



Position Specification



Chief Marketing and Communications Officer

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Ref: Chief Marketing and Communications Officer
University of Texas at Arlington

Our Client

[The University of Texas at Arlington](#) (UTA) is one of the nation's leading research, teaching, and public service institutions and a dynamic engine of opportunity, innovation, and economic impact. Founded in 1895 and a member of The University of Texas System, UTA serves more than 42,000 students across more than 180 undergraduate, master's, and doctoral degree programs and has earned Carnegie's highest designation for research activity (R1: Very High Research Activity). Located in the heart of the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex, one of the fastest-growing regions in the United States, UTA combines the scale and ambition of a major research university with an enduring commitment to student success, access, and social mobility.

UTA's mission is rooted in advancing knowledge, fostering innovation, and preparing graduates to lead in an increasingly complex world. The University consistently ranks among the nation's leaders in economic mobility, veteran support, workforce development, and innovation while attracting more than \$150 million annually in research expenditures and expanding its national reputation through strategic investments in faculty, research infrastructure, and academic excellence.



Under the leadership of President Jennifer Cowley, UTA is pursuing an ambitious vision for the future through its strategic plan, **Shared Dreams, Bright Future**, positioning the University to further elevate its national profile while remaining deeply committed to serving the students and communities of North Texas. Significant initiatives, including the development of UTA West, continued expansion of the University's research enterprise, and investments in student success and community engagement underscore the institution's momentum and long-term aspirations.

This period of institutional growth coincides with another historic milestone. UTA is preparing to launch its first comprehensive fundraising campaign, with a proposed goal of \$250 million to advance transformational priorities including student success, research excellence, learning environments, and community engagement. The campaign represents an opportunity not only to accelerate philanthropy, but also to further define and communicate UTA's identity to alumni, donors, corporate partners, policymakers, prospective students, and the broader public.

To support these ambitions, the University has strategically integrated Marketing, Messaging and Engagement into University Advancement and has created the newly established Chief Marketing and Communications Officer position. The newly designed function is expected to play a central role in strengthening institutional reputation, elevating research visibility, supporting enrollment growth, enhancing community engagement, and reinforcing a unified institutional brand across every audience and touchpoint.

Looking ahead, the University's priorities of focus for Marketing, Messaging and Engagement include:

- **Strengthening UTA's brand awareness** by increasing visibility across the Dallas-Fort Worth region in Texas and nationally through compelling storytelling, strategic partnerships, and greater recognition of the University's research, student success, workforce impact, and athletics.

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- **Developing a clearly defined institutional brand strategy** that establishes consistent messaging, visual identity, and brand governance across the University's colleges, schools, and administrative units.
- **Implementing targeted enrollment-based marketing campaigns** that are sophisticated and data-informed and that support enrollment objectives through audience segmentation, digital engagement, personalization, and measurable performance analytics.
- **Elevating the profile and protecting the reputation** through proactive media relations, executive communications, internal communications, and issues management.
- **Creatively positioning UTA as a bold, high-impact public research university** by continuously enhancing the consistency and clarity of the institution's visual identity, e.g. continuing to enhance UTA's creative capabilities through exceptional visual storytelling, multimedia production, photography, design, and digital experiences.

Together, these priorities reflect a broader institutional expectation that marketing and communications will serve not simply as a communications function, but as a strategic enterprise capability that advances the University's academic mission, research enterprise, enrollment goals, philanthropic aspirations, and long-term reputation.



The Role

Reporting to the Vice President for University Advancement and serving as a member of the President's Leadership Council along with other VP / Chief level executives, the Chief Marketing and Communications Officer ("CMCO") will provide strategic leadership for all enterprise marketing, communications, brand, media relations, creative services, digital engagement, publications, and internal communications activities across The University of Texas at Arlington. The CMCO will serve as the University's chief brand steward and principal advisor on all marketing, messaging and

engagement matters. Working collaboratively with senior leadership, deans, faculty, advancement, enrollment management, research leadership, and administrative partners, this executive will lead the development and execution of an integrated marketing and communications strategy that advances UTA's institutional priorities while strengthening its reputation locally, nationally, and globally.

This is a highly visible leadership role during a transformational time at the institution. The role will require executive presence, exceptional relationship-building skills, and the ability to influence across a complex, decentralized academic environment. The successful candidate will elevate marketing and communications from a service function to a strategic enterprise capability that supports fundraising, enrollment, research, community engagement, and institutional excellence.

Key priorities and responsibilities in the role include, but are not limited to, the following:

Strategic Leadership & Executive Counsel

- Serve as the University's chief marketing, communications, and brand strategist managing a high-performing marketing and communications organization.
- Advise senior leadership on institutional messaging, brand positioning, media strategy, reputational risk, and communications priorities.
- Lead the development and execution of enterprise-level marketing and communications strategies aligned with institutional goals.

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- Provide leadership and counsel during major institutional initiatives, announcements, and sensitive or high-profile situations.

Digital Strategy, Brand & Media Relations

- Ensure alignment of media outreach and public messaging across central and unit-level communications.
- Serve as the institutional authority for brand and media alignment, enforcing University brand standards, voice, and visual identity.
- Oversee strategy for websites, social media, email, and emerging platforms.
- Ensure digital platforms are accessible, audience-focused, and content-driven.
- Use analytics and performance metrics to improve effectiveness.
- Oversee institutional media relations and public affairs strategy.
- Lead crisis and issues communications planning.
- Serve as a senior spokesperson or designate spokespersons.
- Manage sensitive reputational matters with sound judgment.



Enterprise Communication, Creative Direction, & Storytelling

- Provide executive leadership for campus-wide communications across all colleges, schools, divisions, and units.
- Establish governance frameworks, guidelines, and best practices to support distributed communicators.
- Partner with unit-based communicators to strengthen consistency, coordination, and impact of institutional messaging.
- Provide strategic communications support and strategies across fundraising initiatives and campaigns.
- Collaborate with academic units to elevate research program and faculty visibility.
- Partner with Enrollment Management on enrollment branding and recruitment strategies.
- Oversee creative strategy and production to ensure high-quality, compelling storytelling.

Institutional Collaboration, Organizational Leadership & External Engagement

- Collaborate with academic and administrative leaders to understand needs and priorities and ensure alignment of messaging.
- Represent the University in professional and external engagements as appropriate.
- Foster a collaborative and service-oriented culture.
- Manage budgets, agencies, and vendor relationships responsibly.

This role will be required to be located in Arlington, Texas, in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex.

Candidate Profile

The successful candidate will be an accomplished marketing and communications executive with the vision, leadership, and collaborative instincts to help shape the next chapter of one of the nation's fastest-rising public research universities. They will combine strategic thinking with operational excellence and possess the executive presence necessary to advise senior leaders while building trusted relationships across a complex, decentralized organization.

The ideal candidate will be equally comfortable discussing institutional strategy in the President's Cabinet, collaborating with academic leaders on research visibility, partnering with advancement colleagues on campaign communications,

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and coaching teams responsible for creative execution and digital engagement. They will appreciate the unique dynamics of higher education while bringing innovative ideas that strengthen institutional reputation and deepen stakeholder engagement.

The successful candidate will ideally bring:

- Progressive executive leadership experience in integrated marketing, communications, brand strategy, and/or corporate affairs.
- Demonstrated success leading enterprise marketing and communications organizations within large, complex, mission-driven institutions.
- Experience developing and executing integrated brand strategies that strengthen institutional reputation and stakeholder engagement.
- Executive advisory experience supporting senior leaders on communications strategy, issues management, media relations, and reputation.
- Success leading multidisciplinary teams spanning marketing, creative services, digital engagement, media relations, editorial content, and internal communications.
- Experience utilizing analytics, research, and audience insights to inform strategic marketing decisions and measure organizational performance.
- A record of successfully building relationships and influencing outcomes across highly matrixed organizations.
- Experience supporting fundraising, advancement, enrollment marketing, research communications, or similarly complex stakeholder environments.

While higher education experience will be highly accretive in this role, exceptional candidates from other complex, mission-driven organizations with transferable leadership experience will also be considered.

In terms of the performance and personal competencies required for the position, we would highlight the following:

Setting Strategy

- The ability to create and articulate an inspiring vision for the organization, not only for the areas they are directly responsible for, but the enterprise as a whole.
- The inclination to seek and analyze data from a variety of sources to support decisions and to align others with the organization's overall strategy.
- An entrepreneurial and creative approach to developing new, innovative ideas that will stretch the organization and push the boundaries within the industry.
- The ability to effectively balance the desire/need for broad change with an understanding of how much change the organization is capable of handling, to create realistic goals and implementation plans that are achievable and successful.



Executing for Results

- The ability to set clear and challenging goals while committing the organization to improved performance; tenacious and accountable in driving results.
- Comfortable with ambiguity and uncertainty; the ability to adapt nimbly and lead others through complex situations.
- A risk-taker who seeks data and input from others to foresee possible threats or unintended circumstances from decisions; someone who takes smart risks.
- A leader who is viewed by others as having a high degree of integrity and forethought in their approach to making decisions; the ability to act in a transparent and consistent manner while always taking into account what is best for the organization.

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Leading Teams

- The ability to attract and recruit top talent, motivate the team, delegate effectively, celebrate diversity within the team, and manage performance; widely viewed as a strong developer of others.
- The ability to persevere in the face of challenges, and exhibit a steadfast resolve and relentless commitment to higher standards, which commands respect from followers.
- A leader who is self-reflective and aware of their own limitations; leads by example and drives the organization's performance with an attitude of continuous improvement by being open to feedback and self-improvement.

Relationships and Influence

- Naturally connects and builds strong relationships with others, demonstrating strong emotional intelligence and an ability to communicate clearly and persuasively.
- An ability to inspire trust and followership in others through compelling influence, powerful charisma, passion in their beliefs, and active drive.
- Encourages others to share the spotlight and visibly celebrates and supports the success of the team.
- Creates a sense of purpose/meaning for the team that generates followership beyond their own personality and engages others to the greater purpose for the organization as a whole.

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