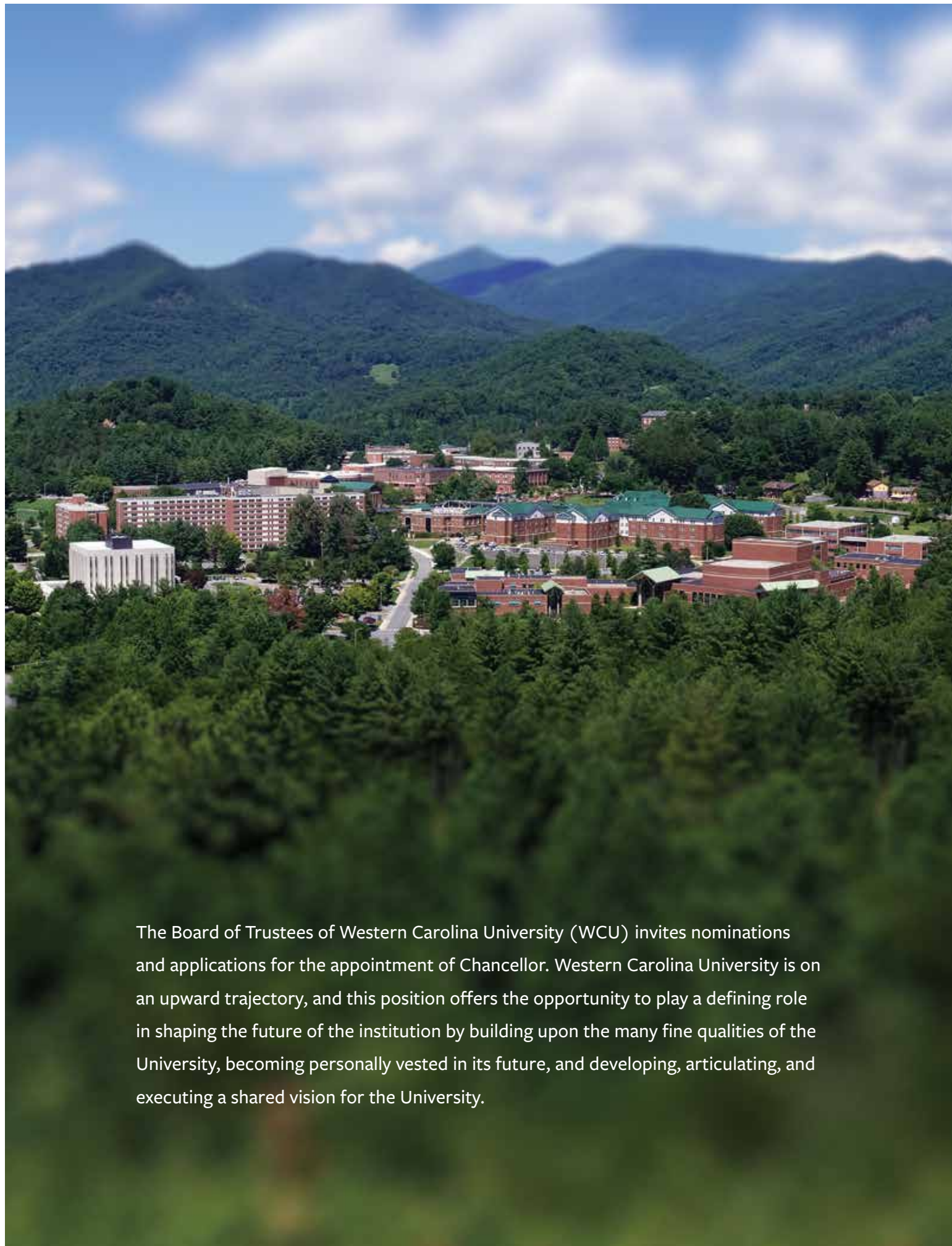


# CHANCELLOR SEARCH 2018



Western  
Carolina  
UNIVERSITY



The Board of Trustees of Western Carolina University (WCU) invites nominations and applications for the appointment of Chancellor. Western Carolina University is on an upward trajectory, and this position offers the opportunity to play a defining role in shaping the future of the institution by building upon the many fine qualities of the University, becoming personally vested in its future, and developing, articulating, and executing a shared vision for the University.



# THE UNIVERSITY

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Western Carolina University is a thriving regional comprehensive university with nationally and internationally recognized teacher-scholars dedicated to student learning. The University provides comprehensive educational opportunities to residents in North Carolina's far west region and attracts students from across the country and around the globe to explore the region's vast natural diversity. Founded in 1889 as a teaching college, Western Carolina University is the fifth oldest institution in the University of North Carolina System. It now serves more than 11,600 students in bachelor's, master's, education specialist, and doctoral level programs with nearly 550 full-time faculty, more than 1,000 full-time staff, and an annual budget of approximately \$225 million.

Student enrollment at WCU has been climbing steadily for the last decade, with the campus becoming increasingly diverse. Student academic metrics also have continued to climb, fueled by competitive academic programming and the growth of WCU's Honors College, which is the oldest and largest residential honors college in the UNC System. WCU provides more than 115 undergraduate majors and concentrations and more than 40 graduate and certificate programs with a focus on high-demand degrees, including a variety of programs in engineering, science, health care, education, humanities, business, and the arts. The University has six academic colleges – **College of Arts and Sciences, College of Business, College of Education and Allied Professions, College of Engineering and Technology, David O. Belcher College of Fine and Performing Arts, and College of Health and Human Sciences.**

With its main campus consisting of approximately 600 acres in Cullowhee, N.C., adjacent to Great Smoky Mountains National Park, and an instructional site in Asheville, WCU is deeply connected to and invested in the region it serves. The University partners with high-tech companies in the region to support research and development, provides student and faculty services to enrich the region's thriving entrepreneurial community, and strengthens surrounding rural communities through service learning in the fields of health care, education, public policy, and more. At the same time, WCU honors the rich history and culture of the region through its Mountain Heritage Center and annual regional festival as well as its Cherokee Center and long-standing partnership with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

WCU's core geographical region is defined as the 17 westernmost counties of North Carolina. Historically, WCU has provided educational programs and services to an extended region as far east as the Interstate 77 corridor. WCU will continue to serve its extended region within the University's resources and programming. Further, WCU has multiple programs that interact with its larger economic region extending from Atlanta to the southwest, Raleigh to the east, Knoxville to the north, and Greenville/Spartanburg to the south. Although WCU has a defined region, it maintains a presence in national and international sites for educational purposes and training. Western Carolina University has continued its designation as a Community Engaged University by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching since receiving it in 2008.



WCU's Bachelor of Science in Engineering has seen explosive growth since it was added in fall of 2013.

## Mission

Western Carolina University is a public regional institution of higher education whose mission is to create learning opportunities that incorporate teaching, research, service, and engagement through on-campus, off-campus, online, and international experiences. The University focuses its undergraduate, master's, and three doctoral programs and its educational outreach, research, creative, and cultural activities to sustain and improve individual lives and enhance economic and community development in Western North Carolina and beyond.

## Vision

The story of WCU is one deeply connected to the people of our region; we are rooted in our service to the people of Southern Appalachia and beyond. WCU belongs not just to our students and our faculty and staff, but to the whole community, for we are integrally connected to this region as its educational, economic, and cultural center. Our vision is to be a national model for student learning and engagement that embraces its responsibilities as a regionally engaged university.

## Core Values

Western Carolina is committed to excellence in teaching and learning, collaboration with a respect for our communities, free and open interchange of ideas, responsible stewardship, organizational and environmental sustainability, and cultural diversity and equal opportunity. These are the values that guide our approach to education and service daily.

## Academics

WCU provides more than 115 undergraduate majors and concentrations and more than 40 graduate and certificate programs through its six colleges: Arts and Sciences, Business, Education and Allied Professions, Fine and Performing Arts, Health and Human Sciences, and Engineering and Technology. Approximately 64 percent of all classes have fewer than 30 students, and the average student/faculty ratio is 17 to 1. In addition, Western Carolina's Honors College coordinates courses and events in every area of student learning, and the Graduate School coordinates the admission process, funding support, and awarding of degrees to graduate students. Hunter Library provides academic support for all academic units.



## Strategic Plan

Western Carolina's priorities for the future are summarized in its Strategic Plan, 2020 Vision: Focusing our Future. As a dynamic and living document, the plan recently underwent revision and its six strategic directions were expanded to seven.

### STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1 – ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE:

We commit to providing our students with a 21st century rigorous curriculum that is composed of the intellectual, creative, cultural, and personal outcomes necessary to advance and excel.

### STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2 – STUDENT EXPERIENCE:

We will enrich the student experience through creating intentional co-curricular and curricular programs, which will prepare students to successfully engage in a vibrant, complex, and culturally diverse world.

### STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3 – INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE:

We commit to creating a campus reflective of our core values and we offer curricular and co-curricular educational programs that prepare our students for the diverse world in which they live.

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION 4 – REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** We will deepen our commitment to regional,

economic, and community engagement as connected to our higher education mission.

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION 5 – EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE:** We will continue to attract, retain, and promote outstanding faculty and staff while providing valuable scholarship, leadership, and professional development opportunities.

### STRATEGIC DIRECTION 6 – INFRASTRUCTURE

**INVESTMENT:** We will focus our priorities on facilities, technology, core resources, and business policies and practices.

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION 7 – VISION ADVANCEMENT:** We will create and promote a shared understanding of WCU's future around our areas of distinction, student support, and faculty and staff initiatives.

In addition, the UNC System adopted a new five-year strategic plan in January 2017: Higher Expectations. Under the leadership of President Margaret Spellings, this plan grew from public discussions with students, faculty, staff, alumni, chancellors, members of the Board of Governors, elected officials, business and civic leaders, and citizens of North Carolina. The new strategic plan outlines goals focused on access, affordability and efficiency, student success, economic impact and community engagement, and institutional diversity and excellence.



## Governance

Western Carolina University is a member of the University of North Carolina System, which is made up of 17 institutions across the state. The Chancellor reports to Margaret Spellings, President of the University of North Carolina System, and, through the President, works closely with the UNC Board of Governors. The UNC Board of Governors is the policy-making body charged with “the general determination, control, supervision, management, and governance” of the University of North Carolina System. The Board elects the President, who has oversight of the University. The 28 voting members of the Board are elected by the N.C. General Assembly for four-year terms. Each of the campuses in the UNC System is headed by a chancellor who is chosen by the Board of Governors on the recommendation and nomination of the President. Each university has a Board of Trustees consisting of eight

members elected by the Board of Governors and four members appointed by the N.C. General Assembly (two by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and two by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate). The President of the WCU Student Government Association also serves as a Board of Trustee member. The Board of Trustees holds extensive power over academics and operations of the campus on delegation from the Board of Governors.

## Regional Accreditation

Western Carolina University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award baccalaureate, masters, and doctorate degrees. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of Western Carolina University.



## Awards

Western Carolina University has been honored in multiple areas demonstrating its commitment to students, faculty, staff, and its community. WCU has been named a Top Green College by Princeton Review, is among the Top 10 for undergraduate research in the nation, is consistently ranked by U.S. News & World Report among the top universities in the South, and has been named by Kiplinger's Personal Finance as a Best College Value. WCU's distinguished faculty includes national award-winning authors; winners of Emmy, O'Henry, and National Endowment for the Arts awards; Fulbright Scholar award recipients, including three Fulbright awardees for the 2017-18 academic year; a three-time Tony nominee; and a recent John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellow – to name a few. WCU is ranked by U.S. News & World Report as one of the nation's best for online bachelor's degree programs as well as among the best colleges in the South for veterans. Blue Ridge Outdoors magazine has named WCU the No. 1 Outdoor Adventure College in the South and Mid Atlantic for four consecutive years and, in 2018, inducted WCU as the inaugural member of the publication's outdoor college Hall of Fame. The WCU Pride of the Mountains Marching Band is a Sudler Trophy recipient, having participated in the New Year's Day Tournament of Roses Parade and the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. The band has earned a rare invitation to return to participate in the parade in 2019.

# WCU TODAY

Western Carolina University has thrived under the leadership of the late Dr. David O. Belcher. During his tenure, Western Carolina reached an unprecedented level of visibility both within the University of North Carolina System and across the state and region. As a result, Western Carolina University is extremely well-positioned to continue a period of remarkable strength and optimism. Pride in the University is at an all-time high among students, faculty, and staff. Student success, as measured in terms of retention and graduation, is at a record level. And confidence in the University among legislators, donors, and alumni has never been higher. Chancellor Belcher has left Western Carolina University in the strongest possible position for his successor.

## Student Success

Western Carolina University's long-range strategic plan envisioned enrollment growth complemented by increasing admissions standards, articulated a focus on increasing endowed student scholarships, and reinforced the institution's historic commitment to Western North Carolina.

WCU has seen steady increases in enrollment, with the size of the student body increasing by more than 24 percent since fall 2011. The University's freshman-to-sophomore retention rate hit 80 percent in fall 2016, five years ahead of the strategic plan's target date.

As part of a regular process to continually enhance and modernize the academic enterprise of WCU, the faculty and the University administration underwent a process of academic program prioritization to align those programs to WCU's mission and strategic directions, ultimately eliminating twenty-three programs and identifying eight for additional investment. The University also reorganized several administrative units as part of an effort to improve the effectiveness and efficiencies of campus business processes.

The University consolidated graduate and undergraduate academic programs previously offered at locations across Buncombe County at a new off-campus instructional site in Biltmore Park Town Square in Asheville, strategically located along the fast-growing Interstate 26 corridor of Buncombe and Henderson counties, and has continued to expand academic offerings there.



The Doctor of Nursing Practice in Nurse Anesthesia is one of several graduate programs offered at WCU's Asheville instructional site.





WCU Students enjoy a 17:1 student to faculty ratio



The early phases of construction of a replacement for WCU's 1970s-vintage Natural Sciences Building are underway, with completion slated for 2021. The building is designed to provide the modern laboratory facilities needed to teach students in the burgeoning science, technology, engineering and math fields. (Architectural rendering provided by Lord Aeck Sargent)



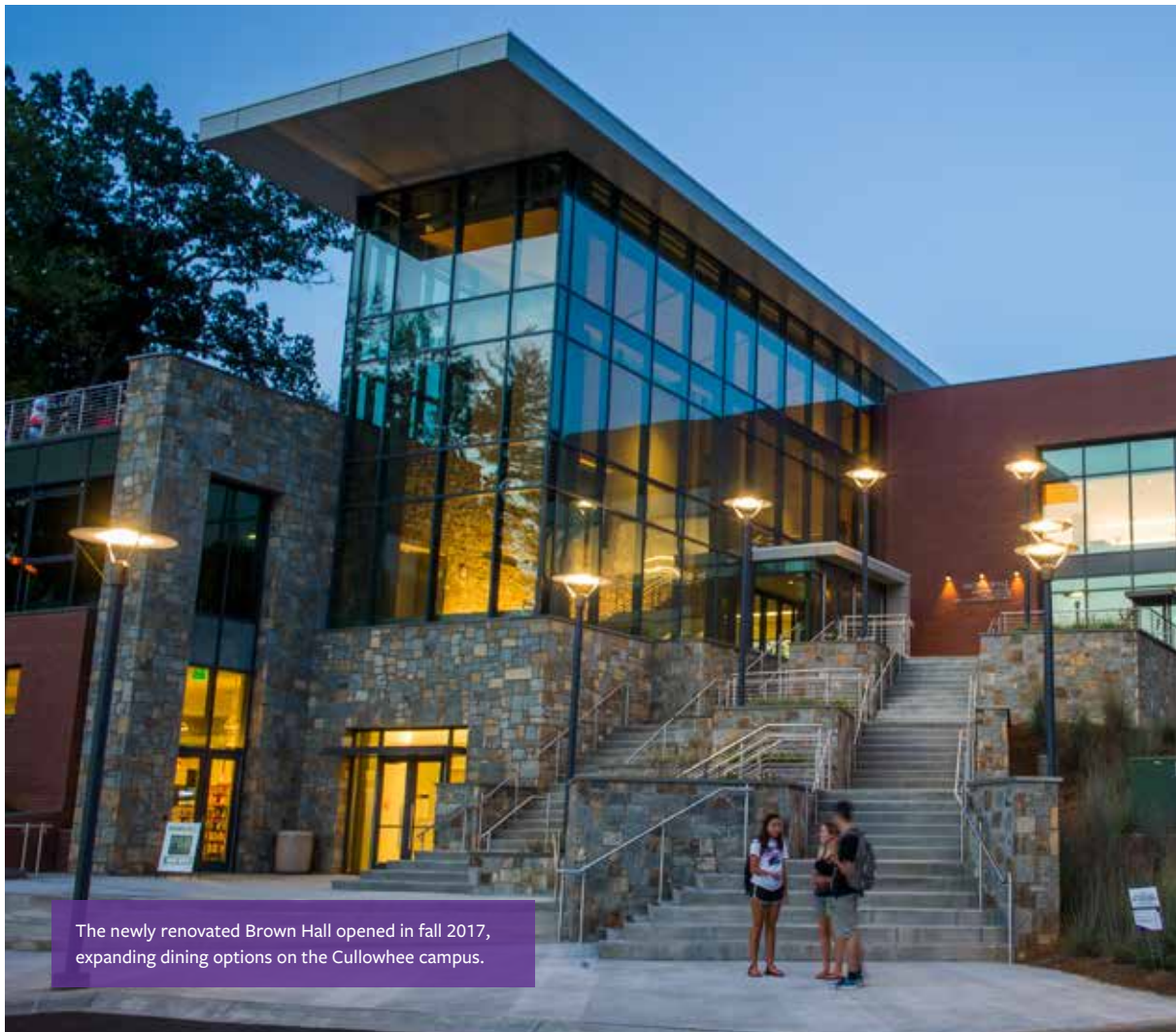
A new 600-bed residence hall for the upper section of campus is being built on a parking area between Judaculla Hall (formerly Central Drive Hall) and Brown Hall. The new facility is needed to help meet the demands of a rapidly growing student population, university officials say. (Architectural rendering provided by Clark Nexsen)



## Campus Master Plan

As an extension of the strategic plan, the University also initiated a revision of WCU's master plan to guide the development and improvements of the campus over the next several decades. Among the changes to the physical plant:

- Noble Hall, a mixed-use facility consisting of a blend of retail, dining, and student housing, which opened in fall 2016.
- A fully renovated and expanded Brown Hall, which opened in fall 2017, that included additional dining options and student programming space for a growing campus.
- A new 600-bed residence hall for the upper section of campus, which began construction in spring 2018.
- Approval of additional housing for 750 students, to be built on the lower campus.
- Planning for a medical office building, to be constructed near the Health and Human Sciences Building as part of WCU's Millennial Initiative, which is a comprehensive regional economic development strategy designed to enable the University to engage in public-private partnerships that enhance educational opportunities for students and increase the ability of faculty to conduct research, while also promoting regional development.
- Structured parking facility, the University's first, which is in the planning stage.
- Complete renovation of the campus energy production facility (steam plant), which is in design phase.



The newly renovated Brown Hall opened in fall 2017, expanding dining options on the Cullowhee campus.

## Legislative Advocacy

Western Carolina University played a pivotal role in three significant statewide initiatives with tremendous impact on public higher education and for Western North Carolina.

- In March 2016, North Carolina voters approved a statewide bond package that included \$110 million for replacement of WCU's 1970s-era Natural Sciences Building; early site work on the new state-of-the-art STEM building, Apodaca Science Building, already has begun and the new facility is expected to open in 2021.
- In May 2016, WCU was selected for inclusion in the NC Promise tuition plan, a state higher education investment commitment that dramatically lowers tuition payments for students who choose to attend WCU and two other University of North Carolina System institutions beginning in fall 2018.
- In August 2017, WCU opened The Catamount School, a middle grades laboratory school, planned and administered by WCU's College of Education and Allied Professions. The Catamount School is one of eight legislatively mandated lab schools that will be managed by the UNC System.

## Building a Culture of Philanthropy

In recent years, Western Carolina University made significant investments in its development and alumni affairs functions. The staff in Advancement has been expanded. The University developed and implemented a volunteer Board of Visitors to amplify and elevate WCU's story to a broader audience.

As part of a focused effort to foster philanthropic support for WCU students, the University has added more than 200 new endowed scholarships in the past five years.

Western Carolina University launched the quiet phase of its second comprehensive fundraising campaign, called "Lead the Way," with a hugely successful Leadership Summit in October 2015, and is now in the midst of the public phase of the campaign, with a goal of raising \$60 million by spring 2019.

## Campus Climate

Over the past seven years, the University has built an incredibly strong team in support of WCU's mission. The chancellor's Executive Council enjoys remarkable access and support on campus and with the UNC System and Board of Governors. Western Carolina University has strengthened, through strategic hiring, its commitment to university marketing, communications, diversity and inclusion, external relations, student success, enrollment management, economic development, and community engagement.

Western Carolina University also leveraged unique, historical, artistic, and athletic events to develop pride and celebrate success. From honoring the University's 125th anniversary to enjoying the once-in-a-lifetime celestial spectacle of a total solar eclipse, and from celebrating a championship Catamount baseball season to cheering on the Pride of the Mountains Marching Band, the level of joy and optimism is palpable on campus.

Members of the Western Carolina University campus community have enthusiastically embraced the inspiring and uplifting vision of putting students first, to be in the business of changing lives, and to own their own University. The next Chancellor will have the opportunity to help guide this continued journey.

## NC Promise Tuition Plan

Western Carolina University has long been committed to providing an affordable and accessible quality education. Beginning in the fall of 2018, WCU's affordability reached a new level with the introduction of the NC Promise Tuition Plan. Western Carolina University is one of three UNC System institutions that are part of NC Promise, a groundbreaking new North Carolina program to drive college affordability. What that means for students and parents is that the cost of tuition has dropped to \$500 per semester for in-state undergraduate students and \$2,500 per semester for out-of-state undergraduate students beginning in the fall of 2018. Fees, along with room and board, are not affected. This new program applies to all new and returning students, transfer students, students in online programs and international students, not just to incoming freshmen.







## THE CHANCELLOR

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The Chancellor works closely with the Western Carolina Board of Trustees and with a wide range of internal and external constituencies to build upon the existing strengths of the University and to provide the personal and professional leadership to chart its future course. The Chancellor is expected to value both the human and financial resources of the University and to advance its standing within the national and international community of higher education.

More specifically, the Chancellor is expected to:

- Understand and appreciate the history and mission of Western Carolina and its sense of place;
- Be highly visible, collaborative, and inclusive, on a consistent basis with all members of the Western Carolina community;
- Oversee the effective management of academic, administrative, student, business, legal, athletic, and financial affairs;
- Be a visionary leader who can demonstrate a history of commitment to excellence in diversity and inclusion; model the University's commitment to inclusive excellence and promote diversity of thought, culture, gender, sexuality, and ethnicity through the understanding and development of current and future generations of students, faculty, and staff;
- Provide leadership for, and serve as a role model of, the University's commitment to collaboration and shared governance;
- Continue the University's partnership with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians;
- Strengthen partnerships with local and regional business and community leaders, to facilitate their continued involvement in all aspects of the University;
- Build upon the relationship with University alumni to encourage their active engagement with the University;
- Be the principal public spokesperson and ambassador for the University, reflecting and enhancing its standing within the region and the State of North Carolina and beyond;



- Take an active leadership role in fundraising efforts to expand the University's resource base, including research grants and contracts, operating funds, and additions to endowments;
- Serve as the University's mediator to reach consensus on major policy issues among competing or conflicting constituency groups, making decisions in as transparent a manner as possible;
- Meet the goals for student retention and graduation that have been established by the UNC Board of Governors;
- Support and embrace the UNC Strategic Plan, titled Higher Expectations;
- Manage and direct the preparation and implementation of an annual financial plan for the University, while prioritizing competing budget requests, to ensure it is consistent with the strategic plan;
- Enhance the strategic partnerships with K-12 schools and community colleges;
- Maintain responsibility for and ensure the integrity of the athletics enterprise, as required by the NCAA and the Southern Conference, including appropriate academic progress of student-athletes, and the sound investment in and maintenance of athletics facilities and programs. A proper balance of athletics and academics must be maintained;
- Keep the President of the University of North Carolina System and the Western Carolina Board of Trustees closely apprised on developments within the University, formulate plans and policies for Board consideration and approval, and implement the resulting Board policies; and
- Be responsive to the needs of the WCU community, comprising students, faculty, staff, and alumni/ community/supporters of athletics, which include but are not limited to:
  - Lead the University communities in the development of shared values and a clear sense of shared mission;
  - Embrace student life and the value of the undergraduate experience, including undergraduate research and service-learning opportunities;
  - Be actively engaged in all aspects of economic development, including high visibility and consistent involvement in the region and the state;
  - Have an understanding of and be engaged with the concept of excellence with a personal touch – a passionate dedication to teaching of and personal involvement with students who are enthusiastic about learning;
  - Be approachable, friendly, and responsive to the needs of students, faculty, and staff;
  - Promote a culturally aware, inclusive, and safe environment with a strong commitment to recruiting and retaining diverse students, faculty, and staff;
  - Advocate for resources to support faculty, staff, and academic programs;
  - Meet frequently with the Chancellor's Executive Council, students, faculty, and staff in order to better understand their concerns, and demonstrate genuine appreciation for all members of the "Western family";
  - Support the continued development and expansion of partnerships with the P-12 school system and community colleges across the region and the state;
  - Embrace and appreciate the Southern Highlands culture and Western Carolina University pride;
  - Integrate and promote the NC Promise Tuition Plan, manage the growth that will occur as a result of the plan, and continually focus on access, affordability, and student success; and
  - Be a visible presence in Cullowhee, Sylva, Asheville, and surrounding communities.

# THE CANDIDATE

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The Chancellor of Western Carolina must be a person of unquestioned integrity, a visionary who understands and values the academy and who has the experience and skills to reach out to the external and internal community to build relationships, garner and provide resources, and form collaborative partnerships. The Chancellor must endorse and build upon WCU's student-centered focus and create an atmosphere conducive to a positive student experience. The Chancellor should have an engaging personality and have personal qualities of honesty, vision, sound judgment, and a commitment to collaboration. The Chancellor must listen openly and objectively to the opinions of others, appreciate difference of opinion, and be firm in reaching decisions. Further, the Chancellor must be collaborative, consultative, and transparent in his or her decision-making process.

It is required that the Chancellor have an earned terminal degree or an equivalent record of outstanding professional experience and achievement. The Chancellor must be a distinguished leader with a keen understanding of the conditions shaping higher education and the challenges facing faculty as researchers and teachers, the ability to provide collaborative leadership in a complex environment, a commitment to shared governance, and a demonstrated respect and appreciation for students, faculty, and staff. The Chancellor should have significant leadership experience at multiple levels in higher education; equivalent leadership experience will be considered.

The Chancellor must understand Western Carolina University, internalize and respect its history, articulate its uniqueness, and appreciate and value its important missions of teaching, research, public service, and regional economic and community development. The Chancellor must have a thorough understanding of the changing nature of public higher education, including its vital role in local, state, national, and global economies.

The Chancellor must possess the core competencies of leadership and a vision of the University's future to challenge it to greatness, to extend its reach, and to energize the University to new levels in all endeavors including academics, athletics, and the student experience. The Chancellor must be willing to take reasonable risks, be innovative, and set realistic priorities. This leader must have a passion for his

or her vision for WCU, communicate that vision effectively, inspire others to achieve it, and be a persuasive and effective agent of change.

The leader of WCU must be an extraordinarily effective advocate for the University and able to describe its future needs and the opportunities facing it. The Chancellor is the primary spokesperson for the University and is responsible for communicating its culture, values, roles, and responsibilities to all constituencies. The skills to engage, debate, challenge, promote discussion, incorporate positive suggestions, and accommodate concerns when appropriate are critical.

The Chancellor must fully understand the role of successful athletic programs and how these programs can enhance fundraising, the total student experience, alumni engagement, and the public image of the University.

The Chancellor will be an effective leader in fundraising and in establishing a high level of expectation in regard to funding initiatives. The Chancellor must create, sustain, and build relationships with multiple and diverse constituencies, including students, faculty, staff, alumni, and the Western North Carolina community.

The Chancellor will have the proven skill and demonstrated ability to manage a complex and diverse University, including having acquired a finely tuned understanding of institutional controls and best standard business practices. This person must have significant experience working with business, nonprofit, or government sectors, must be an astute strategic thinker, and must have the confidence to act decisively in the business of the University.

The Chancellor will be able to work effectively with the WCU Board of Trustees, the President of the University of North Carolina, the UNC Board of Governors, members of the State of North Carolina General Assembly, and other government, agency, and industry representatives, building consensus by keeping these entities informed on important issues, fostering communication, valuing ideas and analyses and reactions, keeping communication open and direct, and encouraging dialogue and debate. The Chancellor should have demonstrated knowledge of board governance and relations in a complex institutional setting.









## **PROCEDURES FOR CANDIDACY**

Application materials should include a letter addressing how the candidate's experience matches the position requirements and an updated curriculum vitae.

Nominations, applications, and inquiries of interest may be sent in confidence to the University's executive recruitment firm:

### **Martin Baker**

Managing Partner  
Buffkin/Baker  
[martin@buffkinbaker.com](mailto:martin@buffkinbaker.com)

### **Chelsie Whitelock**

Principal  
Buffkin/Baker  
[chelsie@buffkinbaker.com](mailto:chelsie@buffkinbaker.com)