Hridesh Rajan named new dean of Tulane University School of Science and Engineering

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Hridesh Rajan, Kingland professor and chair of the Department of Computer Science at Iowa State University, has been named the new dean of Tulane University's School of Science and Engineering.

"A distinguished scholar and innovative leader, Hridesh brings an impressive breadth of knowledge and experience to this vital role. Bringing Hridesh to Tulane will elevate the School of Science and Engineering to new levels of excellence," President Michael A. Fitts and Provost Robin Forman wrote in a message to the Tulane community.

The message also noted that Rajan's selection followed "an extensive national search that attracted an exceptionally strong pool of candidates."

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>
> *Hridesh Rajan, Dean of the School of Science and Engineering*

At Iowa State University, Rajan led the development of cutting-edge new degree programs in artificial intelligence and computer science while implementing a cross-campus transdisciplinary research initiative of faculty and students interested in the foundations and applications of data science. He launched numerous other efforts that facilitated interdisciplinary faculty collaboration, guided the successful reaccreditation of ISU's computer science bachelor's program and greatly increased seed grants for graduate research.

Rajan developed new instructional methods that boosted the success rates of students and helped usher in a period of remarkable growth in enrollment, including a 45 percent increase in female students, as well as increases in faculty, staff and research funding.

Rajan, who will join Tulane July 1, cited the School of Science and Engineering's interdisciplinary strengths in areas vital to the future of humanity – health, energy, climate science and AI – as major draws to the new position.

"Joining Tulane SSE represents a unique opportunity for me to contribute to an institution that aligns with my values and to lead a school poised to make significant contributions to solving the pressing challenges of our time through transdisciplinary research, education and community outreach," he said.

Rajan earned both a PhD and an MS in computer science from the University of Virginia, and a Bachelor of Technology degree in computer science and engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology. He arrived at ISU in 2005 and served three years as the founding professor-in-charge of data science programs.

A Fulbright scholar, [ACM Distinguished Scientist](#) and [fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science](#), Rajan said he recognizes Tulane's unique positioning at the center of health, energy, climate research, data science, artificial intelligence and other fields.

"Working closely with Tulane administration, the SSE Board of Advisors, the SSE executive committee, and our dedicated faculty, staff and students, our collective efforts will focus on enhancing interdisciplinary research, fostering innovation, and growing a strong, inclusive community that supports academic excellence and groundbreaking discoveries," he said.

Throughout his career Rajan has displayed a deep commitment to increased access for students from all backgrounds. At ISU he helped increase annual philanthropic commitments by an astounding 643 percent and worked continually to promote more inclusivity, greater representation and higher success rates for all students. His strategic vision led to the creation of an inclusive departmental plan extending through 2032.

An accomplished and award-winning researcher with more than 125 publications, Rajan's research interests are focused on data science, software engineering and programming languages where he is most known for his design of the Boa programming language and infrastructure that democratizes access to large-scale data-driven science and engineering.

Rajan will join Tulane as Kimberly Foster, who led the School of Science and Engineering through six successful and transformative years, steps down.