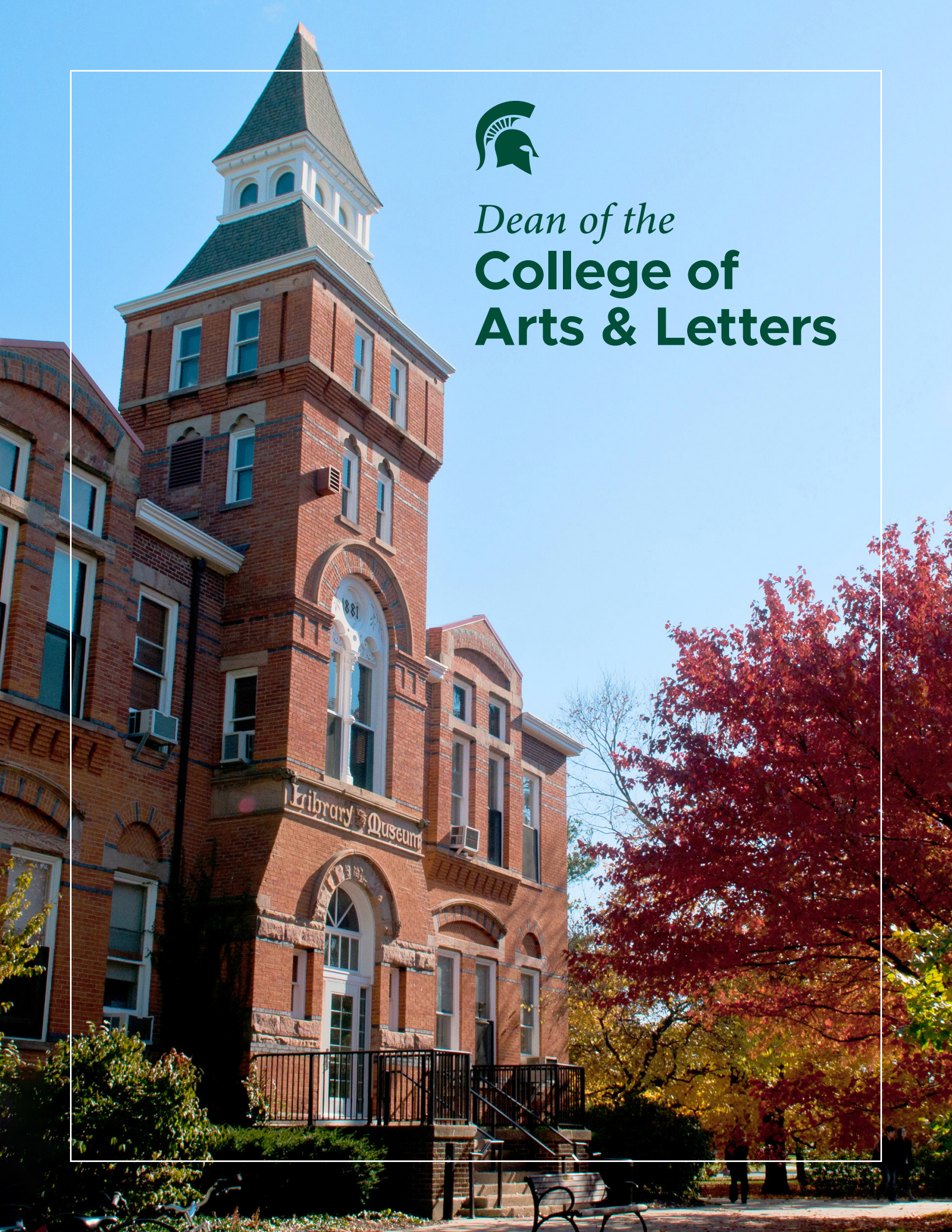




*Dean of the*  
**College of  
Arts & Letters**





*The 1855 wooden seal of Michigan State University, prominently displayed above a door in Linton Hall, represents the institution's historic roots.*



[Michigan State University](#) (MSU) invites nominations and applications for the position of Dean of the [College of Arts & Letters](#). With students from all 50 states and nearly 140 countries, MSU strives to foster a community that respects and values a broad range of backgrounds and viewpoints in order to create opportunities for all. This is an exciting time of change at MSU, with a new, visionary, and highly regarded President who has great aspirations to further the University's reputation and stature. MSU offers more than 400 academic programs across its 17 degree-granting colleges. With 10 recently appointed deans, this is a vibrant, dynamic moment filled with energy and optimism for new possibilities.

An appreciation of strategic planning and assessment has been growing. The College has identified five strategic priorities:

- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**
- **Arts & Storytelling**
- **Engaged Pedagogy and Practice**
- **Wellbeing**
- **Research and Innovation.**

Each unit (e.g., departments, college-level centers, and programs) is now working on a strategic plan of its own. In addition, there is a strong culture of care that permeates the College of Arts & Letters. In this context, the College seeks a human-centered, values-driven leader who cares deeply about people and collaborative culture building. The next College of Arts & Letters Dean also should have a comprehensive understanding of the state of arts and humanities across the United States as well as new ways of thinking about fields and disciplines in light of societal, cultural, and technological changes.

# Michigan State University

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The nation's premier land-grant university, Michigan State University was founded with the goal of democratizing higher education and bringing innovation in science and in the arts and humanities into everyday life. MSU collectively acknowledges that Michigan State University occupies the ancestral, traditional, and contemporary Lands of the Anishinaabeg – Three Fires Confederacy of Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi peoples. We affirm Indigenous sovereignty and will work to hold Michigan State University more accountable to the needs of American Indian and Indigenous peoples. To learn more about the University's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, read the [2023–24 Diversity Equity and Inclusion Report](#). Today, MSU makes an impact in communities throughout Michigan and beyond as it pushes the boundaries of discovery, expands opportunity, and advances equity to make a better, safer, healthier world for all.



*Spartan Statue at Michigan State University, a symbol of strength, resilience, and pride for the Spartan community.*

MSU pairs a vigorous opportunity agenda with formidable status as a Big Ten, AAU, and R1 research university, with fiscal year 2023 sponsored research expenditures of \$844 million. The University reaches into all 83 Michigan counties, conducts life-changing research on the most pressing societal challenges, and is essential to the Michigan economy with a nearly \$7 billion statewide impact. According to the 2025 *U.S. News and World Report* rankings, MSU ranks 30th among U.S. public universities, with 32 programs and concentrations ranked in the top 25 nationally, including nine ranked #1.

Michigan State University is one of the nation's largest institutions of higher education, enrolling more than 50,000 students—including approximately 11,000 graduate and professional school students—in 17 degree-granting colleges.

MSU is home to approximately 5,700 faculty and academic staff, more than 1,600 of whom engage in international research, teaching, and outreach. The University has more than 325 partnership agreements in more than 80 countries and is ranked by *U.S. News and World Report* as the #1 public university for education abroad.

MSU faculty have received national and international recognition, including eleven faculty members with membership in the National Academy of Sciences, four members of the National Academy of Engineering, one member in the National Academy of Medicine, and five members in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Many have received competitive awards, including Dreyfus, Fulbright, Guggenheim, MacArthur, Sloan, Grammy awards and the World Water Prize.

The strength and commitment of MSU alumni drive its philanthropy. MSU's most ambitious fundraising campaign in its history, *Empower Extraordinary*, concluded in 2019, with \$1.83 billion raised over seven years. As of June 30, 2024, the university endowment exceeded \$4.46 billion.

The [MSU Strategic Plan 2030](#) articulates a shared vision for Michigan State University, shaped with the input of many voices through an inclusive process. The plan focuses on six major thematic areas that guide the University's shared efforts moving forward: Student Success; Staff and Faculty Success; Discovery, Creativity, and Innovation for Excellence and Global Impact; Sustainable Health; Stewardship and Sustainability; and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. [Annual implementation updates](#) are publicly available. MSU offers a rich assortment of cultural offerings including the Broad Art Museum, MSU Museum, Wharton Center for Performing Arts, W.J. Beal Botanical Garden and Campus Arboretum, MSU Horticulture Gardens, and Abrams Planetarium, to name a few.



*Beaumont Tower, an iconic landmark at Michigan State University, symbolizes academic excellence, tradition, learning, and the University's rich history and commitment to community.*

# The College of Arts & Letters

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The MSU [College of Arts & Letters](#) educates actors, artists, designers, filmmakers, linguists, philosophers, poets, teachers, translators, writers, and much more in a creative, learning, and nurturing environment. Beyond traditional coursework, the College provides opportunities for student and faculty collaborations, interdisciplinary course offerings in the arts and humanities, and opportunities to engage the greater MSU community as well as numerous communities beyond campus. The breadth and depth of the work being carried out on campus and in the community is wide-ranging and impactful. The formidable talents of students, faculty and staff help chart new directions and discoveries in the arts and humanities, challenging conventions in art, writing, design, teaching, theatre, digital media and thought. The reach of College of Arts & Letters students locally and globally elicits critical cultural knowledge and understanding, contributing to a core mission of the College.

Nine departments comprise the College of Arts & Letters: [African American & African Studies](#); [Art, Art History, and Design](#); [English](#); [Linguistics, Languages, and Cultures](#); [Philosophy](#); [Religious Studies](#); [Romance and Classical Studies](#); [Theatre](#); and [Writing, Rhetoric, and Cultures](#). While 1,541 undergraduates and 238 graduate students are enrolled in the College, it serves more than 5,000 students overall, offers 25 majors, and boasts a 95% undergraduate placement rate. Importantly, the College of Arts & Letters plays a critical role in the general education of all undergraduate students with responsibility for instruction in first year writing courses in which students acquire the moves, strategies, and dispositions that will allow them to continue to develop as writers and producers of knowledge. In addition, the College is one of three colleges responsible for delivery of integrative studies courses designed to develop students' critical thinking skills, appreciation of our humanity and creativity, of human cultural diversity, of the power of knowledge, and of responsibilities for oneself and for our world. The College of Arts & Letters prepares transformative scholars in the arts and humanities by providing inclusive, global, digital, and interdisciplinary graduate education.



*Linton Hall, one of the oldest academic buildings on Michigan State University's campus, stands as a testament to the university's long-standing commitment to education and history.*

The College of Arts & Letters also hosts numerous interdisciplinary academic programs that offer students the ability to connect their learning across fields. The College is home to 316 FTE faculty (168 tenure-system and 148 fixed-term), 71 FTE academic staff, and 55 FTE nonacademic staff. The College hosts numerous research centers that produce innovative scholarship and provide opportunities for students to engage in firsthand learning.

Over the last four years, research awards in the College of Arts & Letters have ranged from \$3.7 million to \$6 million.

With the support of a \$3 million grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the College launched a project in 2021 to explore the role creativity played in helping people cope with and respond to the unprecedented events of COVID-19 while highlighting the power of art to heal, to overcome, to connect, and to inspire. The [\*Creativity in the Time of COVID-19\*](#) project has amassed more than 2,000 pieces of art from all around the world showing all the diverse ways people, from all levels of society, turned to creativity during the pandemic.

In 2022, a \$2 million grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation helped launch the [\*Diaspora Solidarities Lab\*](#) (DSL), a Black feminist digital humanities initiative that supports solidarity work in Black and Ethnic Studies with a commitment to transformative justice. The DSL builds knowledge communities through technology and serves as a co-creating space. It is a hub for Black feminist modes of academic and community partnership and mutual aid for the study of technologies of diaspora and solidarity. Its primary purpose is to build power and critical knowledge within Black diasporic communities by bringing together diaspora studies projects, scholars, and community members accountable to Black feminist thought.

In addition, in 2022, a three-year, \$1.25 million grant from the National Science Foundation was awarded to the Humanities Commons, now referred to as the [\*Knowledge Commons\*](#), focusing on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. The Knowledge Commons is an online open-source platform hosted and sustained by MSU and used by more than 50,000 scholars and practitioners around the world. Up until its creation, there was no such platform in the humanities field. Under the NSF grant, Knowledge Commons is collaborating with a group of STEM education researchers to facilitate collaboration and communication across their fields.

The College has identified three core values: Equity (inclusivity, diversity, social justice, equitable access, accessibility), Openness (transparency, open process, candor, accountability, open source), and Community (collaboration, collegiality, empathy, respect, connection). Guided by these core values, the College of Arts & Letters Strategic Plan will illuminate five key focus areas. In **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**, the College seeks to transform its culture and its metrics. In **Arts and Storytelling**, the College stakeholders affirm the arts as the center of community life while simultaneously challenging themselves in both the classroom and the office to remove barriers to engagement and success. The [\*Dean's Art Advisory Committee\*](#) (DAAC)

## CORE VALUES

- Equity
- Openness
- Community

## STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUS AREA

- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Arts and Storytelling
- Engaged Pedagogy and Practice
- Wellbeing
- Research and Innovation

and Art's Initiative is tasked with greater integration of the arts into the research mission of the University and to seek out strategic collaborations. **Engaged Pedagogy and Practice** positions the College as a world-class engine for community engagement and as a hub for unique curriculum, pedagogies, and practices that directly anticipate the changing world. A commitment to **Wellbeing** prioritizes actions and consideration of whole people with whole lives and experiences, urging the College's community to address both individual and shared needs together. Finally, the goal for **Research and Innovation** is to encourage and build systems in the College that support big ideas, forward thinking and daring, elevating scholarship and experiences of arts, languages, and humanities, placing the College at the forefront of these fields and a leader in the creation of emerging dynamic future fields.

The College of Arts & Letters' innovative [Culture of Care](#) initiatives work to sustain inclusive practices as part of the core work of the College across all areas of endeavor, including teaching, scholarship, service, governance, leadership, professional development, and administration. The goal is to support full participation in the activities of the College by



*The Wells Hall Atrium at Michigan State University, a vibrant space featuring modern architecture, natural light, and artistic design, fostering collaboration and creativity.*

a diverse cohort of faculty, staff, and students, where diversity encompasses, but is not limited to rank or appointment type; area of artistic or scholarly endeavor with the arts and letters; and identity and individual characteristics noted in the [MSU Anti-Discrimination Policy](#).

The College's [Charting Pathways of Intellectual Leadership Initiative](#) is designed to expand the type of scholarship and research that aligns the process of promotion and advancement for faculty with the core institutional values of public engagement, transformative teaching, and transdisciplinary research. The Pathways framework emphasizes the ends toward which scholarship is directed: sharing knowledge, expanding opportunity, and engaging in formal mentorship and stewardship. In dialogue with chairs, faculty are invited to identify horizon goals, milestones, and steppingstones along their pathway to intellectual leadership. Those goals become the markers of academic success; progress along their pathway also becomes progress toward tenure and/or promotion. With this model, from the very start of their career, faculty can undertake scholarly work that is most valuable to the University and most meaningful to them.

# Residential College in the Arts and Humanities

A vibrant living-learning community devoted to using the arts and humanities to make positive change in the world, the Residential College in the Arts and Humanities (RCAH) opened its doors to students in 2007. RCAH offers opportunities for creative collaboration and discovery in a focused community in which students in the same major live, attend class, socialize, and form lifelong connections with friends and mentors. With an average class size of 15 students, RCAH provides the advantages of a small, private college with the opportunities of a large research university. 99% of new graduates land in a preferred job or graduate program.

Serving approximately 175 students in total, RCAH is home to 11 FTE tenure-system faculty, 6 FTE academic staff and 7 FTE nonacademic staff. Since its founding, RCAH has been a leader in diversity, equity, and inclusion. Approximately one-third of students and one-third of tenure-stream faculty are people of color; half of the tenure-system faculty are women. Year after year, *U.S. News and World Report* ranks Michigan State University's learning communities among the top five in the nation.



*The Residential College in the Arts and Humanities (RCAH) at Michigan State University, a living learning community for creative and interdisciplinary learning, fosters collaboration and creativity.*

MSU has begun to explore the possibility of integrating RCAH into the College of Arts & Letters. A single strong arts, letters, and humanities college—combined with existing strategic initiatives related to the arts, research, and community outreach and engagement—is expected to position MSU to be a national leader in the arts and humanities. The plan under discussion is to retain RCAH's residential community and social justice-oriented curriculum as an administrative unit within the College of Arts & Letters, and to preserve and enhance the student experience in both colleges through this transition. Against the backdrop of the changing landscape of U.S. higher education—and the decrease in humanities majors and enrollment across the nation—the mission and vision of the two colleges combined promises to create a synergy that provides an expansive and holistic liberal arts experience to students so that they can be more competitive in career pathways and in their professional careers.



# Role of the Dean, College of Arts & Letters

The Dean of the College of Arts & Letters reports to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Dean plays a key leadership role in advancing the mission, operations, and service of the College, with complete line responsibility for personnel, general administration and management, budget, academic, and development functions. The Dean leads the College, working closely with their senior leadership team. Under the current organizational structure, the following people report directly to the Dean:

- Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies and Administration
- Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies
- Associate Dean for Equity, Justice, and Faculty Affairs
- Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Studies
- Assistant Dean for Academic Technology and Scholarly Engagement
- 9 Department Chairs
- 15 College-level Center/Program Directors
- Chief of Staff
- Senior Director of Development
- Director of Strategic Planning, Assessment, and Accessibility
- Faculty Excellence Advocate

## PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Executive Leadership:**  
Provide leadership in establishing the College of Arts & Letters strategic objectives and develop and manage all resources essential to the achievement of these objectives. Maintain a leadership team capable of supporting and implementing the College's vision and strategies. Work with faculty, staff, academic leadership, and University leadership in pursuit of broader institutional goals.
- **Academic Leadership:**  
Serve as a collaborative and decisive leader who empowers others and has an established record of effectively engaging, convening, and supporting diverse disciplines. Support, enhance, and promote faculty research and creative discovery, teaching excellence, and service. Promote a culture of care, transparency, and shared governance. Advocate and lead active collaborations among other MSU units and external partners.

## KEY PRIORITIES:

- Set a clear, innovative vision for the future of the arts and humanities at MSU;
- Implement the newly developed College of Arts & Letters strategic plan;
- Raise enrollments through a focus on student recruitment;
- Play a leadership role in MSU General Education redesign efforts;
- Secure adequate funding to fulfill contribution to MSU general education goals;
- Recruit and retain the best faculty and staff and enhance their career development;
- Secure additional resources for the College of Arts & Letters, especially through fundraising;
- Promote the College's community-engaged research, digital humanities, and creative discovery agenda, and incentivize faculty to do more funded research;
- Ensure a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment for all members of the College of Arts & Letters community;
- Improve theatre and arts facilities;
- Champion and advocate for the College across the entire University and beyond the University;
- Ensure transparency in financial stewardship and operational management.

Recruit and retain top faculty who will further the College's research, creative, and academic mission, attain ambitious standards of excellence, and enhance diversity. Evaluate faculty for appointment, tenure, and promotion. Ensure adequate staffing to support academic goals. Enhance the student experience by fostering excellence in programs and classroom teaching.

- **Fundraising:**

Enthusiastically engage in cultivating and soliciting individual donors, foundations, and corporations.

- **Financial Management:**

Ensure a strong financial future for the College through revenue growth. Manage the College's financial resources through effective oversight of the annual operating budget, long-term financial planning, and exploitation of strategic opportunities for revenue growth. Oversee College-wide resource acquisition and utilization.

- **Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships:**

Enhance administrative, academic, and research relationships with other entities internal and external to MSU. Leverage and enhance relationships through effective communication with internal and external constituencies, including staff, local, regional, and national organizations/associations, members of senior leadership, and academic communities.

## PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND QUALITIES

### Essential Requirements for Consideration:

The Dean serves at the pleasure of the Provost with an initial appointment of a renewable five-year term, during which they will be a visionary leader with high academic standards and steadfast dedication to centering inclusive excellence. The ideal candidate will possess a terminal degree, have a proven track record of scholarly achievement, demonstrate the level of excellence expected for a full professor in a College of Arts & Letters department, and bring relevant administrative experience to the table.

While no one possesses them all, the successful candidate will demonstrate many of the following experiences and skills:

### Visionary Leadership:

An established record of effective, strong, and collaborative leadership. Demonstrated commitment to enhancing diversity and equal opportunity for individuals from underrepresented or historically marginalized groups. Ability to unite students, faculty, and staff to pursue together a promising future. The courage and discipline to implement the changes that will be necessary to attain this future. A history of developing and promoting shared governance between faculty and administration. The capacity to formulate and articulate a shared vision to persuade a wide range of audiences of its value and to engage others in its implementation. Must be able to see initiatives through to completion. Ability to recruit outstanding new faculty and staff as well as retain the College's strongest faculty, with specific experience engaging with, recruiting, and retaining faculty of color and diverse backgrounds. Familiarity with appointment, promotion, and tenure procedures. Ability to motivate and inspire others to strive continuously for academic excellence. Strong interdisciplinary ethic. Successful experience as a dean, associate dean, department chair, or research center/institute director will be deemed a valuable asset to an individual's candidacy. Ability and willingness to advocate for and enhance arts and humanities across and beyond the institution while working collaboratively with other deans and institutional leaders on advancing MSU's tripart missions of teaching, research, and outreach and engagement.

### Knowledge of higher education trends:

A comprehensive understanding of the state of arts and humanities across the United States and a proactive plan for navigating the landscape and advancing the work of the College in this context. New ways of thinking about the evolution of fields and disciplines in light of societal, cultural, and technological changes. Ability to speak with conviction about the value of liberal arts education.

**Focus on Students:**

Genuine understanding of the teaching mission and the importance of providing undergraduate and graduate students with the highest quality educational experience. Must understand and value the importance of a diverse student body.

**Fundraising Ability:**

Demonstrated success in strengthening philanthropic support from individuals, foundations, and corporations, or a genuine appetite to engage in such fundraising.

**Financial Management Experience:**

A distinguished record of operational leadership demonstrating excellence, growth, and financial effectiveness. Demonstrated experience in fiscal management.

**Diversity and Inclusive Excellence:**

Demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. Must understand and value the importance and benefits of a diverse student body, faculty, and staff.

**Personal Qualities:**

Human-centered, values-driven, and cares deeply about people. High emotional intelligence. Unquestioned, unassailable personal and academic integrity. A commitment to the mission of a global public research university. Strong interpersonal, oral, and written communication skills, with a focus on openness and transparency. Innovative and creative problem-solver, with a willingness to take risks. Ability to have challenging conversations and make tough decisions while simultaneously fostering a collegial and respectful work and educational environment.

# MSU Leadership

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## **KEVIN M. GUSKIEWICZ**

*President*

Kevin M. Guskiewicz, a neuroscientist, academic leader and concussion researcher, was appointed president-elect of Michigan State University in December 2023 and began serving as president in March 2024. A member of the University of North Carolina's faculty since 1995 and founding director of the Matthew Gfeller Sport-Related Traumatic Brain Injury Research Center and the Center for the Study of Retired Athletes, Guskiewicz was appointed UNC's Chancellor in 2019, after serving three years as Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. He is a nationally recognized expert on sport-related concussions and maintains an active research portfolio serving as co-principal investigator on two multi-center research grants. He has published over 200 peer-reviewed papers in the areas of sports medicine and neuroscience.

His team's groundbreaking work has garnered numerous awards and has influenced concussion guidelines in the NFL and NCAA. In 2011, Guskiewicz received the prestigious MacArthur Fellowship for his innovative work on the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of sport-related concussions. In 2011, he convinced the NFL and NCAA to change the kickoff rule, which resulted in a 50% reduction in concussions on kickoffs. In 2013, Time magazine named him a Game Changer, one of 18 "innovators and problem-solvers that are inspiring change in America."

Guskiewicz earned a bachelor's degree in athletic training from West Chester University, a master's in exercise physiology/athletic training from the University of Pittsburgh and a doctorate in sports medicine from the University of Virginia.



## THOMAS D. JEITSCHKO

*Interim Provost and Executive Vice President  
for Academic Affairs*

Thomas D. Jeitschko is a professor of economics who serves as the Interim Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs at Michigan State University. He transitioned into this role from serving as the Senior Associate Provost, overseeing the budgeting process of the Office of the Provost, provost's office communications and events, Institutional Research, and Institutional Space Planning and Management as well as the Apple Developer Academy with MSU in Detroit and the Student Information System transition project. Prior to that, he was MSU's Associate Provost for Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies and Dean of the Graduate School after serving for several years as the Director of the American Economic Association Summer Program.

Before arriving at MSU, Jeitschko held faculty positions at Royal Holloway College, University of London, and Texas A&M, as well as shorter appointments at Duke, Johns Hopkins, and Georgetown universities, and at Humboldt University in Berlin, Germany. He has also worked at the U.S. Department of Justice in Washington, D.C. as an economist in the Antitrust Division. He has advised and consulted for States Attorneys General Offices throughout the U.S. concerning antitrust and consumer protection matters.

Jeitschko holds an advanced degree in economics from the University of Münster in Germany with a specialization in Economic History and a Ph.D. from the University of Virginia with a specialization in Mathematical Economics. His research interests are in applied economic theory with concentrations in industrial organization, law and economics, and micro-economics more broadly.

# Nomination and Application Process

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Michigan State invites inquiries, nominations, and applications for the position of Dean of the College of Arts & Letters. Interested candidates should confidentially submit a curriculum vitae, and a letter of interest (Adobe PDF files preferred). Materials should represent qualifications relative to the opportunities and challenges described in this document, inclusive of a statement detailing how your past and future work will contribute to advancing MSU's commitment to inclusive excellence to [MSU.CAL@russellreynolds.com](mailto:MSU.CAL@russellreynolds.com).

**For fullest consideration, materials should be received as soon as possible and preferably by January 13, 2025.**

*All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, citizenship, age, disability, or protected veteran status.*

## Contact

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