

NATIONAL SEARCH PROSPECTUS

PRESIDENT



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The University of Houston-Downtown (UHD) invites nominations and applications for an exceptional and visionary leader to serve as its next President. Situated in the heart of one of the nation's most dynamic and diverse metropolitan regions, UHD is uniquely positioned at the intersection of higher education, workforce development, economic opportunity, and community impact. Serving more than 13,500 students, the University has established itself as a catalyst for educational access, social mobility, and urban innovation.

Reporting directly to the Chancellor of the University of Houston System, the President serves as the University's chief executive officer and is responsible for advancing UHD's mission through strategic leadership, academic excellence, fiscal stewardship, and collaborative engagement with faculty, staff, students, alumni, community partners, and elected officials. The next President will inherit a strong institutional foundation while enjoying the opportunity to shape the University's next era of growth, visibility, and impact.

This presidency represents a rare opportunity to lead an institution with a compelling mission, an outstanding location, exceptional System support, and significant momentum. The successful candidate will be a collaborative, forward-thinking leader who embraces innovation, champions student success, builds strategic partnerships, and inspires the University community around a shared vision for the future. For a leader committed to expanding opportunity and transforming lives through higher education, few presidencies offer the scale of impact available at the University of Houston-Downtown.

CHANCELLOR RENU KHATOR



Renu Khator is Chancellor of the University of Houston System — the longest-serving chancellor in the state of Texas — and President of the University of Houston. In 2008, she broke boundaries and glass ceilings when she assumed her appointments and became the first female chancellor in the state of Texas and the first Indian immigrant to lead a comprehensive research university in the U.S.

As Chancellor of the UH System, Khator oversees a three-university organization that serves more than 70,000 students and has an annual budget of \$2.6 billion.

The UH System includes the University of Houston, University of Houston-Clear Lake, and University of Houston-Downtown. Under her leadership as Chancellor, each university has achieved exponential growth in academic achievement, student enrollment, and community impact. Most impressive is each university's rapid expansion into neighboring suburban and urban areas through additional locations, including UH's Sugar Land and Katy campuses; UH-Clear Lake at Pearland and UH-Clear Lake at Texas Medical Center; and UH-Downtown Northwest.

A champion of public education and its transformative power, Khator is constantly seeking to expand the UH System's comprehensive education resources to improve the lives of all in the Greater Houston region and beyond.

In 2021, the Texas Legislature allocated close to \$340 million in funding for new construction, renovation of existing buildings, and improved infrastructure across the UH System. The much-needed funding will allow System universities and instructional sites to expand educational opportunities, launch new programs, and meet the ever-changing workforce demands of regional and state economies. Moreover, each university is making college more accessible by providing full-tuition coverage for low and middle-income students.

Under her strategic direction, the Public Art of the University of Houston System has reached new levels of prominence by shifting from collection development, commissioning, object conservation, and long-term exhibitions to an all-encompassing arts organization with all core museum functions, including temporary exhibitions, robust public programming, research, education, and broad community outreach.

Khator was born in Uttar Pradesh, India, earning a bachelor's degree in liberal arts at the University of Kanpur. She received her master's degree in political science and Ph.D. in political science and public administration 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.

She was Chair of the Board of Directors of the American Athletic Conference (AAC) from 2017-2019 and served as AAC's representative to the NCAA Division I Presidential Forum. Khator was also a member of the Indian Prime Minister's Empowered Expert Committee, charged with selecting India's 20 world-class "Institutes of Eminence," the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Academic Advisory Council, Chair of the American Council on Education (ACE) and the 11th District Chair of Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas. Khator is currently a member of the Association of Governing Boards of Colleges and Universities Council of Presidents, the Council on Foreign Relations, Board of Directors for the Big 12, the Texas Medical Center CEO Forum, and the Greater Houston Partnership.

She was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2020 and has received numerous accolades for her leadership. Khator has been inducted into the Texas Women's Hall of Fame and received the Council of Fellows/Fidelity Investments Mentor Award from the American Council on Education (ACE), the Excellence in Leadership Award from the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the President of the Year Award from the Association of College Unions International, and the President's Award from NASPA, the National Association of Student Affairs Administrators.

Khator received the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award from the President of India, the highest recognition conferred on overseas Indians based on their "significant contributions" to their homeland. In addition, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services included her among its Outstanding Americans by Choice awardees, recognizing her achievements as a naturalized citizen.

Purdue University awarded her with the Doctor of Social Sciences degree, honoris causa; and Swansea University awarded her with the Doctor of Letters, honoris causa.

THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON SYSTEM

As the region's largest provider of comprehensive university services, from the baccalaureate to the doctorate, the University of Houston System plays an essential role in meeting the higher education needs of the Houston metropolitan area and Texas. The UH System serves more than 70,000 students and has an annual budget that exceeds \$2.6 billion.

The UH System includes the University of Houston, UH-Clear Lake, and UH-Downtown, and campuses in Katy, Northwest Houston, Pearland and Sugar Land. Also at the University of Houston is Houston Public Media, home to KUHT-TV8, Houston's PBS station and the nation's first educational television station; KUHF-88.7, Houston's National Public Radio station; and KUHF 88.7 HD-2, Houston's digital classical music stream.

THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON DOWNTOWN

The University of Houston-Downtown (UHD) is a comprehensive public university offering bachelor's and master's degree programs designed to prepare students for successful careers and leadership in a rapidly changing world. Founded in 1974, UHD has served the educational needs of the Greater Houston region for more than 50 years.



Located in the heart of downtown Houston — one of the nation's most dynamic and culturally diverse metropolitan areas — UHD offers one of the lowest public university tuition rates in the city while providing students with direct access to the business, government, nonprofit, and cultural opportunities of the nation's fourth-largest city. UHD is one of the three distinct universities within the University of Houston System and is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). The University operates with an annual budget of approximately \$258 million and maintains an institutional endowment of approximately \$55 million.

Today, UHD serves 13,558 students, with 46% enrolled full-time and 54% enrolled part-time. The student body is 62% female and 38% male. Reflecting Houston's remarkable diversity, the student population is 57% Hispanic, 19% Black or African American, 9% White, 8% Asian, 3% Multiracial, 2% International, and 2% Race/Ethnicity Unknown. The University employs approximately 375 full-time faculty members (697 total faculty, including adjunct faculty) and is supported by more than 1,400 staff members dedicated to student success and institutional excellence.

The University is deeply committed to expanding educational opportunity while addressing the complex challenges facing urban communities through innovative teaching, research, and community engagement. Its downtown location provides exceptional opportunities for partnerships with corporations, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and community leaders throughout the Houston region.

UHD offers 46 undergraduate degree programs and 12 master's degree programs across four academic colleges. Among its most popular undergraduate majors are Interdisciplinary Studies, Accounting, Psychology, Criminal Justice, and Management, reflecting the University's strong emphasis on workforce preparation and career advancement.

UHD's four academic colleges include:

- [Marilyn Davies College of Business](#)
- [College of Humanities and Social Sciences](#)

- [College of Public Service](#)
- [College of Sciences and Technology](#)

For more complete data, visit [UHD's Fact Book](#) and [Fact Sheet](#).

Mission

The University of Houston-Downtown is a dynamic and welcoming community of faculty, staff, students, and regional partners dedicated to nurturing talent, generating knowledge, and driving socioeconomic mobility for a just and sustainable future.

Vision

The University of Houston-Downtown will be the university of choice for Houstonians and for all who seek to contribute to the social, intellectual, and cultural life of their communities.

Values

- **Excellence** – UHD nurtures excellence in teaching, learning, scholarly work, and stewardship of the University for the benefit of students, the community, and the academy.
- **Student Success** – UHD facilitates and supports students in achieving their full potential for academic, personal, and career growth through outstanding programs and services.
- **Inclusiveness** – UHD values diversity and promotes access to higher education through flexible and affordable educational opportunities.
- **Respect** – UHD treats all individuals with respect and dignity while promoting collegiality, cooperation, and open communication.
- **Integrity** – UHD is committed to the highest ethical standards in its operations and holds itself accountable to its students, employees, and community partners.

Strategic Plan

To view UHD's current strategic plan, please [click here](#).

PRIMARY DUTIES

As the Chief Executive Officer of the University, the President:

- Implements policies.
- Effectively manages the institution and sustains and enhances the institution's mission and overall operations while fostering and building upon the existing traditions, distinctiveness, and strengths of the University.
- Leads UHD on a successful path to excellence and builds, maintains, and promotes collaborative and productive relationships across campus, the local community, and the region.
- Leads and helps shape the University going forward, and enjoys every ingredient needed for success as an integral part of the University of Houston System. This includes an outstanding, progressive Chancellor fully committed to the overall success of the organization.

- Works creatively and proactively as a change agent to improve the University, the community, and the region. The President has the autonomy to bring the best ideas to advance the mission, vision, brand, and efficacy of UHD in an open and supportive environment.



KEY LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Advance Student Success and Social Mobility

The next President will have the opportunity to build upon UHD's nationally recognized commitment to access and opportunity by further strengthening student success, persistence, graduation rates, and post-graduate outcomes. Serving one of the nation's most diverse urban student populations, the President will champion initiatives that remove barriers to educational attainment and position UHD as a national model for socioeconomic mobility.

Shape the Future of Houston's Urban University

Located in the center of one of America's fastest-growing metropolitan regions, UHD is uniquely positioned to become the university of choice for Houston's workforce and civic leaders. The next President will be expected to leverage the University's downtown location and urban mission to expand its impact on economic development, workforce preparation, and community engagement throughout the region.

Expand Enrollment and Institutional Visibility

The University seeks a leader who can articulate a compelling vision that attracts students, faculty, donors, and community partners while increasing UHD's visibility throughout Texas and beyond. Strategic enrollment growth, innovative academic programming, and enhanced brand recognition will be central to the institution's continued success.

Strengthen Partnerships Across Industry and the Community

Houston's globally recognized energy, healthcare, aerospace, technology, logistics, and nonprofit sectors provide extraordinary opportunities for collaboration. The President will be expected to cultivate strategic partnerships that expand experiential learning, internships, research opportunities, philanthropic support, and workforce alignment while strengthening UHD's role as a vital regional partner.

Foster a Culture of Collaboration and Shared Purpose

The University values transparency, inclusiveness, and respect. The next President should be a visible, approachable leader who engages faculty, staff, students, alumni, and external stakeholders in meaningful dialogue while promoting collaboration, shared governance, and a culture centered on student success and institutional excellence.

Lead Innovation Within a Strong University System

As one of the three universities within the University of Houston System, UHD benefits from exceptional System leadership while maintaining its own distinct identity and mission. The next president will have the opportunity to capitalize on system resources, collaborate across institutions, and advance innovative initiatives that enhance academic quality, operational effectiveness, and institutional competitiveness.

Champion Academic Excellence and Workforce Relevance

The president will be expected to support academic innovation by ensuring that programs remain responsive to evolving workforce demands while maintaining a strong commitment to teaching excellence, applied learning, and student-centered education. Strengthening graduate education, online learning, and interdisciplinary collaboration will position UHD for continued success.

Enhance Resource Development and Financial Sustainability

Building upon a solid financial foundation, the next president will work collaboratively with the University of Houston System, alumni, donors, corporate partners, and elected officials to secure additional philanthropic investment and external resources that support strategic priorities, student scholarships, academic excellence, and long-term institutional growth.

Inspire Organizational Excellence Through Visionary Leadership

The next President will have the opportunity to shape UHD's next chapter by fostering innovation, embracing change, and empowering faculty and staff to pursue bold ideas that advance the University's mission. A collaborative, strategic, and forward-thinking leader will be well positioned to guide UHD as it continues to elevate its reputation and impact across Houston, Texas, and beyond.

WHY THIS PRESIDENCY

- Lead one of the nation's preeminent urban universities with a powerful social mobility mission.
- Serve in downtown Houston, one of America's most dynamic economic centers.
- Benefit from the resources and support of the highly successful University of Houston System under Chancellor Renu Khator's leadership.
- Enjoy significant autonomy to shape the University's strategic direction while building on a strong institutional foundation.
- Make a visible and lasting impact on students, the city of Houston, and the future workforce of Texas.



KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, & ABILITIES

- Knowledge of trends, issues, and accepted practices relevant to the position of president of a university
- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills, as well as excellent interpersonal and communication skills
- Ability to effectively communicate with a wide range of individuals and constituencies in a diverse community

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Terminal degree
- Significant experience as a leader of a major complex organization, including a distinguished record of leadership and intellectual achievement, and excellence in fiscal responsibility, along with a thorough understanding of the functioning of, and challenges facing urban public universities
- Commensurate experience that demonstrates the ability to work effectively with faculty, staff, students, alumni, and other constituencies important to the University, region, state, nation, and world is also required

POSITION SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES

Commitment to Excellence – UHD

Demonstrates a commitment to competently perform his/her job duties and responsibilities within established time frames. Continuously strives to improve work performance. Accepts responsibility for his/her commitments to the University. Contributes to the success of the University by consistently providing quality results in the performance of his/her job duties and responsibilities.

Integrity

Demonstrates high ethical standards of conduct in the performance of his/her job duties and responsibilities. Accepts responsibility for his/her actions. Respects and complies with department and University policies, procedures, and work rules.

Respect and Cooperation

Treats others with courtesy, respect, and dignity in the workplace. Promotes cooperation through open and honest communications and consideration of others' ideas, thoughts, and opinions.

Leadership

Leads the organizational unit's endeavors to achieve its goals and objectives in support of the University's vision and mission. Oversees the organizational unit's operations in accordance with the University's shared values of excellence, student success, inclusiveness, respect, and integrity. Fosters a dynamic work environment that encourages teamwork and cooperation.

Accountability

Accountable for oversight of the organizational unit's projects and initiatives; monitors utilization of allocated resources and status of projected timeframes. Ensures organizational unit's operations are in compliance with University and department policies and procedures; responsible for development and revision of policies and procedures for assigned area(s). Resolves complex issues after careful consideration of all relevant information. Collaborates with other University administrators to keep the University apprised of significant developments and issues.

Change Management

Manages the development and implementation of change initiatives to advance the University's goals and objectives. Assesses the availability of resources and ascertains additional resources required to effect change within projected timelines. Promotes the benefits of new methods, technology, and/or work environments resulting from changes. Addresses concerns to minimize the impact of potential consequences of changes. Provides encouragement and support to employees through the change process. Supports changes in the University's organizational structure.

Strategic Planning

Develops the organizational unit's short- and long-term goals and objectives that align with the University's strategic plan. Establishes assessment measures to evaluate the organizational unit's progress toward accomplishing its goals and objectives. Determines priorities and allocates resources to achieve the organizational unit's goals and objectives. Anticipates potential difficulties and concerns, and develops feasible contingency plans. Collaborates with other University administrators to coordinate efforts across organizational units.

Talent Management

Communicates the organizational unit's priorities and initiatives to employees and the importance of their contributions to the organizational unit's goals and objectives. Motivates employees by encouraging a commitment to excellence and recognizing employee accomplishments. Clearly defines employee responsibilities and expectations; provides guidance and constructive feedback. Encourages employee participation in professional development and training, and supports mentoring and on-the-job training to provide the tools for employees to be successful. Promotes teamwork and a work environment that fosters cooperation. Manages the resolution of performance issues expeditiously and with discretion.

Financial Administration

Assesses and modifies the organizational unit's budget annually to provide sufficient resources for the organizational unit's operations aligned with goals and objectives, in consideration of the University's budget constraints. Directs administration of the organizational unit's budget to ensure effective utilization of financial resources and compliance with federal, state, and University policies and procedures. Approves disbursement of funds consistent with the organizational unit's budget. Monitors the status of the organizational unit's budget, and directs the resolution of deficiencies and/or discrepancies.

Organizational Engagement

Positively represents the organizational unit to internal and external constituents in support of the organizational unit's efforts and in recognition of its accomplishments. Coordinates with other University administrators to collaborate on endeavors across organizational units. Builds rapport with external constituents to advance the organizational unit's goals and objectives and engage the community with the University's efforts to address the needs and advance the development of the region. Competently responds to audits and requests from governmental entities and UH System on behalf of the organizational unit.

Student Success Support

Contributes to student success by assisting students with anything that supports their student experience, whether directly or indirectly. Helps students navigate their way through the different offices, programs, and services at the University and/or connects students with the appropriate party(ies). Connects students with services or resources that can help them with career exploration, goal selection, and ongoing academic assistance. Helps students build peer support networks. Encourages student participation in out-of-class activities. Provides encouragement and guidance to foster student success. Treats students with respect. Maintains the learning environment to ensure quality and/or sound pedagogy.

This job description may not encompass all duties and responsibilities associated with the position.

HOUSTON, TEXAS

As the nation's fourth-largest city and one of the world's leading centers for energy, healthcare, aerospace, technology, international commerce, and the arts, Houston offers an unmatched environment for innovation, economic opportunity, and cultural diversity.

UHD's campus is located in exciting downtown Houston. From UHD, it's a quick ride on [MetroRail](#) to the heart of downtown for entertainment, ball games, dining, and clubs at historic Market Square, Bayou Place, the Theater District, the Astro's Daikin Park and Toyota Center, home of the Houston Rockets, and more.

To learn more about Downtown Houston, visit [Houston Downtown Alliance](#).

For general information about Houston, try:

- [The Greater Houston Partnership](#)
- [The Greater Houston Visitors and Convention Bureau](#)



APPLICATIONS & NOMINATIONS

The Search Committee invites letters of interest and nominations to be submitted directly to the search firm, Anthem Executive. Correspondence should include a curriculum vitae and a letter of interest describing relevant experience and interest in the position. Submit materials to Michael Ballew, Scott Watson, JR Wheless, or Florene Stawowy at:

UHDPresident@AnthemExecutive.com

While applications and nominations may be accepted until the position is filled, interested parties are strongly encouraged to submit their materials as soon as possible to assure consideration. Anthem and the University reserve the right to end or extend the application and nomination process at any time. Expressing interest is the first step in receiving consideration and does not make one an applicant for the position.

The University of Houston-Downtown is an equal opportunity employer.



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Anthem is a national executive search and leadership advisory firm serving higher education, healthcare, nonprofit organizations, and the corporate sector. Drawing upon more than a century of combined executive search experience, our consultants partner with governing boards and executive leadership to identify transformational leaders who align with an institution's mission, culture, and strategic priorities. Through a research-driven methodology, extensive national networks, and a collaborative team approach, Anthem delivers exceptional leadership solutions that create lasting organizational impact.