

2021 -Withers appeared in 46 games for the Lions, starting in 44 across the infield. She finished the season with a .325 batting average with 38 hits, 26 runs, eight doubles, four triples (3rd in MIAA, 36th in Division II), three home runs, a team-high 34 RBIs, drew 13 walks, set a new school record for hit-by-pitches with 12, had a .538 slugging percentage and a .438 on-base percentage. Leighton hit the game-winning, seventh inning double that drove in two runs to advance the Lions into the semifinals of the MIAA Tournament against Missouri Western. Her defense was also strong with 106 putouts and 35 assists. In the MIAA, the Lions ranked first in double plays turned, stolen bases per game, stolen bases, triples and triples per game, second in double plays turned per game, hit-by-pitches and sacrifice bunts; all of which, Withers made solid contributions. Leighton was named to the Honorable Mention All-MIAA Team as a Utility Player.

Prior to Southern -Withers prepped at Harmony Grove High School in Benton, Arkansas where she was involved in the softball, basketball and volleyball teams. On the softball field, Withers boasted a career that included a .480 batting average, .580 on-base percentage with 165 hits, 26 home runs, 142 runs scored and 135 RBIs. She was a four-time All-Conference selection and an All-State performer while helping the Cardinals capture the 2018 Class 3A State Championship. Withers started her collegiate career at Ouachita Baptist University, a Division II school that competes in the Great American Conference (GAC). At Ouachita Baptist as a freshman, Withers appeared in 52 games and getting the start in 49. Leighton finished the season with a .227 batting average that included 29 hits, including nine doubles and seven home runs. She also picked up 26 RBIs and scored 25 runs herself. Withers was named onto the 2019 GAC All-Tournament team. An honor that came after she hit a game-winning home run in the eighth inning, that helped the Tigers to a 5-4 upset over Southern Arkansas in the opening round. In the 2020 shortened season, Withers started in all 21 games for the Tigers while boasting a .302 batting average with 16 hits, three doubles, three home runs and five RBIs.