

Zachary A. Smith, Ph.D, Lauren Bruce-Stets,  
And Kimberly Migoya  
Wittkiewer  
CSUArtsandSciencesDean@wittkiewer.com

March 6, 2022

Search Committee:

I wish to express my interest in the position of Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Cleveland State University. I understand that the CSU Strategic Plan 2.0 establishes the realignment of colleges, thus forming the College of Arts and Sciences in “order to reflect the University’s unique strengths” among other reasons. I have overseen nearly all disciplines in the new College of Arts and Sciences in my current position of Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and as Acting Associate Provost at Lamar University, and in my prior roles of Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies and Associate Graduate Dean. I served as Chair of the Department of Political Science and as a longtime faculty member in large Colleges of Arts and Sciences. I would advocate for the new college because the interrelationship of the creative arts, liberal arts, and social and natural sciences in General Education will form the basis of success of every student at Cleveland State, while at the same time the majors enjoy the excellence of the disciplines.

The new college will be strengthened by a new strategic plan that is based on the university strategic plan, but unique to the College and created by the faculty. The Arts and Sciences Strategic Plan that I lead at my current institution is one of action. The faculty have formed four college-wide committees in four strategic goals: Creative Activities and Research, Engaged Learning, Enrollment, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). Simultaneously, each department develops initiatives in each goal to carry out over the next year, while the Dean’s office supports the initiatives. I also have strategic planning experience at the university level by serving as co-chair on the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Planning President’s Taskforce, and the university wide strategic planning Steering Committee. In the CSU College of Arts and Sciences, I foresee the College Strategic Plan as a process to build cohesion among the departments, as well as a guide for the college budget priorities.

As Dean, I would bring experience in leading colleges in teaching, curriculum, and research. I have directly supervised faculty and chairs in Arts and Sciences, mentored them in tenure, promotion, and professional development, and initiated programs on diversity, equity, and inclusion, student success, and faculty research. Cleveland State University at this time offers an opportunity for growth of the core disciplines –from the creative arts, humanities, social sciences to the natural sciences. I hope to bring my skills and knowledge to support the faculty in building a successful College of Arts and Sciences.

I received both the M.A. and the Ph.D. in Political Science from The Ohio State University. My record of teaching and research allowed me to achieve the level of full Professor. My teaching areas focus on Western and Eastern Europe, women and international politics, democratization, and international conflict in both my own department and in interdisciplinary studies.

In addition to being a social scientist in a College of Arts and Sciences throughout my career, I have also served as an affiliate member of Black Studies, Women Studies, and International Studies. As a graduate dean, I oversaw 75 programs, including the MM in Music, the MFA in Art and Design, as well as creative writing, and have worked alongside and supported Dance and Theatre and Mass Communications. I oversee or have overseen the natural sciences, as well as professional studies, such as Clinical Psychology, the Psy.D., and a School of Nursing. With this wide-ranging experience, I hope to contribute to a college culture in which every discipline will be supported and treated fairly.

I wish to address the essential components of the role of the dean and the experience and vision that I will bring to CSU:

### **Leadership**

Leadership from the Dean's Office necessitates collaboration, adaptability, and transparency. Leadership today is more about response to change and adaptability than personal characteristics. I have experience in staffing and structuring a dean's office, in overseeing the day to day workings of a college, and handling curriculum, scheduling, and personnel and Human Resource issues. I take diversity, equity, and inclusion into account in all decisions and interactions with faculty, staff, and students. I support Chairs and Program Directors through regular interactions and meetings, workshops, and retreats. I also hold open discussion meetings with the faculty so that they may ask questions, bring concerns, and interact both with the dean's office and each other. I hold these sessions in my current college both online and in person for availability.

My management style is collaborative and communicative, while allowing my leadership team through their autonomy and expertise to in turn develop and lead their own teams. I encourage and regularly sponsor professional development opportunities for the faculty, staff, and senior leadership teams. I set high standards of excellence for myself and others; the key is communication, transparency, and shared governance, as well as favoring the excellence in education that is central to a College of Arts and Sciences.

### **Urban Partnerships**

Public research universities must now be engaged with the community. As an urban university, CSU serves as a cultural and economic leader interacting with the greater Cleveland area. As practical and pragmatic leaders, urban public research institutions play a role in the community by applying their research, providing medical and counseling services, engaging in internships for their students, serving on advisory boards, creating partnerships, and continuing relationships with alumni.

As an urban institution, Cleveland State University and the College of Arts and Sciences within it have the opportunity to continue and create new partnerships and agreements within Cleveland and beyond, such as the Department of Theatre and Dance's relationship to Playhouse Square, cooperation with Cleveland Clinic, the Cleveland Innovation District (and its development), and the Cleveland ARTS Education Consortium.

My current college's initiatives and programs involve external collaboration with various non-profit organizations (such as hospitals, clinics, and schools), industry, and universities. I have helped to design academic programs, such as the Healthcare Informatics Master's at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, which partnered with Barnes Jewish Christian

Hospital in St. Louis. I also helped to design and have accredited an MS in Genetic Counseling at Indiana State University. In the second year of this Master's program, students carry out their practicums in urban settings throughout the country while taking their courses online.

In my current position as Dean, the departments in Arts and Sciences carry out field work and practicums in area agencies and hospitals. The Natural Sciences work with the area high schools to interest students in the STEM disciplines, Computer Science and Earth and Space Sciences hold summer camps, Political Science sponsors internships with area judges, while in Clinical Psychology, an internal clinic is maintained for the students to serve the community and university. In Southeast Texas, a bit north of Galveston –while not a very large urban environment– our programs have had the opportunity to create an interdisciplinary Center for Resiliency (based on wind events, hurricanes, and oil refinery accidents) and to work with our five city Museums, including the Southeast Texas Art Museum, as well as area theatres and the Symphony of Southeast Texas. I am also fortunate to oversee in the College of Arts and Sciences the oil museum, Spindletop - Gladys City Boomtown Museum, which works with the Department of History. I would like to use my experience in these relationships to help the CSU College of Arts and Sciences grow in its partnerships in Cleveland.

### **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity in support of Faculty and Student Success**

I am deeply committed to diversity, equity and inclusion. As CSU works to increase enrollment and the student success of underserved minorities, I can bring my experience from working at a university that is over 50% LatinX, African American, and other underserved populations. I recently served as a co-chair of the President's Taskforce on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, overseeing seven subcommittees on wide-ranging issues of DEI at Lamar University: campus diversity climate; curriculum and co-curriculum transformation; enhancing intercultural competency; recruitment, retention, and professional advancement of faculty of color; academic success and timely graduation of students of color; women and gender equity; community engagement. Members of this taskforce included faculty, students, and staff. I have also developed diversity initiatives in the colleges and departments I have led. In my current position, I have created an Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Faculty Council as part of the college strategic plan and support the chairs in webinars that address unconscious biases and micro-aggressions in their disciplines.

As Dean at CSU, I would serve as a strong advocate of faculty, staff, and student diversity. I have served as co-PI on an NSF IT-Catalyst ADVANCE grant to recruit, retain, and promote women and minority faculty in the STEM disciplines and would bring this approach to the hiring practices of the college. I adhere to the *Inclusive Excellence* model, which combines three previously established diversity models: equal employment, cultural diversity, and academic diversity (Williams, 2005; Williams and Clowney, 2007). This model relies on the promotion of diversity from the top administration throughout the university; in other words, diversity is a central theme and not an afterthought. I believe that my experiences fit well with CSU, as my approach to and experience in diversity and multiculturalism can help serve the faculty, staff, and students as they increasingly grow a diverse and welcoming campus and learning environment. I would support the chairs, staff, and faculty in diversity initiatives.

### **Budget Management, Advancement, and Research**

The budget in the College of Arts and Sciences should follow closely the Strategic Plans of the college and the university, as well as state and federal economic situations. In my last two positions, I have handled extensive budgets and overseen the budgets of several units. At my current institution as dean of a large complex college, I manage \$25 million in the College of Arts and Sciences (12 departments and schools) with significant budget constraints and challenges brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic and natural disasters, such as hurricanes. While serving as Interim Associate Provost last year, I managed issues that spanned all of the colleges and developed knowledge on the university-level budget and the effect of state formulas and legislative decisions on a public university.

At Indiana State University, I oversaw four major units, each with their own budget and goals: the College of Graduate and Professional Studies (with 75 programs in five academic colleges); the Office of Sponsored Programs including compliance committees; Global Engagement overseeing international students, recruitment, compliance, and study abroad; undergraduate research. I also housed in the graduate and professional college Research and Teaching Centers named “Unbounded Possibilities”, as wide-ranging as the Community School of the Arts, the Center for Genomic Advocacy, the Center for Unmanned Systems and Human Capital Development, and the Institute for Community Sustainability. I encountered budget challenges in supporting faculty external grants and the distribution of six million dollars to fund Teaching Assistants, based on enrollment, program review excellence, and need of the programs. In encouraging external grants, as well as supporting research in general, as Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, I have funded course releases and Dean’s Summer Research Fellowships in order to give faculty members the time and opportunity to work on research in any stage from literature gathering to data collection, writing, publishing, dissemination, and grant writing.

As Dean, I would take advantage of advancement opportunities, as well as incoming research and state funds. I have worked with Advancement in all of my roles but most extensively as Dean of Arts and Sciences. In this role, I work regularly with an Advancement Officer. As a team we have quadrupled the advancement funds of the college and have created an active College Advisory Board, whereas the former board had become dormant. The key to the new Advisory Board of the College of Arts and Sciences is that individual members work with department chairs to initiate partnerships (internships, business agreements) and scholarships, in addition to college initiatives.

As Dean at CSU, I would work to build relationships with prospective donors and alumni and to form a new Advisory Board. This will help to identify new monies and donations, as well as new research and creative activities for the faculty and engaged learning, such as internships, for the students, thus strengthening community partnerships.

### **Student recruitment, retention, completion, and enrollment management**

In my last two positions, including the current one, I have been responsible for enrollment in my college. In the ISU Graduate and Professional College, as well as in Arts and Sciences at Lamar, I have worked with the departments and programs in their recruitment plans, and with Enrollment Management in recruitment, yield, retention, and completion. My current team includes Student Success coaches and a marketing coordinator cooperating with college departments, student life, and enrollment management.

I offer experience in distance education and online learning, as both Indiana State and Lamar offer half of the programs online, with an instructional design team to support faculty. As

part of Lamar University's efforts to deal with the pressures of the pandemic, I chaired the University Committee on Course Delivery and Coursework offerings, creating choices for the students among course modalities: on campus socially-distanced attendance, hybrid courses, and complete online attendance (either synchronous or asynchronous). This committee was a partnership among faculty, technology, facilities, students, and administration. These are a few examples of experience that I can bring to CSU in working for student success.

In sum, the new College of Arts and Sciences at Cleveland State University will have outstanding opportunities to grow as the central college in a public urban institution in order to grow diversity, equity, and inclusion, community partnerships, excellence in academic programs, and student success.

I look forward to the possibility of speaking with you about serving Cleveland State University in this position.

Sincerely,

Lynn M. Maurer

Lynn M. Maurer, Ph.D.  
[lynnmaurer@att.net](mailto:lynnmaurer@att.net)  
cell: 314-303-3675