



**POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT**

**DEAN OF THE SCHOOL OF ARTS  
AND COMMUNICATION (S0AC)**

**PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY**

Tacoma, Washington

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**WITT/KIEFFER**

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*This position specification is intended to provide information about  
Pacific Lutheran University and the position of Dean of the School of Arts and Communication.  
It is designed to assist qualified individuals in assessing their interest.*

## **THE OPPORTUNITY**

Pacific Lutheran University (PLU) invites applications and nominations for the position of Dean of the School of Arts and Communication (SOAC). The immediate past dean (2006-2009) left summer 2009 to assume the provost position at Capital University, and a senior faculty member is acting dean for the 2009-2010 academic year. It is anticipated that a new dean will start by July 2010.

In recent years, having welcomed significant numbers of new faculty, SOAC has positioned itself to move toward greater distinction by adopting national benchmark standards for reviewing programs and developing student learning outcomes, redesigned curricula, and continued efforts for community outreach. The new dean will guide the School's continuing progress in setting and achieving national benchmarks.

The dean will be responsible for the leadership of the School and its faculty, academic administration, and School advancement. The dean will provide vision and leadership for student learning, curriculum development, and the development of faculty in their teaching, scholarship and professional activity, and their university citizenship. Engagement with the local community (Tacoma, Seattle, and Olympia) will be a key responsibility. Further, a critical component of the dean's portfolio is working with the university development team to secure endowment funds and other resources.

The dean, reporting to the provost, works collaboratively with the other academic deans. The successful candidate will be appointed as an administrator with faculty status.

## **PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY**

Pacific Lutheran University is located six miles south of Tacoma, in suburban Parkland, Washington, on a 126-acre woodland campus. PLU offers more than 3,600 students a unique blend of academically rigorous liberal arts and professional programs. Students develop skills in decision making, analysis, communication, and reasoning that prepare them for a lifetime of success – both in their careers and in service to others.

There are a number of reasons why students choose PLU, including the influence of the Lutheran faith and heritage on university culture, values, and academic program. Students are drawn to the academic rigor, the centrality of the liberal arts, the professional schools, the commitment to global education, and the emphasis on educating for lives of service. PLU provides undergraduate education through majors and minors in three divisions of the College of Arts and Sciences, four professional schools, and interdisciplinary programs. Graduate education is offered in business, nursing, education, marriage and family therapy, and creative writing.

There are 260 full-time faculty and a 15:1 student faculty ratio. The work of the university is supported by an administration and staff of 400. One-fourth of the university tenure-stream faculty has been hired in the last four years.

PLU is led by a president who is serving in his 18<sup>th</sup> year. Under his leadership the university has participated in two long-range planning processes, *PLU 2000* and *PLU 2010* ([www.plu.edu/~plu2010](http://www.plu.edu/~plu2010)), each culminating in a series of initiatives. Defining the university's distinction and developing three academic pathways are continuing initiatives: student-faculty research, global education, and purposeful learning. In particular, the university is known for its commitment to developing in all students a global perspective including an understanding of the intercultural and intellectual richness of the world. More than 40 percent of undergraduate students spend time studying abroad.

## History

Pacific Lutheran University was founded 119 years ago by Scandinavian immigrants. Throughout its history PLU has been owned by the Lutheran Church and maintains a healthy and progressive relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The school was incorporated December 11, 1890, as Pacific Lutheran University Association. Until 1918, the school operated as an academy offering four years of high school. In the fall of 1920, Pacific Lutheran College was formed. The College was regionally accredited in 1936, and the first bachelor's degrees conferred in 1940. The high school department was dropped in 1944. In 1955 the college conferred its first Master of Arts degree in education.

In the fall of 1960 the college again became Pacific Lutheran University, with its academic program organized under the College of Arts and Sciences and the then College of Professional Studies. The College of Arts and Sciences remains with three divisions: humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences. The College of Professional Studies expanded into separate professional schools.

## THE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND COMMUNICATION

The School of Arts and Communication (SOAC) is a community of artists and scholars—students, faculty, and staff—dedicated to the fulfillment of the human spirit through creative expression and careful scholarship. SOAC offers professional education to artists and communicators grounded in the framework of a liberal arts education. The School encourages all of its members to pursue their artistic and scholarly work in an environment that challenges complacency, nurtures personal growth, and maintains a strong culture of collegial integrity. SOAC is dedicated to building and enhancing community through the study, practice, and understanding of artistic expression.

Goals include preparing majors for careers and community participation in the visual, communication, and performing arts in an increasingly diverse and technologically complex world; building community by providing a "hot shop" of arts in a process that provides a forum for the exchange of ideas, values, common concerns, and aesthetic achievement that enrich our region and our world; and helping non-majors and community members develop an understanding and appreciation of the vital role of the arts in our society and culture.

See [www.plu.edu/~soac/mission](http://www.plu.edu/~soac/mission) for more information about mission and goals.

## **SOAC ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

The mission and goals of SOAC serve to underscore the design of the curriculum and community outreach. For each program within SOAC, the curriculum is defined by three interactive spheres: classroom instruction, studio and guided learning, and public performance and display. Each sphere is defined by its objectives and is designed to help move learners from concept to practice, to performance and display.

Each department in SOAC shares common design principles for its curriculum. First, the departments offer a liberal arts degree program in their respective Bachelor of Arts curriculum. And, second, each department offers a professional degree program that builds on the liberal arts foundation and supports professional development and application. The professional degree tracks are based on a three-part model: conceptual and critical foundation, studio and guided learning, and public performance and display.

### **Art**

The Department of Art is focused on the visual arts as a source of knowledge and method of communication. Teaching in the department is directed toward the goals of providing major students with the highest possible level of technical skill in arts media, linking artistic skill with the creative and effective communication of knowledge and ideas, and exposing the wider university community to the importance and value of the visual arts. Majors are provided a solid foundation for entry-level careers in art-related fields and preparation for graduate school.

Those pursuing the Bachelor of Arts select either a studio art or art history concentration. Bachelor of Fine Arts students are required to complete an area of emphasis: two-dimensional media (drawing/painting, printmaking, or film arts), three-dimensional media (ceramics or sculpture), or graphic design.

The Wekell and University galleries on campus provide a place for community interaction and opportunities for students and professionals to display their art. Connections with the art community are fostered through student internships. The global focus of the university is accomplished through January-term art courses in Paris and New York.

There are six full-time teaching faculty and two continuing part-time visiting artists. All of the tenure-stream studio faculty have their terminal MFA degrees and the art historians hold terminal PhD's. Four of the faculty have been hired in the last five years.

## **Communication and Theatre**

The Department of Communication and Theatre is dedicated to a philosophical perspective of communication as the process by which shared understandings are created among various audiences through the use of symbols. Teaching in the department has goals of seeking to prepare students with specific competencies to enter a diverse array of careers and situating pedagogy in the broader context of a liberal arts tradition. The curriculum and co-curriculum are based on the conviction that all students share the need for certain skills and abilities to help them adapt to and function in a dynamic and complex world. The curriculum is organized into two programs.

The communication program is one of the most highly enrolled programs in the university, averaging 140 declared majors. Five years ago the curriculum was redesigned, allowing for more half-semester skill development courses. Students may earn the Bachelor of Arts or the Bachelor of Arts in Communication. The latter program requires students to select from concentrations in conflict and global peace building, journalism, media performance and production, or public relations/advertising.

Theatre students may earn a Bachelor of Arts or a Bachelor of Fine Arts (acting/directing or technical/design concentration). These curricula include coursework in dramatic literature, playwriting, script analysis, movement, and voice.

Minors are available in theatre, dance performance, communication, and publishing & printing arts. The School of Business offers a specialized business minor for communication and theatre majors.

Among co-curricular activities are university theatre, forensics, newspaper, radio, television, and MediaLab. MediaLab is an award-winning student media organization with expertise across the media spectrum.

There are 14 full-time faculty teaching in the department. Eight have PhD's, three the MFA, and three an MA (two of these in final stages of completing their PhD's.). Four of the faculty have been hired in the last five years.

## **Music**

The Department of Music brings together students, faculty, and the public to explore, understand, present, and appreciate the musical arts in all forms. To this end, the program is open to all students at PLU, supports the artistic activity and ambition of the faculty, and provides opportunity for community participation as performers and audience. With nearly twenty percent of all PLU students participating in music activities, opportunities abound in class, in the studio, and in ensembles. The department seeks to enrich a broader constituency and therefore engages in a significant outreach program beyond the campus and its immediate community.

Four majors and two minors are available, with the majors sharing a common core of study during the first three years. The Bachelor of Music in Performance covers five areas of concentration (instrumental, voice, piano, organ, and composition). The Bachelor of Music Education, for those wishing to teach in public schools, has concentrations in band, orchestra, and choral. The Bachelor of Musical Arts combines the study of music with an outside non-music field. The department also offers a Bachelor of Arts which includes a broad curriculum of liberal arts study. PLU students may obtain a generalized or specialized minor.

The music faculty consists of 15 full-time and over 40 part-time faculty. Among the full-time faculty there are 12 with doctorates and the remainder with master's degrees. The part-time faculty teach in the private lesson studios, perform in faculty ensembles, and teach in the classroom. Among the part-time faculty, the average length of service is over 10 years, providing an exceptionally stable resource for this important part of the department.

The music program is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music, with the next accreditation report and visit in academic year 2111-12.

## **THE ROLE OF THE DEAN**

The dean will be responsible for the leadership of the School and its faculty, academic administration, and School advancement. The dean will provide vision and leadership for student learning, curriculum development, and faculty development in teaching, scholarship and artistic performance and production, and university citizenship. Engagement with the local community (Tacoma, Seattle, and Olympia) will be a key responsibility. Further, working with the university development team is a critical component of the dean's portfolio.

The dean, reporting to the provost, works collaboratively with the other academic deans. The successful candidate will be appointed as an administrator with faculty status.

Reporting to the dean are the chairs of art, communication and theatre, and music; director of the MediaLab; and an assistant.

## **OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE NEW DEAN**

### *Ensuring strategic direction including curricula review and effective assessment*

As the university enters into its new long-range planning process, *PLU 2020*, it is imperative that the dean work with faculty and staff in SOAC in informing the process. This requires a review of the mission and goals of SOAC, a strategic plan to achieve pertinent markers, a review of curricula, and attention to internal and external communities. In particular, refinement of the capstones for each major and a study of internship programs are clear priorities for the new dean.

*Leading the professional development of faculty*

With more than one-third of the full-time faculty having been at PLU for five years or less and with the large number of visiting, clinical and part-time faculty in the School, it is imperative that the dean institute a plan to develop faculty as teachers, scholars, and leaders. PLU provides a number of teaching-learning opportunities—SOAC faculty should be encouraged to participate. With a standard tenure system and the ongoing university discussion of what constitutes scholarly work, the dean is expected to help articulate various benchmarks for scholarly work in the areas of arts and communication. With the looming retirement of senior faculty over the next several years, it is important that all high level administrators find ways to develop leaders for their schools and divisions as well as for the university.

*Building an endowment and other development activities*

The new dean is expected to find ways to supplement the annual budget with funds to support the academic and co-curricular programs. More students and increase community involvement stretches available resources and the incremental budget increases have not kept pace with rising demand, increased costs, and needed infrastructure and equipment repair and replacement. Working with development, the dean is expected to find new sources to support these initiatives.

*Envisioning future of facilities*

The PLU campus master plan ([www.plu.edu/~mstrplan](http://www.plu.edu/~mstrplan)) provides a contemporary needs assessment and direction for numerous facilities upgrades for arts and communication. There is anticipation that ultimately a building will replace Ingram (art and communication) and an appropriate home will be found for theatre (Eastvold Hall renovation). The new dean will be an active partner in discussions of space needs for all SOAC programs.

*Leveraging connections with other units*

There are natural curricular connections with other units, including those in business, political science, and humanities. Some curricular connections exist, however yet more should be explored. There are discussions underway with the business school for a joint arts management degree.

*Engaging the wider community*

As the arts play an important role in society and a highly visible opportunity for the university, the dean will develop ways to better connect with the local community. Countless opportunities exist for partnerships and for student internship placements. Tacoma has truly transformed itself with the emergence of a "Museum District" in the heart of downtown. Three major museums form an impressive triangle – the Tacoma Art Museum, the Museum of Glass, and the Washington State History Museum. Linking them is the Chihuly Bridge of Glass and historic Union Station, also filled with Chihuly art. Tacoma also boasts numerous theatre performance companies, opera, symphony, and additional venues. Finally, the Tacoma public school system has a successful arts-specific high school, Tacoma School of the Arts.

## **DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS**

The successful candidate will demonstrate qualities of innovative thinking, collaborative leadership, and an appreciation of the arts in a way that will enable the School to achieve its goals. Candidates should have:

- A clearly established record of teaching and scholarship in the arts and/or communication;
- The highest terminal degree for their field of expertise;
- A strong record of higher education administration;
- A record of success in managing a budget and good stewardship of resources;
- An ability to work effectively within a university community;
- A record of success working with community organizations and constituencies; and
- The ability to successfully cultivate external funding sources.

## **PROCEDURE FOR CANDIDACY**

The search process is currently underway. Nominations are welcome. Review of applications begins September 15, 2009 and continues until the position is filled.

Confidential inquires may be directed to the Witt/Kieffer consultant supporting this search: Oliver B. Tomlin at 215-568-2160. To receive full consideration, please electronically send a nomination or a letter of interest, curriculum vitae, and names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses of at least five references (who will not be contacted without permission) to [PLU\\_D\\_SOAC@wittkieffer.com](mailto:PLU_D_SOAC@wittkieffer.com).

The University is committed to diversity, endorses the goals of equal opportunity and affirmative action, and actively seeks applications from women and persons of color.