

# NC STATE UNIVERSITY

## ASSOCIATE VICE CHANCELLOR FOR UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA

### THE SEARCH

North Carolina State University (NC State) seeks a strategic, collaborative, and innovative executive as its Associate Vice Chancellor for University Communications and Marketing. This is an exceptional opportunity to join an extraordinary institution as its next strategic visionary to enhance the institution's communications, brand vision and public relations efforts and continue advancing its reputation as one of the nation's leading public research universities.

North Carolina State University was founded in 1887 with the purpose of creating economic, societal and intellectual prosperity for the people of North Carolina. Today NC State is the largest university in North Carolina, with more than 37,000 high-performing students, 9,000 preeminent faculty and staff and over 280,000 alumni. NC State is a research-extensive university known for its leadership in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The university is also at the forefront of teaching and research in agriculture, management, design, education, humanities and social sciences, natural resources, textiles and veterinary medicine. NC State is consistently named as one of the best values in higher education, and many of its programs are ranked at the top of their respective disciplines. This is a particularly exciting time for NC State on the heels of the successful completion of the *Think and Do the Extraordinary Campaign*, which raised \$2.1 billion on a \$1.6 billion goal; strong budget support from the state and excellent fiscal health; and a bold, new strategic plan.

The new Associate Vice Chancellor for University Communications and Marketing (AVC) serves as the University's chief communications and marketing officer; oversees three units and 75-plus staff in the Office of University Communications (UComm); is a member of the University Advancement (UA) leadership team reporting to Vice Chancellor Brian Sischo; and serves as a member of the Chancellor's Cabinet and University Council. The AVC will play a critical role in helping NC State convey its academic strengths and breadth of research; commitments to excellence and access; importance in national and global dialogues; and contributions to local, national, and international communities. This is an exceptional opportunity for a dynamic and accomplished communications and marketing professional to partner with the senior administration of a major research university and work with key stakeholders to build on UComm's existing strengths and success, further elevating the university's reputation and support for its mission. To that end, the AVC will develop and implement a comprehensive communications and marketing strategy that clearly lays out university-wide priorities and messages and,

simultaneously, will influence communications and marketing efforts across the university through collaboration and partnership. This work will result in a strategic platform that unifies messaging and branding for NC State, supports and furthers the goals of the entire university and its individual units, and engages constituencies both on and off campus.

The AVC will have a clear record of accomplishments as an innovative and collaborative leader in a large, mission-driven organization—ideally, a complex university setting—with substantial experience developing and implementing multifaceted communications and marketing efforts that position and elevate the awareness and understanding of an institution with multiple audiences – internally, externally, and with a variety of politically and culturally diverse communities and stakeholders. This person will possess exceptional diplomacy, judgment, and integrity; a full understanding of the marketing, branding, and communications process from creative conceptualization to implementation; expert knowledge of traditional, digital, video, and emerging media; experience in crisis communications; and demonstrated success fostering an inclusive team culture and building an efficient, cohesive, and collaborative team. The AVC must be able to articulate a vision for communications, marketing, and branding that advances NC State’s reputation – across the state, nationally, and internationally – and inspires internal communications partners across the organization. Equally important are a collaborative, collegial orientation and the flexibility to navigate a large and complex university community. A bachelor’s degree and at least 10 years of demonstrated senior leadership are required.

North Carolina State University has retained Isaacson, Miller to assist in this important recruitment. Please direct all inquiries and applications as indicated at the end of this document.

#### **NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY**

North Carolina State University (NC State) was founded in 1887 as a public land-grant research university, and it is the largest university in the University of North Carolina System. In 2023, *US News & World Report* NC State ranked 60<sup>th</sup> out of all national universities and 28<sup>th</sup> out of public universities. True to its land-grant heritage, NC State creates economic, societal and intellectual prosperity for the people of North Carolina and the country, and it is widely considered one of the best values in higher education.

The university’s colleges and academic units include:

- [College of Agriculture and Life Sciences](#)
- [College of Design](#)
- [College of Education](#)
- [College of Engineering](#)
- [College of Humanities and Social Sciences](#)
- [College of Natural Resources](#)
- [Poole College of Management](#)
- [College of Sciences](#)
- [Wilson College of Textiles](#)
- [College of Veterinary Medicine](#)
- [The Graduate School](#)
- [University College](#)

NC State offers over 100 undergraduate majors, 160 master's programs, and 62 doctoral programs. The university also offers over 120 online and distance academic programs, including three undergraduate degrees. NC State has garnered national and international recognition for its faculty and student scholarship, and the university's alumni have risen to prominence in academia, the corporate sector, the military, government at all levels, and the entertainment industry.

NC State's [research](#) enterprise is impressive. Annual research expenditures are over \$583 million, there are 23 National Academy members among its faculty, and it has generated over 190 startups and spin-offs. It has become a lead university for two National Science Foundation Engineering Research Centers and one Manufacturing USA institute as well as a [partner](#) in six others. The university has also expanded to more than 70 industry and government partnerships on its nationally recognized [Centennial Campus](#). To direct its research efforts, NC State has identified five [strategic research areas](#), which further establish the university's contributions to the state, the nation, and the world as well as the scientific and academic community.

NC State teams are known as the [Wolfpack](#). The 21 Division I varsity programs primarily compete in the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) for all sports. The university also has over 40 club sports, more than 20 league sports, and 20 special events every year. NC State athletes have gone on to successful careers as players and coaches in football, basketball, baseball, soccer, golf, and other sports.

## Strategic Plan

In 2021, NC State announced [Wolfpack 2030: Powering the Extraordinary](#), a new strategic plan. Based on NC State's existing accomplishments and keeping the university's mission, vision, and values at the forefront, a strategic planning executive steering committee drafted a plan based on the work of nine strategic planning task forces. The plan was presented to and endorsed by the board of trustees in April 2021. Wolfpack 2030 identifies seven goals to build on existing strengths and address areas of needed growth:

- Goal 1: Empower students for a lifetime of success and impact.
- Goal 2: Ensure preeminence in research, scholarship, innovation and collaboration.
- Goal 3: Expand and advance our engagement with and service to North Carolina and beyond, defining the standard for a 21st-century land-grant university.
- Goal 4: Champion a culture of equity, diversity, inclusion, belonging and well-being in all we do.
- Goal 5: Improve university effectiveness through transformative technologies, cutting-edge processes and actionable data.
- Goal 6: Lead in developing innovative partnerships, entrepreneurial thinking and applied problem-solving.
- Goal 7: Elevate the national and global reputation and visibility of NC State

An implementation plan was [drafted](#) in Fall 2022 which will extend through the end of the 2024 academic year. An [update](#) was provided to the community in February 2023.

Additional information about NC State may be found [here](#).

## LEADERSHIP

### Randy Woodson, Chancellor

Dr. Randy Woodson became North Carolina State University's 14th chancellor in April 2010. Under his leadership, the university created, implemented and completed [The Pathway to the Future](#), a strategic plan that elevated NC State's recognition among the nation's top public research universities. In 2021, NC State created the [Wolfpack 2030: Powering the Extraordinary](#) strategic plan to build on this momentum and carry the university even further.

Under Woodson's leadership, NC State has become a preeminent research enterprise known for solving real-world challenges — a true [Think and Do](#) university. His strategic vision has enabled the university to advance in areas of student success, innovative research and collaborative partnerships. This has resulted in students ready to solve real-world challenges, public-private partnerships that transform ideas into solutions, and a creative, engaging center of learning and exploration for all.

A nationally recognized scholar and academic leader, Chancellor Woodson came to NC State having most recently served as provost and executive vice chancellor for academic affairs at Purdue University. An internationally renowned plant molecular biologist specializing in reproductive processes in agricultural crops, he earned his undergraduate degree in horticulture from the University of Arkansas and his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in plant physiology from Cornell University.

### Brian Sischo, Vice Chancellor for University Advancement

Brian Sischo leads a comprehensive [University Advancement](#) (UA) organization that incorporates University Development, Alumni Engagement and Annual Giving, University Communications and Marketing, Principal Gifts, and Advancement Services with a hybrid team of nearly 300 staff who are embedded centrally and within colleges/units across campus. The organization is responsible for strengthening relationships with alumni, donors, and friends to elevate the NC State brand and build a culture of philanthropy.

Under Sischo's leadership, NC State launched [Think and Do the Extraordinary](#), the most ambitious fundraising campaign in university history. At the campaign's completion on December 31, 2021, more than 133,000 donors from all 100 counties in North Carolina, all 50 states, and 73 countries had helped the university raise more than \$2.1 billion.

Prior to joining NC State, Sischo served as vice president for development at Syracuse University, where he spearheaded the planning, implementation and successful conclusion of the university's first-ever \$1 billion comprehensive fundraising campaign. Before joining Syracuse in 2001, Sischo worked for ten years at his alma mater, Clarkson University, where he served as the chief development officer and led two successful capital campaigns. Sischo earned a B.S. in finance and a master's degree in management systems from Clarkson.

## Board of Trustees

NC State is a constituent institution of the University of North Carolina (UNC) system, and it is overseen by a thirteen-member board of trustees. Eight of the members are elected by the [UNC Board of Governors](#); four are appointed by the General Assembly, two upon the recommendation of the president pro tempore of the Senate and two upon the recommendation of the speaker of the House of Representatives; and the president of the student body serves an ex-officio member. The current chair of the [Board of Trustees](#) is Edward I. "Ed" Weisiger Jr., President and CEO of CTE in Charlotte.

## ASSOCIATE VICE CHANCELLOR FOR UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

The Associate Vice Chancellor for University Communications and Marketing (AVC) is charged with creating the vision for and leading the implementation of a proactive, innovative, and comprehensive marketing, communications, and branding strategy that builds on the powerful [Think and Do brand](#); highlights NC State's academic strengths and research; demonstrates its commitment to an environment in which students, staff and faculty are able to flourish; and fosters relationships with university constituents, both internally (e.g., prospective and current students and families, faculty and staff, board of trustees, employee groups, alumni, donors, university supporters, and affinity groups) and externally (e.g., state and federal officials, the state of North Carolina, and the city of Raleigh and wider Research Triangle, peer institutions, associations, and thought leaders).

To this end, the AVC serves as the University's chief communications and marketing officer and will oversee the 75-plus staff in the [Office of University Communications and Marketing](#) (UComm), which is divided into three units: [Marketing](#), [Communications](#), and [Strategy](#) (which includes brand management). UComm offers its services to other units across the university at below the local market rate using an appropriated receipts model.

In late 2022, NC State and UComm contracted with outside consultants to assess and advise on strategy, structure, staffing, and systems to better serve the university's stated strategic goals. A comprehensive report was delivered in January 2023. One key recommendation from the report was that UComm focus on Goals [Four](#), [Five](#), and [Seven](#) from the [Wolfpack](#) strategic plan. While the ethos of the report – an executive summary of which was shared with staff – informs current team efforts, UA and UComm have decided that implementation will be the purview of the new AVC.

The AVC will also partner with roughly 150 marketing and communications professionals across NC State to help create and define holistic communications and marketing strategies that serve the needs of the overarching university and respects the significant and varying needs of specific colleges, divisions, and units.

**Following are the responsibilities and duties of the chief communications and marketing officer:**

- Conceive of and implement an overarching strategic communications and marketing plan that is innovative, progressive, and proactive, resulting in cohesive messaging and a brand identity that extends across all media and vehicles in ways that appropriately support and reflect the goals and objectives of the university.
- Serve as a main point of contact to the Chancellor and provide routine, day-to-day communications support for the Chancellor's office. Act as senior counselor to the chancellor and other university leaders on all communication matters and messaging, internal and external.
- When appropriate, serve as chief spokesperson on behalf of the University and its leaders.
- Provide leadership in crisis management planning, including establishing crisis communications policies and procedures. Provide real-time crisis management, counsel, and support to university leadership.
- Build relationships with and leverage the expertise of key stakeholders, including those within the [Office of the Provost](#); [Department of Academic and Student Affairs](#); [General Counsel](#); [Athletics](#); [University Advancement](#); [Office of Information Technology](#); [Office of External Affairs, Partnerships, and Economic Partnerships](#); and with all academic deans.
- Advise deans and other senior university leaders in their efforts to translate and communicate academic, research, and service accomplishments to the university community and external audiences.
- Build and manage an outstanding strategic marketing and communications program that incorporates all traditional and digital channels and media, and that can be considered best-in-class compared to its peers across higher education.
- Utilize data captured from CRM and other systems to evaluate the effectiveness and success of communications vehicles with different internal and external audiences on an ongoing basis.
- Establish a digital ecosystem that reflects the university's brand, creates a cohesive strategy across platforms, while also recognizing the breadth and diverging needs of campus units, and emphasizes compliance with accessibility and user experience standards.
- Work with staff and key stakeholders to proactively reinforce and protect the university's reputation; anticipate and mitigate potentially negative and high-profile issues or crises that may impact NC State.

- Convene, support, and inspire collaboration and coordination among decentralized communication professionals across NC State. Build strong, collaborative, and collegial relationships with all unit-based communications and marketing teams, understanding their specific priorities and how those integrate with the university's brand, strategic communications, and goals. Provide appropriate levels of support and service to those individuals and teams.
- Ensure that UComm is a collaborative, responsive partner that can address both opportunities and concerns from diverse stakeholders, and that staff are sought out as respected thought leaders. Foster excellence with respect to client collaboration and partnership, customer service, and problem solving.
- Thoroughly evaluate current marketing and branding efforts across the university. Strategically invest time and resources in market research, competitive landscape analysis, brand and marketing refinement, and creative execution. Working with direct reports and other key stakeholders, assess how best to leverage internal resources, external counsel, agencies, and services.
- Maintain and refine an organizational structure that will increase integration and cohesion across UComm. Set clear direction and priorities for professional and administrative staff alike. Continually assess staff strengths; recruit and retain a high-quality, diverse communications and marketing team.
- Maintain and promote a diverse and equitable workplace environment. Similarly, promote a professional workplace culture of mutual respect and collegiality for all members of the institution.
- Inspire and motivate staff through transparency and direction, placing staff members' work within the context of NC State's strategic priorities and goals. Provide professional development opportunities as appropriate and encourage staff to set and reach personal growth targets.
- Have a leadership style that is open and empowers staff through active communication, delegation, and accountability. Manage expectations and resources to ensure that overall marketing goals and activities are challenging and realistic.
- Foster an environment that rewards new ideas, creativity, and risk taking; builds confidence; and encourages teamwork and collaboration within the office and across the university. Celebrate achievements and set clear expectations for future success.

**The chief communications and marketing officer will bring many of the following professional qualities and experiences:**

- At least 10 years of experience leading, envisioning, and implementing a strategic communications, marketing, and branding program that was successfully leveraged across an enterprise with multiple constituencies and a wide variety of audiences, ideally in public higher education.
- A record of success as an innovative and collaborative leader in a large, complex, mission-driven organization with numerous and distributed stakeholders, shared decision making, and often rapidly shifting priorities.

- Advanced knowledge of the strategies and industry best practices for all aspects of communications, marketing, positioning, and messaging, including sophisticated and creative use of brand content, social media, analytics, and other forms of digital communications.
- Substantial experience evaluating the strengths of existing communications and marketing programs and identifying opportunities for improvement. An aptitude for using data and metrics in decision making and evaluating success of programs and campaigns.
- Broad experience in strategic communications, crisis and issues management, communications planning, media relations, public relations, perception management, and internal communications.
- Proven effectiveness engaging and working directly with local, national, and international media on background and on the record.
- Experience in institutions that are subject to political and public scrutiny, whether legislative or regulatory.
- The ability to intuit the implicit dimensions of messages and messaging. Exceptional diplomacy, discretion, and judgment.
- Engaging and persuasive in written and oral communications, clearly able to serve as a professional and trusted representative of the university.
- Collaborative and collegial orientation, eager and skillful in engaging diverse stakeholders and building strong professional relationships. Demonstrated experience serving as a resource to others and obtaining their input, thereby able to synthesize many ideas and produce work products that address a variety of goals and objectives.
- Experience managing and inspiring teams in a complex organization, leading by influence and unifying the work of communications and marketing professionals across the enterprise. The ability to encourage change and growth in both people and programs. Persuasive, persistent, and determined.
- A strong commitment to personal and professional development and the ability to build, lead, mentor, motivate, and retain high-performing, diverse professional teams to create a robust and collaborative communications and marketing ecosystem.
- Outstanding management, operational, and planning skills, including the ability to handle multiple projects simultaneously in a decentralized environment.
- High degree of integrity, character, and emotional maturity, demonstrating respect for individuals at every level of an organization; humility, a sense of humor and life balance.
- Sharp eye for operational efficiency and optimal use of resources; understanding of budgets, cash flows, and proven success managing them.
- An understanding of the land grant, research Tier One university environment.
- A deep appreciation and passion for the mission, values, and culture of NC State.



- Bachelor's degree is required.

#### **APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS**

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website for the search, which can be found [here](#). Electronic submission of materials is strongly encouraged.

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NC State University is an equal opportunity and affirmative action employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, age, sexual orientation, genetic information, status as an individual with a disability or status as a protected veteran.