

Dear Search Committee Members:

I am pleased to apply for the position of Dean of the College of Community Innovation and Education (CCIE) at the University of Central Florida (UCF). I am applying for the position based on my review of the university's history, current character, and direction, as well as CCIE's place and purpose in realizing the university's mission. The college's vision, especially its promise to "transcend traditional university boundaries to engage faculty and students with the social and economic fabric of thriving, modern communities" speaks directly to my personal and professional commitments. CCIE promises an academic home grounded in intellectual curiosity and integrity and, with the opening of its downtown campus in the Parramore community and partnership with the Creative Village, is positioned to experience increased visibility and greater success. I believe that my unique combination of skills and experiences—success as a teacher-scholar; accomplishments addressing performance metrics; understanding of responsibility-centered management; experience leveraging non-degree credentials and training; expertise building and launching 'key' academic programs; fostering community engagement enterprises—make me an excellent match for UCF and the CCIE.

I bring substantive leadership and managerial experience as a university administrator. Currently, I am in my eighth year of service as dean of the College of Education and Professional Studies (CEPS) at the University of West Florida (UWF). Prior to that, I served as associate dean of the College of Community and Public Service (CCPS) at Grand Valley State University (GVSU), where I was also a faculty member since 2002. My deanship experiences in both colleges involved stewarding many of the same academic disciplines now housed in the CCIE. Moreover, as recognized by awards and symbols of excellence, both of my prior colleges and CCIE value social mobility; academic programs of excellence such as education, criminal justice, legal studies, and public administration; and serve as best colleges for active military and veterans.

During my time at GVSU, I held a number of administrative leadership positions beyond the dean's office. I chaired the School of Criminal Justice prior to assuming the dean's position, and served as the executive director for the Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy until my departure in 2014. I was recruited by Michigan State University (MSU) in 2009 to serve as resident director of the Japanese Center for Michigan Universities (JCMU) in Hikone, Japan, and subsequently served on the state board that oversees this international institution.

I enhanced my administrative experience and understanding of the higher education sector as an American Council on Education (ACE) Fellow during the 2010–11 academic year. I had the opportunity to engage with legislators, board members, and executive leadership from dozens of U.S. and international universities, growing relationships and gaining insights into strategies and innovations from across the higher education sector, to include student success and community engagement initiatives. As part of this exceptional experience, I worked in the president's office at DePaul University and focused my professional development in three areas—strategic planning, enrollment management and marketing, and institutional advancement. I was fortunate to earn my president's trust, as he charged me with the development of DePaul's tenth college—the College of Science and Health—and to lead the search for its first dean.

In all of my positions of trust and responsibility, I worked under the guiding principles of honest and transparent discourse, respect for the opinions of others, discernment and thoughtful

decision-making, and never forgetting the university's mission and first priority – student success. I am energetic and goal driven, while I foster a work environment that welcomes camaraderie, inclusion, humor, trust, and open communication. Serving from a variety of leadership positions has allowed me to learn to negotiate with patience and purpose, hone and develop college and faculty strengths, and importantly, to listen and learn from my colleagues.

### ***Academic Vision, Priorities and Leadership***

I am interested in the CCIE deanship at UCF because it will provide the opportunity to lead a complex college strategic plan and resource model, support accreditation and quality enhancement initiatives, strategically grow graduate and online programs, and support a committed cohort of academic colleagues eager to advance a culture of high-impact research. My leadership record demonstrates that I have the skills and experience to build academic vision, implement it with flexibility, promote it with consistency and creativity, and follow through on challenging initiatives. My current deanship involved founding a college with a profile very similar to CCIE, and thereafter working with faculty to bridge disciplines, create a college identity, and support a concerted mission. While I came to my role having significant experience with many of the college's disciplines, I also invested substantial time and energy growing my understanding of programs for which I had not previously had the opportunity to lead.

As a member of UWF's SUS Performance-Based Metrics Executive Committee, I work to develop strategic priorities proven to effectively advance performance measures that link to the university mission. Moreover, as dean, I focus on initiatives that extend beyond metrics, to include academic excellence, integrated curricular and co-curricular learning and student success initiatives, diversity and inclusion, student-faculty research and mentoring, strategic enrollment, and community collaborations. I have demonstrated gains and improvements in each of these areas, while also realizing stronger cross-college and community partnerships. In developing initiatives, I work collaboratively and creatively to ensure strong support from both faculty and administration, as I understand that leadership decisions impact all college stakeholders.

### ***Development and Allocation of Resources***

In addition to talented and collaborative colleagues, a healthy organization must be led by data-informed decisions executed by means of refined processes that take into consideration institutional culture and capacity. Across my administrative experiences, I have honed an in-depth understanding of strategic university enrollment and student performance—degree progress, time to completion, graduation rates—as they interrelate with finances, revenue procurement, and resource management. As dean at UWF, I implemented a strategy to evolve the college from a fully centralized budgeting model to that of a hybrid-responsibility-center management (RCM) model. This revamped budget strategy has evidenced significant efficiencies and increased opportunities across the past several years. As a result, I am now able to collaborate with department chairs and program coordinators to align incentives and advance a strategy from stewardship, to reinvestment in smart-growth strategies, and finally to enhance opportunities for innovation. Such change offers new perspectives for data-informed conversations about curricular development, teaching technology, enrollment management, serving diverse populations, and investment in innovative programs with potential for significant impact and visibility.

I have a comprehensive knowledge of the fundraising process through close collaborations with the advancement unit at three universities. In my role as GVSU's Johnson Center for Philanthropy executive director, I facilitated significant fundraising and stewardship activities involving university alumni, donors, private and family foundations, and community and industry partners. As an ACE Fellow at DePaul University, I spent much of my year focusing on alumni and corporate engagement. In my role as dean at UWF, I worked with the development office to facilitate a new culture of gift development and donor cultivation wherein we honed our fundraising plans, developed program specific "points of pride," and engaged potential donors.

In addition to understanding university finances through a successful history of grantsmanship and fundraising, I also possess an understanding of institutional budgeting through experiences working with auxiliary programs and third-party vendors to enhance revenues and support delivery of academic programs, to include online programs and public-private partnerships. As a college leader I understand how indirect returns and other revenue sources are incorporated into college and university budget planning.

### ***Foster a Culture of Understanding and Respect***

Transparency and inclusiveness in decision-making and policy development can transform a campus culture. Good leadership is built on trust and open communication. Faculty must know how and why decisions are made in order to support and value those decisions. Fundamentally, faculty must be part of the decision-making process to be invested in it. To be sure, there are times when difficult decisions are necessary and consensus is not possible, but honesty and transparency in the process builds understanding even if the policy or decision is unpopular.

I admire and respect UCF's history and evolution, and my own leadership reflects CCIE's mission and values. My career as a teacher, scholar, and university leader is characterized by a commitment to supporting student-centered, high-impact educational experiences, and leveraging and aligning institutional resources central to building a collaborative, meaningful, productive academic life. I believe that higher education provides students with communication and problem-solving skills, creativity, global awareness, and thus, prepares them for fully engaged citizenship in a democratic society. I am convinced that experiences unique to the university community can provide students with the tools for success and fulfillment in life and a deeper understanding of social responsibility.

I am very excited about the opportunities afforded by the CCIE dean position at UCF. I perceive the college to be well positioned to expand its impact in teaching and research through committed faculty, close personal attention provided to all students, engagement with innovative strategies, and proper alignment of rigorous academic programs. I see an ideal prospect for building on the college's strong foundation through a strategic vision that leverages the college's strengths, ensures student engagement and research opportunities, and celebrates the college's reputation for excellent teaching and research. I am confident that I have the energy, organizational skills, leadership, creativity, and diplomacy to effectively lead CCIE. I would be honored to join the UCF team and respectfully ask for your consideration.

Thank you,

William R. Crawley, Ph.D., ACE Fellow