

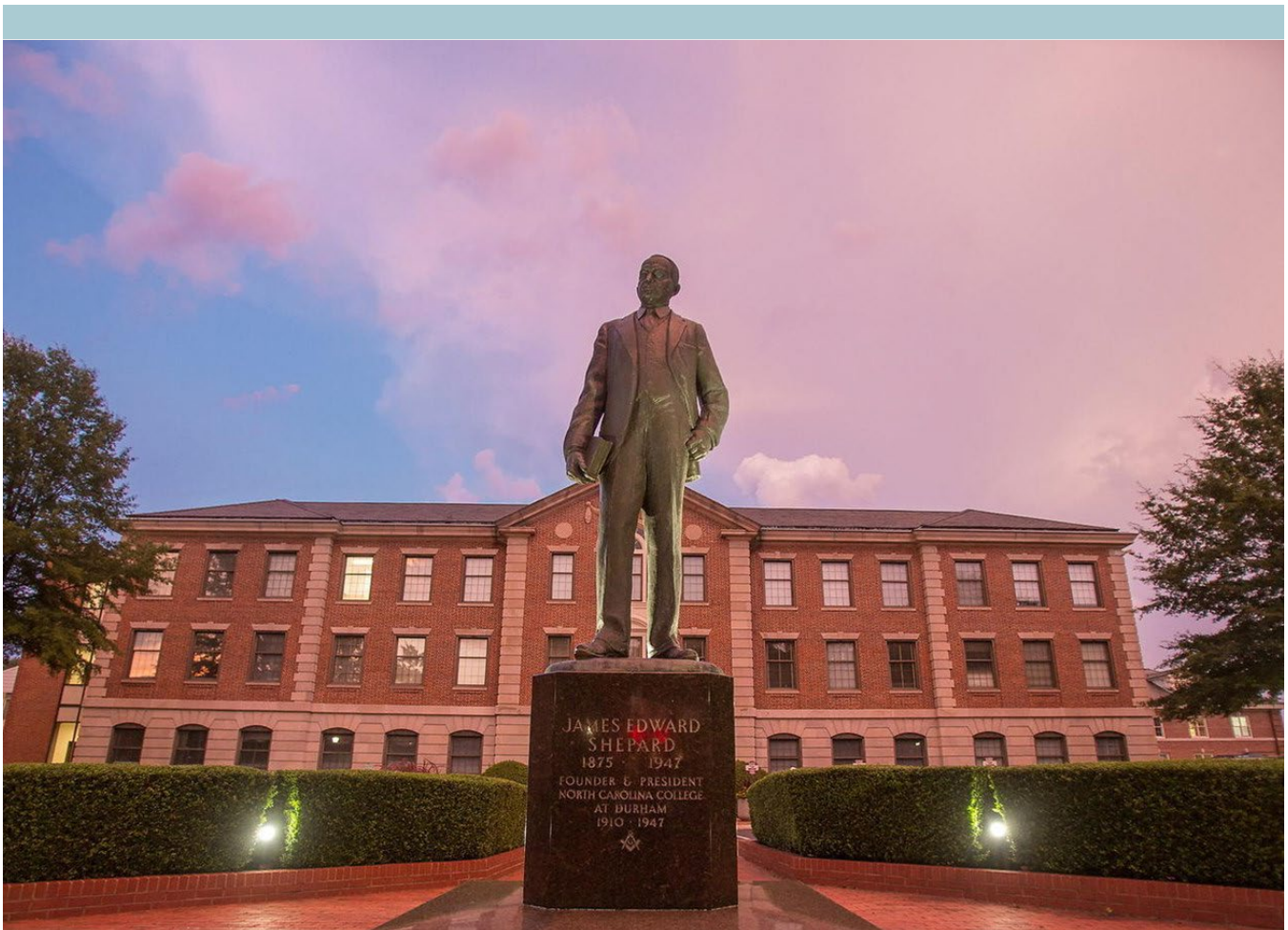


NC Central
UNIVERSITY

Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement

Leadership Profile

Spring 2026



WittKieffer

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Executive Summary

North Carolina Central University (NCCU), located in Durham, North Carolina, seeks a dynamic, strategic, and mission-driven advancement leader to serve as Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement (VCIA). This individual will provide visionary leadership for the planning and execution of comprehensive fundraising and engagement strategies that advance current academic and student-centered priorities while supporting ambitious future initiatives with the potential to transform programs, facilities, and community impact. Guided by NCCU's deep legacy of excellence, access, and service, the VCIA will inspire philanthropic investment, strengthen partnerships, and help position the University for sustained success and expanded opportunity.

Founded in 1910, North Carolina Central University is a distinguished Historically Black University (HBCU) and the nation's first publicly supported liberal arts college for African American students. Today, NCCU continues its proud tradition of expanding educational access and fostering student achievement through a holistic academic environment that includes nearly 100 undergraduate majors, more than 40 graduate and professional programs, and a growing portfolio of online degree offerings.

Reporting to Chancellor Karrie Dixon and working in close collaboration with the Executive Leadership Team, the VCIA builds advancement strategies that are intentionally aligned with institutional priorities and designed to achieve meaningful, measurable results. As the University's chief fundraising officer, the VCIA provides bold, creative, and strategic leadership across all advancement functions, ensuring a cohesive and forward-looking approach to philanthropy and engagement.

The VCIA personally engages individuals with significant giving capacity while providing strategic oversight to donor engagement and relationship management efforts across the institution. Working closely with key affiliated organizations, including the NCCU Foundation and the NCCU Alumni Association, Inc., the VCIA ensures alignment and coordination of fundraising and engagement activities, strengthening advocacy and philanthropic impact. Through a relationship-centered approach, the VCIA promotes thoughtful engagement, informed decision-making, and sustained donor relationships that deepen alumni connection and foster lasting pride, loyalty, and involvement.

The Office of Institutional Advancement encompasses all aspects of advancement activity, including annual and major gifts, planned giving, alumni relations, corporate and foundation relations, advancement services, and communications. Under the VCIA's leadership, the office delivers a focused and differentiated communications strategy that engages diverse audiences, enhances visibility, and produces measurable outcomes. This approach supports consistent messaging, strengthens the University's public identity, and amplifies the impact of philanthropic investments.

Through close collaboration with faculty, staff, campus partners, and external stakeholders, the Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement cultivates a strong and enduring culture of philanthropy among alumni, friends, and supporters. By aligning strategy, relationships, and resources, the VCIA expands NCCU's capacity to secure transformational support, advance institutional excellence, and sustain long-term impact.

To submit a nomination or express personal interest in this position, please see Procedure for Candidacy at the end of this document.

Role of the Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement

The mission of the Office of Institutional Advancement at North Carolina Central University is to help tell the NCCU story and to strengthen the institution's tradition of excellence in teaching, research, and public service. Institutional Advancement seeks to generate transformative private support by connecting donors with philanthropic opportunities that advance the University's mission of *preparing students to become global leaders and practitioners who uplift and empower communities through academic excellence, research, and service.*

The Division of Institutional Advancement encompasses development, alumni relations, advancement services, and special events. The advancement team is currently composed of 22 employees and serves an alumni base of approximately 47,000 graduates. The alumni giving rate presently stands at 10 percent. NCCU also benefits from an institutional endowment of roughly \$91 million.

As NCCU looks toward the future, the Division of Institutional Advancement will play a critical role in advancing the University's strategic vision and long-term goals through a comprehensive and integrated fundraising strategy. Chancellor Dixon has authorized a review of the advancement operation to ensure the office is optimally structured to meet both current and future needs. This review represents a significant opportunity to build upon existing strengths, address areas for growth, and position Institutional Advancement for long-term sustainability and success, ensuring it can effectively support NCCU's evolving priorities and aspirations. Even further, the NCCU Foundation, a central partner in Institutional Advancement's work is also engaged in the review as a means of achieving greater efficiencies, synergy, collaboration and coordination in their support. Consideration is being given to a shared model for day-to-day leadership in Institutional Advancement and the Foundation which would align with accepted practice in the University of North Carolina System and the higher education landscape overall.

Primary Purpose of the Position

The Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement provides strong, creative and strategic leadership for all University fundraising efforts and serves as chief fundraising officer. The Vice Chancellor is responsible for the development, implementation and overall success of the University's comprehensive advancement program consistent with the University's strategic plan. The Vice Chancellor serves as a member of the Chancellor's senior leadership team and is a member of the Cabinet. Working with the Chancellor and the Executive Leadership Team, this individual develops and implements a comprehensive plan to expand the University's fundraising efforts through annual giving, major gifts, leadership gifts, planned giving, and foundation and corporate grants. The Vice Chancellor personally cultivates, solicits, and stewards high net worth individuals, works directly with the associated entities (i.e./NCCU Foundation and NCCU Alumni Association, Inc) and staff as a means of coordinating fundraising efforts, unlocking opportunities for greater advocacy and yield in alignment with the strategic priorities set for the University. The Vice Chancellor is also responsible for development of robust alumni relations, constituent relations, and prospect research.

Primary Purpose of the Organizational Unit

The Vice Chancellor directs a thoughtful, appropriate and differentiated communications plan that engages diverse audiences with the University and produces measurable results and visibility for the University. The Vice Chancellor also develops and implements effective strategies to connect with the University's alumni and strengthen their engagement with the University. The Office of Institutional Advancement spans all aspects of advancement, including major gifts, planned and annual giving, alumni relations, corporation and foundation relations and advancement services. Working collaboratively with colleagues across the University and alongside associate entities with natural connections to the office including but not limited to the NCCU Foundation and NCCU Alumni Association, Inc., the office continues to strengthen the University's engagement with alumni,

enhance communications with all constituents, and create a strong culture of philanthropy among alumni and friends.

Leadership and Collaboration

Provides vision and leadership in creating Advancement's strategic direction and managing implementation of plans and programs that enhance fund raising efforts. Develops and implements new strategies to connect with constituencies and strengthen their commitment to the University. Works closely with the Chancellor, associated entities including but not limited to (the NCCU Foundation and NCCU Alumni Association, Inc.), senior leadership, faculty, and UNC System Advancement shared services to build and strengthen the Office of Institutional Advancement and serves as a key strategist for the University through service on the Chancellor's Cabinet and various other committees. Personally, solicits high net worth prospects and develops effective strategy to encourage their giving. Directs the cultivation and solicitation and stewardship of donors.

Budget Processing and Management

Enhances leadership giving efforts by introducing a structured approach to identify and cultivate prospects, solicit prospects and follow-up with current donors. Represents the University with various audiences, including alumni and friends, volunteer leadership, foundation and business leaders, potential major donors and others as identified. Oversees the administration of the office including the hiring and evaluating of staff and mentoring of staff to build an effective and stable team. Leads and develops a highly effective team of staff members who achieve significant and individually quantifiable goals. Creates a tracking system to measure both individual and overall performance. Oversees the development and management of the Advancement Office budget and administrative operations.

Operations Management

Ensure that all systems and processes, from prospect research to solicitation to gift acceptances and processing, maximize available intelligence via reporting and follow sound budgetary, legal and accountability practices. Ensure ongoing review of policies procedures, and practices in alignment with industry standards.

Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

The following represent some of the immediate opportunities that the vice chancellor will address during the first two to three years in office. They are presented here in no particular order of priority.

Build resources to implement a dynamic institutional strategic plan

NCCU's previous vice chancellor led successful fundraising initiatives by developing a targeted cadre of major donors and securing focused alumni support. The new vice chancellor will be expected to build on that foundation by significantly expanding the major donor base and strengthening the alumni network so that the next generation(s) of givers can be actively engaged in the life of NCCU. This will require enhancing the infrastructure and empowering staff to achieve best-practice standards.

Time is of the essence. Both the need for continued philanthropic investment and the urgency of building and focusing the advancement operation call for immediate action. The vice chancellor, therefore, will begin right away to create the resources necessary to implement a dynamic and comprehensive strategic plan that has been embraced by the campus community and the trustees. The vice chancellor will thus have the opportunity to create the necessary infrastructure and to build the required staff within the context of strong board support and campus and alumni engagement, thereby accelerating the anticipated return on the university's investment.

Significantly increase the volume and effectiveness of alumni engagement

As noted above, NCCU in recent years has prioritized existing major- and principal-gift prospects and donors over the longer strategy of building the prospect pipeline from the grassroots level. Thus, both alumni relations and annual giving will be strategic areas of focus going forward. The vice chancellor will lead their team in strengthening relationships and coordinating efforts with the NCCU Alumni Association, Inc., with the intention of revitalizing alumni relations and annual giving as part of the advancement plans.

Happily, NCCU's alumni are by-and-large passionate about the institution and the education they received. The University's long and successful history of educating first-generation college students and its success in assisting them in having a powerful impact on the world position the University to make a strong and compelling case for the support of alumni across the prospect spectrum. The vice chancellor will create plans and programs to leverage that passion in pursuit of current philanthropic support and to build the long-term prospect pipeline.

Engage across the university

NCCU could benefit from engaging other university leaders and key volunteers in its external relations efforts. Working collaboratively with members of the NCCU Foundation board, trustees, and members of the board of visitors, an increased number of NCCU community members must be called upon to provide information on, access to, or direct contact with prospects or donors. The new vice chancellor will work diligently from the outset to build strong and symbiotic relationships across the entire spectrum of the University's constituencies, including especially academic and executive leadership, the faculty, NCCU Foundation board, NCCU trustees and other well-placed volunteers and local supporters with an eye toward significantly increased volunteer activity within the context of the advancement program.

Of course, the chancellor will continue to be the university's key spokesperson and fundraiser. Chancellor Dixon is an exceptionally enthusiastic and able fundraiser and seeks a partner to create and execute strategies that optimize her impact. In particular, she seeks a vice chancellor who can develop and convey the University's key messages in ways that are focused and effective, particularly regarding the case for support of the institution's aspirations.

Play a critical role on the senior team

Chancellor Dixon utilizes the members of her senior team to provide input and insight on the widest array of issues facing the University. She looks to the vice chancellor for institutional advancement, in particular, to provide the perspective of the University's external constituencies to those discussions and to provide guidance regarding the communication of strategic initiatives and decisions being made at the senior leadership level.

Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

North Carolina Central University seeks in its next senior advancement leader a seasoned professional with a distinguished record of leadership, institutional impact, and fundraising success. The successful candidate must have significant and progressively responsible development experience, including familiarity with all areas of fundraising including annual giving, major gifts, planned gifts, corporate and foundation giving, capital campaigns, alumni relations and events.

Candidates must have a strong results orientation and a proven track record in setting and achieving ambitious goals; an ability to be a strategic partner with the Chancellor, volunteer leadership, and senior management, as well as convey an appreciation for and commitment to NCCU's mission and communicate it effectively; and a genuine appreciation for philanthropy in all of its forms. Candidates must have evidence of success building relationships with multiple, diverse constituencies.

A bachelor's degree is required, and an advanced degree is preferred. Candidates must have significant experience linking donor interests to institutional priorities and the ability to link university-wide issues with opportunities for fundraising. The successful candidate will be a strong manager with experience to build, manage, and motivate an engaged and collaborative advancement team and have the experience and ability to assess an institution's fundraising efficacy and move it to the next level of proficiency and impact.

Additionally, the university seeks a leader with the following attributes:

- The next senior advancement leader of NCCU will be a strategic, values-driven leader of people and programs with a deep and enduring commitment to the university's mission, students, and academic enterprise. Demonstrating a sophisticated understanding of higher education and its philanthropic landscape, this leader will articulate and execute a compelling vision for institutional advancement that aligns fundraising priorities with the university's long-term strategic goals. The ideal candidate will possess an exceptional track record managing complex advancement organizations and driving sustained philanthropic growth at an institution of comparable or greater complexity.
- The senior advancement leader must be an engaged and visible presence among alumni, donors, campus partners, and external stakeholders. NCCU values leadership that is accessible, collaborative, and deeply invested in the life of the institution. This role is ideally suited for a leader who thrives in building trust across constituencies while balancing the internal leadership of a high-performing advancement operation with extensive external relationship-building responsibilities.
- The senior advancement leader will have a proven record of building inclusive teams and cultivating relationships across diverse communities. NCCU will be best served by a leader who values differing perspectives, fosters collaboration, and approaches advancement work with cultural humility, integrity, and respect for all members of the university community.
- The senior advancement leader must be an exceptional communicator and relationship-builder, capable of inspiring confidence and enthusiasm for NCCU's mission. Serving as a strategic partner to the Chancellor, volunteer leadership, and senior management, this leader will be a compelling ambassador for the university—effectively engaging alumni, donors, corporate and foundation partners, elected officials, and friends in support of NCCU's future.

About North Carolina Central University

Overview

North Carolina Central University (NCCU), founded in 1910 by Dr. James E. Shepard, is a distinguished Historically Black University (HBCU) located in Durham, North Carolina. As the first publicly supported liberal arts college for African American students in the nation, NCCU has a long-standing history of expanding educational opportunities and fostering student achievement. As a constituent institution of the University of North Carolina System, it continues to serve a broad student population through its dedication to academic excellence, personal growth, and community involvement. The university is set in the heart of Durham—just minutes from downtown and within close proximity to the globally renowned Research Triangle Park—providing students with access to a vibrant mix of cultural, professional, and research opportunities.

The campus itself is a blend of historic charm and modern innovation. Georgian Revival–style buildings nod to NCCU’s historic roots, while recent additions such as the state-of-the-art Student Center reflect the institution’s commitment to growth and modernization. The university fosters a holistic academic environment through nearly 100 undergraduate majors, over 40 graduate and professional programs, and a growing selection of online degrees.

NCCU is particularly known for several points of distinction. It is one of only a handful of HBCUs with an accredited law school, and the only HBCU with an American Library Association–accredited library science program.

In line with its mission of “Truth and Service,” NCCU is also a Carnegie Foundation–designated Community Engaged Institution, with students contributing more than 160,000 hours of community service annually. The university ranks highly among HBCUs and regional universities in the South for its commitment to social mobility, academic quality, and support for veterans. Whether through its University Honors Program, global learning initiatives, undergraduate research opportunities, or high-tech online learning platforms, NCCU continues to prepare students for leadership in a rapidly evolving global society.

Mission

North Carolina Central University, with a strong tradition of teaching, research, and service, prepares students to become global leaders and practitioners who transform communities.

Vision

North Carolina Central University aspires to be a globally renowned catalyst for excellence and innovation in academics, research, and engagement.

Values

Excellence: A commitment to providing a high-quality education that fosters critical thinking, creativity, and lifelong learning. This dedication to academic excellence ensures that students are well-prepared to meet the challenges of a dynamic and interconnected world.

Impact: NCCU believes in the power of service and community engagement to make an impact. By actively engaging with local, national, and global communities, the institution strives to make a positive impact and address workforce and societal needs through collaborative efforts and partnerships.

Opportunity: A dedication to providing opportunities related to education and resources for all students. Creating a welcoming and engaging learning environment ensures that every student has the support needed to succeed and thrive.

Innovation: North Carolina Central University contributes to a more sustainable world through research, teaching, and demonstrating best practices in protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment on the campus and environs, making it a great place to live, learn, work, play, create, recreate, and visit.

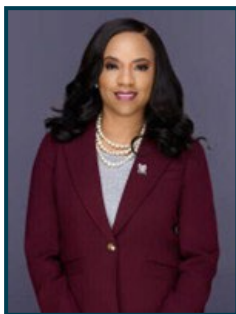
Academics

North Carolina Central University's academic programs are organized into nine colleges and schools, which together support undergraduate, graduate, professional, and doctoral education:

- [College of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities](#)
- [College of Health and Sciences](#)
- [Division of Extended Studies](#)
- [School of Business](#)
- [School of Education](#)
- [School of Graduate Studies](#)
- [School of Law](#)
- [School of Library and Information Sciences](#)
- [University College](#)

Leadership

Dr. Karrie Dixon, Chancellor



Dr. Karrie G. Dixon was named the 13th chancellor of North Carolina Central University on June 6, 2024. She was elected by the University of North Carolina Board of Governors following her nomination by the University of North Carolina System President Peter Hans. She began her appointment on July 1, 2024.

Dr. Dixon was appointed the 12th chief executive officer and 7th chancellor of Elizabeth City State University on December 14, 2018. Before her appointment, she served as the interim chancellor from April 9, 2018, after having played a crucial role as co-lead on the ECSU New Directions Phase 2 Operational Team since early 2017. Dr. Dixon is the first woman to serve as chancellor at two UNC System institutions.

As a seasoned senior administrator in the University of North Carolina System, Dr. Dixon has served in a higher education leadership role since 2008. In 2014, she was promoted to vice president for Academic and Student Affairs, overseeing the Division of Academic and Student Affairs across the System's 17 institutions. During her tenure, she played a crucial role in shaping policy and guiding best practices within academic and student affairs divisions by providing expert guidance on academic policy to the UNC System Office while spearheading initiatives to improve student success, increase access and enrollment, and boost retention and graduation rates. Her collaborative efforts fostered innovative partnerships between the UNC System, the NC Community College System, independent colleges and universities, and the NC Department of Public Instruction, driving significant policy changes and projects that have profoundly impacted students across the University of North Carolina System and beyond.

Before joining the UNC System, she spent a decade at two other UNC campuses – UNCG and NC State University.

Dr. Dixon is a highly engaged and respected leader in the higher education community. She serves on the Board of Directors for Project Kitty Hawk and is a charter member of the Black Women Collegiate Presidents and Chancellors. In 2022, she was appointed to the Campus Compact Board of Directors and the North Carolina Campus Engagement Executive Board. Additionally, she was elected to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) Board of Trustees in 2021. Dr. Dixon was also appointed to the Board of Directors of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) for a three-year term and to the Association of Governing Boards (AGB) Council of Presidents.

She was a 2016-17 American Council on Education (ACE) Fellow hosted by Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, NC.

Dr. Dixon's impressive list of accolades includes several significant awards and recognitions for her outstanding service, including the Old North State Award, one of the highest honors granted by the State of North Carolina; was named one of "The Ten Most Dominant HBCU Leaders of 2020" by the HBCU Campaign Fund. In recent years, Dr. Dixon has received the Toastmaster D117 Award for Communication & Leadership in 2023, and in 2024, she was awarded the prestigious William C. Friday Lifetime Achievement Award by the University of North Carolina Association of Student Governments (UNC ASG), the Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award for her leadership in higher education. Dr. Dixon was honored with the J.W. Hood Consistory #155 Recognition Award for Contributions to the Albemarle Region and named one of the 10 Most Dominant HBCU Leaders of 2026 by the HBCU Campaign Fund.



Durham, North Carolina

Durham, North Carolina is a vibrant and fast-growing city known for its rich history, cultural diversity, and thriving innovation economy. Once a major hub for tobacco and textiles, Durham has transformed into a nationally recognized center for healthcare, education, and technology. The city is celebrated for its dynamic food scene, award-winning restaurants, and a strong arts and music culture, with venues like the Durham Performing Arts Center and local festivals drawing visitors year-round. Outdoor enthusiasts enjoy access to nearby Eno River State Park, the American Tobacco Trail, and numerous green spaces throughout the city.

Durham's central location in the state also offers convenient access to other major cities and attractions: Raleigh and Chapel Hill are just 30 minutes away, while the North Carolina coast and the Blue Ridge Mountains are both within a 2.5-3.5-hour drive. This combination of urban amenities, natural beauty, and regional connectivity make Durham an ideal place to live, work, and explore.



Procedure for Candidacy

All applications, nominations and inquiries are invited. Applications should include, as separate documents, a CV or resume and a letter of interest addressing the themes in this profile. Review of applications has begun and will continue until the position is filled. For Full consideration, all materials should be received by June 26th.

WittKieffer is assisting North Carolina Central University in this search, which will remain open until an appointment is made.

Application materials should be submitted using WittKieffer's [candidate portal](#).

Nominations and inquiries can be directed to:

Mercedes Chacón Vance and Jevon Walton

NCCU-VCIA@wittkieffer.com

North Carolina Central University (NCCU) is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate against employees or applicants based on age, color, creed, disability, gender, gender identity or expression, military status, national origin, sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, status as a veteran or any other protected class. NCCU is committed to fostering an inclusive and respectful work environment where all individuals are welcomed, valued, and treated equitably in the terms and conditions of employment.

The Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) office is dedicated to upholding these policies and principles while supporting the University in providing optimal employment and educational experiences.