Chief of Staff
The University of North Carolina at Pembroke

The University of North Carolina at Pembroke invites nominations and applications for the appointment of Chief of Staff.
The University of North Carolina at Pembroke

The University of North Carolina at Pembroke (UNCP), a constituent institution of the University of North Carolina System, is a master’s-level university with a spirited community of more than 8,300 students of whom 6,318 are undergraduate students and 2,001 graduate students. UNCP is an historically minority-serving institution (HMSI), a Native American-Serving Nontribal Institution (NASNTI), and the only state-designated historically American Indian university in North Carolina. With 878 full-time faculty and staff, the university offers more than 150 pathways to graduate and undergraduate degrees. The average class size is 20 with a student-to-faculty ratio of approximately 18-to-1. The university is comprised of four degree-granting colleges and schools: the College of Arts and Sciences; the College of Health Sciences, which includes the McKenzie-Elliott School of Nursing; the Thomas School of Business; and the School of Education. In addition, UNCP features The Graduate School, the University College, which assists in first-year student transition, and the Esther G. Maynor Honors College. Athletically, UNCP competes as a member of the NCAA Division II and offers 17 varsity sports including the Spirit Squad. The university also offers more than 120 clubs and organizations for students to be active and engaged citizens on campus and in the community.

Affordability and value have earned UNC Pembroke inclusion in national rankings such as U.S. News & World Report’s Best Colleges and Universities. Over the previous two years, UNCP has jumped more than 22 spots in the Best Regional Universities category, landing at number 65 in the 2022 list. Further evidence of UNCP’s commitment to excellence, the university placed in the top 30 Top Public Universities list and is in the top 20 for Best in Social Mobility. In 2022’s rankings, UNCP’s undergraduate nursing program was listed among the top nursing programs in the nation. UNCP is consistently one of the safest campuses in the University of North Carolina System.

UNC Pembroke is an educational institution whose core mission clearly identifies excellence in teaching and learning as a value and ideal. With substantial growth and change over the last decade, the university has an opportunity to define anew what academic excellence means and how to leverage its unique characteristics, strengths, programs and heritage to shape and deliver a distinctive and enriching educational experience that mirrors systematically increasing higher levels of performance from students and faculty.

Student engagement is an important characteristic of UNCP as demonstrated by the university being named to the President’s Community Service Honor Roll for all three years of the award’s existence. Engaged learning has become a hallmark of progressive regional institutions because student work in the field enriches their learning experience and benefits the region where students practice. As a regional
comprehensive institution, UNCP is committed to providing educational programs important to both building opportunities for constituents and serving as a catalyst for economic development in the region. UNCP’s surrounding counties are some of the most economically challenged in southeastern North Carolina. Yet, many untapped assets lie within the I-95 corridor that is minutes away from UNCP. Fort Bragg and Pinehurst/Southern Pines are fertile areas for academic programming and training sites.

Over the past ten years, UNCP has experienced remarkable growth in student enrollment, in part resulting from the tuition buy-down program for undergraduates, the North Carolina Promise Tuition Plan, adopted by the North Carolina General Assembly during the 2016 session. NC Promise dramatically lowers the cost of tuition to $500 per semester and $2,500 per semester in-state and out-of-state, respectively. Simultaneously, the university has maintained its deep commitment to diversity while raising academic requirements for admission to the institution. The university has been challenged to manage that growth effectively while improving retention and graduation rates, a priority clearly outlined in the university’s strategic plan, and an expectation of the UNC System President.

While maintaining a connection to its rich American Indian history and traditions, the university today serves a broad base of students from diverse races, ages and backgrounds. With a wide array of bachelor’s and master’s degree offerings, dedicated Pembroke faculty and staff, and a diverse community of cultures, ideas and organizations at their fingertips, UNCP students are poised to excel in life.

UNCP is located in the Town of Pembroke in Robeson County, North Carolina, a town of 3,000, which is also the home of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina. UNC Pembroke was founded in 1887 as The Croatan Normal School to train American Indian teachers and today is the nation’s only four-year public institution founded by American Indians for American Indians. With a quick trip from UNCP, you can easily reach the picturesque mountains of western North Carolina as well as world-famous beaches and resorts along the coastline.

For more information about UNC Pembroke, please visit uncp.edu, consult Purpose – Promise – Possibility our 2020-2025 strategic plan, and view our organizational chart.

Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission Statement

Founded in 1887 as a school for the education of American Indians, The University of North Carolina at Pembroke now serves a distinctly diverse student body and encourages inclusion and appreciation for the values of all people. UNC Pembroke exists to promote excellence in teaching and learning, at the master’s and undergraduate levels, in an environment of free inquiry, interdisciplinary collaboration, and rigorous intellectual standards.

Our diversity and our commitment to personalized teaching uniquely prepare our students for rewarding careers, postgraduate education, leadership roles, and fulfilling lives. We cultivate an international perspective, rooted in our service to and appreciation of our multi-ethnic regional society, which prepares citizens for engagement in global society. Students are encouraged to participate in activities that develop their intellectual curiosity and mold them into responsible stewards of the world.
UNCP faculty and staff are dedicated to active student learning, engaged scholarship, high academic standards, creative activity, and public service. We celebrate our heritage as we enhance the intellectual, cultural, economic, and social life of the region.

Vision Statement

The University of North Carolina at Pembroke will challenge students to embrace difference and adapt to change, think critically, communicate effectively, and become responsible citizens. Working from a strong foundation in the liberal arts, we will increase opportunities to infuse our curriculum with interdisciplinary innovation while promoting undergraduate and graduate research as well as international opportunities.

Core Values Statement

The faculty and staff of UNC Pembroke are guided by accountability, innovation, service, integrity, communication, collaboration and the following set of core values:

1. The commitment to serving the local region
2. The creation, exploration, evaluation, and articulation of ideas
3. The value of a liberal arts foundation as the basis of self-realization and lifelong learning
4. The importance of honor and integrity to learning and leadership as we educate students to be stewards of the world
5. The appreciation of the American Indian history of the University and local community
6. The appreciation of diversity and respect for the dignity and worth of every individual
7. The commitment to prepare graduate and undergraduate students to succeed in an ever-changing and increasingly technological global environment
8. The accessibility of education which leads to the enhancement of the economy and culture in the region
9. The maintenance of a sustainable, safe, healthy, attractive, and accessible campus

Institutional Distinctiveness Statement

The University of North Carolina at Pembroke distinguishes itself from peer institutions by offering an affordable, highly personalized, student-centered education to diverse students. Founded in 1887 as an American Indian institution to serve the Lumbee people, UNCP is now also comprised of students, faculty, and staff who possess differing attributes based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability status, national origin, age, political affiliation, religion, and other characteristics. Diversity grounds intellectual pursuits and provides us with opportunities for discovery and ways to integrate all individuals and groups into the larger community, respecting and valuing their uniqueness while simultaneously advancing the University’s historical tradition. UNC Pembroke thus prepares its students for life and leadership within a diverse society.
Accreditation

The university is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). Additional program accreditations include: the Thomas School of Business, the McKenzie-Elliott School of Nursing, the Social Work Program, the School of Education, the Clinical Mental Health Program, as well as programs in the departments of Art and Music.

The Community

The campus is located in the Town of Pembroke, which is in the coastal plains of southeastern North Carolina. Historically, the regional economy has largely depended on tobacco and textiles. Today, the service sector, health care, education and government are the major sources of employment in the region along with agriculture, agribusiness, construction and light manufacturing. With a population of approximately 3,000, Pembroke is the historic home of the university and the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina. The town is the site of seasonal tribal events and governance. With easy access to major highways, Pembroke is convenient to most metro areas in North Carolina and nearby states, coastal beaches, and the famous golf courses of Pinehurst. Located 12 miles away, Lumberton, the county seat, is a city of approximately 22,000 and is a hub of shopping, banking, health care, and government operations. Lumberton is located at the crossroads of I-95 and I-74/U.S. Highway 74. UNC Pembroke’s faculty and staff reside in Robeson County or within 45 minutes of the university in communities including Pembroke and Lumberton as well as Laurinburg, Fayetteville, Pinehurst, and Southern Pines.

Partnerships

UNC Pembroke’s success has long been built on innovation and collaboration. To that end, UNCP seeks out opportunities to partner with other educational institutions and community organizations. As the anchor institution and key economic driver for southeastern North Carolina, the university actively creates and fosters relationships to meet mutual goals of advancing the region. The university will play a key role in identifying and leading new and existing partnerships that benefit educational goals and the needs of the communities we serve.

Examples of these partnerships include the School of Education’s K-12 collaboration and efforts; the College of Health Science and McKenzie-Elliott School of Nursing’s mobile health unit; degree pathway partnerships with East Carolina University, NC State, Tuskegee and Methodist; the BraveStep pathway program and articulation agreements with community colleges across the region and state; global exchange and education partnerships with universities across the world; and research partnerships with organizations like UNC-Chapel Hill and the Department of Defense, among many others.

Notable UNCP Alumni

- Jerry Lanier, retired U.S. Ambassador
- Kelvin Sampson, Head Coach University of Houston Men’s Basketball
- Kellie Blue, UNC Board of Governors and County Manager, Robeson County
- Brigadier General Allen J. Jamerson, retired
UNC Pembroke’s Chancellor: Robin Gary Cummings, MD

Dr. Robin Gary Cummings took office as the sixth Chancellor of The University of North Carolina at Pembroke in July 2015 after being elected by the Board of Governors of the 17-campus University of North Carolina System.

During his leadership, UNCP has increased access to a high-quality education through the NC Promise Tuition Plan, expanded academic opportunities through institutional partnerships, enhanced the University’s role in regional economic development and set records for philanthropic giving. With Chancellor Cummings’ vision for the University, UNCP is advancing its vision of Changing Lives Through Education and broadening its impact across southeastern North Carolina and beyond.

Cummings is a board-certified general and cardiothoracic surgeon. He earned his undergraduate degree in zoology (1978) from The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he was a James M. Johnston Scholar and founding member of the Carolina Indian Circle. He then attended Duke University Medical School as a UNC Board of Governors Medical Scholar and Henry J. Kaiser Merit Scholar, earning the Sandoz Award for Basic Science Research and the National Library of Science Award.

After receiving his medical degree in 1983, he interned in surgery and completed residencies in surgery and cardiac surgery at Duke University Medical Center (1983-91). During this period, he also earned a National Research Service Award that enabled him to complete a two-year research fellowship (1985-87) in cardiothoracic surgery. From 1992-2004, Cummings practiced cardiothoracic surgery at the Pinehurst (NC) Surgical Clinic and Moore Regional Hospital, where he chaired the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery (1999-2000) and Section of Cardiovascular and General Surgery (2000-2003). After retiring from surgery, he remained active in the work of the hospital, serving on the Moore Regional Hospital Board of Trustees and chairing the FirstHealth Moore Regional Hospital Foundation.

Cummings subsequently accepted an opportunity in 2009 to serve as medical director and executive director of Community Care of the Sandhills, a regional healthcare organization and in 2013 he joined the NC Department of Health and Human Services as Director of the NC Office of Rural Health and Community Care. Six months later, he was named Deputy Secretary for Health Services and Acting State Health Director.

A Pembroke native and member of the Lumbee Tribe, Chancellor Cummings is active in professional and civic activities, serving as a former chairman of the UNC Pembroke Board of Trustees, chairing the UNCP
Foundation Board, and has served on the UNC-Chapel Hill Board of Visitors. The founding chair of the NC American Indian Health Board, he also has chaired the Commission on NC Indian Health and served on the NC Council on Developmental Disabilities and the NC Rural Center board. He currently serves on the Institute for Emerging Issues National Advisory Board and the Southeastern Health Board of Trustees. His honors include the 2016 John. L. Sanders Student Advocate Award from the UNC Association of Student Governments, the 2014 Presidential Award from the NC Academy of Family Physicians and the Visionary Award from NC Prevent Blindness.

Given his background in health care, Dr. Cummings has led UNCP in the development of a new College of Health Sciences, leveraging the university’s ability to address urgent workforce needs in health care in the region and beyond. The College combines departments of social work, nursing and kinesiology with the goal of adding occupational therapy, physical therapy, optometry and nurse practitioner programs. Established August 2018, the College is already making a difference in health outcomes by educating more than 1,500 students who will become professionals qualified to meet the unique needs of Southeastern North Carolina.
Chief of Staff

Reporting Relationships

The Chief of Staff reports to the Chancellor and serves as a member of the Chancellor’s Cabinet and Senior Leadership Team, and as a visionary strategic partner with the Chancellor. Other positions reporting to the Chancellor include Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Vice Chancellor for Finance & Administration, Vice Chancellor for Advancement, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, Chief Communications & Marketing Officer, General Counsel, and Director of Athletics.

Responsibilities

This position requires an understanding of and a commitment to the Chancellor’s administrative operating principles and core values (communication, collaboration, integrity, accountability, innovation, and service). An understanding and appreciation for UNCP’s institutional history, university policies, and organizational culture are also important in support of the Chancellor’s initiatives and goals.

The Chief of Staff works continually for the long-term interests of the university through the development of policies and solutions to complex problems. This requires an ability to understand existing policies in significant detail and appreciate the likely consequences of proposed initiatives during implementation. An ability to analyze complex institutional and interpersonal situations and to assess and develop possible alternative solutions is also required. In that regard, strong interpersonal skills and a willingness to listen to and appreciate alternative points of view is essential. Excellence in written and oral communication is expected, as well an ability to convey complex ideas in a concise and comprehensible fashion under time-constrained conditions.

This position also requires a capacity for sound judgment, tact, diplomacy, discretion, confidentiality, and a strong sense of integrity, as well as emotional intelligence, flexibility, creativity, strong attention to detail, tolerance for ambiguity, and a sense of humor.
The Chief of Staff will be expected to work independently with little supervision from the Chancellor. This position will be responsible for effective management of the Office of the Chancellor and will have the discretion to make decisions and represent the Chancellor whenever needed.

The Chief of Staff has supervisory responsibilities for specific functional offices reporting under the Chancellor’s Division as well as staff in the Chancellor’s Office organization. These supervisory responsibilities include direct oversight for leadership and management including recruitment, performance management, and professional development.

The Chief of Staff performs the following:

- Oversees effective execution of staff functions of the Chancellor’s Office, including daily operations, and office budget maintenance.
- Responsible for the overall management of Chancellor’s Office staff, including the division of responsibilities within the office, training and professional development, and completion of annual performance evaluations.
- Establishes priorities in directing the Chancellor’s personal time and attention and to ensure appropriate and timely information is provided to facilitate efficient and effective decision-making, following up as required during implementation.
- Serves as the Assistant Secretary to the Board of Trustees, plans and coordinates the university’s Board of Trustees meetings by working closely with board leadership and university administration in the development of board materials while ensuring compliance with board’s by-laws and the UNC system codes/regulations.
- Leads and completes special projects and assignments as required, particularly those having inter-divisional implications.
- Plans and organizes weekly Cabinet meetings and planning retreats. Ensures actions identified in Cabinet meetings are tracked and completed.
- Performs a central role in the institutional strategic planning process to develop and implement five-year institutional plans, aligning institutional resources to support the achievement of the goals and objectives included therein.
- Oversees and manages the annual goal setting and job target process for the Chancellor and Cabinet.
- Works with the Office of the General Counsel to ensure that proposed changes in university policy or procedures are fully vetted before being scheduled for Cabinet discussion and the Chancellor’s final consideration.
- Undertakes various internal and external communication efforts on behalf of the Chancellor.
- Works closely with the University Communications and Marketing Office on the development and implementation of key communication strategies and messages to be conveyed by the Chancellor in documents such as speeches, newsletters, university addresses, and other reports as necessary.
- Works closely with the VC for Advancement and the Chief Communications and Marketing Officer to represent the Chancellor’s interests and to assure all events are conducted at the level of excellence that is expected by the Chancellor.
• Works with dedicated staff in planning campus visits by individuals or groups of individuals from the Board of Governors and state and federal legislatures.
• Serves as institutional representative on selected internal committees and external civic groups, boards, and councils as determined by the Chancellor.
• Acts as the Chancellor’s liaison to faculty, staff, and administration of the university on internal projects and initiatives.

Requirements
• A minimum of five years of progressive leadership experience in administrative roles within a medium to large organization, preferably an institution of higher education is required.
• Demonstrate an understanding of the organization, administration, and management of modern institutions of higher education or an institution or business of comparable size and complexity.
• Experience in building trust-based relationships with other senior administrators, faculty, staff, governing board members, elected officials, and community representatives (or their equivalents in other employment settings) is essential.
• Possess a background in one or more of the following is preferred: strategic planning, organizational development, organizational planning, project management, or policy development/implementation.
• Experience in working directly or indirectly with a governing board of an institution is an asset.
• Exceptional communication and people skills; accessible; energetic and enthusiastic; ability to build and maintain close relationships and engender trust.
• Espouse and model leadership principles based on integrity, honesty, sincerity, inclusiveness, collaboration, humility, servant leadership, and compassion.
• A master’s degree or higher from an accredited university is highly preferred.
Compensation

Compensation will be commensurate with experience including a competitive base salary and competitive benefits package.

To make a nomination, provide a referral, or for additional information, please use the contact information below. Interested parties are encouraged to submit their materials by, or preferably before, June 15, 2022.

To apply, please submit a resume and/or vita, and cover letter, to: UNCPCOS@BuffkinBaker.com.

Martin Baker, Managing Partner
770-313-5573

Janny DeLoache, Principal
704-377-7828

UNC Pembroke is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The University prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals based on their status as protected veterans or individuals with disabilities and prohibits discrimination against all individuals based on their age, race, color, genetic information, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or national origin. Moreover, the University takes affirmative action to employ and advance in employment individuals without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, protected veteran status, or disability.