to that of the area where it is located. The Houston community is calling upon TSU to engage in processes to achieve these ends, particularly in the Third Ward.

## Nominations and Applications

Applications should be received by April 19, 2021 for full consideration. Applications must include a cover letter, curriculum vitae or résumé, and contact information for five (5) current professional references. All inquiries, nominations, and applications will be received and evaluated in confidence and references will not be contacted without the candidate's prior consent.

All materials should be submitted electronically to:

**TSUPresident@agbsearch.com**

AGB Search is assisting TSU in the application process.

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