



CONNECTICUT COLLEGE

Vice President for Marketing and Communications

Leadership Profile

January 2026



WittKieffer

Executive Summary

Connecticut College invites nominations and applications for the position of Vice President for Marketing and Communications (VPMC). This is a dynamic opportunity to lead a talented team and transform the College's marketing and communications enterprise. This is an exciting moment for Conn: the institution is ready to refresh its brand, embrace digital innovation, and amplify the distinctive strengths that make it a top liberal arts college. The next VPMC will bring creativity, strategic vision, and collaborative leadership to elevate Conn's visibility and impact in a rapidly changing communications landscape.

Reporting to [President Andrea E. Chapdelaine, Ph.D.](#), the Vice President for Marketing and Communications is the chief communications and brand officer of Connecticut College, responsible for shaping and advancing the College's reputation and visibility on a national and global scale. The VPMC provides strategic leadership and drives strategic alignment for all aspects of marketing and communications, including brand, advertising, earned media, social media, creative services, web presence, and executive communications. This role is central to articulating the College's excellence, innovation, and commitment to equity through compelling narratives and integrated content strategies aligned with institutional goals that engage diverse audiences and have an impact.

Founded in 1911, Connecticut College is a highly selective liberal arts college located in New London, Connecticut, overlooking the beautiful Thames River and Long Island Sound. The College enrolls approximately 1,800 students from across the country and around the world, offering more than 50 majors, minors, and interdisciplinary programs. Known for its innovative Connections curriculum, Connecticut College integrates academic rigor with career preparation, global engagement, and sustainability. With a vibrant campus community, NCAA Division III athletics, and a network of more than 25,000 alumni, the College is committed to academic excellence, equity, and full participation as it enters its second century of leadership in higher education.

As a key member of the senior administration, the VPMC works closely with the President and other senior leaders to develop and execute strategic initiatives that support enrollment, fundraising, and institutional advancement. This role is central to advancing enrollment and fundraising goals through integrated, data-driven marketing and communications strategies. The VPMC also serves as the College's primary spokesperson during times of crisis and ensures 24/7 readiness and coordination for emergency communications. In addition, the VPMC leads a skilled, responsive, and committed team of professionals while overseeing all marketing and communications functions, including advancement and admission communications, athletic communications, and digital engagement. The position also staffs the Marketing and Communications Committee of the Board of Trustees and serves as a trusted advisor on matters of public perception and media relations.

The department is poised for transformation, building on a strong foundation of talent. Experienced and committed to excellence, the team needs a leader who can build trust, unify operations, and implement best practices in modern marketing and digital strategy. This includes replacing outdated systems, adopting mobile-first and accessibility-focused web design, and leveraging analytics to drive decision-making. This role offers an opportunity to elevate Connecticut College's brand, strengthen engagement with diverse audiences, and align messaging with institutional priorities.

The VPMC is charged with creating and implementing a cohesive, integrated brand strategy for the College; generating innovative ideas to raise its profile regionally, nationally, and internationally; and ensuring that all communications reflect the College's values of academic excellence, integrity, equity, and full participation. This leader will bring exceptional strategic vision, creativity, and operational expertise to a department ready for modernization and growth. This leader will play a critical role in defining the College's voice, ensuring consistency across platforms, and leveraging technology and data-driven strategies to maximize 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 President for Marketing and Communications

Reporting directly to the President and serving as a member of the senior leadership team, the Vice President for Marketing and Communications provides both strategic and operational leadership to ensure that marketing and communications align with Connecticut College's mission, strategic goals, and fiscal sustainability. In this highly visible role, the VPMC works closely with the President, senior leaders, the Board of Trustees, and campus partners to advance institutional priorities and actively engage in the life of the College.

A trusted and innovative leader, the VPMC builds strong relationships across campus, fosters collaboration within the division, and unites teams around the College's strategic messaging pillars, reflecting its mission, values, and academic excellence. This individual oversees brand strategy, digital outreach, media relations, creative services, and institutional messaging to ensure that Connecticut College's story and distinctive strengths are communicated clearly and consistently to prospective students, families, alumni, and the broader community.

The VPMC also staffs the Board of Trustees' Marketing and Communications Committee and provides counsel on institutional messaging, reputation management, and issues communications. As the Chief College Relations Officer, the VPMC oversees emergency operations communications and serves as the primary spokesperson in times of crisis, ensuring 24/7 readiness. The VPMC will regularly draft and advise on presidential speeches, correspondence, and high-stakes communications, as well as participating in major College events such as convocation, commencement, and reunion.

Leading a comprehensive marketing and communications strategy across digital, print, web, and media platforms, the VPMC shapes a unified brand identity through compelling storytelling that reflects academic excellence, student success, and community. This leader drives digital-first strategies—including paid and organic social, search, and display advertising—while managing large-scale website projects that enhance design, content, and user experience. They strengthen media relationships, elevate thought leadership, and ensure brand consistency across campus touchpoints, including athletics communications and signage.

As the head of a team of approximately 15 professionals, the VPMC fosters trust, creativity, and collaboration, mentoring staff and encouraging innovation and continuous improvement. They manage the division's budget with transparency and fiscal responsibility, aligning resources with strategic priorities and promoting a culture of inclusion and high performance. Through data-informed decision-making and rigorous annual assessment, the VPMC ensures that marketing and communications strategies advance institutional goals and reflect the College's values.



Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

Reporting directly to the President and serving as a member of the senior leadership team, the Vice President for Marketing and Communications provides enterprise-wide leadership for all marketing and communications functions at Connecticut College, ensuring an integrated and cohesive approach across all brand strategy, marketing and advertising, earned media, social media, content creation, creative services, and web presence. In addition, the role provides strategic communications for the President; Admissions, Advancement, and Athletic department; as well as issues management and crisis response.

Further, the Vice President for Marketing and Communications will be expected to:

Provide Strategic Marketing Leadership

The next Vice President for Marketing and Communications will redefine the department's role from a traditional communications function to a modern, data-driven marketing organization. This includes shifting the focus from producing high-quality editorial content to implementing strategies that elevate Connecticut College's visibility, drive enrollment, and support fundraising initiatives. The College seeks a leader with strong marketing expertise who can bring best practices in digital engagement, analytics, and brand positioning.

Modernize Digital Strategy and Infrastructure

The department has only recently begun digital advertising and lacks a robust social media presence, which is currently fragmented across other campus units. Outdated systems and existing ticketing tools hinder efficiency and collaboration. The new leader will prioritize replacing legacy platforms, implementing a mobile-first web strategy, and adopting tools that support decentralized content creation and modern digital storytelling. Leveraging technology and analytics will be essential to measure impact and optimize engagement.

Build and Strengthen Team Collaboration

The Vice President for Marketing and Communications will be more than a strategist; they will be a unifying force and an inspiring leader. This individual will bring clarity, confidence, and vision to a talented team eager for direction and collaboration. By fostering trust and transparency, the VPMC will create an environment where creativity thrives, and people feel valued and empowered. This is an opportunity to build a culture of shared purpose, professional growth, and innovation, ensuring that every member of the division feels connected to the College's mission and confident in their contributions. Through authentic leadership and a commitment to partnership, the VPMC will help the team move forward together, energized by a common vision and ready to achieve ambitious goals. The department brings strong creative talent and a deep commitment to quality, and now has an exciting opportunity to enhance collaboration, clarify roles, and streamline workflows to maximize impact.

Develop a Cohesive Messaging Framework

The VPMC, along with the team, will develop a stronger, more consistent messaging strategy aligned with institutional priorities. The VPMC will lead the development of an annual messaging plan to guide content creation, prioritize projects, and assess outcomes. They will work collaboratively with campus leaders, develop and distribute compelling narratives that authentically tell the Connecticut College story, and effectively distribute that narrative through various media channels, including social media and national media outlets.

Enhance Cross-Campus Partnerships

The new leader will work closely with Admission, Advancement, Athletics, and academic units to ensure marketing and communications efforts are fully integrated and strategically aligned. This includes formalizing event coordination and executive communications functions, as well as creating systems for transparent project management and information sharing.



Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

The success of Connecticut College depends on strong leadership and a bold vision for the future. The Vice President for Marketing and Communications will bring the expertise and strategic insight needed to modernize a historically communications-focused department, elevate the College's brand, and implement innovative, data-driven marketing strategies. A bachelor's degree is required, and an advanced degree is preferred. The VPMC will have at least 10 years of experience in marketing and communications.

The following qualifications and attributes will position the leader for success:

Proven Marketing Leadership: The next Vice President for Marketing and Communications will be an accomplished leader with a bachelor's degree (advanced degree preferred) and at least ten years of experience in marketing and communications. This individual will demonstrate a strong record of creating and implementing results-oriented marketing, communications, and business plans, with a deep understanding of the higher education landscape, including enrollment trends, branding and digital engagement, reputational enhancement, and stakeholder engagement.

Strategic and Creative Expertise: The successful candidate will possess impeccable oral and written communication skills, as well as the ability to evaluate a wide range of creative work, including text, graphic design, and video production. They will bring proven success in finding and telling compelling stories that articulate the College's distinctiveness to diverse audiences, while also demonstrating strength in analytical forecasting, tracking, and reporting of marketing data to inform planning and measure success.

Digital and Technology-Driven Vision: The next Vice President will bring a technology-driven vision and a proven ability to implement strategies that boost engagement and visibility. Expertise in digital marketing and advertising—across paid and organic social, search, and display—is essential, along with a record of driving enrollment and fundraising success. This leader will have experience managing large-scale website redesigns, including design, content migration, technology integration, and user experience optimization. Advanced analytical skills are critical: the ability to set KPIs, build dashboards, interpret data, and adjust strategies based on insights. Familiarity with AI-driven marketing tools to reach high school students and emerging Gen Z and Alpha audiences will position the VPMC to lead in a rapidly evolving digital landscape.

Collaborative and Inclusive Leadership: The Vice President for Marketing and Communications will be a collaborative and inclusive leader with exceptional interpersonal skills and the ability to lead with empathy. This individual will inspire confidence by communicating a clear, collective vision, empowering others, and delegating effectively. Success will be defined by the ability to mentor talent, foster collaboration, and build strong, high-performing teams that thrive in a culture of trust and shared purpose. As a highly collegial partner, the VPMC will work seamlessly with senior leadership to advance institutional priorities while remaining deeply student-centered. A positive outlook, sense of humor, and genuine enthusiasm for the College community will be essential qualities of this leader's approach.

Commitment to Core Values: The ideal candidate will embrace Connecticut College's core values of academic excellence, a commitment to justice and fairness, shared governance, and environmental stewardship. They will exhibit sound judgment, professionalism, discretion, and trust in all interactions, and maintain the ability to engage a broad range of internal and external stakeholders.

Operational Excellence: Outstanding organizational skills, the ability to set priorities, and a track record of meeting deadlines are essential. The position requires flexibility, adaptability, and a willingness to travel as needed to fulfill the role's obligations.



About Connecticut College

Overview

Founded in 1911, Connecticut College is a stellar four-year residential college with a history of excellence in the liberal arts and sciences. The College's distinctive mission of "educating students to put the liberal arts into action" has encouraged students, from the beginning, to combine rigorous academics with real-world experience—not just to make a living but to make a difference. Listed in 2025 among the Top 50 of U.S. News & World Report's liberal arts rankings as a "Most Innovative School" is a strong affirmation of the College's academic excellence and enduring commitment to the liberal arts.

The College's innovative curriculum, Connections, realizes that mission for the 21st century. Connections is a holistic approach to the liberal arts that unleashes curiosity and promotes complex thinking and problem-solving to prepare students for next-generation success. Students maximize the impact of their academic major by combining it with interdisciplinary study, world languages, off-campus learning, guaranteed internships, and other professional development in a personally meaningful pathway leading beyond college. More than 90% of the most recent incoming class said that the comprehensive, integrative vision of Connections was the reason they chose to enroll at Conn.

Students at Connecticut College have the opportunity to enhance their Pathways with unique certificate programs in museum studies and in distinguished centers for interdisciplinary scholarship: the Holleran Center for Community Action and Public Policy; the Goodwin-Niering Center for the Environment; the Ammerman Center for Arts and Technology; the Toor Cummings Center for International Studies and the Liberal Arts; and the Center for the Critical Study of Race and Ethnicity. A sign of its commitment to equity and student success, the College supports one of the most highly endowed Academic Resource Centers in the country, enabling excellence for every student. The Walter Commons for Global Study and Engagement allows all students to integrate meaningful international experiences into their Pathways. The Hale Center for Career Development enhances the academic programs of every student with its own four-year curriculum, offering the opportunity to integrate College-funded internships and research experiences into Pathways in preparation for life beyond college.

The College supports approximately 700 employees, including 180 full-time faculty in 60 academic departments and programs. Excellence in research is evident through the many grants and awards garnered annually by faculty for their scholarship through disciplinary societies and through local, national, and federal foundations, including the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, the Social Science Research Council, the Ford Foundation, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Sloane Foundation, and many others. The intimate 9:1 student-to-faculty ratio means students benefit directly from this research, working closely with faculty on research programs and frequently serving as co-authors in faculty publications.

The community as a whole is bound by a fiercely held value of shared governance, by high academic standards, by a student-run honor code, and by a commitment to environmental stewardship and full participation. The campus is known for its eclectic and creative mix of artists, scientists, researchers, and activists, with a strong sense of social justice. The College's scholar-athletes compete in NCAA Division III sports through the elite New England Small College Athletic Conference. In 2021, the College was crowned NCAA Division III Champions in men's soccer and ranked in the top 20 percent of all Division III programs, setting a record with 406 NESCAC All-Academic selections.

The student body is drawn from 46 states and 46 countries, supported by generous financial aid, with 29% of domestic and international students of color in 2025. The College's faculty includes 27% U.S. and international faculty of color. Staff at Connecticut College reflect a similar proportionality.

Excellent outcomes have been a hallmark of the College from its origins. Consistently, 95% of alumni are employed or in graduate school within one year of graduation, and 90% of alumni say the College's award-winning four-year career program helped them get their first job. Connecticut College's most recent alumni are pursuing graduate degrees at top universities, including Dartmouth, Columbia, Yale, Harvard, Georgetown, and NYU, among others, with nearly half of all graduates earning an advanced degree within 10 years of graduation. Connecticut College has had nine Watson Fellowship winners since 2021, 33 Fulbright fellows in the last seven years, and is regularly recognized as a top producer of Fulbright students; eight graduates have been named to Forbes' 30 under 30 in the past eight years.

For more information about the College, visit www.conncoll.edu.

Mission

Connecticut College educates students to put the liberal arts into action as citizens in a global society. The College combines rigorous academics with real-world experiences—such as research, internships, and global engagement—to prepare graduates to be creative problem-solvers and thoughtful leaders. Faculty scholarship and research advance human knowledge and inform excellent teaching, while students learn both inside and outside the classroom through interdisciplinary study and experiential learning opportunities.

Values

Academic Excellence

Connecticut College maintains rigorous academic standards and fosters intellectual curiosity through innovative teaching and faculty research.

Diversity, Equity, and Shared Governance

Founded on the principle that all qualified students deserve access to education, the College strives to create an inclusive community where differences are respected and equity is paramount.

Education of the Whole Person

The College nurtures intellectual, emotional, creative, and physical development, encouraging engagement in academics, arts, athletics, and service.

Honor and Integrity

Connecticut College upholds a strong Honor Code and expects honesty, fairness, and moral courage in all academic and social interactions.

Global Citizenship and Community Engagement

The College promotes civic responsibility and global awareness through service learning, study away programs, and interdisciplinary coursework.

Environmental Stewardship

Connecticut College is committed to sustainability and ecological responsibility, continuing its tradition of leadership in environmental awareness.

The Office of Marketing and Communications

The Office of Marketing and Communications at Connecticut College is a creative, strategic hub dedicated to elevating the institution's reputation and aligning its messaging with institutional goals. The team manages a wide range of responsibilities—from print publications and the official website to digital channels, social media, media relations, and crisis communications—for audiences that include students, alumni, parents, faculty, staff, trustees, donors, and the broader public.

Uniquely positioned at the intersection of storytelling and brand consistency, the division maintains a comprehensive visual identity and editorial style guide, ensuring unified messaging across all College assets. They facilitate seamless event promotion through user-friendly tools and templates, support faculty and staff in preparing for media engagements, and proactively cultivate relationships with regional and national outlets to highlight Conn's achievements.

Staffed by approximately 15 professionals across functional areas, including admissions communications, advancement communications, athletics relations, content development, creative services, digital marketing, web services, and media relations, the division is both collaborative and multidisciplinary. It harnesses traditional and emerging platforms to bring the Conn story to life and engage key audiences in authentic, contemporary ways.

This division is actively engaged in evolving the College's communications landscape, embracing new media, social networking, and digital-first strategies to support enrollment efforts, fundraising initiatives, and academic prominence. Whether guiding internal teams through crisis response or equipping departments to produce polished materials, the division delivers consistency, responsiveness, and creativity to every aspect of Conn's communications.

For more information, visit: <https://www.conncoll.edu/offices/office-of-communications/>

Leadership

President Andrea Chapdelaine



Andrea Chapdelaine became the 12th president of Connecticut College in July 2024, following a unanimous appointment by the Board of Trustees. A strategic, student-centered leader and experienced communicator, she has more than 30 years of experience in higher education, having served as a professor, dean, provost, and, most recently, as President of Hood College in Maryland.

Since arriving at Conn, President Chapdelaine has focused on building upon the College's liberal arts mission. She is leading a campus-wide effort to articulate a forward-looking vision that advances student success, faculty excellence, curricular innovation, equity and inclusion, financial stability, sustainable enrollment, infrastructure investment, fundraising, shared governance, alumni engagement, and reputational strength. Under her leadership, Conn is fostering a thriving culture where students can reach their full potential, integrating a rich academic, extracurricular, and social experience, guiding them into meaningful careers and lives that reflect Conn's mission: To put the liberal arts into action as citizens in a global society.

At Hood College, where she served as President from 2015 to 2024, Chapdelaine led two strategic plans; strengthened academic programs; increased enrollment and retention; expanded experiential learning; advanced inclusion initiatives; improved compensation and benefits; and enabled key facilities investments while improving the institution's financial position. She launched Hood's first comprehensive campaign in more than 25 years, which reached 150% of its goal and included a historic \$54 million gift; during her tenure, the endowment grew by 103%.

A proud first-generation college graduate and noted scholar of social psychology and justice studies, President Chapdelaine earned a bachelor's degree in psychology with a minor in justice studies from the University of New Hampshire and master's and doctoral degrees in social psychology from the University of Connecticut. She began her academic career at Wabash College in 1993 and taught at Trinity College beginning in 1995. In 1998, she joined the psychology faculty at Albright College, where she also served as dean of undergraduate studies, provost, and vice president of academic affairs.



New London, Connecticut

Located on the Northeast Corridor equidistant between Boston and New York City, New London is a historic port city with a rich Native American and maritime tradition owing to its location along the Thames River and Long Island Sound. Before the arrival of European settlers, it was known as Nameaug, the home of the Mashantucket Pequot, the Eastern Pequot, Mohegan, and other indigenous tribal nations. In the 19th century, the city was a major trade and whaling center and the boyhood home of the great American playwright Eugene O'Neill. In the 20th century, it became the home of Connecticut College, the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, and Mitchell College.

Today, the city of 28,000 residents has a progressive culture and a lively music and arts community. The Providence Journal once described it as a “seaside haven with a funky, hipster vibe.” It neighbors many beautiful towns along the Connecticut shoreline—from Niantic to Groton to Mystic to Stonington—offering access to beaches, farms, and outdoor activities. Since the founding of Connecticut College, the City of New London and the College have enjoyed a mutually beneficial partnership that continues to this day. Since Fall 2022, the College has offered a new type of residential living experience for students in downtown New London, located in the newly renovated Manwaring Building on State Street.



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.

WittKieffer is assisting Connecticut College in this search. For fullest consideration, candidate materials should be received by March 15, 2026.

Application materials, nominations, and inquiries can be directed to:

Charlene Aguilar and Jenna Brumleve

Conn-VPMC@wittkieffer.com

As a top residential liberal arts college, Connecticut College is committed to creating a vibrant community enriched by diverse perspectives, talents, and experiences. We encourage applications from candidates who share this commitment and will contribute to the diversity of our college community. AA/EOE