THE OPPORTUNITY

The University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNC Charlotte) is seeking an accomplished scholar, visionary leader, and proven academic administrator to lead the Cato College of Education.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHARLOTTE

UNC Charlotte is North Carolina’s urban research university nestled in one of America’s fastest growing and most diverse cities. 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 impactful community engagement initiatives. UNC Charlotte is committed to working collaboratively with community partners to address the cultural, economic, educational, environmental, health, and social needs of the greater Charlotte region in line with the community’s focus on racial equity and economic mobility.

This fall, during a global pandemic, UNC Charlotte welcomed a record-breaking incoming first-year class of just about 4,000. They are joined by 2,600 transfer students and 2,400 new graduate students. Together with returning students, enrollment exceeds 30,000 students for the first time in UNC Charlotte history – making it the second largest university in the UNC System. UNC Charlotte is also the fastest growing institution in the UNC System, comprising seven academic colleges offering 171 undergraduate majors in 77 programs leading to Bachelor’s degrees, 65 Master’s degrees, and 24 Doctoral degrees. UNC Charlotte is proud to have 1,019 passionate and committed faculty members and more than 120,000 living alumni.

Responding to the need to serve returning veterans immediately after WWII, UNC Charlotte is one of a generation of schools founded in metropolitan areas just after the war to meet the rising post-war demands for higher education. 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 its main campus from Uptown Charlotte to its current location on 1,000-acre campus ten miles from the city center. The main campus is connected to the city center of Charlotte and the Dubois Center at UNC Charlotte Center City by Charlotte Area Transit System light rail.

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 second largest of the 17 institutions within the state system, the University has maintained its entrepreneurial culture and its commitment to innovation. As the system’s “Urban Research University,” UNC Charlotte continues to be essential to the region’s economic and civic vitality. The University’s Civic Action Plan, adopted in 2018, articulates an institutional strategy “to improve social outcomes by organizing University resources, community-based research efforts, and community collaborations to effectively address regional needs through collective impact.” The recently created Office of Urban Research and Community
Engagement serves as the hub of the University’s engaged scholarship ecosystem, mobilizing, assessing, and advancing efforts that connect the University’s interdisciplinary, urban research resources to community assets to co-create a thriving, inclusive region.

Largely because of this commitment, UNC Charlotte is the No. 1 institution in North Carolina in awarding bachelor’s degrees to Latinx students, enrollment among Black/African American freshman has grown by 30%, enrollment has increased 43% for first year Latinx students, and nearly 33% of the incoming class are first-generation college students.

The University has a strong focus going forward on student success and access, and research results that strive to advance the institution’s quality and growth through diversity, equity, and inclusivity. This pursuit has been reinforced through key administrative appointments and adoption of forward-looking strategic documents.

**CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA**

Fueled by rapid job growth and an affordable cost of living, in 2018 Charlotte was ranked as the country’s third fastest growing big city and is a top millennial hub. With an estimated population of 880,000 and an average of 60 people moving to Charlotte per day, Charlotte is the 15th most populous city in the U.S., 22nd largest metro area, and the second largest banking hub in the U.S.

The Charlotte region is home to headquarters for six Fortune 500 companies and 14 Fortune 1000 companies such as Bank of America, Lowe’s, Honeywell International, Duke Energy, Nucor, Sonic Automotive and Sealed Air. The city is also home to the NFL’s Carolina Panthers, NBA’s Charlotte Hornets, NASCAR Hall of Fame, and the 10th largest airport in the country. The region offers a wide array of cultural activities such as the Charlotte Ballet, Mint Museum, Blumenthal Performing Arts, and many outstanding and award-winning restaurants and eateries.

In the heart of the city of Charlotte is the Dubois Center at UNC Charlotte Center City, the only University of North Carolina building conceived and designed specifically to serve the people, organizations, and businesses of the urban center. Conveniently located next to the Center City campus, a new light rail system provides a physical connection between the Center City and University City campuses. Center City 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, 25 classrooms and design studios,
meeting and performance spaces, an art gallery, and a four-acre park, it speaks to a new vision in higher education that includes urban education, research, engagement, and sustainability.

Over the past five years, the region has focused its collective community, civic and corporate resources on reducing long-standing racial disparities around economic and social outcomes, and ensuring equitable economic mobility among all residents, regardless of race, ethnicity, or zip code. The community’s **Leading on Opportunity Task Force**, driven by the Foundation For The Carolinas in collaboration with dozens of organizations and institutions, including UNC Charlotte, has led this community-wide effort.

**THE CATO COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

The Cato College of Education at UNC Charlotte is a cornerstone of the University’s civic mission and its status as one of the nation’s leading urban universities. It prepares highly effective and ethical professionals whose work positively impacts children, youth, adults, and families in communities, P-12 and higher education settings, and organizations within urban and other diverse settings. UNC Charlotte is one of the largest teacher preparation institutions in the state and Cato College of Education teacher candidates are among the most prepared in the state. Graduates are continuously recognized at the state and national level. The College also prepares principals and superintendents who are also highly recognized.

The College enrolls more than 2,000 undergraduate and graduate students annually and delivers accessible programs for all potential students through traditional and distance education. The programs are nationally accredited and approved by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. Currently 115 full-time faculty provide instruction, conduct research, and contribute to both the university and the community through service. The college houses a variety of research centers and educational institutes, including the Center for Adolescent Literacies, the Center for Educational Measurement and Evaluation, the Center for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Education, the Multicultural Play Therapy Center, the **Freedom School**, the **Niner Clinical Immersion School**, and the **Urban Education Collaborative**, a synergistic approach to engaging scholars across departments in urban research through collaborative research projects, initiatives and events including a biannual international Urban Education conference.

The Cato College of Education is a research leader in fields including students with disabilities, reading instruction, student success in college, the teacher shortage, culturally relevant instruction, and anti-racist education. The faculty work to build an infrastructure to support **meaningful diversity and inclusion efforts** and seek to create a culture of inclusion that actively supports all
faculty, staff, students, and alumni. High-quality instruction is a top priority for the College’s talented faculty, who are consistently recognized for their efforts in the classroom. Cato College of Education faculty have received university and statewide honors for teaching and mentorship.

The College is a community-engaged college and has deeply responsive partnerships with over 12 public school districts and dozens of private schools, including Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, the 18th largest public school district in the country. The College maintains a close working relationship with these schools, contributing to a job placement rate that is the 2nd highest in the UNC system. As the region grapples with reducing deep-seated educational disparities among its residents and the resulting economic inequities, the Cato College of Education has proven to be a critical partner and resource, providing essential research, driving innovative solutions, and educating and training the leaders and future leaders who are responsible for solving these complex problems.

In 2020, the College through deliberation among faculty, staff, and community stakeholders developed the Cato College of Education Statement on Racial Justice, which reinforces its opposition to the systemic racism and injustice that permeates society and recognizes its responsibility to prepare teachers, school leaders, counselors, higher education administrators and faculty, educational researchers, and learning technologists, who will disrupt systemic racism and all forms of social injustice. The College’s accountability to these principles and practices is driven by its Diversity Committee.

In the 2021 rankings for Best Colleges from U.S. News & World Report, the Cato College of Education was ranked nationally for its online programs and among the top 10 for online special education programs. UNC Charlotte Distance Education has been recognized consistently by U.S. News & World Report during the past four years, with several programs earning increasingly higher rankings. Online bachelor’s programs are ranked 34th overall. Many of the current bachelor’s degree programs are degree completion offerings, with plans for expansion over the next several semesters due to increased demand. Online graduate education programs from the Cato College of Education are ranked 27th overall, up from 28th in 2020 and 29th in 2019. The M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction ranks 13th in the curriculum and instruction category, placing for the first time. The Learning, Design, and Technology fully online program ranks 13th in the Educational/Instructional Media category. The Cato College of Education’s graduate special education programs rank 10th in the nation for 2021. The Counseling Department was named the Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision Outstanding Program, and UNC Charlotte recently became the first in the nation to launch an online master’s degree in urban education.

The Cato College is committed to recruiting diverse candidates into the teaching profession and providing cutting-edge practices in clinical experiences for its candidates. Two such innovative examples are the Charlotte Teacher Early College, a school housed on campus to serve high school students interested in a career in education and Niner University Elementary, a public school and laboratory for clinical practice created and led by education experts at UNC Charlotte.
The College’s academic programs are organized into five departments:

- **The Department of Counseling** has a mission to improve mental health and inspire social change through counseling and envisions a counseling community that values and advances the dignity, potential, and mental health of all people. The Department offers a master’s degree in counseling and Ph.D. in counselor education and supervision. It also offers certificates in play therapy, school counseling, and addiction counseling. The Department of Counseling’s Master’s and Ph.D. degrees are accredited by CACREP.

- **The Department of Educational Leadership** prepares highly effective and ethical educational leaders who have a positive impact on children, youth, families, adults, communities, and schools and who are successful in urban and other diverse settings. The department offers five graduate degree programs: an M.Ed. in Educational Leadership (Higher Education), an M.Ed. in Learning, Design and Technology, a Master’s in School Administration, an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership (Higher Education, P-12 principal and superintendency preparation, and Learning Design, and Technology), and a Ph.D. in Educational Research, Measurement, and Evaluation. The Department also offers four graduate certificates: Learning, Design and Technology, School Administration, Quantitative Analyses, and University and College Teaching.
The Department of Middle, Secondary, and K-12 Education prepares professionals to be knowledgeable, effective, reflective, collaborative and responsive practitioners who are leaders in their fields. They offer programs leading to a B.A. in Middle Grades Education; Minor in Secondary Education and Foreign Language Education; Graduate Certificate in Teaching; M.A.T.; a M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction with concentrations in Teaching English as a Second Language, and Middle and Secondary Education; a new M.Ed. in Urban Education; and an urban-focused Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction.

The Department of Reading and Elementary Education prepares effective teachers and teacher-leaders. The department recognizes and values the unique position elementary educators have to influence - through teaching and critical literacy practices - the nation’s youngest generation of thinkers, innovators and leaders who will strive for a more equitable world. The department believes that achieving equity broadly, first and foremost, involves an explicit commitment to antiracism, with the understanding that anything less than antiracism (i.e., racism and non-racism) is not an option. The Department of Reading and Elementary Education offers a B.A. in Elementary Education, M.Ed. in Elementary Education, M.Ed. in Reading Education, Graduate Certificate and M.A.T. in Elementary Education, and a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction.

The Department of Special Education and Child Development prepares highly effective and ethical professionals who have a positive impact on children, youth, families, community, and schools, and who are successful in urban and other diverse settings. This mission is accomplished through teaching, research, and community engagement that lead to improved practice and by working in partnership with schools, community programs/agencies, and university colleagues. The department offers undergraduate degrees in Special Education and Child and Family Development; a minor in Child and Family Development; graduate certificates in Special Education, Child and Family Studies, Early Childhood Mental Health (interdisciplinary with School of Social Work), Academically or Intellectually Gifted, and Autism Spectrum Disorder; Master’s degree programs in Special Education and Child Development, including concentrations in Academically or Intellectually Gifted, Applied Behavior Analysis, Child and Family Studies, and Special Education; and a Ph.D. in Special Education.

For more information about the Cato College of Education, please visit https://education.uncc.edu/.

The Goals and Highlights of the College

The vision of the Cato College of Education is to be a leader in educational equity through excellence and engagement.

Goal #1: To produce highly effective and engaged professionals for all settings, including urban and high needs areas.

Goal #2: To expand the frontiers of knowledge and leverage discovery for the public benefit through innovative programs of graduate education (M.Ed., Ed.D., Ph.D.) that span the disciplines.
Goal #3: To expand the frontiers of knowledge and leverage discovery for the public benefit through innovative programs of research that span the disciplines.

Goal #4: To engage community partners in mutually beneficial programs that enhance the economic, civic, and cultural vitality of the region.

Goal #5: To increase visibility and connectedness within the Cato College of Education and across communities.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

To fulfill its mission and realize its vision, the Cato College of Education must be at the forefront of transformational and innovative research, education, and programming. This requires advancing academic endeavors that unabashedly oppose systemic racism and injustice. There is a critical shortage of qualified P-12 teachers and other education professionals in the United States who are equipped to address current societal challenges. Embracing access and student success, the dean will continue to build the College’s financial resources, alumni, and community relationships, as well as understand the needs of urban schools and the needs of leaders, researchers, counselors and professionals in other diverse educational and organizational settings. The next dean will also continue to build the strategic goals to best support the growing College and remain actively engaged in promoting equity and diversity within.

Research is fundamental to the mission of UNC Charlotte. Identified as an opportunity and a challenge, the next dean will strategically navigate the college’s increasing research pursuits and foster an environment of enhancing the academic reputation, doctoral programs, and funding.

In close collaboration with the provost, other deans and officers of the University, and key stakeholders, the dean will:

- Advance the mission and vision of the University and the Cato College of Education in an equitable, inclusive, and collaborative environment, and as a champion for diverse perspectives;
• Lead the college in transforming teaching, research and engagement through partnerships to position the college as a leader in diversity, equity and inclusion;
• Support and grow scholarship that is relevant to the needs and assets of communities, including those in the Greater Charlotte area, and research practices that are accountable to them to extend the college’s and institution’s influence locally, statewide, nationally, and internationally;
• Advance the college’s efforts in research and graduate study consistent with the university’s strategic goals of increased research productivity;
• Oversee the effectiveness of the college’s academic programs through the assessment of student learning and program review and renewal processes that are free of racial bias; uphold fair standards of rigor and academic excellence that allow equitable assessment of tenure and promotion; and oversee and facilitate external accreditation;
• Provide leadership for five academic departments, six offices, and multiple centers and educational institutes;
• Sustain, grow, and foster mutually rewarding collaborations with state and local agencies that promote shared expertise to advance justice-oriented agendas;
• Keep current on teacher requirements on a state and national level;
• Advocate for the faculty and staff and for their engagement with a commitment to ensuring the full participation of those whose voices and scholarship often are not centered in the academy because of their race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, ethnicity, or language;
• Provide leadership to continue to enhance and encourage interdisciplinary academic collaborations across campus;
• Evaluate current programs and explore and develop new programming to best serve students and the city of Charlotte, the country, and the world;
• Equitably allocate resources consistent with college priorities to advance efforts of faculty and staff;
• Serve as the external face of the college; and
• Take up additional tasks and responsibilities, as appropriate and necessary, in consultation with University leadership.

THE ROLE OF THE DEAN

Reporting to the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the dean is the chief academic and administrative officer of the College. The dean is a member of the Deans Council.

The dean will be supported by a leadership team consisting of the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Education and Academic Affairs, Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies, Assistant Dean for School and Community Partnerships, Assistant Dean of Teaching and Innovation, Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Principal of the Lab School, Director of Teacher Education Advising and Licensure, Director of the Office of Assessment and Accreditation, Director of Communications, Director of Alumni Affairs and New Teacher Support Program, Business Officer, and an Executive Assistant.

The dean’s office works with the College’s department chairs, program directors, faculty, staff, and students, as well as other units across the University, in particular with the Division of University
Advancement, to advance undergraduate and graduate education.

**QUALIFICATIONS**

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

- Demonstrated scholarly and professional accomplishments commensurate with an appointment as a tenured full professor in the College and continued knowledge of advances in the field;
- Demonstrated commitment to UNC Charlotte’s and the Cato College of Education’s missions of access and diversity, and to continuing to build an organization that values and practices diversity and inclusion, affirmative action, equal opportunity, and the disruption of systemic racism and injustice;
- Ability to lead a faculty community that encompasses an array of disciplines;
- Demonstrated administrative ability to delegate, prioritize, and make timely, transparent, and collaborative decisions;
- Demonstrated commitment to engaged scholarship that is mutually beneficial to community partners and elevates their assets and shared expertise, and scholarship that intersects with the schools, nonprofits and resident-led organizations in support of schools and teachers, including teacher and administration support and district transformation;
- Experience with the alignment of resources with transition and strategic goals;
- Record of effective budget management for a college or department-wide unit;
- Experience leading in times of transition with increased expectations for scholarly productivity;
- Demonstrated fundraising experience and success soliciting and receiving funds from foundations, individual donors, and/or external sources, as well as the ability to support and allocate resources to support faculty pursuit of external funding;
- Experience with and value for online, blended, and distance education;
- Understanding of international partnerships and collaborations;
- Experience with developing and expanding graduate programs;
- Experience facilitating interdisciplinary work that transcends traditional boundaries and inspiring and leading faculty in civic engagement and community-engaged scholarship;
- Ability to collaborate with others to develop curricula and programs to prepare future teachers, counselors, researchers and administrators for a rapidly changing field;
- Demonstrated success in fostering collaboration, motivating others, and building effective working relationships with internal and external stakeholders;
- Informed grasp of key issues affecting economic divide, urban education, faculty recruitment, retention, promotion, and scholarly productivity;
- Familiarity with national issues affecting research and higher education; and
- Ability to be an effective spokesperson and strong advocate for the College through both speaking and writing.
EDUCATION

The Dean of the Cato College of Education should possess an earned Ph.D., or equivalent terminal degree(s), and possess a record of recognized achievement in leadership, service, teaching, and research.

NOMINATION & APPLICATIONS

The Search Committee will begin reviewing candidates immediately and will continue until the position is filled. Priority consideration will be given to materials received by April 22, 2021. Applications should include 1) a curriculum vitae and 2) a letter of interest that addresses the responsibilities and requirements described above, as well as the applicant’s motivation to apply. To ensure full consideration, inquiries, nominations, and applications (PDF preferred) should be submitted electronically, in confidence, to:

Martin M. Baker, Managing Partner
Chelsie Whitelock, Principal
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CatoCollegeDean@buffkinbaker.com

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 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.