



C O K E R
UNIVERSITY

**PRESIDENTIAL
SEARCH**



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Coker University is engaged in a search for its 17th president. The institution welcomes inquiries, nominations, and applications for an experienced, impassioned leader interested in continuing and expanding the university's efforts to educate the new student majority through innovative teaching, learning, and personal and professional development, as well as increasing the visibility of Coker's graduate degree programs. The university hopes for a leader committed to keeping Coker competitive, yet still student-centered, in a rapidly changing higher education environment.

About Coker

Since its founding in 1908, Coker University, formerly Coker College (1969-2019) and Coker College for Women (1908-1969), has been dedicated to fostering lifelong learning and the development of ethical character, leadership skills, and social responsibility. Founded by Major James Lide Coker, the institution was established to fill a need for quality higher education in the rural Pee Dee region of South Carolina, an honorable objective that is still relevant to the university's mission. The Coker family is still an ongoing supporter of the university to this day.

Today, Coker University is a student-focused, comprehensive university with a strong liberal arts core offering five online master's degree programs and granting bachelor's degrees, including four undergraduate degrees that can be earned entirely online. Coker is known for its signature round table, discussion-based learning combined with hands-on experiences designed to encourage active participation inside and outside the classroom. A Coker education and student experience centers around personalized learning and the values of the university's student covenant—integrity, respect, scholarship, sustainability, service, and contribution. A supportive, close-knit community prepares our students with the confidence and practical life skills they need to reach their personal best.

11:1 STUDENT : PROFESSOR RATIO
AVERAGE CLASS SIZE OF 10 STUDENTS

27 STATES
REPRESENTED
(INCLUDING S.C.)

21 FOREIGN
COUNTRIES
REPRESENTED

97% OF STUDENTS
RECEIVE SOME FORM
OF FINANCIAL AID

970+
UNDERGRADUATE
STUDENTS

COKER AWARDS
\$14,000,000
IN SCHOLARSHIP AID EVERY YEAR

130+
GRADUATE
STUDENTS

STUDENT ATHLETES CONTRIBUTE
3,000+ HOURS
OF COMMUNITY SERVICE EACH SEMESTER

340+
TOTAL ONLINE
STUDENTS



Coker is ...

...currently engaged in two **National Science Foundation projects.**

Coker serves as the lead institution of NSF “**Institutional Collaboration to Recruit, Retain and Graduate Low-Income Students in Biology.**” This project provides over \$2.7 million in scholarship aid to low-income students across four partnering institutions and involves a comprehensive and scalable approach to enhancing the college experience and success of low-income STEM students in biology.

The second NSF project, titled “**Functions and mechanisms of A-to-I RNA editing in *Fusarium graminearum*,**” is a \$500,000 grant with the goal of understanding the role and mechanism of a phenomenon known as RNA editing in a fungal pathogen. This project provides students training in molecular genetics and genomics studies. In addition, this project involves the development of an annual, weeklong summer workshop designed to inform high school teachers in the Pee Dee region of South Carolina.

...in its second year of a **three-year \$300,000 grant from the Teagle Foundation: Liberal Arts and the Professions**, a grant to support faculty as they work to see that business graduates are prepared with key skills in writing, communication, and cross-disciplinary thinking.

...in its **first year of a \$300,000 grant from the Office of Violence Against Women Department of Justice campus grant.** This grant seeks to reduce sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking on campus while enhancing collaboration among Coker, local law enforcement, and victim advocacy organizations.

BEST COLLEGES FOR FINANCIAL AID

LendEDU

BEST REGIONAL UNIVERSITIES IN THE SOUTH

U.S. News & World Report

BEST VALUE SCHOOLS IN REGIONAL UNIVERSITIES SOUTH

U.S. News & World Report

BEST SOUTHEASTERN SCHOOLS

Princeton Review

RANKED SOUTH CAROLINA'S 2ND BEST SCHOOL FOR THE SOCIAL MOBILITY OF ITS GRADUATES

Harvard Equity of Opportunity Study

STRONG COMMITMENT TO UNDERGRADUATE TEACHING AND A MOST INNOVATIVE SCHOOL

U.S. News & World Report 2019



Mission

Coker University is a student-centered, comprehensive university dedicated to providing every student an academic curriculum based upon a uniformly excellent liberal arts core that enhances the structured development of key personal skills. The university's goal is to graduate students with the ability to think analytically and creatively, and to write and speak effectively. Experiences both inside and outside the classroom are focused on active student involvement and the practical application of academic knowledge that lead to lifelong learning. Coker measures its success by the personal and professional accomplishments enjoyed by all members of the academic community.

Vision

Everyone has an opportunity here.

Coker University is part of a national movement for change in higher education and is proud to educate the new student majority, which includes substantial numbers of first-generation students, students coming from under-resourced high schools, underrepresented students, and adult-age students. These incoming students face a different set of challenges than previous generations; Coker continues to identify and eliminate achievement gaps by devoting resources to student success initiatives, including a recent institutional reorganization focusing on more effective student communication, support, inclusion, and retention. Coker is intentional about graduating students ready for careers, responsibility, and to be engaged and active in their communities.

Coker recognizes that accessibility is one of the most important factors in higher education and has been creating opportunities for students of all ages and circumstances to earn their college degree. Coker has been educating adult learners through its evening program since the late 1980s, helping thousands of working adults and busy parents earn a college degree through evening, in-seat classes. Over the last five years, Coker has added four entirely online bachelor's degree programs—business management, criminology, psychology, and sociology—empowering students to earn their college degree on their own time and from any location with an internet connection.

Coker's graduate programs are an opportunity for continued scholarship without pausing careers or family responsibilities. All graduate coursework is online offering flexibility and convenience for busy adults looking to advance their careers and personal goals.

Campus

Coker University's beautiful 15-acre campus sits on the edge of downtown Hartsville and hosts some of the town's most historic buildings. Davidson Hall is the heart of Coker's campus, boasting six columns that serve as both the inspiration for the six pillars of the student covenant and the university's logo and brand identity.

Coker University has eight dormitories, including two apartment-style buildings built in 2013 with the look and feel of a modern village neighborhood.

In August 2014, Coker opened the Harris E. and Louise H. DeLoach Center, a state-of-the-art athletic facility, featuring a 1,908 seat gymnasium, an auxiliary gym, two interactive classrooms, 10 locker rooms, a student-athlete weight room, a sports medicine and training room, a fitness center, team store, walking track, café, and athletic offices.

Coker University is also home to the P.L. and Belle Wolfe McCall School of Visual and Performing Arts, which hosts over 65 performances and exhibitions every year. Coker's campus has extensive performance

spaces, including the Elizabeth Boatwright Coker Performing Arts Center, a 40,000 square foot building encompassing the 466-seat Watson Theater and the 100-seat Black Box Theater, the Margaret Coker Lawton Music Building, and the Gladys Coker Fort Art Building.

Kalmia Gardens of Coker University, the area's oldest and only public garden, is located approximately three miles from the heart of campus. With 35 acres of flora and fauna, Kalmia is home to a variety of plant life, including its namesake, *Kalmia latifolia* (Mountain Laurel), and animal life, including numerous species of birds. Formerly a 19th century plantation, Kalmia is home to the Thomas E. Hart House (circa 1820), which belonged to the founder of Hartsville and is on the National Register of Historical Places. Kalmia Gardens is on the forefront of environmental research and trends with an innovative regenerative stormwater conveyance system, an oyster shell recycling initiative, and numerous educational classes each year in coordination with local and national nonprofits and organizations.

Future campus projects include a new Coker University School of Business building, which will include three active learning classrooms, a community meeting room, 12 faculty/staff offices, an outdoor classroom, and a courtyard.





Hartsville (est. 1891)

“A small town with a big heart,” Hartsville is the perfect university town. With downtown just a five minute walk from the center of campus, it’s easy to grab some food (most local restaurants and coffee shops offer Coker discounts), attend events like the outdoor Concerts on College, shop at local boutiques, or browse the weekend Farmer’s Market.

Major James Lide Coker founded both Coker College (1908) and Sonoco Products Company (1899), a multinational corporation with 20,000 employees operating more than 300 plants across 33 countries headquartered here in Hartsville.

Small Charming Southern Town

POPULATION OF

~7700

.....
2016 & 1996

ALL-AMERICA CITY



Student Success

Through its numerous student success initiatives, Coker is committed to leveling the playing field for its students, providing resources and opportunities for scholarship, growth, and personal development.

Student Success Coaches - All Coker undergraduate students—traditional, online or evening—are matched with a student success coach to help them navigate college life. Student success coaches help students with everything from registering for classes to identifying internship opportunities to connecting them with the campus resources they need to be successful. They work directly with students to answer questions, provide clarity, and foster connections between students and the campus community.

Stock, Paper, Scissors, the Cobra Cupboard, and the Cobra Closet - The Coker community is committed to helping its students meet the most basic of needs. Coker's residence life staff stocks the Cobra Cupboard, a food and basic-necessities pantry located adjacent to the residence life office. Stock, Paper, Scissors was started in the fall of 2019 by Coker's library staff in an effort to provide students with school supplies, including backpacks, notebooks, highlighters, index cards, and more. The Cobra Closet will open in the spring of 2020 with gently used or new clothing, bedding, and towels for Coker students. All Coker supply centers depend on donations from the community.

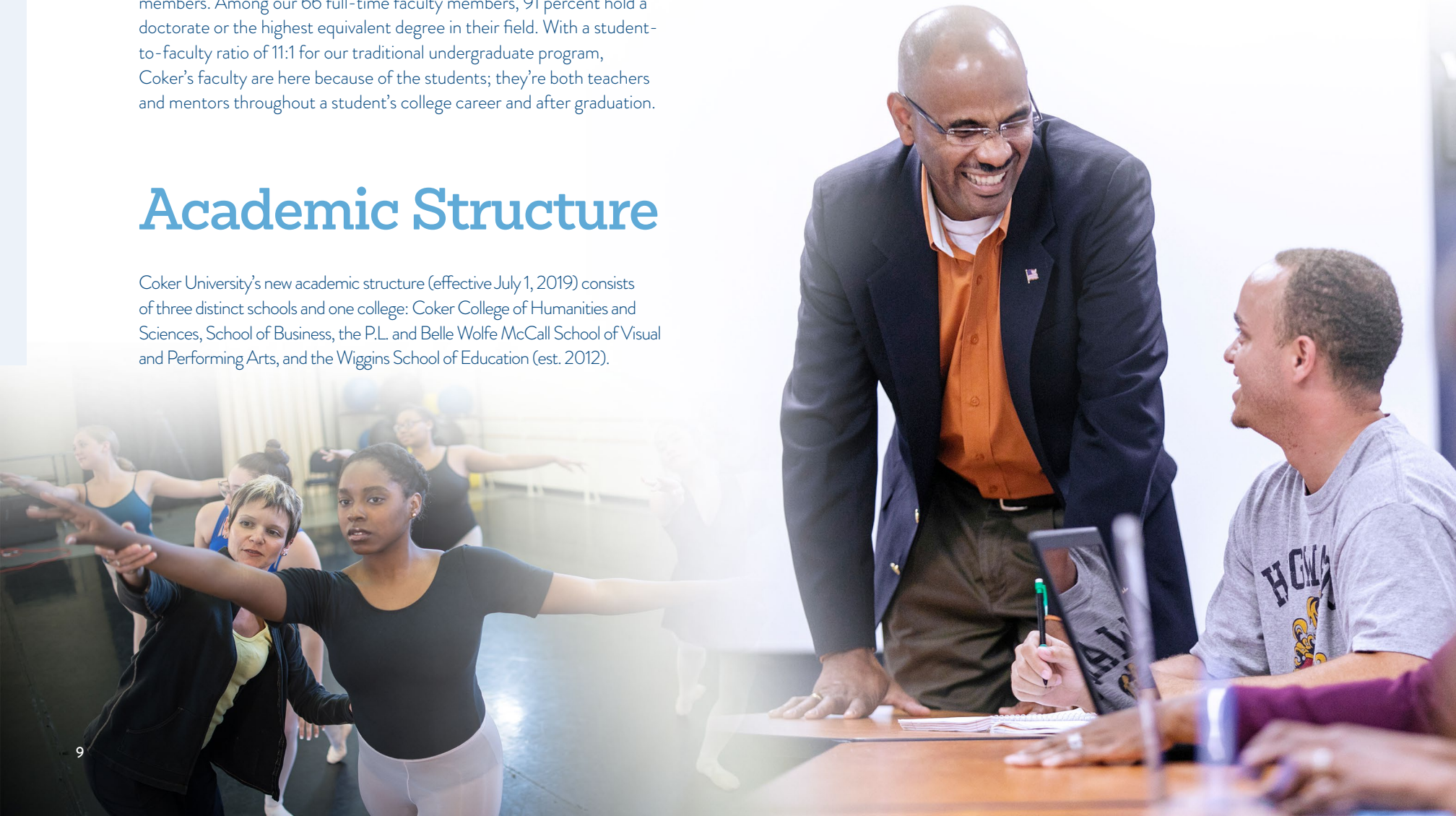
Access Coker - All traditional first-year students receive a brand new iPad® and Apple Pencil® to use during their four years at Coker to help them easily access learning materials and prepare for 21st-century careers. With this initiative, Coker provides an environment where students, faculty and staff can more easily engage, offer and receive feedback, and experiment with new approaches to problem-solving.

Faculty & Staff

Coker University employs 66 full-time faculty members, 48 adjunct faculty members, 96 full-time staff members, and 27 part-time staff members. Among our 66 full-time faculty members, 91 percent hold a doctorate or the highest equivalent degree in their field. With a student-to-faculty ratio of 11:1 for our traditional undergraduate program, Coker's faculty are here because of the students; they're both teachers and mentors throughout a student's college career and after graduation.

Academic Structure

Coker University's new academic structure (effective July 1, 2019) consists of three distinct schools and one college: Coker College of Humanities and Sciences, School of Business, the P.L. and Belle Wolfe McCall School of Visual and Performing Arts, and the Wiggins School of Education (est. 2012).



Undergraduate Studies

Coker's discussion-based roundtable learning philosophy challenges students to explore, communicate, and defend their ideas, training them to think critically and ask purposeful questions.

B.S. in Nursing (Fall 2021) - Through a partnership with Hartsville's hospital, Carolina Pines Regional Medical Center, Coker will begin a nursing program in Fall 2021. Coker students will have access to state of the art facilities at the medical center. Additionally, Coker was awarded a three-year grant totaling \$300,000 from the Byerly Foundation to help establish a Bachelor of Science in Nursing program.

Honors Program - In its eighth year, Coker's honors program allows for high-achieving and motivated undergraduates to pursue a vigorous course of study offering experiences based on three principles—innovative scholarship, cultural interaction, and civic leadership. Students get extensive research experiences in a variety of disciplines through a combination of coursework and co-curricular experiences, as well as study abroad and participation in community service projects.

STEM Scholars in Biology - In its third year, Coker's STEM scholars in biology (SSB) program is for high-achieving students interested in pursuing careers in STEM fields and who are in need of financial assistance to attend college. Coker is currently serving as the lead

UNDERGRADUATES AT A GLANCE

41% MALE 59% FEMALE

74% IN-STATE STUDENTS 8 RESIDENCE HALLS

75% RESIDENTIAL 25% COMMUTER 63% FIRST-YEAR STUDENT RETENTION RATE

21% ARE ENROLLED IN AN ONLINE OR BLENDED PROGRAM 39% FIRST GENERATION STUDENTS

20+ REGISTERED STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

ALMOST EVERY TRADITIONAL COKER UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT STUDIES AWAY OR ABROAD

55% PELL ELIGIBLE STUDENTS 37% UNDER-REPRESENTED MINORITY STUDENTS

institution on a collaborative research project funded by the National Science Foundation's Scholarships in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics program (NSF S-STEM), which funded the first two cohorts of the SSB program. (Next fall's cohort is a continuation of the project's principles, but funded by Coker rather than NSF S-STEM.) As a result of this work, the SSB program at Coker selects an annual cohort of academically talented students who receive as

much as \$6,000 a year in scholarship aid for their four years of college, along with other benefits such as a laptop computer, mentoring by scientists, individualized advising and early involvement in research. The impact of these activities on enrollment and retention, graduation, and post-graduate placement rates are examined thus generating new information about factors contributing to the persistence and success of biology students who need financial assistance.

Foster Scholars - In its inaugural year, the Foster Scholars program offers a select group of students the opportunity to connect with their new college community in hopes of providing a solid foundation for success. Foster Scholars come to campus two weeks early and they live together on one hall with a live-in resident assistant (RA). In those two weeks, they begin two college courses before the fall semester even starts by taking a college skills course and a compressed communication course. Foster Scholars have the opportunity to meet people on campus and throughout Hartsville, including faculty and staff who will help them throughout their college careers. All Foster Scholars who achieve a 2.3 GPA or higher in their first year will receive a \$1,000 scholarship for their sophomore year. The program is named for Rev. John Foster, III (1957 - 2017), a beloved member of the Coker community, an associate professor of religion, and the founding director of Coker's Center for Diversity, Interfaith, and Inclusion Education.

Trans4mations - The right college experience is one that is truly transformative. Trans4mations is an innovative four-year program to ensure Coker students are well prepared for their future endeavors by requiring traditional undergraduate students to take advantage of cultural events, service opportunities, personal and academic exploration, study away, and a final capstone project.

The Teagle Foundation's Liberal Arts and the Professions grant -

In February 2018, the Teagle Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting and strengthening liberal arts education, announced its *Liberal Arts and the Professions* grant award of \$300,000 to Coker and three partner schools to support faculty as they work to see that business graduates are prepared with key skills in writing, communication, and cross-disciplinary thinking. This fall, Coker implemented the first of its three paired course offerings: *Principles in Management and Management and Leadership Skills in Literature*. Leveraging Coker's Monday, Wednesday, every-other-Friday schedule, students take the two 50-minute paired courses back-to-back on Mondays and Wednesdays. Each Friday they're able to connect the coursework through a two hour class taught by the professors in their back-to-back Monday, Wednesday courses.

Interdisciplinary Studies - A 21st century career almost always means an integration between fields. As an option for students looking to mix their passions and talents, Coker allows them to create customized fields of study under its interdisciplinary studies major. There are certain explicit skills, such as how to make connections, solve complex problems, develop leadership skills, engage in strategic thinking, communicate effectively, practice analytical thinking and how to collaborate, that interdisciplinary studies majors are applying to their areas of study. This program began in 2016 and now has 28 enrolled students.

Universal Learners

Coker is committed to providing a curriculum rooted in questions, dialogue, and interaction to all students, and increasing accessibility through its blended and online programs. Coker University is now part of Acadeum (formerly College Consortium), which gives students access to online courses from liberal arts institutions across the nation.

Bridge Programs - Coker University has 2+2 agreements with six regional technical colleges to allow students who have earned an associates degree a seamless pathway to completing a bachelor's degree at Coker. All students from partnering institutions receive a \$2,000 a year scholarship for up to three years and each student is assigned a student success coach to help them navigate life as a Coker student.

Coker University's bridge program has an **87% retention rate** and **100% of students with an associates degree**, who enroll full-time every term, **graduate in two years**.

Coker University's top five majors by enrollment are

BUSINESS

BIOLOGY

PHYSICAL EDUCATION & SPORTS STUDIES

PSYCHOLOGY

CRIMINOLOGY

Areas of Study

Coker students can choose from 30 areas of study. Think active, discussion-based coursework (we call it round table learning) plus hands-on experience through internships, study away or abroad, community service, and research.

ART (B.A.) (B.F.A.)

ART EDUCATION

BIOLOGY

BIOLOGY EDUCATION

**BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION**

**BUSINESS
MANAGEMENT**

CHEMISTRY

COMMUNICATION

COMPUTER SCIENCE

CRIMINOLOGY

DANCE (B.A.) (B.F.A.)

DANCE EDUCATION

**EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION**

**ELEMENTARY
EDUCATION**

ENGLISH

ENGLISH EDUCATION

HISTORY

**INTERDISCIPLINARY
STUDIES**

MATHEMATICS

**MATHEMATICS
EDUCATION**

**MEDICAL
TECHNOLOGY**

MUSIC

MUSIC EDUCATION

NURSING (B.S.N.)

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION
& SPORT STUDIES**

POLITICAL SCIENCE

PSYCHOLOGY

SOCIOLOGY

SPANISH

THEATRE



Graduate Studies

All graduate programs are 100% online and can be completed in 15-18 months. The programs operate on an accelerated schedule—one course every six weeks with approximately 10 courses per program.

First **online graduate program** started in **Fall 2012**
5 online graduate degree programs with **130+ students enrolled**

M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instructional Technology -

A program designed to help educators stay relevant by incorporating technology into learning experiences and focusing on the alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices that maximize student learning.

M.Ed. in Literacy Studies -

Coker's M.Ed. in literacy studies addresses a timely concern in the United States. Our program aligns with critical initiatives and educational goals by serving one of our country's greatest needs.

M.S. in College Athletic Administration -

A program that gives the necessary foundation to become a leader in the sports industry by teaching all the fundamentals, including legal issues, financial management, fundraising, marketing, coaching and recruiting, sports information and communication, and facilities management.

M.S. in Criminal and Social Justice Policy -

A program that dives deep into our country's greatest social challenges and teaches students how to research, analyze, and evaluate those challenges to bring about positive change.

M.S. in Management and Leadership -

A program for professionals looking for solutions to issues facing any and every organization and manager, including negotiations, ethics, strategy, decision making, marketing, and accounting.

Student Life

Coker University's students benefit from initiatives intentionally designed to foster inclusion, engagement, and career preparedness. Whether a residential student or a commuter, Coker offers 20+ registered student organizations and activities, as well as numerous leadership opportunities.

First Year Experience - Coker's First Year Experience program provides students with a smooth academic and social transition into the campus community through intentional programs and services designed to connect students to campus resources and involvement opportunities that are crucial for their success during that first year. The program has very specific objectives—student persistence, academic achievement, satisfaction with the Coker experience, personal development and student involvement—and lots of carefully designed programming to ensure a favorable outcome for students.

Cobras in the Capital - In an effort to help new incoming first-year students better acclimate to their new community and experience studying away from campus, Coker designed Cobras in the Capital. Every September, all first-year undergraduate students, sophomore commissioners, and instructors travel together to Washington, D.C., for three days of immersion into the history and culture of our nation's capital.

Commissioners - Commissioners are sophomore students and responsible for a "family" of incoming students with the goal of helping them adjust to college life. Commissioners keep their "families" throughout the year and do programming with various transition tips, study habits, and getting habituated to campus.

Center for Diversity, Interfaith & Inclusion Education - The Center for Diversity supports the university's affirmation of the individual and holds in highest regard the indestructible dignity of every human being. The center provides cultural competency education, resources and advocacy for the overall well-being of students, faculty and staff and hosts programs and educational events for the college community.

Enactus - Enactus is an international organization that connects students, academic and business leaders through entrepreneurial-based projects that empower people to transform opportunities into real, sustainable progress for themselves and their communities with more than 30 participating students. Coker is one of more than 400 active Enactus teams in the United States. In 2018, Coker Enactus was named third in the nation at the Enactus United States National Exposition held in Kansas City, Missouri.

Living Learning Communities - Living Learning Communities (LLCs) are specialized living environments that connect students through inside and outside of the classroom experiences, and each one is centered

on a distinctive theme or academic interest area. Currently in Coker's LLCs, there are two cohorts living and learning together—the Foster Scholars with a freshman cohort of 18 students and the STEM Scholars in Biology (SSB) with freshman and sophomore cohorts of 18 students each. All of the residential Foster Scholars and SSB students live together with a live-in resident assistant (RA) there to help.

Engagement Scholars - Coker University's Engagement Scholars are students interested in being leaders on campus and who strive to make the Coker community a better place. Engagement Scholars are awarded a leadership and civic engagement-based scholarship—up to \$3,500 per year for up to four years, a value of \$14,000. The program involves guaranteed participation in Coker's Emerging Leaders program, which is a 12-week course that helps students identify and make the most of their leadership strengths, a mentorship program that pairs students with senior Engagement Scholars, and numerous leadership opportunities on Coker's supportive, student-centered campus.

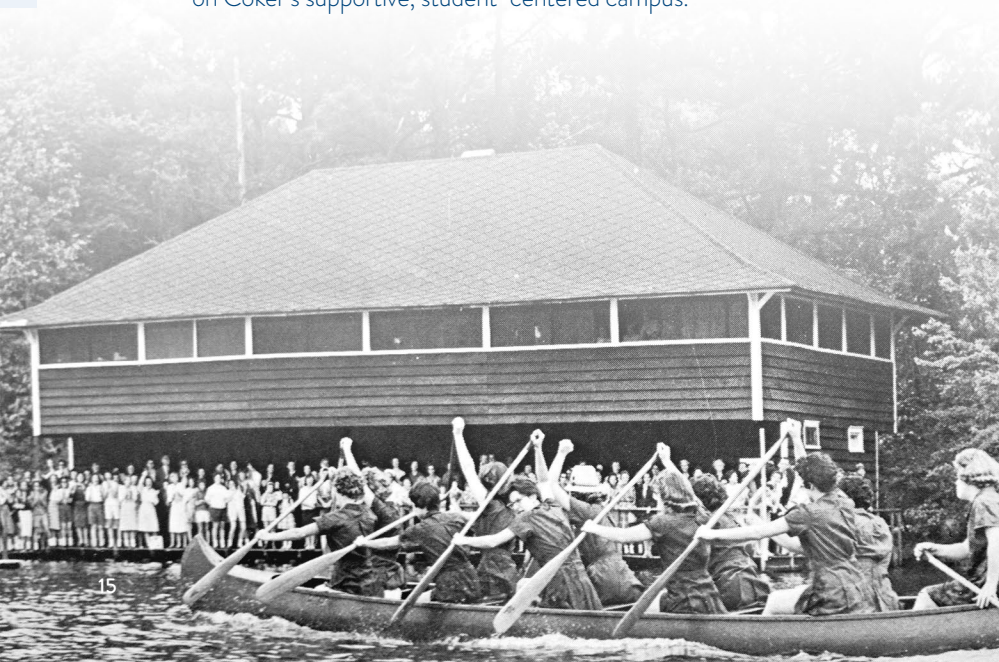
Coker Traditions

Crew Races - Established in 1919, students race canoes across Prestwood lake, complete with personalized, decorated oars, and plenty of school spirit. In 2019, Coker celebrated its 100th crew races event.

COW Days - Coker Olympics of Winter (C.O.W. Days), a week-long event that began in the mid 1970s, is held annually at the beginning of February. Events include a hot wing eating contest, tug of war, a lip sync contest, and C.O.W. Day games with each class competing in hopes of earning the title of C.O.W. Days Champions.

Late Night Breakfast - Late night breakfast is held each semester on the evening of reading day and offers students one final chance to relax before exams begin. The dining hall opens at 9:30 p.m. for breakfast cooked and served by faculty and staff.

Ringin' the Bell - The belltower has been a campus landmark since 1914. Rung at the beginning and the close of every day for over 50 years, it's now the way campus celebrates a victory or announces a significant accomplishment.



Athletics

Student-athletes make up 45% of the undergraduate student population. These students compete in 21 NCAA Division II sports. Coker is a member of the South Atlantic Conference (SAC).

82% ACADEMIC
SUCCESS RATE
(NATIONAL AVERAGE IS 73%)

CUMULATIVE
GPA ABOVE **3.0**

SINCE
2010 • **113** ALL AMERICANS
• **9** CONFERENCE
SCHOLAR ATHLETES
• **5** COACHES OF THE YEAR

**non NCAA-sponsored athletic programs*

MEN'S

Baseball
Basketball
Cross Country
Golf
Lacrosse
Soccer
Tennis
Track & Field
Wrestling

WOMEN'S

Acrobatics and
Tumbling*
Basketball
Cross Country
Field Hockey
Golf
Lacrosse
Soccer
Softball
Tennis
Track & Field
Volleyball

SPIRIT

Spirit Squad*
Striker the Cobra*

MEN AND WOMEN'S

Esports*

Coker is a member of the National Association of Collegiate Esports (NACE) and one of approximately 130 colleges and universities competing in varsity collegiate esports across the country.



Financials & Fundraising

Coker University's operating budget is \$21 million. The university benefits from an endowment and support from the Coker Foundation totalling \$49 million.

Coker University's largest revenue source (57%) is tuition, which for the 2019-2020 academic year is \$29,976. Tuition for evening, online, and bridge undergraduate programs is \$425/credit hour and tuition for graduate programs ranges from \$542-\$690/credit hour. In an effort to serve its student body and keep college affordable, more than 97% of Coker students receive financial aid, and approximately 40% of the budget is allocated to financial aid.

Coker University's leadership team and its Board of Trustees balance the budget annually so the institution can continue with confidence to serve its students and community.

Recent fundraising efforts include:

\$1.2 million gift for the P.L. and Belle Wolfe McCall School of Visual and Performing Arts

\$650,000 for Coker's forthcoming B.S. in Nursing program

\$325,000 for Kalmia Gardens

\$249,000 from the Lettie Pate Whitehead Foundation for student scholarships

\$131,000 from the Linville Foundation for Coker's Annual Scholarship Fund

\$100,000 from the Sonoco Foundation for Coker's Annual Scholarship Fund

\$100,000 for upgrades to Coker's athletic fields





Governance

Coker University is governed by a Board of Trustees comprised of between 21 and 35 members, who are nominated by a standing committee of the Board and are elected for a three year term. The Board currently consists of 31 members; 13 are alumni. The authority and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees include but are not limited to determining and periodically reviewing the mission of the university, approving new educational programs, selecting and evaluating the president, and overseeing and approving the university budget.

Agenda for Leadership

for Coker University's Next President

The next president of Coker University will join the institution at a time of positive momentum on all fronts. Programs of rigor and excellence led by an engaged and loyal faculty and staff have led to lifelong relationships between students, staff, faculty, alumni, parents and friends. The warm collegiality of the campus and Hartsville community, the beauty of the campus, Coker's distinctive roundtable pedagogy, the successful launch of new and innovative curricular programs, the addition of outstanding new facilities, and the diversity and vibrancy of the student body are all sources of great pride for the university.

The next president will have myriad opportunities to leverage the university's strong position, advancing its mission and ensuring its future financial success. Demonstrating a deep commitment to the value of liberal education, the next president will uphold Coker's values and dedication to delivering the highest quality education to students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. The ideal candidate will have exceptional leadership and management skills, possess a record of transformative impact, clearly and visibly demonstrate a professional and personal commitment to diversity and inclusion, and will have a successful history of securing and increasing financial resources. Coker's president will also be knowledgeable about issues impacting higher education and be able to identify ways to bring new and relevant best practices to campus.

Among the most important priorities for the next president are:

Sustain the University's Trajectory - Coker University is on a strong trajectory and is celebrating many recent successes, including its change in status from college to university, the development of its stunning new athletics center, increases in enrollment, the addition of graduate and online degree programs as well as bridge agreements with six regional technical colleges, a partnership with the South Carolina Governor's School for Science and Mathematics Accelerate program, and the addition of new athletic teams. Coupled with these successes is a commitment to and comprehensive plan for meeting the needs of today's university students, which includes substantial numbers of first-generation students, students coming from under-resourced high schools, underrepresented students, and adult-age students. Coker's next president will be charged with keeping this momentum strong while ensuring that the resources – human and financial – as well as the infrastructure required to deliver an experience of excellence are in place.

Enhance Institutional Advancement and Build Financial Capacity - The new president will serve as the university's chief fundraiser and will work with all constituencies to enrich the university's philanthropic culture. Whether focusing on endowment enhancement, the annual fund, cultivating prospects for major or planned gifts, or initiating a future campaign of significance, Coker's next president will be asked to have a direct impact on and to spend a significant percentage of her or his time on fundraising. Communicating the Coker story, engaging internal and external constituencies, and setting advancement expectations are all opportunities awaiting the next president. As a vigilant steward of the institution's resources, the president must be a strong financial manager, knowledgeable about academic business models, innovative with regard to forging new revenue streams, and capable of adjusting the business plan to ensure the university's solid financial health long into the future. She or he will also play a critical role in cultivating new members for the Board of Trustees.

Lead and Inspire the Community in a Strategic Planning Process - The next president will play a leading role in identifying and subsequently implementing strategic priorities for the university's successful future. Seeking input from and working closely with faculty, staff, students, trustees, alumni, and community members, the next president will seek to articulate Coker's mission and outline aspirational yet achievable goals that stay true to Coker's values while ensuring innovation and progress. The new president will be willing to take calculated risks, while being anticipatory and proactive in identifying issues that may arise for Coker as the landscape for residential liberal arts-based institutions evolves.

Reinforce the University's Strong Sense of Community - Coker benefits from a remarkably warm and caring community. The considerate manner with which members of the university family interact with one another will be fostered by the new president's intuitive capacity to engage the campus in a genuine manner. Integrity will be central to her or his approach. The ability to ask thoughtful and strategic questions, listen carefully, lead the campus through points of conflict, and foster collegiality are of great importance. Modeling and encouraging transparent decision-making will also promote trust and nourish the spirit of mutual respect that is fundamental to the university's identity. He or she will be eager to work closely with the Coker and Hartsville communities and ensure the well-being of both entities, recognizing the symbiotic relationship between the university and the town.

Nurture a Genuinely Diverse and Inclusive Environment at Coker - As the leader of Coker's distinctive and diverse academic community, the next president will advocate for ongoing efforts to attract and welcome faculty, students, and staff from all backgrounds, as Coker believes the most effective and forward-looking universities are those that most value different points of view and a diversity of experiences. She or he will ensure the broadest outreach to potential students and will continuously evaluate and strengthen hiring practices and salary

structures to ensure that the best-qualified employees from all walks of life join, and remain part of, the Coker community.

Focus on Balanced Enrollment Growth and Student Success - The next president must have a firm understanding of enrollment management and the ever-growing challenges surrounding recruitment and retention at private, residential universities. The next president must also have a strong understanding of how areas such as athletics and co-curricular activities impact enrollment and student success. The president will also help to "brand" more effectively Coker University's distinctiveness in a crowded marketplace and to articulate emphatically the value proposition of a Coker education. Presidential engagement with demographic analysis, curricular innovation, pricing, financial aid, and marketing will be important. She or he must have a student-centric approach that prioritizes student success initiatives and understands the needs of the current and future generation of learners.

Represent and Promote the University - The next president will be an engaging and visible presence on and off campus and will communicate with clarity and enthusiasm the university's storied past, exciting present, and promising future. Coker's president will be a thought leader who is knowledgeable about issues impacting higher education statewide and nationally and be able to identify ways to involve the university in those dialogues in a manner that will strengthen its reputation. The president's outreach will be crucial in defining and communicating Coker's points of distinction and raising its profile among prospective students, parents, friends, community members, donors, peers at other colleges and universities, and additional influential stakeholders.



Desired Attributes

for the Next President

This is a highly attractive leadership opportunity at an institution with a venerable history coupled with a progressive and innovative approach to education. Coker University's next president will bring high energy, optimism, authenticity, self-confidence balanced with humility, courage, deep personal integrity, a strong work ethic, and a clear understanding of the modern liberal arts university to her or his work. Coker's next president will be a servant leader with a deep understanding of, and experience with, the opportunities and challenges facing higher education broadly. While the Presidential Search Committee is eager to consider many possible pathways to the presidency, candidates possessing a terminal degree will be preferred.

The successful Coker candidate will be:

- A visionary, innovative, and strategic planner with a proven ability to develop and articulate a clear and coherent plan, unify constituents behind it, and expertly execute the plan;
- An accomplished leader in higher education, or a comparable setting, and a passionate, engaged, and sincere advocate for the liberal arts and sciences in a modern university setting;
- An ardent explorer of higher education who is aware of critical national issues, including affordability, student success initiatives, technology, sustainability, and educational quality, and who has an appreciation for the unique role of universities in effecting change in these arenas;

- A student-centered leader with a commitment to developing lifelong learners and positive contributors to society;
- An inclusive leader with an understanding of and respect for Coker's commitment to shared governance coupled with an abiding respect for the significant contributions of faculty and staff;
- A person who is committed to promoting and celebrating inclusion, equity, and diversity in its many forms;
- A holistic educator who values the role of athletics, the visual and performing arts, service, and other key co-curricular activities;
- A team builder who will optimize the effectiveness of a strong senior leadership group and who will excel at talent identification and cultivation;
- An eager fundraiser, who is experienced in building a positive culture of philanthropy, and who has demonstrated the ability to cultivate, solicit, and steward major gift prospects and donors;
- An evidence-based planner who is well versed in enrollment management, retention strategies, and persistence to graduation efforts;
- An inclusive, transparent, and fair decision-maker who listens, builds consensus, prioritizes well, and communicates decisions with clarity and care;
- A person of financial acumen who will lead the university in matching aspirations with finite resources while thinking innovatively about growth opportunities;
- A technologically savvy person with a fluent understanding of pedagogical strategies and approaches that enhance student learning and program delivery;
- An expert communicator who is eager to share the story of Coker to various constituents; and
- An engaging, authentic, and resilient leader of integrity who will provide respected, long-term leadership.

The Process of Candidacy

The Coker University Presidential Search Committee will begin to evaluate applications immediately. Although applications will be welcomed until the time that a new president is selected, candidates should submit materials by March 2, 2020 to ensure fullest consideration. The new president is expected to begin work on July 1, 2020.

Applications should include a complete résumé or vita and a letter of candidacy that responds to the agenda for leadership and the desired attributes for a new president. All application materials will be considered in full confidence and should be submitted electronically to [**CokerPresident17@storbecksearch.com**](mailto:CokerPresident17@storbecksearch.com).

Ms. Julie E. Tea – Partner and Ms. Julie Williams-Krishnan – Senior Associate at Storbeck Search & Associates, LP have partnered with Coker University on this search. Nominators and prospective candidates are encouraged to contact them at [**CokerPresident17@storbecksearch.com**](mailto:CokerPresident17@storbecksearch.com) to arrange confidential conversations.

Coker University, in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws, including Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, marital status, veterans or military status, or against individuals with disabilities, or other legally protected classifications in the areas of employment, admission, financial aid or access to educational or extracurricular programs, activities or facilities.





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