

EDWARD A. SERNA

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE HIGHLIGHTS

- An authentic leader with presidential experience at public universities in Arkansas and Maine
- A change agent with extensive experience in strategic planning and organizational change in higher education, government organizations, and private industry
- A passionate advocate for the critical mission of public higher education
- A conceptual thinker with a commitment to data-informed decision making to drive transformational change
- A transparent and collaborative leader with a commitment to shared governance

EDUCATION

Doctor of Education in Higher Education Administration
University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL

Master of Management Information Systems
Auburn University, Auburn, AL

Master of Science in Industrial Management
Clemson University, Clemson, SC

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration
Winthrop University, Rock Hill, SC

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Winthrop University, Rock Hill, SC | 2022 -- Present
President

Institutional Profile:

Founded in 1886, Winthrop University, is a public, comprehensive institution located in the heart of the Carolinas that upholds a tradition of national-caliber academics, championship athletics, and a student-centered approach. Ranked sixth by U.S. News & World Report among Southern public universities and in the top 15 of public and private institutions in the region, Winthrop University provides an education that blends liberal arts, professional programs, global awareness, and civic engagement with an emphasis on lifelong professional and personal development. Winthrop University grants 46 undergraduate degrees and 23 graduate degrees across four colleges. With an annual budget of \$117 million and an enrollment of 4,500 students, Winthrop has over 800 employees with more than 60,000 alumni. Winthrop fields 17 division athletic teams plus a growing Esports team.

University of Maine at Farmington, Farmington, ME | 2019 – 2022
President

Institutional Profile:

The University of Maine–Farmington (UMF) was founded in 1864 and is Maine’s oldest institution of public higher education. UMF is a member of the University of Maine System, which consists of seven universities. With its focus on teacher education and liberal arts, UMF provides 32 bachelor's degrees and 5 master’s degrees. The University has an annual budget of \$42 million; an enrollment of 1,700 students; a workforce of more than 400 faculty and staff; and a base of more than 18,000 alumni. UMF Athletics compete in 19 varsity sports including 13 NCAA Division III sports and 6 USCSA sports. UMF is recognized annually by US News and World Report for its excellent value, the quality of its educational programming, and social mobility.

development of long-range capital facilities priorities; and the administration of all programs affecting student life and promotion of the learning environment for the welfare of the student body.

Key Achievements

- Led the institution through a comprehensive, year-long strategic planning exercise that focused on addressing the significant internal and external challenges driving an erosion in enrollment and causing a significant structural budget deficit. The “Reimagining the University 2021-2024” plan is an action-oriented plan that addresses the most serious issues facing UMF. The ambitious first year of the implementation is focused on driving fundamental change in our curriculum, budgeting, enrollment management, and organizational structure.
- Collaborating with the faculty and with the full support of the University of Maine System Trustees, actively reimagining our curriculum to seek innovative ways to cooperate with our sister campuses within the new unified accreditation model for the University of Maine System and create seamless pathways for community college transfer students. Leveraging extensive data including a peer analysis, student surveys, market analysis, curricular efficiency analysis, and program economic analysis to restructure the curriculum including a conversion from a four-credit hour course structure to a three-credit hour structure, reevaluation of the general education curriculum, and a redesigned scheduling grid.
- Transforming the budgeting process from an incremental model to a needs-based model. Implementing a budget that operationalizes the strategic plan and funnels resources to those areas identified as critical to the mission. After years of incremental budging coupled with significant enrollment losses, the budget no longer accurately reflected operational priorities and must be reset.
- Improving organizational structures and processes through an organizational design review process. The strategic plan identified significant issues with under-resourced and under-skilled areas on campus. Years of non-strategic, reactionary staffing and professional development funding cuts created a significant risk to successfully implementing the strategic plan. To address this, we conducted an organizational design review to analyze our current state, desired future state, and identify gaps. This plan will provide a multi-year roadmap to creating a more agile organizational structure.
- Recalibrating our enrollment management and marketing plans to the new strategic plan. The institution lacked a cohesive enrollment management strategy anchored in its strategic plan. Our new plan addresses many of the internal issues that caused declining enrollment. While the provost, deans, and faculty work to redesign the curriculum, we implemented immediate changes to diversify our enrollment strategy away from an overreliance on a residential undergraduate student population that had been the focus at the institution for the past 15 years. In the last two years, we launched three new graduate programs resulting in credit hour production growth of 54% since fall 2019. New leadership in our Early College program has grown enrollment in the past year from 59 to 167 students with more changes aimed at further growth. While these changes are positive progress towards mitigating our overreliance on a shrinking market for traditionally-aged students in our recruitment area, we are actively developing a new enrollment management plan that focuses on further diversifying our student population, a new retention plan including the new Director of Advising and a First Year Class Dean positions, a new data-informed marketing plan, and a new financial aid model that addresses an ineffective and financially unsustainable institutional aid strategy.
- Expanding collaborative programs with University of Maine System campuses and community college partners to increase diversity in our student population and grow enrollments in new programming areas. Among the early successes in this area has been a new bachelor of science in nursing program offered in partnership with the University of Maine at Augusta to help meet the critical nursing shortages in our region. Another growing partnership is with Stone Child College in Montana. This partnership with a Tribal College provides opportunities for student and faculty

exchange, collaboration on mutually beneficial research, and a pathway for Stone Child students into our graduate education programs.

- Creating new revenue streams in the areas of fundraising, grant writing, and congressionally directed funding to alleviate our overreliance on tuition revenue.
 - The strategic plan identified our Advancement Office as significantly under-resourced with a single development officer and alumni director. To address this, we recently hired a new Chief Advancement Officer to begin rebuilding our fundraising capabilities. Even with these limitations and constrained by the pandemic, we successfully raised \$1.6m including several mini-campaigns focused on providing much needed aid to our students during the pandemic.
 - Through the generous gift of a donor, we also created structures and incentives for faculty to actively engage in grant writing. In the first year, this effort yielded \$600k in new federal grant funding to UMF. We continue to build on these early successes to build a grant writing culture on campus focusing on larger federal grants that advance the institution's mission and carry indirect rates.
 - Actively pursuing state and federal funding sources to complete the \$3.5m project to expand our early childhood education center enabling UMF to greatly expand much-needed early childhood services and education programs in Maine.
- Directed the development and implementation of a Diversity Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) plan to be funded in the FY23 budget. This was in response to the sobering assessment during the strategic planning process of our institutional approach to DEI as “underfunded”, “ineffective” and, an “afterthought”. While we see an opportunity to increase diversity on campus, that must be coupled with the support systems necessary to ensure success. We have commenced the critical work of building a comprehensive and resourced institutional approach that brings together existing efforts on campus.
- Building a series of structures and practices to strengthen shared governance. Established the President's Advisory Council consisting of senior administrators, Faculty Senate leadership, Staff Senate leadership, and Student Senate leadership to meet on a monthly basis on critical issues facing UMF. This group served as the Strategic Planning Steering Committee and is currently advising on the implementation of the plan. Instituted a practice of monthly one-on-one meetings with the presidents of the faculty, staff, and student senates to engage in honest conversations about the state of the university and discuss possible courses of action. In an effort to increase the transparency and inclusiveness of our budgeting process, created the Budget Advisory Committee comprised of faculty, staff, and students to advise the President's Cabinet on the annual budgets.
- Serve on several University of Maine System governance committees including; the Presidents' Council, the Unified Accreditation Executive Steering Committee, the Strategic Planning Executive Steering Committee, and Capital Budget Advisory Committee

University of Arkansas- Fort Smith, Fort Smith, AR | 2015 – 2019
Chancellor (Interim) | September 2018 – June 2019

Institutional Profile:

The University of Arkansas- Fort Smith (UAFS) is a public, four-year university located in Fort Smith, Arkansas. UAFS is a member of the University of Arkansas System, which consists of six universities and seven community colleges. UAFS has an annual budget of \$80 million; a Foundation with assets in excess of \$100 million; an enrollment of 6,700 students; a workforce of more than 800 faculty and staff; and a base of more than 48,000 alumni. UAFS offers 60 bachelor's and associate degrees, 35 certificates, and a master's program. UAFS Athletics competes in 10 NCAA Division II sports.

Position Profile:

The Chancellor is the chief executive officer of the university, reporting to the President of the University of Arkansas System and the Board of Trustees of the University of Arkansas. In accordance with university policy, the Chancellor provides leadership for all activities of the university and is accountable for its overall operation and success. The Chancellor employs an array of Vice Chancellors to provide leadership and assistance in all aspects of carrying out the operation and mission of the university.

Key Achievements:

- Implemented the UAFS Promise program. A recruitment and retention initiative focused on providing students with fixed tuition and a streamlined pathway to graduate in four years with their promise to make satisfactory academic progress and adhere to advising guidance. It is unique within Arkansas and designed to address our four-year graduation rates in response to the new ADHE funding formula.
- Implemented the Adult Degree Completion Program. A recruitment and retention initiative focused on providing nontraditional students with a streamlined pathway to complete their baccalaureate degree. The program serves a student population that provides opportunities for enrollment growth and is responsive to the ADHE funding formula.
- Founding member of the newly chartered Fort Smith Regional Workforce Development Advisory Board. As the higher education representative, collaborate with the Fort Smith Regional Chamber of Commerce, Fort Smith Public Schools, and regional employers in the development of a holistic approach to workforce development.
- Implemented the “First to Go” program focused on helping our large first generation student population transition to the University. Through a series of outreach initiatives, connected first generation students with UAFS faculty and staff, who were also first generation college students. The effort has been highly effective in providing this student population with a support network to aid in their successful transition into the campus community.
- Re-chartered the Student Retention Committee expanding membership to include all areas of the University’s enterprise. The new Committee made significant progress in identifying, analyzing, and redesigning organizational processes and policies that were not student friendly and negatively impacted student persistence.
- Actively collaborated with the UAFS Foundation staff and Board to secure \$4m in gifts and a \$10.8m estate gift to fund the honors program. Successfully conducted a national search for a new Vice Chancellor for Advancement and Executive Director of the UAFS Foundation.
- Implemented a new First Year Advising Center. The University was losing nearly 40% of its first year class by the beginning of their second year. A series of student focus groups, surveys, and data analysis indicated that our first year advising was negatively impacting student persistence. All advising for first year students was centralized and an investment made to add staff and upskill existing personnel.
- Developed a partnership agreement between the Arkansas National Guard (ANG) and UAFS in support of our Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) degree program. The first of its kind in the state of Arkansas, the agreement allowed UAFS students to gain real world flight and data analysis experience by operating aircraft in restricted airspace at Fort Chaffee. This was a critical partnership that provided a recruiting pipeline for ANG personnel and veterans into our programs.
- Conceptualized the Associate’s to Bachelor’s (A2B) program. A recruiting campaign for our community college 2+2 programs. The program provided for the centralized recruiting, marketing, and relationship management of the University’s portfolio of five online baccalaureate completer programs with more than 20 partner community colleges across five states.
- Implemented a national recruiting campaign for active duty military personnel. Leveraged our new UAS program and strong Student Veteran Organization (SVO) on campus to target 20 military installations with active UAS units for recruitment. Contracted with marketing organizations specializing in this market space. The campaign focused on recruiting for our UAS, BBA, and BSOL programs.

Chief of Staff & Vice Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives | July 2017 – June 2019

Position Profile:

Charged by the Chancellor to proactively identify and lead a portfolio of cross-divisional initiatives that are critical to successfully meeting strategic goals. Directed the development, tracking, and refinement of progress indicators for the implementation of the strategic plan. Developed and executed relationship management and communication strategies with key constituencies that advanced the institution's workforce and economic development missions. Represented the UAFS at public events engaging elected officials, business leaders, and community leaders. Provided leadership to a broad cross-section of departments focused on driving revenue capture, enrollment growth, and strategic partnerships in new markets.

Key Achievements:

- In collaboration with Academic Affairs, successfully developed the first degree programs in unmanned aerial systems (UAS) in the state of Arkansas. Led the cultivation of partnerships with commercial organizations to assist with the growth of the new program. Recruited the program's founding director.
- Collaborated with faculty to build a grant writing culture on campus that to date has resulted in greatly increased faculty participation, external partnerships, and more than \$12m in new awards to the institution.
- Developed the UAFS Promise Program. This was a recruitment and retention initiative focused on providing students with fixed tuition and a streamlined path to graduate in four years with their promise to make satisfactory academic progress and adhere to advising guidance.
- Developed the Adult Degree Completion Program. In collaboration with Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management, this is a recruitment and retention initiative focused on providing nontraditional students with a streamlined pathway to complete their baccalaureate degree.
- Established the newly created Office of Student Retention. Collaborated with Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management to identify and implement institution-wide, data-driven solutions for student persistence. This included creating the new position of Executive Director for Student Retention.
- Established the newly created Office of Corporate and Foundation Engagement in a collaborative effort with the UAFS Foundation and Academic Affairs to implement a more holistic approach to engaging our partners in strategic, long-term relationships. This included creating the new position of Director for Corporate and Foundation Engagement.
- Directed the migration of the Office of Strategic Analytics and Institutional Research from Academic Affairs to the Office of Strategic Initiatives. The office focus increased in scope to managing data at the institutional level. This led to greater data integrity and transparency driving a culture of data-driven decision making on campus.
- Developed an internal consulting capability focused on providing analysis with actionable recommendations to the Chancellor on core organizational challenges. White papers were delivered in the areas of new student onboarding, advising, nontraditional students, and our digital presence. As part of this capability, we established a mechanism for capturing the voice of students through focus groups and surveys. This resulted in a more complete understanding of the needs of our core stakeholders. These reports led to significant changes in policies and procedures to better serve students.
- In an effort to transform our International Relations Office into a profit center, redirected our recruitment efforts to focus on markets that were a better match for our technical degree programs resulting in increased revenue generation per student.
- Coordinated the institution's partnership efforts with the Restore Hope Alliance addressing the region's criminal recidivism and foster care crisis through grant proposal development and new educational programs aimed at serving this at risk population.

Chief of Staff & Associate Vice Chancellor for External Funding | July 2016 – June 2017

Position Profile:

Provided counsel to the Chancellor on a wide variety of executive duties, special projects, and initiatives involving the Chancellor's Office and its priorities. As an advisor and support to the Chancellor, provided coordination and liaison with Senior Staff members on matters of interest to the Chancellor; handling questions, concerns, issues and requests on the Chancellor's behalf; coordinating communications; and serving as a liaison between the Chancellor and a variety of internal and external constituencies. Led the institution's external funding efforts focused on increasing faculty proposal writing.

Key Achievements:

- Principal architect of the institution's 2017-2022 Strategic Plan. Directed key aspects of the plan's development including competitor analysis, benchmark analysis, and environmental scan. Worked collaboratively with the Chancellor and Vice Chancellors in facilitating working sessions to articulate and capture key institutional priorities in the development of the plan. Directed the development of the published plan and communication to key internal and external stakeholders.
- Leveraged business contacts in the aerospace industry to develop programming in unmanned aircraft systems. Brokered introductions between the Chancellor and aerospace executives to form partnerships, identified and contracted with UAS subject matter experts to advise the institution on establishing a program that meets an emerging need within the industry, and connected UAFS with the broader national UAS network. This effort resulted in an industry-driven workforce development solution that placed the institution on the national stage in an emerging market.
- Co-authored a winning proposal for more than \$4m over a four-year period of performance to deliver concurrent education to six areas high schools in robotics and cyber systems. The two awards from the Arkansas Department of Higher Education were the largest Regional Workforce Grant awards in the state.
- Continued to lead the institution's rapidly growing discretionary grant portfolio. Eclipsed \$32m in proposal volume for CY2017. This represents more than a tenfold increase from my first year at UAFS.

Director, Grants Management & Compliance | January 2015 – June 2016

Position Profile:

Directed the full lifecycle of external grant activities including the identification of new funding opportunities, development of winning proposals, and delivery of contractually-compliant technical and financial reports. Fostered collaborative relationships with external organizations to form competitive grant partnerships. Worked with faculty and staff across campus to promote and support the development of highly competitive proposals to government, corporate, and private agencies. Cultivated a portfolio of nonprofit, corporate, and government funding that aligned with institutional needs and goals.

Key Achievements:

- Increased the institution's annual proposal volume from less than \$1m in CY 2014, to \$2.6m in CY 2015, and \$12.85m in CY 2016.
- Captured more than \$6m in new discretionary grants from federal, state, and foundation sources.
- Facilitated the development of a strategic planning framework for Academic Affairs. Collaborated with the Provost and Deans to define strategic objectives and performance measures, which were delivered as part of the institution's strategic plan.

Athens State University, Athens, AL | 2013-2014

Assistant Professor of Management, College of Business

Taught both online and classroom-based undergraduate courses in leadership, project management, information systems, and organizational change. Advised undergraduate business students within the College of Business.

Science & Engineering Services LLC, Huntsville, AL | 2011-2014

Program Manager II, Unmanned Aircraft Systems

Senior program manager for a portfolio of prototype development, logistics, and training contracts for the U.S. Army Project Management Unmanned Aircraft Systems (PM UAS) Office. Directed geographically dispersed teams providing logistics and training support to U.S. Army units. Developed statements of work, evaluated proposals, and negotiated/managed subcontracts across multiple delivery orders. Provided management and technical content for proposal efforts. Managed financials for the company's small and tactical UAS programs to ensure all delivery orders met organizational profit targets. Held U.S. Government Secret clearance.

Booz Allen Hamilton Inc., Huntsville, AL | 2004-2011

Associate, Strategy & Organization

Consulting task order lead and subject matter expert in strategic planning, change management, knowledge management, and process reengineering for U.S. Army and NASA clients. Provided management and technical content for proposal efforts. Held U.S. Government Secret clearance. Client engagements included:

- Managed a knowledge management program for the U.S. Army Materiel Command's Chief of Staff.
- Provided subject matter expertise towards the development of IT architecture and process models for the U.S. Army Aviation Field Maintenance Directorate.
- Developed an IT lifecycle management plan for the U.S. Army Aviation & Missile Research, Development & Engineering Center.
- Developed external stakeholder interview protocols, staff competency models, and a strategic planning framework as part of an organizational review of the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command.
- Managed content development and requirements analysis efforts for the creation of a knowledge management system for the NASA Ares Project Office.
- Conducted an assessment and made recommendations to the NASA Marshall Space Flight Center's Office of the CIO (MSFC OCIO) for transformation initiatives to better position the organization to support the Constellation Program.
- Developed a 5-year integrated IT plan for the NASA MSFC OCIO.
- Managed analysis efforts of the current state architecture and made recommendations as part of an NASA-wide Enterprise Resource Planning implementation.

AFLAC Inc., Columbus, GA | 2003-2004

Project Leader, Administrative Technology Services

Senior business analyst and project leader directing junior analysts on an enterprise-wide reengineering initiative of core client management business processes. Managed efforts to identify opportunities for business process reengineering initiatives and new technology infusion. Contributed to the design of the future-state business architecture and development of a 5-year implementation roadmap including a change management and communications plan.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- Organization Ethics- University of Arkansas- Fort Smith (2017-2018)
- Decision Support Systems- University of Arkansas- Fort Smith (2015-2016)
- Project Management- Athens State University (2014)
- Management of Change- Athens State University (2012-2014)
- Principles of Management and Leadership- Athens State University (2011-2014)
- Management Information Systems- Athens State University (2011-2012)
- Introduction to Information Systems and Data Analysis, Troy University (2011-2013)
- Computer Concepts and Applications- Troy University (2007-2011)
- Advanced Microcomputer Applications- Calhoun Community College (2009-2010)
- Microcomputer Applications- Calhoun Community College (2007-2010)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- New Presidents Academy, American Association of State Colleges and Universities (2019)
- Executive Leadership Academy, American Academic Leadership Institute (2018-2019)
- Institute for Educational Management, Graduate School of Education, Harvard University (2017)
- Leadership Arkansas, Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce (2016-2017)

PROFESSIONAL & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- University of Maine at Farmington
 - Greater Franklin County Development Council
 - Franklin County Chamber of Commerce
 - Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges
 - North Atlantic Conference (DIII Athletics)
- University of Arkansas- Fort Smith
 - Fort Smith Regional Chamber of Commerce
 - Fort Smith Regional Council
 - Fort Smith Regional Workforce Development Advisory Board
 - Restore Hope Arkansas
 - Friends of Recreational Trails
 - Lone Star Conference (DII Athletics)