

Position and Candidate Specification



EMORY

CANDLER
SCHOOL OF
THEOLOGY

Emory University

Dean, Candler School of Theology

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From its founding, **Candler School of Theology has connected the church and the academy.** Emory University has evolved to become one of the world's premier institutions of higher education, and for generations Candler has been a remarkable leader at Emory across the metrics that matter in higher education, i.e., faculty stature and research productivity; student outcomes; and social engagement and innovative practice in teaching and community involvement.

Candler's mission is to educate faithful and creative leaders for the church's ministries throughout the world. This requires not only commitment to the church but also **academic excellence**, which are both central to Candler's identity. Candler faculty have an exceptional scholarly reputation and focus on four main areas: Biblical Studies, History and Interpretation of Christianity, Christianity and Culture, and Church and Ministry. Additionally, almost every member of the faculty is regularly active in their local congregation and faith community.

One of 13 official seminaries of The United Methodist Church (UMC), Candler manifests its relationship to the denomination in many ways, including sustaining a strong Methodist Studies program, hosting a bishop-in-residence, recruiting and retaining the best faculty from Wesleyan traditions, hosting the World Methodist Evangelism Institute, and maintaining a relationship of accountability with the University Senate of the UMC. Candler faculty and administrators play prominent roles in leading the UMC both theologically and institutionally. Candler graduates go on to serve the UMC as bishops, elders, deacons, and other kinds of leaders at every level and in every region.

In addition to maintaining its close ties to The United Methodist Church, Candler enthusiastically welcomes students from all branches of the Wesleyan family (e.g., AME, AMEZ, Christian Methodist, Free Methodist, Global Methodist, Nazarene, Wesleyan) and beyond. Students represent more than 40 different denominations. To serve this range of students, the School offers formal programs in Methodist (the largest number of students), Episcopal/Anglican, Baptist, and Catholic studies. In living out its mission of forming faithful and creative leaders, Candler aspires to serve the whole church.

In fall 2023, **Candler has 425 students** with 275 students (65%) in the Master of Divinity (MDiv) and 74 (17%) in the Doctor of Ministry (DMin), the two largest degree programs. Enrollment in the MDiv program soared by almost 50% in fall 2023 with the addition of a new hybrid format, and UMC student enrollment grew by 70%. The School is launching two new DMin degree tracks in fall 2024 and is revising the Master of Religious Leadership degree program to provide a more dynamic curriculum in leadership and spiritual entrepreneurship.

The School has a **robust financial scholarship program and a commitment to teaching students financial literacy.** More than 30% of Candler students leave Candler having accumulated no debt while enrolled. All masters' degree students receive scholarships, with an overall School discount rate of 61%. The discount rate for the MDiv program is 78%, with more than half of MDiv students receiving full tuition scholarships. Candler's current budget from all sources is \$30.2 million annually.

Candler has 41 outstanding full-time faculty members across the theological disciplines, 14 senior administrators (many leading scholars in their own right), and 60 talented staff who all contribute to the School's mission. Candler faculty regularly provide **leadership for academic societies.** For example, in the last

three years, Candler faculty have served as presidents of the American Academy of Religion, the Society of Biblical Literature, and the Academy of Homiletics. They are recognized with election to the prestigious American Academy of Arts and Sciences, honorary degrees, and other citations.

Considered by many to be the heart of the university, Candler likewise makes significant **contributions to the broader Emory community**. In scholarship, teaching, service, and reputation, Candler is one of the strongest units of the university according to common metrics applied in higher education. Faculty collaborate with colleagues in Emory College and other Emory schools to lead the Graduate Division of Religion (GDR), a PhD program administered by the Laney Graduate School that is among the strongest in the nation, ranked at #8 in the United States and #15 globally by the 2023 QS World University rankings. While the GDR draws on faculty from five Emory schools, Candler's faculty excellence is a driving force in this ranking.

Faculty and senior administrators at Candler have also contributed to the governance of the university, including president (James T. Laney) and provost (Rebecca Chopp). Candler Dean Jan Love recently served 19 months as interim provost, illustrating the **centrality of Candler to the wider university**. Candler is a connector across campus through various components of the School, including the Pitts Theology Library and other programming and degree offerings that link to public health, nursing, law, medicine, business and beyond. Candler students and faculty also lead the university in connecting to the diverse communities of Atlanta through its nationally recognized Contextual Education program and other initiatives. The Candler community is deeply involved in Emory's Twin Memorials project, which will honor enslaved individuals who are part of the university's history.

This deep grounding in the university has only strengthened Candler's **commitment to educating faithful and creative leaders for the church's ministries throughout the world**. A high number of Candler graduates go on to serve the church or other Christian ministries. Historically those ministries have centered in congregational leadership, but in recent decades they have expanded to include a wide range of ecclesial, missional, and nonprofit leadership roles. To serve this expansive understanding of the church's ministries, Candler offers a flagship MDiv degree as well as four other master's degrees—a Master of Theological Studies (MTS), Master of Religious Leadership (MRL), Master of Religion and Public Life (MRPL), and Master of Theology (ThM)—and a Doctor of Ministry (DMin) degree. Alongside these single degrees, Candler offers 10 dual degrees that bridge disciplinary divides.

Candler's **8,400 alumni** make a positive difference every day, applying their gifts in service to the world and community. The majority serve in congregations or parishes (56%) but also in chaplaincy (11%) and faith-based nonprofits (9%). Many (more than 20%) are now retired. Candler UMC alumni fill a wide range of leadership roles across the country and the world. Some are pastors of the most vibrant and largest churches in the connection. Many are bishops, district superintendents, agency heads, missionaries, Christian educators, children's ministers, and other vital roles. Outside the UMC, Candler graduates now compose the majority of clergy who serve in the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta.

Current Climate in Theological Education

Theological education, just like the churches Candler serves and higher education itself, is considered by many to be in a time of great disruption and realignment. Most of the traditional pipelines that provided productive arenas for young people's discernment about God's call on their lives—that is, about choosing to pursue ministry—are weak or under severe stress. The demographic shifts impacting higher education, the decline in church membership and Sunday School programs, and the increase in those who identify as “spiritual but not religious” all contribute to declining enrollment in theological education, which in turn endangers future leadership for the church.

Candler has been on the cutting edge of entrepreneurial leadership in addressing these challenges through new initiatives such as The Candler Foundry and La Mesa Academy for Theological Studies, revised curricula and modes of delivery that maintain a rigorous academic experience, and innovative approaches to engaging young people that the School believes will shape the future of theological education and the church. In the past three years, Candler has received over \$9 million from Lilly Endowment Inc. for these ventures, including a major \$6 million award in its Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative to forge new models of theological education and reach new audiences. Internally, the School has made numerous administrative and academic adjustments to pivot in response to the marketplace and financial realities. That forward-looking approach has allowed Candler to show a substantial rebound in enrollment this academic year. The Candler community believes it has set a faithful, vibrant, and creative course to weather the challenges and is well-positioned to look to the future with renewed confidence and vigor.

Candler's Commitment to Diversity

Candler strives to cultivate a collaborative community that values diversity of culture, theology, ability, experience, and perspective, where all persons are equitably included. The School's active engagement and sustained commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion help it thrive. Candler has programs, processes, and practices that advance this work across the community. Candler has among the most diverse faculties and student bodies in theological education, with 40% of faculty representing racial and ethnic minority groups and 44% of the student body identifying as people of color.

The Candler faculty has endorsed "celebrat[ing] the value of diversity" as a core value of the School, with further published commitments to "openness to honor the voice of every member of the Candler community across lines of confessional difference, disability, race and ethnicity, gender and generation, social and sexual identity, cultural heritage and national origin" and to "dialogue to foster an intentionally diverse community of learning."

Looking to the Next Decade

In keeping with a nimble and adaptive approach to leadership, Candler faculty have identified a set of strategic initiatives rather than a single, fixed plan. This dynamic approach reflects Candler's understanding of best practices in higher education while giving the School a framework to guide its work over the next decade.

1. Welcome a new dean who will continue to lead the remarkable Candler faculty to new heights of academic excellence and faithfulness to the longstanding Candler mission of educating faithful and creative Christian leaders.
2. Provide scholarships that cover 100% of tuition for 100% of MDiv students—and offer transformative levels of support for all students in all degree programs. Candler has been steadily expanding financial aid to students over the last decade and has a current discount rate of 78% for its MDiv students. Moving to full tuition support for MDiv students and maximal support for all others will help Candler continue to attract robust pools of students. Strong financial support will also help those students go on to serve in ministries without being encumbered with debt. Recently, Candler has seen a number of peer and aspirant institutions move to this model, which has impacted the School's ability to recruit some of the more competitive students who would be a great benefit to its community – and who would have chosen Candler if the financial aid packages were similar.
3. Ensure faculty excellence and diversity in recruitment as the generational shift in Candler faculty continues to unfold. Candler tenure-line scholar-teachers are characterized by their passion for research and desire to define the cutting edge of their fields; a dedication to creative pedagogy and student mentoring; a commitment to the church as embodied in real-life congregations and judicatories; and a

responsibility to serve the School, university, guilds, churches, and communities. Candler has used a variety of search techniques (i.e., competitive searches, targeted searches, cluster searches) to address the replacement challenge and places a high priority on hiring vibrant scholar-teachers who demonstrate clear dedication to Candler’s mission as lived out at a research-intensive university.

4. Fine-tune the new MDiv curriculum in two modalities, hybrid and in-person, while building community in both modalities. The fall of 2023 saw Candler launch both a new, more flexible MDiv curriculum and a new hybrid option for MDiv studies. Candler expects ongoing assessment to evaluate, reflect, and revise both the new curriculum and the mix of modalities in years to come.
5. Expand the student body through new professional degree offerings. Candler faculty are reshaping the Master of Religious Leadership two-year degree to be more responsive to the needs of the church and society, and are adding two new DMin tracks. The School continues to assess existing programs and develop new ones to expand the number of students enrolled in professional degree programs.
6. Continue to expand theological education beyond professional education. The Candler Foundry and La Mesa Academy for Theological Studies both stretch beyond standard professional degrees to offer theological education for more people serving in more kinds of ministries. Launched in 2019 just prior to the global pandemic, The Foundry has already reached 200,000 people through its innovative offerings. La Mesa will launch in fall 2024. Through processes of ongoing evaluation, Candler plans to continue to strengthen and possibly expand these programs, and it may also discern the need for new kinds of programs as it continues to work towards a full, integrated spectrum of offerings in Candler’s conception of itself as a hub of theological education for the whole church.
7. Promote student flourishing through spiritual, professional, intellectual, and material support. Recent initiatives for student flourishing—a university priority—have included: reorganization of the Office of Student Life and the Office of Worship and Spiritual Formation; the creation of a network of residential Formation Community Houses with a Christian “rule of life” at their core; increased scholarship support that provides, at minimum, 50% scholarships for all MDiv students and enhanced support for students in all degree programs; new personnel and processes for academic support; programs and coursework on Faith and Finance that help students minimize and manage debt; and the Candler Forward emergency fund to aid students during various crises, including the pandemic.
8. Continue to make Pitts Theology Library, the nation’s premier theological library, accessible to more people. Pitts has already opened significant digital access to alumni and select participants in The Candler Foundry. Grant funding secured in 2022 will enable further expansion of digital access to Hispanic Bible Institutes across North America. This will also involve building a more linguistically diverse staff to help all kinds of people make use of the access being offered.
9. Help lead and support The United Methodist Church and provide the education the church needs as it lives into the next stage of its life. Candler has launched the Center for Christian Leadership, which will expand opportunities for United Methodist leaders to learn best practices in onboarding, team-building, strategic planning, financial management, and other business areas.
10. Continue to demonstrate and articulate the significance of theology for the university. Emory University’s Methodist heritage and long history of thoughtful leadership have historically given Candler a prominent and secure place in the life of the university. As it moves into the future, Candler must continue to display excellence in the registers that the university recognizes—including high quantity and quality of scholarship and leadership at every level.

With strong ties to both church and the academy and a clear mission “to educate faithful and creative leaders for the church’s ministries throughout the world,” the Candler of the next decade will display deep continuities with the School at its founding. But continuing to fulfill a founding mission in changing times also requires significant innovations. These priorities strike that balance.

About Emory University

Located in Atlanta, Georgia and founded in 1836, Emory University has an international reputation for world-renowned scholarship and research, unparalleled teaching, and a preeminent medical center that provides students with the access to, and opportunity for, hands-on learning experiences with researchers and scholars. A member of the Association of American Universities (AAU) since 1995, the University benefits from collaboration across its nine undergraduate, graduate and professional schools. These schools include Emory College of Arts and Sciences, Oxford College, Goizueta Business School, James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies, Emory University School of Law, Emory University School of Medicine, Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing, Rollins School of Public Health, and Candler School of Theology. With approximately 16,000 students, including over 8,000 undergraduates and 7,000 graduate and professional students, Emory attracts students from every state and more than 100 countries.

For more information about Emory, please visit www.emory.edu.

Reporting to the Provost, the Dean of Candler School of Theology is the chief academic and administrative officer of the School. The Dean is responsible for all aspects of Candler's management and budget and works with the faculty and staff to ensure active involvement in the development of long-range strategic plans, major budgetary priorities, and other important activities and issues that affect the well-being of the School and its place in the university. The Dean is a member of the Council of Deans and may also be appointed to other university committees as the representative of Candler. This leader will serve as the School's main spokesperson, advocate, and representative, cultivating and nurturing key partnerships within the university and broader communities.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Reports to Provost and Executive Vice President, Academic Affairs, Emory University

Direct reports Associate Dean of Academic Affairs
Associate Dean of Faculty
Associate Dean of La Mesa Academy for Theological Studies
Associate Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid
Associate Dean of Worship and Spiritual Formation
Assistant Dean of Methodist Studies
Assistant Dean of Students
Assistant Dean of Advancement and Alumni Engagement
Chief Business Officer
Chief of Staff
Executive Director, The Candler Foundry
Director, Aquinas Institute
Director, Center for Christian Leadership
Director, Communications
Director, Pitts Theology Library
Director, World Methodism Evangelism Institute
Executive Administrative Assistant

Other key relationships President, Emory University
Academic Deans and Senior University Leaders
United Methodist Church Leaders
Candler Faculty, Staff, Students and Alumni

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Dean of Candler is responsible for overall administration of the School, including setting policies, budgets, and procedures for matters related to faculty, staff, students, facilities, and broader operations.

- The Dean serves as the chief academic officer of the School, leading the faculty with intellectual and spiritual/theological depth, paying particular attention to the recruitment, retention, diversification, and promotion of faculty.
- The Dean maintains visibility, presence, and transparency to students, staff, and faculty while also engaging ecclesial communities and denominational leaders in service of strengthening the church.
- The Dean is a vocal champion of the School and is able to share a compelling vision for its mission that will attract a broad range of donors and partners, ultimately increasing the resources available to advance the School's mission and strategic priorities.
- The Dean serves as the School's ambassador to church communities around the world and to the community of theological higher education.
- The Dean nurtures the School's culture of faculty governance while remaining attentive to faculty work-life balance.
- The Dean leads with an unequivocal commitment to fostering an equitable, diverse, and inclusive environment at all levels of the School, making theological studies accessible to all.
- The Dean works collaboratively with university leadership to fulfill key strategic initiatives.

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

- A seasoned and skilled administrator with proven operational, financial, and managerial success within a complex organization.
- An experienced leader in theology and religion who ideally brings a nuanced understanding of The United Methodist Church and its changing landscape.
- A recognized scholar with experience in higher education.
- A fundraiser with ability to attract and expand financial resources through philanthropy and other vehicles.
- An advocate with a successful trajectory of advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging; a demonstrated commitment to social justice.
- An effective and experienced communicator on a range of topics to diverse academic, church, and public audiences.

CRITICAL LEADERSHIP CAPABILITIES

Strategic Vision

The Dean will be a creative, bold, visionary, and innovative thinker who will understand the landscape of theological education and will:

- Set priorities that balance academic, spiritual, and cultural elements of the School, while ensuring effective fiscal stewardship and budgetary oversight.
- Interpret a fast-changing theological educational landscape, creatively anticipate challenges and opportunities, and effectively lead the School through necessary change as appropriate.
- Garner additional financial resources for Candler that will support its strategic priorities.

Collaborating and Influencing

The Dean will be a visible leader, internally and externally, who will:

- Work with peer Deans across Emory University to build even greater connectivity and collaboration.
- Honor and facilitate Candler's culture of shared governance and collegiality among faculty.
- Build key relationships with organizations and individuals in the community while maintaining visibility on campus, throughout Atlanta, and globally.
- Partner with key church leaders and provide continued opportunities for education for the United Methodist community and beyond.

Managing People

As Candler's academic and administrative leader, the Dean will:

- Exhibit transformative, inspiring, visionary, and authentic leadership and create a strong sense of unity across a diverse community of individuals.
- Recruit, retain, motivate, empower, and develop the next generation of spiritual and academic leaders; oversee the recruitment, appointment, re-appointment, and recommendations for promotion and tenure of faculty, and make non-faculty staffing decisions within the context of University-wide policies and procedures.

- Facilitate a culture of true inclusion and social justice for all identities and backgrounds.

THE SEARCH PROCESS

Candler School of Theology has retained Spencer Stuart to support this national search. If you wish to submit your own application materials or nominate someone to serve as the next Dean of Candler, please send an e-mail message with supporting materials to CandlerDean@SpencerStuart.com.

Emory University is dedicated to providing equal opportunities and equal access to all individuals regardless of race, color, religion, ethnic or national origin, gender, genetic information, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and veteran's status. Emory University does not discriminate in admissions, educational programs, or employment on the basis of any factor stated above or prohibited under applicable law. Students, faculty, and staff are assured of participation in University programs and in the use of facilities without such discrimination. Emory University complies with Executive Order 11246, as amended, Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Vietnam Era Veteran's Readjustment Assistance Act, and applicable executive orders, federal and state regulations regarding nondiscrimination, equal opportunity and affirmative action. Emory University is committed to achieving a diverse workforce through application of its affirmative action, equal opportunity, and nondiscrimination policy in all aspects of employment including recruitment, hiring, promotions, transfers, discipline, terminations, wage and salary administration, benefits, and training. Inquiries regarding this policy should be directed to the Emory University Office of Equity and Inclusion, 201 Dowman Drive, Administration Building, Atlanta, GA 30322. Telephone: 404.727.9867 (V) | 404.712.2049 (TDD).