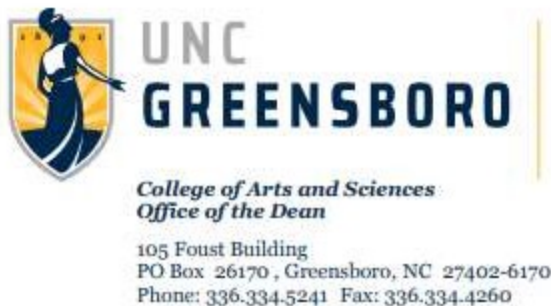




November 14, 2022

Search Committee for Dean, College of Arts & Sciences
University of Louisville
Louisville, KY

Dear Members of the Search Committee,

I write in application for the position of Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences at the University of Louisville. My current position is Associate Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, where I am also a Professor of Psychology. I have enjoyed my time as a faculty member and administrator at UNCG but am ready for a broader leadership role. In this letter I describe my administrative accomplishments and qualifications as they relate to the goals for this position.

Administrative accomplishments. I serve and collaborate across the college and university. UNCG has a total enrollment of over 17,000 students. Our College of Arts & Sciences (CAS) includes 25 departments and interdisciplinary programs, with 6,633 majors and 458 faculty members. We benefit from a diverse student body, with 55% students of color and 45% first generation students. Recent efforts have improved our faculty diversity such that over 36% are from underrepresented groups. Our college embodies the teacher-scholar model, accounting for 50% of credit hours and 44% of presentations at the Undergraduate Research Expo, with 24 faculty books published and over \$10 million in external research grants last year.

I am one of two primary Associate Deans in our college, which also includes a third Associate Dean for Research. My role involves collaboration in areas such as budget, enrollment and curriculum, student success, strategic planning, and advancement. I am also closely involved with faculty and staff recruitment and hiring, annual review, promotion, and support. Our Dean operates in a manner where Associate Deans are involved in and privy to every aspect of college operation. Our annual state-funded budget is approximately \$40 million, and planning and decisions in our office occur collaboratively. Working closely with the Assistant Dean for Budget and Finance, we use department requests as well as productivity metrics and enrollment trends to prioritize and advocate for new resources such as funding and faculty lines. In recent years UNCG has experienced several challenging budget cuts, and we have met these challenges by engaging in open discussion and planning with department and program leadership.

I also have targeted responsibilities that include graduate programs, space and facilities, faculty workload, instructional technology, website and communications, and wellness initiatives. I directly manage faculty recruitment and annual review for our social and behavioral science departments and evaluate promotion & tenure dossiers on behalf of the Dean. I recently chaired a college committee that developed and implemented new guidelines for faculty workloads. With faculty across disciplinary areas, we proposed and unanimously approved a policy that improves equity and transparency within and across departments.

I am deeply engaged with our undergraduate programs and strategies. Higher education is facing challenges with enrollment shifts and the consequences of the pandemic on student learning. Our college has responded by teaming with key campus units to study these patterns and take deliberate steps to support curricular review and student success initiatives. The university recently completed a comprehensive review of our general education requirements, largely coordinated within our office. This process was challenging but successful, with an open and collaborative process that developed a new core curriculum guided by the essential competencies that are most valued by our students and faculty. On the local scale, we supported the redesign of general education courses with tracks aligned to major areas of study and refined student placement for courses with troubling success rates. More broadly, I am working with our student success office and council of associate deans to develop strategies for early identification and outreach to students in need of assistance. I am currently spearheading an initiative to refine our Math Help Center, with more support for the training and supervision of graduate student tutors and better assessment of undergraduate student outcomes. I supervised the directors of our Writing Center, Speaking Center, and Digital Studio and helped to coordinate their transition into a restructured office of student success. I also liaison with our office of career and professional development to bring career readiness initiatives to our departments.

Robust graduate programs are a tremendous benefit to the intellectual community and undergraduate teaching mission at UNCG, and I work closely with our departments in the management of these programs. Major accomplishments in graduate education under my leadership include the development and approval of a new Ph.D. degree in Computer Science, a new online M.S. degree in Sustainability and Environment, and the transition of interdisciplinary programs in Informatics and Analytics and Applied Arts & Sciences into our college from other units. I have also streamlined our graduate policies and processes, centralized administrative functions considered burdensome at the department level, improved coordination between graduate programs for information sharing and efficiency, coordinated discussions of non-academic career advising, helped to develop diversity initiatives at the college and department levels, and worked with Student Affairs to improve access to wellness and other support resources for graduate students. At the university level, I helped to coordinate a restructuring of the Graduate Handbook and revision of various Graduate School policies to better serve our academic units and graduate student community.

Administrative success requires both attentive and trustworthy leadership and a cooperative relationship with the faculty and staff they serve. I believe strongly that principles of shared governance, transparency, and collaboration are critical for a positive university culture. In 2020, I and a fellow dean launched the UNCG Women's Network, coordinated with the NC American Council on Education. We have since organized a speaker series, panel discussions and workgroups on issues of need and interest, and a leadership mentoring program. This group has generated tremendous energy and support during what is otherwise a demanding time on campus and has grown to include over 180 faculty and staff.

The university has regularly called on my expertise and perspective. I chaired the search for our Dean of Visual and Performing Arts and later served on the search committee for their Associate Dean. I am currently assisting the search for a Dean of the Graduate School. In recent years I have also served on search committees for the university's Director of Space Management and Planning, Chief Data Officer, Director of Facilities, and Associate Dean for Online Education. I have been a member of our Academic Technology Committee and Learning Technology Advisory Committee and sit ex-officio on the Faculty Senate Committee for Online Learning. In 2019, I co-chaired an interdisciplinary event series with the theme The 1960's: Exploring the Limits, helping to curate a lineup with dozens of performances, lectures, films, exhibits and community interactions that engaged the campus and broader community throughout the year; headliners included jazz legend Herbie Hancock and renowned First Amendment expert Geoffrey Stone. I look forward to discussing these and other administrative accomplishments with you in more detail.

Qualifications. In this section, I respond to the specific qualifications and priorities outlined in the posted executive summary.

A person of high energy, absolute integrity and enthusiasm, with the perseverance to bring initiatives to fruition. This description of your next leader is a close fit to my leadership style. In 2018-2019, I participated in the Career Development for Women Leaders Program in the Wake Forest School of Medicine. I received a 360° evaluation from 25 administrators, faculty, and staff I work with, allowing me to identify my strengths and develop as a campus leader. My performance in leveraging community diversity was rated 4.73 (from 1-5), my ability to build strategic relationships 4.68, my decision-making 4.66, and my emotional intelligence 4.61 (with all performance areas rated above 4.5). Most related to this qualification, one anonymous reviewer described me as, “energetic and personable—willing and eager to collaborate and solve problems.” Another reviewer summarized their response as, “She is positive, well-organized, collaborative, and has excellent people skills.” I am an enthusiastic and trustworthy academic leader and advocate and am ready to assume a broader administrative role as your Dean of Arts & Sciences. I welcome the opportunity to work with you to refine your strategic priorities and develop effective and sustainable plans to achieve them.

An adept communicator who can inspire, cultivate key external constituencies, attract partners, raise funds, generate excitement among alumni and obtain commitments to support the college. A key responsibility of the dean is to publicize college success stories and leverage this awareness to advocate for investments and support. In order to provide this advocacy, a dean must first be aware themselves. One of the most rewarding aspects of my work in the Dean’s office has been the opportunity to work closely across disciplines and learn first-hand about the impressive and impactful research, creative endeavors, and community projects that our faculty engage in. I work with our college advancement staff both in the development of fundraising priorities and in meetings of our Advancement Council of donors and alumni who help to strategize and reach out to external partners. I enjoy opportunities to collaborate with university advancement in conversations with prospective donors where I can inspire them with initiatives in our departments that connect with their interests and values. I have experience with community partnerships that benefit the collaboration with constituent groups such as local schools and government bodies. As supervisor of our college communications specialist and our web developer, I have become well-versed in academic communication priorities and have helped to refine our strategy and outreach to alumni and community.

An experienced academic administrator with a history of success in a complex college or similar organization; an astute understanding of finances and relationship between academic priorities and the budget, and the ability to work collaboratively with other campus leaders. I work closely with our department heads, college staff, and faculty, and am involved in leadership and management across the college. I regularly advise on personnel matters within departments and act as head for faculty in cases where the department head has a conflict of interest. I have directly supervised 14 faculty and staff and coordinate faculty annual reviews and workload planning for the 130 faculty in our social and behavioral science departments.

Management of college resources such as budget and facilities requires an awareness of the operation and needs of departments and support offices. It is crucial that a dean appreciate the disciplinary variation inherent in a unit of arts and sciences. I have experience with the management of college and department-level budgets and have had primary responsibility for space allocation and renovation planning in the college. Our office is committed to transparent and shared governance, a value that I consider essential for effective academic leadership. I would immediately engage in careful study and a listening tour across the college and collaborate in continued dialogue with departments and college offices, to review and advance plans for resource allocation that preserve effective strategies and also take a forward-thinking approach to areas poised for investment and growth.

I often meet with our upper administration and fellow deans to communicate updates, collaborate on strategic initiatives, and advocate for needs in the College. Like the University of Louisville, UNCG is accredited by SACSCOC. I have been involved in maintaining compliance with these standards on the department and college-level and have participated in reaffirmation review and QEP planning and assessment. I have the understanding and commitment to support these standards at Louisville. I have also been actively engaged in the national-level Council of Colleges of Arts & Sciences. I am prepared and excited to represent and advocate for your College of Arts & Sciences by contributing to important internal and external organizations and events.

A demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. I am fortunate to be part of a university and college with an authentic culture of valuing the diversity of our community and also the will to implement concrete measures that support equity and inclusion. My college has made recent strides in the recruitment and retention of diverse faculty, having instituted a DEI committee that coordinated a best practices document and workshops for search committees. As a minority serving institution, our commitment and responsibility to these principles and actions is particularly important. I helped develop and co-supervise our new CAS Connects mentorship program, a network that supports graduate students from underrepresented groups. Other initiatives include diversity mini-grants that facilitate department-level projects and an annual diversity award. I provide more details about this work in my diversity statement and look forward to talking more with you about bringing these or other approaches to the University of Louisville.

A dedication to the mission and vision of Louisville and the College of Arts and Sciences; a tireless advocate for access, experiential learning and teaching, and community engagement. The mission statements from your university and college websites overlap considerably with the priorities and values at UNCG. I am aware and experienced in the opportunities and challenges for state universities that demonstrate excellence and specialization beyond the flagship campus. I your goals and values: the importance of building and supporting a vibrant intellectual community with exceptional teaching and a strong research identity; the obligation to foster learning, social mobility, and success for a diverse and inclusive student body; and also the imperative to engage in outreach and innovation with the local and broader community.

This mission has driven my academic and administrative work. UNCG is the top university in North Carolina for social mobility. We have a dedicated faculty that empowers our students, who are largely first-generation and minority background, to confront the challenges of today's world. I have an extended history of involvement in high impact, experiential, and innovative teaching methods in my own teaching as well as in my administrative roles. At UNCG, undergraduate research is a core value and practice, with targeted funding and awards and an annual expo to enable and coordinate this work. Our freshman seminar and experiential courses such as service learning and internships are developed at the faculty and department level but also facilitated by a university office that provides teaching and learning support. As I noted above, I am involved in a university-level review of innovative and flexible course and curriculum design; a recent success of which has been the construction of new hyflex learning classrooms and resources for faculty to develop pedagogical practices that use this technology to enrich student success for all learners.

An open and consultative leader; an excellent collaborator who can partner with and inspire faculty, staff and students to elevate the College of Arts and Sciences to heightened levels of success. A core distinction of a College of Arts & Sciences is the collaboration of diverse disciplines and methodologies toward the same broad goal – advancing students' knowledge, abilities, and civic engagement. By working with and listening to our departments and offices, I understand the particular values, needs, and operations of these different groups. I work closely with faculty in a wide range of disciplines including the fine arts, humanities, social and behavioral sciences, and natural and computational sciences. As your Dean, I would update this understanding as I learn more about your specific programs and would be ready to lead and advocate.

As our societal context changes, we must adapt in order to stay true to the college mission and meet the needs of our students, faculty, and staff. In my current position, I supervise the instructional technology staff in our college, who provide seminars and one-on-one meetings with faculty to sharpen skills in digital pedagogy and accessibility. Our office provides a variety of opportunities for faculty scholarship, including seed grants for research projects, funds to compensate reviewers in advance of grant or fellowship submissions, and research leaves for all junior faculty when they complete the third-year review process.

Some of the most innovative and impactful work we do as academics involves building bridges between our disciplinary silos through interdisciplinary academic curricula or research networks and projects. Such connections can be facilitated by university leadership with opportunities and resources for identified commonalities of focus and excellence. University and college-level leadership can also foster these innovations by empowering faculty to pursue new interdisciplinary and translational projects.

Academic accomplishments and credentials. I have a strong grounding as a teacher-scholar with a productive research profile that has continued despite my full-time appointment as Associate Dean. I am a cognitive psychologist with specialization in memory and metacognition in older adulthood. This year, Oxford Press published a book I co-edited and contributed four chapters to, *Multiple pathways of cognitive aging: Motivational and contextual influences*. I have published over 40 empirical and theoretical papers in peer-reviewed academic journals and regularly present my work in invited addresses and scholarly meetings. I am a fellow of the Psychonomic Society and am currently an Associate Editor at *Experimental Aging Research* and on the Editorial Boards for the APA's *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied* and *Psychology and Aging*. My record of external funding includes over \$2 million, with an active NIH grant that just completed data collection. I have mentored an impressive group of students at the doctoral, master's, and undergraduate levels including during the time I have served as associate dean. These students have been successful in obtaining postdoctoral and faculty appointments (e.g., Professor at University of Mannheim) or industry positions (e.g., user experience analyst, statistician), depending on their personal aspirations.

I continue to mentor undergraduate students in my lab including those completing disciplinary honors and have taught courses in the undergraduate and graduate curricula in psychology, including our introductory course, statistics, research methods, cognitive psychology, and seminars in cognitive aging and metacognition. These courses have been situated across large lecture halls, small seminar rooms, synchronous online discussion groups, and asynchronous online classes that created engagement through breakout discussion forums and dialogue series for interest groups.

In summary, my experience and abilities in administration, teaching, and research provide me the perspective and skills necessary to lead as the next Dean of College of Arts & Sciences at the University of Louisville and help enhance the national and international reputation of the college and university. I would be proud to work at such a well-regarded and distinctive institution and would welcome the opportunity to discuss my background and the position with the search committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dayna R. Touron". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Dayna R. Touron, Ph.D.

Associate Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences
Professor of Psychology