

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTEVALLO SEEKS APPLICATIONS  
AND NOMINATIONS FOR THE POSITION OF  
UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT**



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The University of Montevallo (UM) seeks applications and nominations for its next president at a pivotal moment in the institution's history. As Alabama's only public liberal arts university, Montevallo offers a distinctive, student-centered educational experience grounded in close faculty engagement, interdisciplinary learning, and a strong sense of community and place.

The next president will inherit an institution with a proud mission, deeply committed faculty and staff, and a strong foundation on which to build—while also facing clear opportunities to strengthen financial sustainability, enrollment, trust, and institutional confidence. This is not a maintenance presidency. Rather, it is an opportunity to lead a period of stabilization, renewal, and strategic repositioning in a manner that preserves Montevallo's liberal arts identity while preparing the University for long-term success.

The successful candidate will be a collaborative, trust-building leader who communicates with clarity and credibility, respects shared governance, and is willing to make thoughtful, sometimes difficult decisions in service of the institution's mission. The president must be an effective partner to the Board of Trustees, a visible and authentic presence on campus, and a persuasive advocate for the University with alumni, donors, community leaders, and state stakeholders.

The University seeks a president who can align people, resources, and strategy; strengthen enrollment, fundraising, and external partnerships through disciplined execution; and restore pride and confidence across the campus community. For the right leader, this presidency offers a rare opportunity to shape the future of a distinctive public liberal arts institution and to leave a meaningful, lasting legacy.

## THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTEVALLO

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Founded in 1896, the University of Montevallo is Alabama's only public liberal arts university, located near the geographical center of the state in Montevallo, Alabama.

Home to 2,600 students, UM offers more than 30 degree programs with approximately 70 major/concentration combinations and more than 15 graduate programs across five distinct colleges: Arts & Sciences, Business, Education and Human Development, Fine Arts and Health Professions. More than 90 percent of faculty hold a doctorate or terminal degree, and the student-to-faculty ratio is 16-to-1.

UM is well known for its outstanding career development initiatives for undergraduate students, commitment to supporting military-related students and employees and providing its students with a well-rounded, practical education that prepares them for successful careers and lives.



UM has received numerous awards and honors, including being named to the Top 15 Best Public Regional Universities South and Top 25 Best Value Schools for 2026 by US News & World Report. Montevallo was also recognized on the 2025-2026 Colleges of Distinction list for the 14th consecutive year. [Learn more at montevallo.edu](https://montevallo.edu). In 2000, UM's [College Night](#) was named a "Local Legacy" by the Library of Congress. It has an exhibit there in the American Folklife Center.

The University of Montevallo is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award baccalaureate, masters, educational specialist, and doctoral degrees. In addition, UM is accredited by many national organizations for specific degree programs where such recognition is available and appropriate. Learn more at [montevallo.edu/accreditation](https://montevallo.edu/accreditation).

### **Vision Statement**

University of Montevallo offers undergraduate and graduate students a learner-centered 21st century education informed by our liberal arts identity.

### **Mission Statement**

The overriding mission of the University of Montevallo, unique in Alabama higher education, is to provide to students from throughout the state an affordable, geographically accessible, "small college" public higher educational experience of high quality with a strong emphasis on undergraduate liberal studies and with professional programs supported by a broad base of arts and sciences, designed for their intellectual and personal growth in pursuit of meaningful employment and responsible, informed citizenship.

## **KEY ATTRACTORS TO THE ROLE**

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### **Opportunity to Lead a Mission-Driven Public Liberal Arts Institution**

This presidency offers the rare chance to lead a distinctive public liberal arts university with a deeply embedded interdisciplinary culture—where creativity, inquiry, and teaching excellence are woven across the institution.

### **Meaningful Leadership at a Pivotal Moment**

The institution stands at an inflection point—stable enough to build from, but challenged enough to require real leadership. For the right president, this is a "make a difference" role, not a maintenance position. The opportunity exists to stabilize, renew, and reposition the university for long-term strength.

### **Faculty and Staff Who Are Deeply Committed and Invested**

Faculty and staff demonstrate exceptional loyalty, professionalism, and care for students and the institution. A president who listens, respects expertise, and leads collaboratively will find a campus ready to engage, contribute, and move forward together.

## **A Strong, Student-Centered Culture**

Graduates consistently achieve outcomes that exceed what might be expected of an institution of this size, benefiting from close faculty engagement, interdisciplinary learning, and a strong liberal arts foundation.

## **Distinctive Academic and Creative Strengths**

The University's strengths—particularly in the arts, humanities, interdisciplinary study, and undergraduate research—are unusually prominent for a public institution of this size. The integration of creative and analytical disciplines across campus creates a compelling and nationally distinctive academic environment.



## **Opportunity to Rebuild Trust and Shape Culture**

The presidency offers the chance to restore confidence, rebuild trust, and reset institutional tone through transparency, consistency, and integrity. Candidates who value relational leadership and cultural stewardship will see this as a meaningful and rewarding challenge.

## **Real Influence and Visibility as President**

The president has direct influence over culture, strategy, relationships, and outcomes—and is highly visible to students, faculty, alumni, community leaders, and state stakeholders. Leaders seeking hands-on, authentic presidential work will find this role especially compelling.

## **Platform for Collaborative Change, Not Disruptive Overhaul**

The institution is not seeking a “slash-and-burn” turnaround leader. Instead, it offers the opportunity to lead collaborative, mission-aligned change—making tough decisions thoughtfully while preserving what makes the university distinctive.

## **Strong Community and Sense of Place**

The campus community and the surrounding region value the university deeply. For candidates seeking a presidency in a place where the institution truly matters—to its community, alumni, and state—this role provides a strong sense of purpose and belonging.

## **Professional Fulfillment and Legacy Opportunity**

For the right leader, this presidency represents a chance to leave a lasting legacy: strengthening a unique institution, supporting access to a high-quality liberal arts education, and positioning the University for decades of continued relevance and impact.

# **KEY LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**

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## **Strengthen Governance and Board Partnership**

A productive, aligned relationship between the president and the governing board is essential for institutional success. The next president will have the opportunity to establish clear expectations, improve engagement, and foster a governance culture grounded in trust, informed decision-making, and shared responsibility.

## **Lead a Moment of Stabilization and Renewal**

The next president will have the opportunity to guide the University through a pivotal period—strengthening financial foundations, restoring confidence, and setting a clear course forward. This is a moment to move from uncertainty to direction, from stabilization to momentum, and from short-term fixes to long-term sustainability.

### **Rebuild Trust, Morale, and Institutional Confidence**

Faculty and staff are deeply committed to the institution but have experienced prolonged uncertainty. The president can reestablish trust through consistent communication, visible leadership, and thoughtful decision-making—creating a renewed sense of shared purpose and collective confidence.

### **Strengthen Financial Sustainability and Strategic Alignment**

There is an opportunity to align resources more clearly with mission and priorities, modernize financial practices, and strengthen long-term fiscal health. The next president can bring clarity to what is possible, set realistic expectations, and build institutional discipline that supports both academic excellence and operational stability.



### **Clarify and Champion a Distinctive Institutional Identity**

The University occupies a unique space as the state’s only public liberal arts institution with strong interdisciplinary, creative, and student-centered strengths. The next president can sharpen and elevate this identity—articulating clearly what makes the institution distinctive and why it matters in today’s higher education landscape.

### **Advance Enrollment, Retention, and Student Success**

Enrollment and retention challenges create an opportunity for thoughtful innovation rooted in mission. The president can lead efforts to strengthen recruitment strategies, improve student persistence, and enhance outcomes—without compromising institutional identity or chasing short-term trends.

### **Expand Philanthropy, Partnerships, and External Engagement**

With strong alumni loyalty and community support, the presidency offers the opportunity to deepen philanthropic engagement, strengthen external partnerships, and build confidence among donors and stakeholders. Through credibility and clear strategy, the next president can expand resources that directly support students and academic priorities.

## **THE ROLE OF PRESIDENT**

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The President is responsible for providing transformative leadership, focus, and strategic vision. The primary duties and responsibilities include the following:

- Oversees the development, administration, and coordination of all operations and programs of the institution.
- Establishes a clear vision for the institution and outlines appropriate strategic objectives and priorities, as well as the means to successfully achieve goals.
- Serves as an academic leader, with support from the university's provost, to ensure that UM provides a high-quality educational curriculum and talented faculty for the benefit of its students and teaching mission.
- Develops and implements plans and policies to ensure that UM remains in compliance with any accreditation requirements appropriate to the university.
- Provides leadership in growing the university's student enrollment while maintaining excellence in teaching and advancing creative scholarship.
- Champions innovative student learning and student success across the academic enterprise and university experience, including making meaningful, engaging connections with students.
- Fosters a sense of belonging through a commitment to a diverse student body, faculty, and staff.
- Actively works to ensure that the institution acquires the necessary public and private resources for the successful achievement of the university's goals and objectives.
- Drives fundraising activities by cultivating and stewarding donors that increase the university's philanthropic support and address the needs of UM's colleges and programs.
- Works closely and fosters relationships with internal and external stakeholders including students, faculty, staff, alumni and donors, community leaders, and regional partners.
- Understands the importance of the governmental process and possesses the skills to ensure that legislative goals on the local, state, and federal levels are identified and met.
- Understands the financial health of the UM and identifies actions needed to maintain/improve that health.
- Carries out other leadership duties and responsibilities as assigned by the Board of Trustees.



**Qualifications (Required Unless Otherwise Noted):**

- An earned doctorate or terminal degree from a college or university of high standing.
- An educator by profession is preferred.
- A record of successfully leading a complex organization through change.
- A full appreciation for public liberal arts universities.
- Demonstrated exceptional leadership and integrity.
- An established record of forward-thinking vision and innovation with a proven record of growth and success.
- A record of generating resources through means such as enrollment growth, creation of innovative programs, and fundraising.
- A record of creating organizational distinctiveness and sustainability - evidence of creative problem solving, successful entrepreneurial activities, and initiatives.
- High emotional intelligence and strong interpersonal skills, with an inclusive, transparent communication style, both written and spoken.

- The ability to build deep and lasting relationships with donors, the philanthropic community, and business and industry, articulating the case for supporting UM with enthusiasm.
- A commitment to a proven record of community partnership and interprofessional collaboration.
- Demonstrated ability to lead transformational change in the face of demographic, technological, and political challenges.
- Experience advancing institutional identity and reputation in competitive environments.

**Desired Traits and Characteristics of the Next President:**

The University seeks a president who brings both steadiness and momentum—a leader capable of navigating near-term challenges while positioning the institution for long-term strength and distinction. The successful candidate will demonstrate the following traits and characteristics:



- **Collaborative Change Agent**  
Leads through partnership, respects shared governance, and listens deeply—while also making timely, well-reasoned decisions when action is required.
- **Mission-Driven Liberal Arts Champion**  
Demonstrates a clear understanding of, and commitment to, a public liberal arts mission and can articulate its value compellingly to internal and external audiences.
- **Trust-Building Leader**  
Operates with integrity, transparency, and consistency; communicates honestly and builds confidence through credibility rather than rhetoric.
- **Strong Communicator and Listener**  
Engages faculty, staff, students, trustees, alumni, and community partners with clarity, humility, and respect; explains decisions and progress in accessible, plain language.
- **Financially and Operationally Disciplined**  
Understands complex financial environments; aligns resources with institutional priorities; emphasizes accountability, sustainability, and long-term viability.
- **Strategic and Forward-Looking**  
Balances immediate needs with long-range planning; anticipates external pressures and positions the institution proactively rather than reactively.
- **Relationship-Oriented Advocate**  
Builds productive relationships with trustees, donors, legislators, and community partners; serves as a visible, effective ambassador for the University.
- **Student-Centered Leader**  
Keeps student success, access, and outcomes at the center of decision-making, particularly for first-generation and underserved populations.
- **Culturally Aware and Institutionally Grounded**  
Takes time to understand the University’s history, culture, and identity; avoids one-size-fits-all approaches borrowed from other institutions.



## COLLEGES

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### **Richard and Sandra Cummings College of Arts & Sciences**

The mission of the Richard and Sandra Cummings College of Arts & Sciences is to produce educated, engaged citizens prepared for a changing world. The College's offerings underpin the University's unique public liberal-arts mission. Programs in the College emphasize knowledge, skills, and abilities that employers consistently value, including strong communication skills, both oral and written; the ability to research, analyze, and synthesize large bodies of information; and the ability to work collaboratively. These skills together foster flexibility and adaptability, allowing graduates to succeed in a variety of careers.



### **Michael E. Stephens College of Business**

The mission of the Michael E. Stephens College of Business is to produce graduates who use effective communication, critical thinking, and leadership skills to become well-rounded contributors to the global business landscape. We accomplish this mission by creating a tailored, hands-on education, combining theory and experiential learning with collaborative interdisciplinary teaching informed by the production of impactful scholarships.

### **College of Education and Human Development**

The mission of the College of Education and Human Development is to prepare highly skilled, knowledgeable, and continually developing undergraduate and graduate candidates who make informed decisions, use current evidence and research-based practices, and promote healthy and equitable communities through careers in counseling, family and consumer sciences, leadership, teaching, and technology

### **College of Fine Arts**

The mission of the College of Fine Arts is to prepare students as visual artists, performers, musicians, arts educators, and communication scholars and practitioners. The College provides instruction and cultural experiences fundamental to the liberal education of Montevallo students, as well as aesthetic enrichment for the citizens of central Alabama.



### **College of Health Professions**

The mission of the College of Health Professions is to provide a high-quality, student-centered education with a dynamic interprofessional faculty. The mission encompasses a central purpose for all majors; to prepare graduates for careers in health and allied healthcare settings to improve quality of life measures for individuals, families, and communities, locally, nationally, and globally.

## STUDENT LIFE

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Student life at UM is vibrant and full of opportunities to get involved. Whether it's celebrating the University's rich history on Founders' Day or joining one of more than 90 student organizations here, you'll never run out of ways to connect, explore and grow at UM. Among the many ways to get involved, College Night stands out as a truly unique Homecoming tradition you won't find anywhere else. This high-energy school spirit competition features two sides, the Purples and the Golds, going head-to-head with two original, completely student-produced musicals held alongside various athletic events. Whether you're into music, student government or outdoor adventure, Montevallo means more student activities and more chances to find where you belong. Learn more at [montevallo.edu/student-life](https://montevallo.edu/student-life).

## ATHLETICS

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Montevallo Athletics has a storied tradition that dates back to the 1950s with membership in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) beginning in the 1960s. The University later joined the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) in 1996-97. Montevallo Athletics returned to the Gulf South Conference in July 2017, its original home in NCAA Division II. Since its inception nearly 60 years ago, Montevallo Athletics and its student-athletes have brought pride and recognition to the University and the surrounding community. Our intercollegiate teams have made numerous appearances in the postseason as an NAIA member and have been invited to post-season play 33 times in our short NCAA Division II history, with more than 50 Montevallo students-athletes earning All-American honors. [Learn more at montevallofalcons.com](https://montevallofalcons.com).



## MONTEVALLO, ALABAMA

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Montevallo offers a high quality of life rooted in community, culture, and balance. As a welcoming college town, it combines small-town warmth and walkable charm with the energy and creativity that come from being home to a nationally respected public liberal arts university.

Families and professionals are drawn to Montevallo for its sense of safety, affordability, and strong community connections. Neighborhoods are friendly and accessible, commutes are short, and the pace of life supports meaningful engagement—both professionally and personally.

The town's proximity to Birmingham (approximately 30 minutes) expands opportunities for dining, arts, healthcare, shopping, sporting, and air travel, while allowing residents to return home to a quieter, more personal setting. Birmingham-Shuttlesworth International Airport provides convenient regional and national access.

Montevallo is especially appealing to families who value education, creativity, and community involvement. Arts events, outdoor spaces, festivals, and university-anchored cultural programming create an environment where learning and quality of life extend well beyond campus. In short, Montevallo offers a place where leaders and their families can put down roots, engage deeply, and enjoy a balanced, purpose-driven lifestyle—with the advantages of both a close-knit community and a nearby metropolitan hub.

## APPLICATIONS & NOMINATIONS

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The Search Committee invites letters of interest and nominations to be submitted directly to the search firm, Anthem Executive |Anthem Academics. 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:

[PresidentUM@AnthemExecutive.com](mailto:PresidentUM@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 ensure consideration. Anthem and the University reserve the right to end or extend the application and nomination at any time. Expressing interest is the first step in receiving consideration and does not make one an applicant for the position.



[AnthemExecutive.com](http://AnthemExecutive.com)



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