

Department Chair
Abilene Christian University

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Posted Apr. 9, 2025, set to expire Aug. 9, 2025

Job Title	Department Chair
Department	Department of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences
Institution	Abilene Christian University Abilene , Texas
Date Posted	Apr. 9, 2025
Application Deadline	Open until filled
Position Start Date	Available immediately
Job Categories	Department Head/Head/Chair Associate Professor Professor
Academic Field(s)	Environmental Science & Ecology Agricultural - General
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Job Description	

Abilene Christian University

Department Chair, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences

Academic Career & Executive Search is pleased to assist Abilene Christian University in its search for Department Chair, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences.

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For full consideration, please apply by June 3, 2025.

A unique opportunity awaits a dynamic and visionary leader to join Abilene Christian University (ACU), a [nationally ranked](#) top institution, as the next Department Chair and faculty member of [Agricultural and Environmental Sciences](#) in the Onstead College of Science and Engineering ([OCSE](#)). The OCSE is at the forefront of discovery, with recent investments in new research facilities, including the \$23 million Science and Engineering Research Center ([SERC](#)).

Reporting to the Dean of OCSE, the Chair will set a bold strategic direction, strengthen faculty engagement, and expand student recruitment and retention efforts in a thriving academic environment. The Chair will lead a diverse and growing department that offers B.S. degrees in Agribusiness, Animal Science, and Environmental Science while managing the department's 400-acre Rhoden Farm and Field Lab. The ideal candidate is a collaborative leader, an accomplished educator and researcher, and a champion of teaching, scholarship, and Christian service. The Chair must be committed to high-quality undergraduate education, with demonstrated excellence in teaching and a proven track record of impactful research that enhances student learning and faculty development.

This is a 9-month tenure-track position reporting to the Dean of the Onstead College of Science and Engineering.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Working with faculty to develop and review standards, curricula, and procedures that provide preparation of graduates for professional or further academic endeavors
- Scheduling course offerings and teaching assignments for full-time and part-time faculty members
- Managing the department and personnel
- Overseeing department budget and resources, including the department's 400-acre Rhoden Farm and Field Lab
- Planning and executing a strategic direction for the department
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Leading student recruitment and retention efforts

- Representing the department at college and university events
- Communicating and implementing college and university policies to the department
- Advocating departmental needs to the college and university
- Encouraging and supporting engaged teaching, scholarly activity, and professional development within the department
- Teaching within discipline

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- Graduate degree in agribusiness, animal science, environmental science or a closely related discipline
- Record of teaching and research commensurate with the rank of associate professor or above

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Earned doctorate in agribusiness, animal science, environmental science or a closely related discipline
- Previous higher education administrative experience
- Evidence of academic leadership experience

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Founded in 1906, Abilene Christian University (ACU) is one of the largest private institutions in the Southwest with a student population of 6,219. ACU has two campuses. The main campus is located in Abilene, TX and their branch campus, which is the hub for the university's online programs, is in Dallas. ACU has six academic colleges (*College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences; Onstead College of Science and Engineering; College of Biblical Studies; College of Business Administration; the College of Health and Behavioral Sciences, and the College of Graduate and Professional Studies*) offering more than 79 majors, 164 areas of study and 12 accelerated degree programs. ACU is nationally recognized for student academic programs and experiences. In the U.S. News & World Report 2023-24 "Programs to Look For" benchmark, ACU was ranked in the top 10 for Service Learning, First-year Experience and Learning Communities.

ACU is affiliated with the Churches of Christ and emphasizes Christian values and principles in its academic, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities. The university has a strong commitment to community service and encourages students to engage in volunteer work and outreach programs.

About the College

The Robert and Kay Onstead College of Science and Engineering ([OCSE](#)) is at the forefront of discovery and innovation. The college has five departments: Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Biology, Chemistry and Biochemistry, Engineering and Physics, and Mathematics.

The establishment of the Onstead College of Science and Engineering highlights ACU's significant investment in science and engineering within the past 10 years, including the renovation of two existing buildings and the construction of two new facilities. The [Robert R. and Kay Onstead Science Center](#), fully renovated in 2017, houses the Departments of Agricultural and Environmental Science, Engineering and Physics, and Mathematics. Designed to blend science and faith, the Onstead Science Center supports ACU's mission of academic excellence while fostering a learning environment where students and faculty engage in learning and research that makes a lasting impact. The Halbert-Walling Research Center, a 54,000-square-foot facility opened in 2017 and serves as the home for the Department of Biology, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, and the Center for Pre-Health Professions. The new Science and Engineering Research Center (SERC) opened in September 2023 and further positions ACU as a leader in scientific exploration and applied learning. This \$23 million, 28,000-square-foot facility features a 6,000-square-foot research bay with a 25-foot-deep by 80-foot-long shielded trench and a 40-ton bridge crane, as well as a training control room, conference room, office spaces, machine shop, and a series of specialized labs for radiochemistry, molten salt systems and instrumentation. The SERC houses ACU's NEXT Lab advancing applications of molten salt nuclear technologies and designing and building the first university-based molten salt research reactor.

Living in the Area

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Abilene is a city with a population of over 125,000 located in West Central Texas approximately 150 miles west of Fort Worth. The city was established in 1881 as a shipping point for cattle ranching and became a key hub for the Texas and Pacific Railway. Abilene is a dynamic city with a blend of historical charm, modern amenities, and natural attractions. The city is home to six institutions of higher learning and nearly 15,000 students pursuing higher education. These universities and colleges contribute to the city's vibrant cultural scene and provide educational opportunities for residents and visitors alike.

Abilene offers plenty of activities for all ages including museums, parks, theaters, and shopping centers. Designated as The Storybook Capitol of America, the city's cultural offerings include a Storybook Art Adventure Trail, the Grace Museum, which showcases regional art and history, and the Paramount Theatre, a historic venue for live performances and film screenings. Outdoor enthusiasts can enjoy the natural beauty of the area at places like Abilene State Park, Fort Phantom Hill Lake, and the Abilene Zoo. Additionally, the city hosts annual events and festivals that celebrate its heritage and culture, such as the West Texas Fair & Rodeo and the Western Heritage Classic.

Abilene is one of the best places to live in Texas offering residents an affordable and sparse suburban feel. Cost of living is 19.8% lower than the national average and housing is 48.7% less expensive than the national average. Despite being a smaller city, Abilene has a diverse economy with several significant businesses and industries including a major healthcare provider, Hendrick Health, Dyess Air Force Base and three universities. In addition, Abilene's central location in Texas makes it a transportation hub for the region. The Abilene Regional Airport serves the Abilene area with air carrier service. Companies involved in transportation, logistics, and warehousing benefit from the city's location along major highways and railroads.

To Apply

For full consideration, please apply by June 3, 2025.

To be viewed by the search firm, you must apply directly at:

<https://acesrch.applicantstack.com/x/detail/a21esjygr0v>

Please apply through the application link and do not email applications.

Applications will be reviewed as they are received and should include a cover letter and curriculum vita. Ideally cover letters should not exceed two pages. All applications are treated confidentially.

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All applicants must be professing Christians and willing to support the Christian mission and purpose of Abilene Christian University while employed by the university. In addition to a cover letter and CV, all applicants will need to provide a statement of faith. Please read [Identity, Mission and the Future of Abilene Christian University](#) and provide a statement about how this document aligns with your view of the relationship of Christian faith and worldview of teaching and learning.

Inquiries, referrals, and nominations are also treated confidentially.

Inquiries and questions: Please send to ACUChairAES@acesrch.com

Nominations and referrals: Please send the nominee's name, title, and contact information if available to nominations@acesrch.com.

ACU is committed to maintaining a safe and secure campus environment and protecting the university's financial and physical assets. Therefore, Abilene Christian University conducts background checks on all candidates for employment in security sensitive positions.?

Institutional Information

ACU does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, sex, disability, genetic information, national or ethnic origin in employment opportunities, in keeping with applicable state and federal law.

Contact Information

Please reference Academickeys in your cover letter when applying for or inquiring about this job announcement.

Contact

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