



HEYMAN ASSOCIATES



**UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
ANN ARBOR, MI**

POSITION: Vice President for Communications

REPORTS TO: President Mark S. Schlissel, M.D., Ph.D.

SUMMARY:

The Vice President for Communications will serve as the University's chief marketing and communications officer. The University of Michigan seeks an outstanding, seasoned professional to provide creative and inspiring leadership to the division and to work collaboratively with the many constituencies of the University. The position affords an exciting opportunity to make a major impact and is ideal for a candidate motivated by the desire to play a central role in advancing the academic reputation of one of the nation's top public institutions. The Vice President of Communications is an executive officer of the institution charged with enhancing the University's reputation and visibility locally, nationally and internationally; fostering long-term, positive relationships with all University constituents; working to position and differentiate the University of Michigan among leading institutions in higher education; working with the Board of Regents, President and executive officers to set University policy on matters of communication and marketing; developing and implementing strategic as well as crisis communications plans; and providing leadership to expand the University's digital communications and social media engagement.

Reporting directly to the President of the University of Michigan, the Vice President for Communications will oversee the University's media relations, public affairs, marketing, executive speechwriting, publications and internet presence. The University's freedom of information office and public radio station also report to this position.

UNIVERSITY BACKGROUND:

Founded in 1817, the **University of Michigan** is one of the premier institutions of higher education in the world. With a total budget of nearly \$8 billion and an endowment of approximately \$10 billion, the University will commemorate its 200th anniversary in 2017 by celebrating its collective achievements while also examining the complex challenges facing today's academy. The University operates its flagship campus in Ann Arbor as well as vibrant regional campuses in Flint and Dearborn, MI. Broad and balanced excellence, a sense of social mission, and widespread cross-disciplinary interactions distinguish the University

Interdisciplinary research units and initiatives across the social, natural and life sciences involve faculty from many units on campus in some of the nation's and world's most innovative science. The University has acclaimed faculty, rigorous academic programs, and diverse cultural and social opportunities in a stimulating intellectual environment. For example, it is home to one of the nation's finest institutions for legal education, business leadership development, top-notch athletic programs and one of the world's largest health care complexes and sites of many groundbreaking medical and technological advancements. The various undergraduate, graduate and professional degree programs on the Ann Arbor campus are offered within a framework of 19 schools and colleges. The schools and colleges operate in a decentralized fashion: under the University's budget model, deans and directors are entrusted with revenue and cost authority in order to manage their budgets in ways that best meet the needs of their units.

In its pursuit of excellence in learning and research, the University recognizes the importance of diversity in maintaining and enhancing that excellence. As the University recruits students, faculty and staff, it seeks people with diverse backgrounds, intellectual perspectives and life experiences because it knows that a diverse campus provides a richer learning environment for students, and that diverse groups produce better solutions to the challenging problems that are the focus of the University's research.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Serve as chief counselor to the President and other University leaders, including the Board of Regents, on all internal and external strategic communications, branding, marketing, and messaging.
- Work with senior University leaders to shape and communicate key messages related to the institution's highest priorities and key initiatives.
- Leverage and promote faculty, staff and student accomplishments; deliver messages that advance University priorities; effect coherent institutional branding; and ensure the University is consistently portrayed as a high-caliber, high-integrity academic institution with global impact.
- Actively collaborate among faculty and other leaders on campus mechanisms to encourage faculty engagement with the media, and to promote a spirit among those employees of contributing to the University's national and global public reputation beyond the reputations of their campus units.
- Create and develop strategic, integrated communications strategies combining public relations, marketing, digital communications and issues management elements.
- Lead and represent a staff of approximately 128 employees. Offices reporting directly to the Vice President for Communications include: Michigan News; Public Affairs and Internal Communications;

the Freedom of Information Office; the Marketing Enterprise (Michigan Creative, Photography & Video); Michigan Social Media; Michigan Radio, the University's NPR affiliate; and Executive/Presidential Communications.

- Design a strategic communications plan that will function in a large, complex, decentralized organization with varied priorities and stakeholders.
- Provide visionary leadership and manage all University-wide marketing and communications activities, including media relations, issues management, digital communications and social media, marketing, and brand management.
- Working across all University entities on the three campuses, lead development and delivery of University-wide communications that affect institutional branding and reputation to advance a consistent and authentic portrayal of the University
- Ensure that University marketing and communications efforts help to build and sustain positive relationships with external constituencies, including the media, government, alumni, the local community and the general public.
- Cultivate strategies and opportunities for the University to contribute to the national discourse on research, healthcare, college affordability / access, and other matters that influence government and society.
- Provide visionary leadership for integrated, comprehensive and strategic marketing and communications plans, working with communications professionals across the University, by coordinating shared goals, messages, issues management, branding and reputation-building for schools and colleges, Government Relations, the Office of Development, the Alumni Association, the University of Michigan Health System, and the Athletics Department.
- Coordinate crisis management efforts involving both the University as a whole and its individual units.

SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE:

The Vice President for Communications will lead efforts to shape and implement communications strategies that support the University of Michigan's position as one of the world's leading public institutions of higher education and research. In this strategic leadership role, the next Vice President will foster a proactive, long-term approach to the development and implementation of marketing and communication plans for the University's institutional priorities. These plans will strategically inform, engage and excite, national, regional and global audiences, including scholarly and research communities. Given the breadth of the Vice President for Communication's role and responsibilities, this challenging position requires visionary leadership; exceptional judgment; strong management skills; and a deep understanding of and commitment to the academic, research and service missions of the University of Michigan.

Qualifications: Strong candidates will have a significant track record of senior executive communications experience and will have demonstrated creative, proactive, energetic and inspired communications leadership in a complex organization. Candidates should demonstrate strategic thinking and have extensive experience managing highly productive teams and overseeing substantial budgets and operations. Extensive experience with higher education and deep knowledge and understanding of the academic mission is preferred.

Personal attributes: The new Vice President for Communications will possess the following qualities:

- Unquestionable integrity, ethics, energy and creativity;
- Deep understanding of and appreciation for the mission and goals of a public research university and a strong sense of the importance of integrating the academic enterprise into institutional communications efforts;
- An approach to issues management that anticipates messaging needs and ensures effective timing of communications efforts;
- A forward-thinking and creative approach to using technology to support communications strategies;
- Sensitivity and sound judgment in balancing demands for real-time transparency with the need for careful deliberation in communications;
- A commitment to the value of diversity in all aspects of university life; and
- Demonstrated managerial talent and ability to allocate resources efficiently.

GOVERNANCE

The University is governed by the **Regents of the University**, consisting of eight members elected at large in the biennial state election, and the President of the University, who serves as an *ex officio* member. Dr. Mark S. Schlissel became the 14th president of the University in July 2014. The Regents serve without compensation for overlapping terms of eight years. According to the Michigan Constitution of 1963, the Regents have general supervisory powers over the institution and the control and direction of all expenditures of the institution's funds. The Regents meet once a month in a public session.

While applications will be considered until the position is filled, interested applicants are encouraged to apply by November 1st. To do so, please contact Heyman Associates:

**Heather Ring
Senior Associate
(212) 784-2711**

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For more information on this search, please visit the University's dedicated web page:

<http://president.umich.edu/committees/vp-for-communications-sac>

The University of Michigan is an equal opportunity, affirmative action employer. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. The University is supportive of the needs of dual career couples.