Position and Candidate Specification

Cornell University
Ronald P. Lynch Dean, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

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CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Cornell University is a remarkable community of scholars, educators, students, staff, and alumni who are deeply influenced by proud traditions and a set of cherished founding principles. A privately endowed university and a partner of the State University of New York, Cornell is a world-class research institution known for the breadth and rigor of its curricula, an academy dedicated to preparing young people to be well-educated and well-rounded citizens of the world, and a center of knowledge able to share discoveries for the benefit of the State, nation, and world. Cornell’s faculty and students believe in the critical importance of knowledge—both theoretical and applied—as a means of improving the human condition and solving the world’s problems.

As it turns the page on its sesquicentennial celebration, Cornell remains committed to its key principles. It embraces traditional liberal arts education, practical applications of knowledge, and interdisciplinary and collaborative approaches to research and teaching. It champions free and open intellectual inquiry and expression, treats all individuals with dignity and respect, celebrates difference and diversity, and remains open and accessible to all who meet its high academic standards.

Today, Cornell University consists of 15 schools and colleges, four of which receive support from New York State as part of Cornell’s land-grant mission. At the Ithaca campus, the Weill Cornell Medicine campuses in New York City and Qatar, and the new Cornell Tech campus in New York City, the University enrolls nearly 15,000 undergraduates and over 8,000 graduate and professional school students. Cornell employs approximately 8,100 staff and 1,600 professorial faculty members in Ithaca and at Cornell Tech and an additional 5,000 staff and 1,700 faculty members at Weill Cornell Medicine in New York City. The University is governed by a 64-member board of trustees, which includes representatives from the faculty, students, staff, alumni, and New York State.

Cornell’s financial condition is strong with a balanced budget, a growing endowment, and an enviable history of attracting research funds. The operating budget is approximately $4.8 billion, of which 53 percent supports the Ithaca campus, 46 percent supports Weill Cornell Medicine, and one percent supports Cornell Tech. The University’s investment portfolio’s value is close to $6.7 billion (as of June 2019).

THE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND LIFE SCIENCES

As a premier institution of scientific exploration, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS) connects the life, agricultural, environmental, and social sciences to provide world-class education, spark unexpected discoveries, and inspire pioneering solutions. CALS is uniquely positioned to address global challenges, given the College’s commitment to developing innovative solutions that leverage Cornell’s expertise in science and technology and its strength in collaborating with global foundations, economic and government agencies, and industry leaders.
CALS’s approach to research, education, and outreach is interdisciplinary and collaborative. Programming and priorities are diverse, global, experiential, and aligned with each of the University’s “Radical Collaborations” in data science, genome biology, infection biology, nanoscale science, social sciences, humanities and arts, sustainability, and digital agriculture. Cornell’s land-grant commitment guides the College’s focus on ensuring human well-being while protecting and restoring the environment and working to transform food and human systems in financially and ecologically sustainable ways.

CALS is among the most comprehensive academic units in the world and is widely regarded for the quality of its programs. The College has nearly 3,800 undergraduate students and over 1,000 graduate students and encompasses 23 majors, 42 minors, and 1,500 courses of study. There are 360 faculty, 290 academic professionals, 210 post-docs, and 960 staff affiliated with CALS. The rich array of schools, departments, institutes, and initiatives reflects CALS’s commitment to an interdisciplinary culture and a deeply held belief that effecting meaningful change requires a holistic, systems-based approach to problem solving.

CALS has 16 departments and two schools:
- Animal Science
- Biological and Environmental Engineering (with the College of Engineering)
- Communication
- Computational Biology (with Computing and Information Science)
- Development Sociology
- Earth and Atmospheric Sciences (with the College of Engineering)
- Ecology and Evolutionary Biology (with the College of Arts and Sciences)
- Entomology
- Food Science
- Landscape Architecture
- Microbiology
- Molecular Biology and Genetics (with the College of Arts and Sciences)
- Natural Resources
- Neurobiology and Behavior (with the College of Arts and Sciences)
- Nutritional Sciences (with the College of Human Ecology)
- Statistics and Data Science (with Computing and Information Science)
- Charles H. Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management (with the SC Johnson College of Business)
- School of Integrative Plant Science

Total research expenditures in 2018 were $237 million. The College has almost 50 programs, centers, and institutes that extend the reach of scholarship across New York State and beyond. Key programs include:
- Cornell AgriTech in Geneva, NY works across disciplines to create food and agriculture systems, exploring questions from multiple perspectives and translating discoveries into practical solutions to help growers and businesses thrive.
- The Center of Excellence in Food and Agriculture was established in 2018 with $1 million in New York State support and was the first center of its kind to facilitate academic and business collaborations to grow New York’s agriculture and food economy and accelerate business development, jobs, and new products.
- The Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station (CUAES) links Cornell’s world-class research farms and plant growth facilities with one of the nation’s most comprehensive statewide cooperative
extension systems, addressing pressing issues that directly affect the health and welfare of New York State and beyond.

- Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) “puts knowledge to work” in pursuit of economic vitality, ecological sustainability, and social well-being, bringing local experience and research-based solutions together to help New York State families and communities thrive in a rapidly changing world.

More information about Cornell University and the College may be found at https://www.cornell.edu/ and https://cals.cornell.edu/.
The CALS Dean will be responsible for further developing the capacity of the College and moving associated programs forward in reputation, distinction, and influence. The Dean will be expected to expand the intellectual, financial, and human assets of CALS while serving as a critical member of the senior leadership team of Cornell University.

**KEY RELATIONSHIPS**

Reports to  Provost

Current direct reports
- Executive Dean
- Senior Associate Deans (2)
  - Associate Dean & Director, CUAES and Cornell AgriTech
  - Associate Dean & Director, Academic Programs
- Associate Dean & Director, CCE
- Associate Dean, Finance & Administration
- Associate Dean, Government & Community Relations
- Associate Dean, Marketing & Communications
- Associate Dean, Alumni Affairs & Development
- Associate Dean, Diversity & Inclusion

Other key relationships
- Department Chairs (16) (reporting to Senior Associate Deans)
- School Directors (2) (reporting to Senior Associate Deans)
- Center/Program Directors (12)
- Faculty of the College
- Deans of the University
- New York State legislators and agency representatives
- New York State agriculture groups
- Students
- Alumni
- Advisory Council, CALS

**KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Enhancing the strength and supporting the mission of constituent academic units while leading the development and implementation of a compelling strategy for the College as a whole.
- Leading the recruitment and retention of a diverse and world-class faculty, staff, and student cohorts.
- Engaging with the University’s and College’s senior leadership group, faculty, staff, and students to create strong and productive working relationships and promote a culture of transparency.
- Ensuring positive and effective relationships with relevant accreditation bodies.
- Focusing on resource allocation and fundraising to support students, programmatic initiatives, research, and physical infrastructure.
- Playing a critical and constructive role in promoting collaboration and interdisciplinary partnerships in departments within and outside of the College, maintaining strong ties with other units at Cornell,
supporting notable University initiatives (e.g., Radical Collaborations), and engendering connections with agriculture and life sciences leaders and practitioners in New York State and elsewhere.
Cornell University seeks a creative leader and accomplished scholar as the next leader of CALS. Candidates for the role should have a record of successful leadership in an academic enterprise and experience guiding the interaction of people and systems to create the highest levels of institutional academic accomplishment. He or she will combine intellectual curiosity with management acumen, be adept at facilitating connections and building partnerships and collaborations, and be able to serve as a trusted and respected member of a university leadership team. Above all, the Dean must support and advance a culture that values collaboration, shared governance, thoughtful management, and aggressive pursuit of academic excellence at a College rooted in scholarship and application.

**IDEAL EXPERIENCE**

**Institutional Leadership**
Successful service leading an academic unit or program of sufficient scale and complexity, including exposure to recruiting and developing faculty, developing a leadership team, managing a budget, and developing and implementing institutional strategies.

**External Representation**
Demonstrated skill in building relationships, collaborations, and connections with a range of external stakeholders; ability to represent the interests and contributions of an academic unit; enthusiasm for philanthropic activity.

**Academic Rank and Degrees**
Candidates should have attained full professorial rank and possess a record of scholarship that will qualify for tenure at Cornell. A terminal degree in an area of CALS’s scholarship is required and national or international recognition of scholarship, e.g., through academy membership and/or fellowship, is additive.

**CRITICAL LEADERSHIP CAPABILITIES**

**Strategic Thinking**
In partnership with the faculty and other relevant constituencies, the next Dean will advance an institutional vision that is relevant, expansive, and achievable. This vision should build on CALS’s significant strengths to address emerging opportunities and public needs. The Dean will evaluate the sustainability and output of current programs to ensure that the College effectively deploys resources in support of its academic and service missions and develops the partnerships required to ensure the continued expansion of its research enterprise.

**Academic Leadership**
In a multi-dimensional College with a range of academic and service missions and widely distributed units, the next Dean should be prepared to represent CALS’s interests while contributing to the overall success of Cornell’s programs and initiatives. The Dean should display an inclusive, visible, and decisive style of leadership to encourage broad engagement and maximize institutional efficiency and participation. The Dean should
dedicate significant time and attention to reinforcing the College’s commitment to diversity, broadly defined, and leading efforts to enhance the diversity of faculty, staff, and student cohorts.

**College Representation**
To pursue emerging education, research, and service opportunities, compete for high-performing cohorts of faculty, staff, and students, and position the College for continued enhancement of its national and international profile, the Dean will serve as an enthusiastic proponent of initiatives and generate appreciation for institutional accomplishments. Outreach to individual, institutional, industry, and governmental stakeholders and supporters is a major part of this role; the Dean should be prepared to spend substantial energy in support of New York State and other key external relationships and toward philanthropic activity to meet annual and campaign-related fundraising goals.

**ABOUT THE SEARCH**
Cornell University is being assisted in this process by Spencer Stuart. To confidentially submit comments, questions, nominations, or expressions of interest, please send an e-mail with any supporting materials to CALSDean@spencerstuart.com.