



**Dean of the College of Arts + Architecture  
University of North Carolina at Charlotte**

*UNC Charlotte is North Carolina's urban research university. It leverages its location in the state's largest city to offer internationally competitive programs of research and creative activity, exemplary undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs, and a focused set of community engagement initiatives. UNC Charlotte maintains a particular commitment to addressing the cultural, economic, educational, environmental, health, and social needs of the greater Charlotte region.*

**THE SEARCH**

The University of North Carolina at Charlotte (the University) seeks a creative and collaborative academic leader for the position of Dean of the College of Arts + Architecture (the College). Reporting to the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the dean will be chief executive and academic officer of one of North Carolina's largest and most diverse arts and architecture programs, uniquely situated within a rapidly growing, civically engaged urban research university in the vibrant city of Charlotte.

A hub for arts and architecture education, research, and collaboration within the University and beyond the campus, the College encompasses a full range of disciplines, including architecture, art, graphic design, art history, dance, music, theatre, and urban design. The dean will be a respected leader who will advance the college's academic mission, and a vision builder who fosters collaboration and innovation within the College and in partnership with colleagues across the campus and community. The dean will also be a visible leader in the arts and culture community of Charlotte, investing in local connections and continuing to build the College's presence in the cultural life of the city.

The dean will collaborate with faculty, staff, students, and the professional community to express a unified and visible identity for the College of Arts + Architecture; elevate research within the College; advance an excellent, diverse, and engaged community and faculty; develop new strategic interdisciplinary graduate programs; embrace and raise up the mission of student access and support; and manage and strengthen financial resources. The ideal candidate will have an energetic and collaborative leadership style that inspires faculty, students, and staff to develop a shared vision for the future. Candidates must have a record of scholarly achievement in research and/or practice commensurate with an appointment as a tenured full professor in the College of Arts + Architecture at the University.

A search committee of administrators, faculty, and community members has been formed. Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, has been retained to assist in the recruiting of the new dean. All inquiries, applications, and nominations should be directed in confidence to Isaacson, Miller, as noted at the end of this profile.

## The University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Founded in response to the need to serve returning veterans immediately after WWII, the University of North Carolina at Charlotte is one of a generation of schools established in metropolitan areas to meet post-war education demands. On September 23, 1946, the State of North Carolina opened the Charlotte Center of the University of North Carolina with an enrollment of 278 students. In 1961, the school moved from downtown Charlotte to its current location on a 1,000 acre campus 10 miles from the city center.

From its inception, in keeping with the State of North Carolina's commitment to provide affordable access to quality education, the University has worked to make learning accessible to all. Though now a large research-intensive urban university and the third largest of the 17 institutions within the state system, the University has maintained its entrepreneurial culture and eagerness to explore new ideas and practices.

UNC Charlotte is the fastest-growing institution in the UNC System, offering 24 doctoral programs, 64 master's degree programs, and 78 bachelor's degrees across seven colleges. There are more than 1,100 full-time faculty and fall 2022 enrollment exceeded 29,500 students. UNC Charlotte has over 136,000 living alumni and 4,000 to 4,500 new alumni each year. North Carolina is known for its commitment to public higher education and UNC Charlotte exemplifies the state constitution's mission of access.

The University's 10-year strategic plan, [Shaping What's Next](#), affirms its responsibility to produce degree recipients who will contribute to the state of North Carolina as well-prepared, highly-skilled, and productive citizens and lifelong learners able to function in a rapidly evolving global society. The plan recognizes the centrality of the arts, humanities, and sciences to achieving these goals, the value of an interdisciplinary approach, and the importance of other experiences that can be embedded in a coherent collegiate experience, including international study, internships, service-learning, and community service.

## Leadership

**Sharon L. Gaber** serves as the fifth Chancellor of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Under her leadership since 2020, the University has embarked on "Shaping What's Next," a 10-year strategic plan that articulates a new vision of the University as a globally recognized top-tier research university. An academic with a background in city and regional planning, Gaber was named by Education Dive as one of five higher education leaders to watch in 2018 and beyond. Prior to her role at UNC Charlotte, Gaber served for five years as President of the University of Toledo, where she was nationally recognized for her efforts to increase enrollment and graduation rates, boost research funding, and make the campus environment diverse and inclusive. Gaber earned an A.B. in economics and urban studies from Occidental College, an M.P.L. in urban planning from the University of Southern California, and a Ph.D. in city & regional planning from Cornell University.

**Jennifer Troyer** is the University's Interim Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. Dr. Troyer is also Professor of Economics in the Belk College of Business. Since joining the University over 20 years ago, Dr. Troyer has served as Dean of the Belk College, Chair of the Department of Economics, Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Programs, Interim Dean of the College of Health and Human Services, and Interim Dean of the Belk College of Business. As a professor, she has taught numerous courses in health economics and econometrics, and she has conducted policy-relevant research on the quality of U.S. nursing homes, the cost-effectiveness of medical interventions, and strategic behavior in the

pharmaceutical industry. Her research has earned several awards and has been funded by the National Institutes of Health.

### **The College of Arts + Architecture**

Celebrating its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2023, the [College of Arts + Architecture](#) combines the arts disciplines and architecture under one roof, with the aim of bringing a critical mass of artists and designers together to elevate the College's voice as a creative leader within the institution as well as regionally and nationally. The College demonstrates UNC Charlotte's commitment to arts and culture on campus and in the broader community, presenting exhibitions, lectures, and more than 100 performances each year.

With steady enrollment over the past ten years, the College currently enrolls approximately 1,000 students. The 2022-2023 academic year enrolled 893 undergraduate and 108 graduate students. The College is home to three graduate degree programs, nine undergraduate degree programs, certificate programs in Musical Theatre, Jazz, and Advanced Dance Studies, and a professional training certificate in dance in partnership with the Charlotte Ballet. The faculty, led by excellent departmental leadership, has over 110 members in total, including full-time tenured, tenure-track, contract, and professional/academic members, many with national and international reputations. There are approximately 45 to 55 adjunct faculty each semester, including professors in practice who are renowned leaders in art and design practice and research. The College's staff of approximately 25 full-time employees plays a critical role in supporting student services, advancement, operations, technology, and administration. The College has an operating budget of approximately \$20 million (FY2022/23).

The College—like the University and the state—has a strong foundational commitment to open access to education: 70% of undergraduates are on financial aid, 55% are Pell Grant eligible, and 46% of Pell Grant recipients are full need. About one-third of first year students are first generation college students. The University is the leading institution in the system for the enrollment of transfer students, and like the University (with the exception of architecture because of professional accreditation requirements), 35-40% of the College's students come in as transfers from community colleges and other schools. The College has articulation agreements in place with state community colleges to ensure that students graduate in four to five years. The College is deeply committed to student retention and graduation and provides extensive resources including academic and career advising, internships, and scholarships. Students and faculty all benefit from the College's commitment to personalized advising from specialized, full-time, embedded departmental professional academic advisors who work with students one-on-one throughout their career in the College.

All units of the College are located in a campus quadrangle. Plans are underway to update the design of the quad to include a performance and gathering space that will further the sense of academic and co-curricular connection. As one of only a small number of broadly multidisciplinary arts and architecture colleges located within a major urban research university, and with deep ties to the city of Charlotte, the College is well positioned to advance interdisciplinary and publicly engaged research, education, and outreach. This multidisciplinary work, which aligns the College well with the integrative research and curricular goals of the campus-wide [Strategic Plan](#), reaches beyond the main campus to UNC Charlotte Center City and the greater Charlotte community.

## Academic Departments and Programs

The College's academic programs are organized into one school and four departments.

- The [David R. Ravin School of Architecture](#) is devoted to engaging students in an energetic study of how architecture and design affects and stimulates our daily lives. The Ravin School of Architecture is recognized for the outstanding quality of its faculty and students, its commitment to outreach and community involvement, and the quality and extent of resources offered through its labs, studios, and classrooms – both at UNC Charlotte's main campus, and the Dubois Center in Uptown Charlotte. The Ravin School of Architecture offers a pre-professional undergraduate degree in architecture and an undergraduate minor in architectural history and criticism. Graduate programs include: Architecture (M. Arch.), Architecture (M.S.), and Urban Design (M.U.D).
- The [Department of Art & Art History](#) aims to foster innovative and thoughtful artistic scholarship, practice, and education. As professional artists, designers, art historians, and art educators, the faculty enrich the experience of visual culture for students and for the metropolitan area of Charlotte. The faculty contribute to local, national, and international research and dialog through exhibitions, lectures, publications, and other forms of dissemination. By promoting critical thinking, the department empowers students with the analytical and adaptive skills to negotiate and contribute to an increasingly complex and cosmopolitan visual world. The department offers four undergraduate degrees including a Bachelor of Arts in art history; a Bachelor of Arts in art; a Bachelor of Fine Arts in graphic design; and a Bachelor of Fine Arts in art with concentrations in art education or studio art. The department also offers a minor in art history.
- The [Department of Dance](#) provides rigorous dance training and academic preparation enhanced by state-of-the-art facilities. The faculty bring diverse perspectives and training, and are innovative leaders in performance, choreography, dance scholarship, and teacher training. The department offers a Bachelor of Arts in dance with concentrations in applied dance, dance education, and performance, choreography, and theory. The department also offers a dance minor. Certificate programs include undergraduate certificates in advanced dance studies; musical theatre; and dance, professional training in conjunction with the Charlotte Ballet.
- The [Department of Music](#) provides exceptional musical training in a vibrant urban setting. Students benefit from outstanding ensembles and individualized instruction as well as from professional opportunities in the Charlotte arts community. The department awards a Bachelor of Arts in music and a Bachelor of Music degree with concentrations in six areas: choral/general music education; composition; instrumental/general music education; instrumental performance; jazz studies; and vocal performance. The Bachelor of Arts in music is designed for students who want both intensive training in music and the opportunity to explore other disciplines. A minor in music is offered for students who want to study music while working toward a degree in another field, and the certificate in jazz studies and certificate in musical theatre gives students an opportunity to enhance their undergraduate study with specialized instruction.
- The [Department of Theatre](#) strives to inspire students to expand their vision of the world and themselves providing a student-focused liberal arts education that develops theatre artists, scholars, and teachers to investigate current best practices and emerging entrepreneurial methods in theatre and other kinds of professional performance. The faculty of nationally and internationally recognized scholars and artists mentor students in classroom projects and collaborative works that

embrace a diversity of cultural and aesthetic perspectives. The department offers a Bachelor of Arts in theatre with concentrations in performance; applied theatre; design/tech; theatre education (K-12); and directing, dramaturgy, and dramatic writing.

Building on the enthusiasm of faculty, student, and community partners and a commitment to interdisciplinary, community-based programs, the College is developing an interdisciplinary graduate MFA program in Community Engaged Art and Design, which will build on the College's current work to embed educators and artists from various disciplines in the community. For more information about the College of Arts + Architecture, please visit <https://coaa.charlotte.edu/>.

### **The City of Charlotte and its connection to the College**

Located in Charlotte, the largest city in North Carolina, the University is part of a vibrant and growing metropolitan region, fueled by rapid job growth and an affordable cost of living, Charlotte ranks as one of the country's leading communities for arts, culture, and the creative economy.

In tandem with its growth, Charlotte's arts and design community is thriving and the city is home to numerous museums and performance venues. Local audiences and community members are eager for diverse cultural opportunities and representation. The city's first hip hop festival, a new Charlotte jazz festival, and a flamenco program unique to Charlotte were all greeted with deep enthusiasm from the community as they reached beyond traditional content and performance venues and were welcomed into new communities and spaces. The College engages in a variety of partnerships throughout the city including with the McColl Center for Art + Innovation, Mint Museum, Charlotte Ballet, Children's Theater of Charlotte, Charlotte Symphony Orchestra, Charlotte Chamber Music, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, Bechtler Museum of Modern Art, and the Levine Museum of the New South.

The Dubois Center, located in Uptown, was conceived and designed specifically to serve the people, organizations, and businesses of Charlotte's urban center. The Dubois Center provides the University with an enduring presence in the city's business and cultural district, bringing the University's considerable intellectual resources to the heart of the Charlotte community. With 143,000 square feet of space, the DuBois Center houses 25 classrooms and design studios, meeting and performance spaces, an art gallery, and a four-acre park, and speaks to a new vision in higher education that includes urban education, research, engagement, and sustainability. The College operates the Projective Eye art gallery in the Dubois Center graduate architectural studios are also located there. A light rail system, conveniently located next to the DuBois Center, provides a physical connection between Uptown Charlotte and the main University City campus.

### **The Role of the Dean**

The dean is the chief academic and administrative officer of the College, appointed by and reporting to the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. The dean will inherit a well-managed College and will be supported by a strong leadership team consisting of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs; the Associate Dean of Performing Arts Services; the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Programs; the Assistant Dean for Inclusive Excellence; the Director of the School of Architecture; the Chairs of the Departments of Art & Art History, Music, Dance, and Theatre; the Director of Communications and External Relations; the Visual Resources Center Lecturer; the Director of Information Technology; the Director of Business Affairs; the Director of Collaborative Works; and the Executive Assistant.

The dean will build upon the College's strengths in cross-disciplinary practice and community engagement while focusing on student access, innovative research, and increased visibility of the program. The dean will advocate for the College of Arts + Architecture, lead with a unifying vision, and be accountable for the programmatic, financial, fundraising, and management operations that support the mission and vision of the school and its role within the university and the broader academic and cultural communities within which it is situated.

## **KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES**

With a wide array of disciplines, the dean of the College of Arts + Architecture has the opportunity to define a vision for excellence that is specific to the creative disciplines represented by the College. The dean will grow interdisciplinary research and explore new undergraduate and graduate programs while also investing in and celebrating the unique needs and strengths of each department. The dean will be a cross-disciplinary leader who champions the individual programs within the College as well as their collective identity as a creative driver within the University, the city, and beyond. Embracing the university's mission of access and student support, the dean will build the College's financial resources, alumni engagement, and community relationships. In close collaboration with the College and University leadership, the dean will address the following opportunities and challenges:

### ***Lead with a clear and unified vision for the College of Arts + Architecture***

The College of Arts + Architecture is a place where academic leadership means thinking critically and creatively about key questions both in and across the disciplines within the College, as well as within the University and broader society. The new dean will have the opportunity to articulate the unique value that the College of Arts + Architecture contributes and to expand its reach within local, national, and international practice and discourse. In concert with the faculty and in close partnership with academic leadership, the dean will support the ongoing development and delivery of curriculum and programs across all levels and encourage activities that strengthen connections across departments and disciplines, integrating theory with practice and studio-based learning with hands-on experience. The dean will also need to be strategic in managing enrollment growth. While enrollment at the University has grown by 13% over the last 10 years, enrollment in the College has remained flat. Recognizing the growth of the University and the population growth of the Charlotte region, the dean will drive the College's enrollment growth and ensure resources are allocated to support enrollment growth and student success.

### ***Elevate the College's culture of research***

The dean will be an advocate for the importance of the arts and architecture in the university as it aspires to achieve top-tier research designation. By providing both vision and strategic direction, the dean will ensure that the arts and architecture are critical contributors to this goal. The dean will also facilitate alliances and collaborations within the College and across the University so that the College's faculty and departments are increasingly core partners in cross-departmental research grants and publications. The dean will inspire and empower program chairs and directors to innovate and sustain excellence in their disciplines and leverage resources to enhance research activity across the faculty. The dean will have the capacity to bring together in a vibrant whole the diverse range of research and pedagogical interests represented in the College, and to provide the professional development and mentorship appropriate for faculty and staff to grow and advance within their roles and expertise.

***Advance the mission of access and student success***

The dean will work with faculty and staff to support student success and ensure that the programs of the College are accessible to all students. This will include defining targets for growth in alignment with the enrollment goals of the University, developing relationships with employers to create internship opportunities and build career pipelines, and promoting best practices in teaching and learning. The dean will be expected to champion the Guiding Commitment of the University Strategic Plan as integral to academic excellence and productive engagement with local communities. This includes actively recruiting, mentoring, and retaining students, faculty, and staff of all cultures, backgrounds, and perspectives into the college.

***Support the faculty and staff to fulfill the mission of the College***

The dean is charged with providing the staffing and infrastructure to support teaching, learning, and research. The dean will be expected to support the administrative structure of the College, advance the strategic vision, and ensure efficient and effective day-to-day operation. The dean will recognize the specific needs of each discipline and equip them for success. The dean will communicate proactively and effectively with the academic leaders across each unit as well as staff for the College, creating a culture of collaboration, cohesion, and fairness. Recruiting and retaining faculty as well as investing in their ongoing success is paramount to the College's ability to deliver on its goals. The dean will also assess and deliver on the fiscal and infrastructure needs of the College. The dean will have the opportunity to work with exceptional faculty and staff and will invest in their capacity and leadership to support the College's success in achieving its mission and goals.

***Maintain and enhance the College's financial strength***

Budget planning for the approximately \$20 million operating budget of the College is aligned each year with strategic priorities for each unit and with College and University goals. Within this context, the dean will be empowered to enhance the financial strength of the College. While the College is financially strong, the dean will work closely with university advancement, College leadership, and faculty to develop compelling and effective opportunities to attract philanthropic support. The College benefits from the University's location in a major metropolitan area and its many private-sector partnerships.

The dean will sustain and build upon fundraising efforts stewarded by the University's advancement team with an assigned major gifts officer who will work with the dean to identify and cultivate new strategic funding opportunities and deliver a compelling message for support of academic programs, scholarships, fellowships, and facilities. The dean will be expected to be entrepreneurial in seeking new sources of revenue, recognizing that resourceful and innovative financial stewardship will be key for the future of the College.

***Champion the critical role of the arts and architecture in the cultural community of Charlotte***

The dean will be a visible leader in the arts and culture community of Charlotte and an advocate for the College's involvement locally as a key facet of its public mission. The College has a palpable presence in the city, and the groundwork has been laid for continued growth and engagement. The dean will connect with alumni, arts leaders, policymakers, and other external audiences to strengthen ties between the College and the community. The dean will continue to build and develop alumni relations, which will

include cultivating the recently formed advisory council. Building on the College's Uptown presence through the DuBois Center and ongoing cross-disciplinary partnerships with community and industry, the dean will continue to seek out opportunities that exemplify the College's role as a core contributor to the urban research university.

### **Qualifications**

The University seeks candidates who bring the following skills and experiences:

- Demonstrated scholarly, artistic, or professional accomplishment commensurate with an appointment as a tenured full professor in the College;
- Understanding of and enthusiasm for the variety of disciplines in the College; experience facilitating interdisciplinary work that transcends traditional boundaries;
- Capacity to lead the College in building effective working relationships with internal and external stakeholders and contributing to the cultural vibrancy of the local community;
- The ability to inspire and lead faculty in community-engaged scholarship and practice; experience elevating and making visible the research accomplishments of a diverse faculty body;
- A record of effective budget management for a complex organization;
- Demonstrated fundraising experience and success;
- Demonstrated administrative ability to delegate, prioritize, and make transparent and collaborative decisions to advance strategic goals;
- An informed grasp of key issues affecting faculty recruitment, retention, promotion, and scholarly productivity;
- A demonstrated commitment to the UNC System's mission of access and inclusive excellence in a community of faculty, staff, and students; a record of success in promoting and supporting our diverse student body;
- The ability to be an effective spokesperson and strong advocate for the College within the University as well as externally;
- Track record of leading with creativity and a strategic mindset, as well as generosity of spirit and an abiding sense of humor; and
- A terminal degree in a related discipline.

### **Applications, Inquiries, and Nominations**

Screening of applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters will be handled in confidence and should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website for the search: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/university-north-carolina-charlotte-college-arts-architecture/dean>. Electronic submission of materials is strongly encouraged.



Ben Tobin, Partner  
Nella Young, Senior Associate  
Isaacson, Miller  
Boston, MA 02210

As an EOE/AA employer and an ADVANCE Institution that strives to create an academic climate in which the dignity of all individuals is respected and maintained, the University of North Carolina at Charlotte encourages applications from all underrepresented groups. The candidate chosen for this position will be required to provide an official transcript of their highest earned degree and submit to a criminal background check.