Position Specification

University of Houston
Houston, Texas

Executive Director of Admissions

Institutional Background

The University of Houston (UH) is a public research university and the flagship institution of the University of Houston System. Founded in 1927, it is Texas’ third-largest university with nearly 43,000 students. Its campus spans 667 acres in southeast Houston. From 1983 to 1991, the school was known as University of Houston–University Park. The Carnegie Foundation classifies UH as a tier one research university.

The university offers over 300 degree programs through its 12 academic colleges on campus—including programs leading to professional degrees in law, optometry, and pharmacy. The institution conducts nearly $130 million annually in research and operates more than 40 research centers and institutes on campus. Interdisciplinary research includes superconductivity, space commercialization and exploration, biomedical sciences and engineering, energy and natural resources, and artificial intelligence. UH’s alumni base exceeds 225,000. The university contributes over $3 billion annually to the Texas economy, generating about 24,000 jobs.

The University of Houston hosts a variety of theatrical performances, concerts, lectures, and events. It has over 500 student organizations and 16 intercollegiate sports teams. Annual UH events and traditions include The Cat’s Back, Homecoming, and Frontier Fiesta. The university’s varsity athletic teams, known as the Houston Cougars, are members of the American Athletic Conference and compete in the NCAA’s Division I in all sports. The football team regularly makes bowl game appearances, and the men’s basketball team has made 19 appearances in the NCAA Division I Tournament—including five Final Four appearances. The men’s golf team has won 16 national championships—the second-most of any NCAA golf program.

When the Carnegie Foundation elevated the University of Houston to tier one status in 2011, the designation made the university one of only three public tier one research universities in the state of Texas, along with the University of Texas and Texas A&M.

Not only did tier one status confirm the university’s excellence, it also reaped economic and educational benefits for the city, the region, and the state. Simply, when the city of Houston’s namesake university does well, so does the city of Houston.

The city continues to evolve at a faster pace than other cities in America. As Houston’s namesake university, the institution must keep pace with the momentum of the city. There is still room for growth to solidify its position among nationally competitive research universities, including
broadening overall excellence and strengthening performance and reputation for student success. The institution’s administration is firmly committed to achieving these goals and transforming the University of Houston into the tier one university that Houston deserves.

Houston, Texas

Houston is the largest city in Texas and the fourth-largest city in the United States. According to 2012 U.S. Census estimates, the city had a population of 2.16 million people within a land area of 599.6 square miles. Houston is the seat of Harris County, and its metropolitan area is the fifth-largest in the U.S., with over 6 million people.

Houston was founded in 1836 on land near the banks of Buffalo Bayou (now known as Allen’s Landing) and incorporated as a city on June 5, 1837. The city was named after former General Sam Houston, who was president of the Republic of Texas and had commanded and won at the Battle of San Jacinto 25 miles east of where the city was established. The burgeoning port and railroad industries, combined with the discovery of oil in 1901, has led to continual surges in the city’s population. In the mid-twentieth century, Houston became the home of the Texas Medical Center—the world’s largest concentration of healthcare and research institutions—and NASA’s Johnson Space Center, where the

Mission Control Center is located.

Houston’s economy has a broad industrial base in energy, manufacturing, aeronautics, and transportation. It is also leading in health care sectors and building oilfield equipment; only New York City is home to more Fortune 500 headquarters. The Port of Houston ranks first in the United States in the amount of international waterborne tonnage handled and second in total cargo tonnage handled. The city has a diverse population and a large and growing international community. The metropolitan area is home to an estimated 1.1 million (21.4 percent) residents who were born outside the United States, with nearly two-thirds of the area’s foreign-born population from south of the United States-Mexico border. Additionally, more than one in five foreign-born residents is from Asia. The city is home to the nation’s third-largest concentration of consular offices, representing 86 countries.

Houston is home to many cultural institutions and exhibits, which attract more than 7 million visitors a year to the museum district. Houston has an active visual and performing arts scene in the theater district and offers year-round resident companies in all major performing arts.

Many annual events celebrate the diverse cultures of Houston. The largest and longest running is the annual Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, held over 20 days from late February to early March. The
event is the largest annual livestock show and rodeo in the world. Another large celebration is the annual nighttime Houston Pride Parade, held at the end of June. Other annual events include the Houston Greek Festival, Art Car Parade, the Houston Auto Show, the Houston International Festival, and the Bayou City Art Festival, which is considered to be one of the top five art festivals in the United States.

Houston received the official nickname of “Space City” in 1967 because it is the location of NASA’s Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center. Other nicknames often used by locals include “Bayou City,” “Clutch City,” “Magnolia City,” “New Houston” (a tribute to the cultural contributions of New Orleans natives who left their city during the 2005 Hurricane Katrina catastrophe), and “H-Town.”

For more information visit the Chamber of Commerce website: https://www.chamberofcommerce.com/houston-tx/chambers-of-commerce.

Mission Statement

The University of Houston offers nationally competitive and internationally recognized opportunities for learning, discovery, and engagement to a diverse population of students in a real-world setting. The University of Houston offers a full range of degree programs at the baccalaureate, master’s, doctoral, and professional levels and pursues a broad agenda of research and creative activities. As a knowledge resource to the public, the university builds partnerships with other educational institutions, community organizations, government agencies, and the private sector to serve the region and impact the world.

Shared Values of the Mission

As its primary goal, the University of Houston is dedicated to becoming a nationally recognized institution in the 21st century. The university will anticipate and respond to changing demographics in an increasingly diverse and globally interdependent world. It will use its resources to:

- Meet the challenges of educating a dynamic mix of nontraditional and traditional students.
- Promote excellence within the context of basic and applied research and scholarship.
- Identify and respond to the economic, social and cultural challenges affecting the quality of life in the city of Houston, the state of Texas, and the world through its education, research, and service.

University of Houston Goals

Nationally Competitive:
UH will become a nationally competitive public research university as measured by the Top American Public Research University analysis and/or Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.
**Student Success:**
UH will have a student profile consistent with a nationally competitive public research university by creating an environment in which student success can be ensured.

**Community Advancement:**
UH will commit to fulfilling regional and state workforce needs while becoming the primary engine of social, economic, and intellectual development.

**Athletic Competitiveness:**
UH will provide a comprehensive educational experience to its students and, within this context, it will seek to build the strongest athletic program possible.

**Local and National Recognition:**
UH will be known for its accomplishments locally and nationally.

**Competitive Resources:**
UH will build a resource base that enables it to accomplish its mission and realize its vision.

**UH System Strategic Initiatives**
In accordance with its mission, the University of Houston pursues the following strategic principles established by the UH System Board of Regents:

*Strategic Principle 1: Institutional Excellence*
The UH System universities will continue to strive for academic excellence in all undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs, as well as in research and public service.

*Strategic Principle 2: Student Access*
The universities of the UH System will continue to provide broad access to higher education opportunities in the upper Gulf Coast region and Texas.

*Strategic Principle 3: Diversity*
The diversity of the UH System universities is a strength that distinguishes us among universities nationwide. Increasingly, the faculty, staff, administration, and students of our universities will reflect the city of Houston’s diversity.

*Strategic Principle 4: Research*
The cornerstone of higher education is the creation and dissemination of new knowledge, through which the UH System universities will enrich the educational experience of students, enhance the cultural life of our constituents, and contribute to economic development.

*Strategic Principle 5: External Partnerships*
Partnerships with business, industry, government, the community, and alumni are critical to achieving institutional goals of excellence and ensuring the financial health of the UH System universities.

*Strategic Principle 6: Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Retention*
Faculty and staff constitute the most valuable assets of the UH System universities. As such, they must have access to career opportunities that are competitive with those at other universities.

**Strategic Principle 7: PK-16 Partnerships**  
Partnerships among the UH System universities, public schools, and community colleges are critical to increasing the college-going rates of Texas students to the national average.

**Strategic Principle 8: Accountability and Administrative Efficiency**  
The universities of the UH System will be accountable for student learning and for the effective use of resources.

**Leadership**

_Renu Khator, Chancellor/President_

Renu Khator holds the dual titles of chancellor of the University of Houston System and president of UH. The UH System’s first woman chancellor and the first Indian immigrant to head a comprehensive research university in the United States, Khator assumed her post in January 2008.

As chancellor of the UH System, Khator oversees an organization that serves more than 66,000 students, has a budget that exceeds $1.3 billion, and has a $3.5 billion-plus economic impact on the Greater Houston area each year. The UH System includes UH, UH-Clear Lake, UH-Downtown, UH-Victoria, and branch campuses in Sugar Land, Pearland and NW Houston; teaching centers in Cinco Ranch; as well as KUHT, the nation’s first educational television station, and two radio stations: KUHF, Houston’s National Public Radio affiliate, and the classical station KUHA.

As president of the University of Houston, she is the chief executive officer of the largest and oldest of the four UH System universities. UH enrolls over 43,000 students, and offers more than 300 undergraduate and graduate programs.

During her tenure, UH has experienced record-breaking research funding, enrollment, and private support. Recently, UH launched its 75-acre Energy Research Park, part of Khator’s $400 million campus construction program, and became a member of the Texas Medical Center.

In 2011, UH became a tier one university, with the Carnegie Foundation elevating it into the top category of research universities. The university was also recognized by the *Princeton Review* for excellence in undergraduate education and by the *Chronicle for Higher Education* as an exceptional workplace.

Khator was born in Uttar Pradesh, India, earning a bachelor’s degree at the University of Kanpur. She received her master’s degree and her Ph.D. in political science from Purdue University. A noted scholar in the field of global environmental policy, she has published numerous books and articles on the subject. Prior to her appointment, she was provost and senior vice president at the University of South Florida, capping a 22-year career at that institution.

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services has included her among its Outstanding Americans by Choice awardees, recognizing her achievements as a naturalized citizen. She and her husband, Suresh Khator, associate dean in the UH Cullen College of Engineering, were honored with the prestigious Hind Rattan (Jewel of India) award, given to nonresident Indians who have made outstanding contributions in their field. Purdue University awarded her its doctor of social sciences degree, honoris causa. She is featured in the American Council on Education’s video, “The Joys of the Presidency.”
Khator recently joined some of the world’s most respected leaders when she was named to the Indian Prime Minister’s Global Advisory Council of Overseas Indians. She serves on several boards, including the American Council on Education, the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, the Greater Houston Partnership, the Houston Technology Center, the Texas Medical Center Policy Council, the Methodist Hospital Research Institute Board, and the Business Higher Education Forum. She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

J. Richard Walker, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Enrollment Services, University of Houston System/Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, University of Houston

Richard Walker joined the University of Houston in September 2011. Prior to this, he was with the University of Miami for 24 years, where he worked in a variety of progressively responsible positions: assistant/associate dean of students, director of student life, and assistant/associate vice president for student affairs. Previous universities at which he worked are Central Missouri State University and Middle Tennessee State University.

Dr. Walker received his Ed.D. in higher education leadership from the University of Miami. He earned a specialist in education degree in education administration and supervision from Middle Tennessee State University, a master of education degree in education administration and supervision from Memphis State University and a bachelor of science degree in history from Middle Tennessee State University. He is also a graduate of the Harvard Institutes for Higher Education Management Development Program.

Enhancing student success and the student learning experience through the integration of curricular and co-curricular opportunities has been a focus of Dr. Walker's career. This has been achieved by building strong campus and community relationships and collaborations.

Mara Affre, Associate Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Services, University of Houston System/Associate Vice President for Enrollment Services, University of Houston

Mara Affre joined the University of Houston in October 2014. Prior to UH, Ms. Affre served as the director of undergraduate admissions at the University of California, San Diego, the assistant vice president for enrollment services at Boise State University, and the director of admissions and assistant vice president for enrollment services at Southern Oregon University. Her professional career, which has spanned 25 years, has been spent at public universities, including Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University, and the University of California, Irvine.

Throughout her career in higher education, Ms. Affre has been dedicated to working with diverse populations, and has made a personal commitment to providing access and to opening the avenues to college completion for all students.

The Academic Program

With a faculty of world-renowned scholars and mentors and more than 25 cutting-edge research centers, the University of Houston is a place to make things happen. The university offers a wide range of undergraduate and graduate programs, as well as several pre-professional programs leading to careers in medicine, law, pharmacy, and more. UH also offers comprehensive programs leading to teacher certification and a five-year, dual-degree program.
Undergraduates choose from 120 majors and minors, many of which rank among the nation’s best. A top-notch Honors College provides special opportunities for exceptionally motivated students.

At the graduate level, UH offers 131 master’s and doctoral degree programs and three professional degree programs. Working alongside serious scholars and award-winning faculty, UH graduate students make exciting discoveries and prepare for dynamic careers.

Whichever program students choose, they have full access to world-class libraries and the learning resources needed to succeed. They’ll also hone career skills through internships and other on-the-job experiences in the vibrant international city of Houston.

**Colleges, Schools, and Departments**

The University of Houston comprises 12 academic colleges and an interdisciplinary Honors College. Each major and graduate program “lives” in one of the academic colleges or schools. The unit that houses your program will become your academic home. The Honors College, in contrast, provides special courses and opportunities for talented undergraduate students of all majors and departments.

UH colleges, schools, and departments are:

- Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture and Design
- C.T. Bauer College of Business
- College of Education
- Cullen College of Engineering
- Honors College
- Conrad N. Hilton College of Hotel and Restaurant Management
- UH Law Center
- College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences
- College of Natural Sciences & Mathematics
- School of Nursing
- College of Optometry
- College of Pharmacy
- Graduate College of Social Work
- College of Technology
- Graduate School
- College of the Arts

**The Student Body – Fall 2015**

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Organizational Structure of the Division of Enrollment Services

The Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services is headed by the vice chancellor for student affairs and enrollment services, University of Houston System and vice president of student affairs and enrollment services, University of Houston. Reporting to the vice chancellor is the associate vice chancellor for enrollment services, University of Houston System/associate vice president for enrollment services, University of Houston. In addition to the executive director for admissions position, the enrollment services leadership team is made up of the following positions:

- Director, enrollment services business services
- Executive director, enrollment services communication and marketing
- University registrar
- Executive director, scholarships and financial aid
- Executive director, campus solutions services
- Director, enrollment services integration

History of the Position

The position has been held for the past several years by an individual who has assumed new responsibilities within the University’s Office of Student Affairs. It is hoped that the position will be filled by January 2, 2017.

Responsibilities of the Position

Reporting to the Associate Vice President for Enrollment Services, the Executive Director directs and leads an admissions program which includes the recruitment of all undergraduate students as well as the processing of their admissions applications to ensure a highly qualified and diverse student body. The Executive Director is responsible for directing the University’s admissions processes to achieve the University's objectives while providing efficient and effective service, maintaining a strong marketing and recruitment plan to attract the top high school graduates, other highly qualified students, and ensuring the diversity mission of the University is upheld. The Executive Director will provide leadership and coordination of the University's admissions activities with the UH campus community, high schools, community colleges, family members, prospective students, and community groups, serve in a leadership role in coordinating admissions activities throughout the University, oversee and participate in efforts related to college admissions and recruitment, scholarships, financial aid, academic advising, registration, billing and collections. As a member of the Enrollment Services leadership team, the Executive Director will develop relationships with and advise deans, directors, staff, and faculty on market place issues affecting recruitment and enrollment and will ensure that outstanding customer service is provided to all students and campus clients. He/she will be responsible for the recruitment, hiring, training, professional development, and evaluation of a full-time staff of 60, and oversee an operational budget of approximately $5.04 million.

Qualifications and Characteristics of the Successful Candidate

A master’s degree and a minimum of seven years of progressively responsible experience in an admissions program at a college or university are required. In addition, a demonstrated track record of success in the field of admissions, and the ability to create and implement a long-term recruitment plan that results in the enrollment of a diverse student body which supports the University's goals, mission, and vision will be expected. The Executive Director will display superior analytical, budget management, and supervisory skills as well as an interpersonal style that is collaborative and collegial.

UH stakeholders indicated that, in addition to the minimum education and experiential requirements for the Executive Director, the following characteristics would be desired in candidates for this position:

- The ability to connect with strategic partners across campus, including senior administrators and peers;
• One who can engage the staff and earn their trust by encouraging them to share their ideas, and who will offer professional development opportunities to all staff;
• Ability to mentor and assist people in their professional growth;
• Ability to manage change within the office as well as throughout the organization;
• A strong leader who can shift processes quickly as needed and communicate effectively to staff as well as to senior administrators;
• Be forward-thinking and understand and have the desire and technical knowledge to fully utilize technology to create efficient processes;
• Flexible and adaptable and can provide support for the changes that are in progress;
• Pro-active rather than reactive, particularly with the department’s operational budget;
• Willing to partner and collaborate with the Strategic Enrollment Planning group; willing to follow through on joint development and attainment of goals and priorities;
• Willingness to attend events, including on-and off-campus recruiting and Orientation events with staff and students;
• Take a genuine interest in Admissions team members; get to know them and their roles;
• Actively engage with the Enrollment Marketing and Communications area on student outreach via social media;
• Be “curious,” and want to learn about the team and his/her colleagues;
• Understands recruiting techniques for both freshmen and transfer populations;
• Understands the marketplace and can analyze data to develop cogent and reasonable recruiting plans;
• Willing to “put promise to practice,” and follow up with students and team members;
• Understands the role and value of Athletics and athletes at UH;
• Ability to react quickly to changing needs or requests from senior leadership or other departments; and
• One who is humble, not afraid to ask questions, is flexible and has a sense of humor.

Likely Opportunities, Priorities, and Challenges of the Position

This is a very important position at the university during a time of growth and substantive changes directed by the president. A self-starter with very strong management and leadership skills will be required to develop credibility with a large team which consists of several long-term staff members. The recruiting team is currently undergoing organizational restructuring, and individual roles are being changed to include responsibility for both freshman and transfer recruiting, so a new Executive Director will need to embrace this change and follow through on its implementation.

Due to the strong ties between the Admissions and Strategic Enrollment Planning areas, the regular sharing of data along with a review of the marketplace and the communication of trends and actual experiences by the admissions team members who are in the trenches will be helpful in expanding the lines of communication. Additionally, the implementation of the Hobson’s Radius CRM should enhance the quality of the data that is available to both teams, and will serve to enhance the communications directed to prospective students. The Executive Director will be expected to foster the lines of communication with all UH departments and staff and to be involved at all levels of recruitment and engagement with students and staff.

Measures of Success for the Position

At an appropriate interval after joining the University of Houston, the following items will initially define success for the new executive director of admissions:

• He or she will demonstrate a leadership style that is credible and collegial while being highly effective.
• He or she will have reviewed organizational strengths and weaknesses and will have demonstrated the ability to manage short-term change and long-term development for the department.
• He or she will have collaborated with all enrollment services colleagues to create a long-range recruitment plan that aligns with the university’s strategic plan objectives.
• He or she will have reviewed staff and processes within the department to evaluate the level and quality of services provided to students and academic departments to ensure that all prospective students are receiving timely communiqués from the Office of Admissions.
• He or she will have worked closely with the Office of Strategic Enrollment Planning to optimize recruitment and enrollment strategies that will meet the institution’s annual enrollment goals.

Benefits Overview

• Medical Insurance
• Dental Insurance
• Life Insurance
• Short-Term Disability
• Long-Term Disability
• Flexible Spending Account
• Employees Retirement System of Texas (ERS)
• Optional Vision Plan

Application and Nomination

Applications, including a position-specific cover letter and resume, may be submitted online at www.spelmanandjohnson.com/. Nominations for this position may be emailed to ked@spelmanandjohnson.com.

Spelman Johnson
Executive Director of Admissions – University of Houston
Kendra E. Dane, Search Associate

Visit the University of Houston website at www.uh.edu

The University of Houston is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action institution. Minorities, women, veterans, and persons with disabilities are encouraged to apply. Additionally, the university prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

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