



The State University  
of New York

## Office of the Chancellor

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## **MEMORANDUM**

**April 28, 2026**

**TO: Members of the Board of Trustees**

**FROM: Dr. John B. King Jr., Chancellor**

**SUBJECT: Appointment of Dr. Jennifer Burris as President of SUNY Buffalo State University**

### **Action Requested**

The proposed resolution approves the appointment of Dr. Jennifer Burris as President of SUNY Buffalo State University.

### **Resolution**

I recommend that the Board of Trustees adopt the following resolution:

**Resolved** that the appointment of Dr. Jennifer Burris as President of SUNY Buffalo State University, at a salary of \$325,000, effective July 1, 2026, be, and hereby is, approved.

### **Background**

Dr. Jennifer Burris is provost and vice president for academic affairs at Lenoir-Rhyne University, where she leads efforts to advance student success and academic innovation across six colleges, the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Student Affairs, and a broad portfolio of student support, research and academic service divisions. Burris partners closely with deans, faculty and staff to foster an environment where collaboration and innovation empower students from all backgrounds.

Burris's leadership philosophy is grounded in shared governance, transparency and valuing the contributions of every individual. She is deeply

committed to advancing student success across academic and non-academic spaces, while also cultivating strong external partnerships with community members and donors to strengthen the university's mission and resources.

A dedicated and accomplished academic leader, Burris previously held numerous leadership roles at Appalachian State University, including associate dean, chair of the Council of Chairs and department chair. She also served as principal investigator on multiple grants, most notably a \$1 million NSF:ADVANCE award focused on the recruitment and retention of faculty and staff.

Burris's commitment to education, leadership and mentoring extends beyond campus, as demonstrated through her service on the advisory board for the BRIDGES Academic Leadership Program and as an executive board member of the North Carolina ACE Network. Her leadership and advocacy have been recognized with the UNC Board of Governors Award for Excellence in Teaching, Appalachian State University's Harvey R. Durham Outstanding Freshman Advocate Award and internationally with the Optical Society's Diversity & Inclusion Advocacy Recognition.

Dr. Burris is a physicist by training and holds a Ph.D. and M.S. in Physics from Colorado State University and a B.S. in Applied Science (Physics Concentration) from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She is widely recognized for her advocacy for diversity, equity and inclusion and her commitment to expanding access and opportunity in higher education.

A copy of Dr. Burris' CV is attached.

# Jennifer L. Burris

## PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Passionate, entrepreneurial, and mission-driven academic leader with nearly two decades of experience transforming institutions through innovation, transparency, and shared governance in public and private higher education. As Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Lenoir-Rhyne University, a comprehensive institution serving a large percentage of Pell-eligible students, oversee the university's largest division. Guided institutional renewal through financial recovery, academic modernization, and cultural rebuilding, achieving record gains in enrollment, retention, and student success. Led curriculum modernization, program creation, and program redesigns balancing workforce relevance with the enduring value of the liberal arts. Closed significant structural deficits within one year through collaborative, data-informed planning while protecting the student experience. Partnered with Advancement to secure transformational philanthropic gifts. Champion the university story as a visible, engaged ambassador for institutional mission. Progressive leadership at Appalachian State University within the University of North Carolina System, aligning campus initiatives with broader system goals while advancing inclusive excellence and deepening community engagement. Recognized institutionally and internationally for diversity and inclusion advocacy. Known for transparent leadership that builds trust, strengthens shared governance, and turns institutional stability into sustainable momentum.

## EDUCATION

<b>Colorado State University</b> Fort Collins, CO	Ph.D., M.S.	Physics
<b>University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill</b> Chapel Hill, NC	B.S.	Applied Science ( <i>physics concentration</i> )

## APPOINTMENTS

### *Lenoir-Rhyne University*

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, June 2022 – present  
Professor of Physics (tenured), June 2022 – present

### *Appalachian State University*

Chair (national search) – Physics and Astronomy Department, June 2018 – July 2022  
Associate Dean and Interim Associate Dean – College of Arts and Sciences, July 2016 – June 2018  
Graduate Program Director – MS Engineering Physics, July 2014 – July 2016  
Program Director – Professional Science Master's (PSM), July 2013 – July 2016  
Assistant Graduate Program Director – MS Engineering Physics, May 2012 – July 2013

Professor, July 2018 – July 2022

Associate Professor (tenured), July 2014 – July 2018

Assistant Professor (tenure-track), July 2010 – July 2014

Adjunct Assistant Professor (full – time, non-tenure-track), July 2007 – July 2010

***Aims Community College, Science Department – Greeley, CO***

Faculty (non-tenure-track, full-time), January 2004 – July 2007, Adjunct Faculty (part-time), August 2004 – December 2004

***Colorado State University, Department of Physics***

Adjunct Faculty (part-time), June 2005 – August 2005 and August 2003 – December 2004  
Postdoctoral Associate, August 2003 – August 2004

**Other Recent Leadership Positions**

- Founding Member (2017), Executive Board Member (2017 – 2022, 2025 – present) and Treasurer (elected) (2018 – 2021) – North Carolina American Council on Education (ACE) Women’s Network.
- Member (2014 – present) and chair (2016 – 2017) of advisory board for the statewide BRIDGES Academic Leadership Program.
- Catawba County and Regional Education Steering Committee (Fall 2024 – Spring 2025).
- Steering Committee Appalachian College Association NSF ADVANCE Grant (2023 – 2025).

**LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE**

**Lenoir-Rhyne University** is a private institution classified by the Carnegie Foundation as a *Professions-focused Undergraduate/Graduate-Doctorate Small* university, a designation held by only ~ 1% of U.S. colleges and reflecting its distinctive blend of liberal arts and professional preparation. Enrolling approximately 2,400 students across three campuses, LR offers undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral programs. The university pairs academic strength with athletic excellence, setting a record in 2025 with 362 student-athletes on the Conference Commissioners Honor Roll and consistently finishing in the top 30 nationally in the Learfield Directors’ Cup. This combination of competitive success and academic distinction positions LR among the premier NCAA Division II programs.

**Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs**

June 2022 – present

Chief academic officer advancing the mission and strategy of a student-focused, mission-driven university. Provide executive leadership for the university's largest and most diverse division, overseeing eight colleges, institutional diversity and inclusion efforts, and major academic and institutional support offices. Have also led Student Affairs, integrating academic and co-curricular support to advance student success and belonging. Lead and collaborate with deans, assistant provosts, the Director of Inclusion and Belonging, and faculty to advance academic quality, student success, accreditation, and institutional effectiveness. Champion a whole-student model that integrates academic excellence with vocation, belonging, and personal formation as essential complements to professional preparation, with particular focus on first-generation students and those from underserved communities. Partner with the Division of Intercollegiate Athletics to support student-athlete success, ensuring strong academic outcomes alongside competitive achievement.

*Strategic Planning and Institutional Vision*

- Provide leadership across a broad portfolio, including eight colleges (Health Sciences; Education and Human Services; Fine Arts and Communication; Natural Sciences and Mathematics; Humanities and Social Sciences; Business and Economics; the Fritz Honors College; and the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary), Inclusion and Compliance (disability services, Title IX, multicultural affairs), Registrar, Institutional Research and Assessment, International Education, Libraries, and 10 Centers and Institutes. Provided leadership across Student Affairs (residence life, health and wellness, leadership/involvement, spiritual life).

- Served as a key member of the university's new strategic-planning process, helping to shape institutional priorities for 2025–2028.
- Successfully completed all Academic Affairs initiatives from the prior strategic plan, positioning the university to launch its next phase of growth and innovation.
- Partnered with faculty leaders to restructure shared governance, implementing a University Senate model with new bylaws and constitution. This was the first overhaul in 10+ years.
- Led the first comprehensive Faculty Handbook revision in 20+ years, modernizing policies on rank structure, evaluation, tenure/promotion, workload, advising, hiring, grievance, and appeals.
- Launched a campus-wide AI Readiness Initiative with CIC partners, providing year-long professional development across enrollment, pedagogy, student success, student affairs, advancement, and data management.
- Completed MIT Professional Education certificate in Applied Agentic AI for Organizational Transformation.
- Strengthened Institutional Research, Assessment, and International Education, embedding data-driven planning and global engagement into institutional strategy to elevate academic visibility.

#### *Financial Sustainability and Fiscal Stewardship*

- Contributed to closing a \$5M structural deficit within one year by generating ~\$1.1M in new revenue (student housing policy), reducing costs by ~\$1.5M (academic program review and streamlined staffing), and saving ~\$1.5M (relocation of the branch campus), while reducing goods and services expenditures and strengthening financial oversight to ensure resources align with institutional mission and strategic priorities.
- Spearheaded, in collaboration with the CFO, a comprehensive modernization of the budgeting process through cost center-based accounting that integrated revenues, expenses, grants, and endowments to enable transparent, data-informed unit-level profit-and-loss reporting and strategic resource planning, while managing approximately 30% of the institutional budget.
- Partnered with CFO, deans, and faculty leadership to strengthen financial stewardship and embed shared ownership across divisions, ensuring academic priorities with long-term sustainability.
- Partnered with Advancement to align Academic Affairs with fundraising priorities, resulting in \$12.4M secured for divisional initiatives, including a \$7M transformational gift (largest in LR history) to the Seminary, a \$1M naming gift establishing the Fritz Honors College, the Clemmer-Long Center naming gift, endowments for Teaching Scholars and the food pantry, and new research funds in Natural Sciences.
- Actively engaged in the \$90M comprehensive campaign.
- Launched the university's first sponsored programs initiative in collaboration with assistant provost, faculty, and staff, securing the largest federal grant in university history (\$1.2M NSF Noyce) and positioning the institution for continued growth in external funding
- Drove targeted efficiency in seat management, reducing the number of low-enrolled courses and decreasing the part-time faculty salary budget by approximately 33%.
- In collaboration with deans, the CFO, Marketing, and other campus partners, led the relocation and integration of the Columbia, South Carolina, campus (including academic programs, students, employees, and the university's largest library collection) to Hickory, North Carolina. This transition strengthened financial sustainability, operational efficiency, and mission alignment, with no disruption to student learning or accreditation.
- Partnered with Advancement, the CFO, and the Board on capital planning and facilities investments to align philanthropy with academic priorities, deferred maintenance, and strategic growth initiatives that enhance both student experience and institutional visibility.
- Successfully led through financial recovery, demographic decline, and post-pandemic change maintaining a mission-focused and forward-looking approach.

### *Enrollment Management and Student Recruitment*

- Led academic initiatives that directly contributed to enrollment and student-success gains, including nearly doubling transfer enrollment, achieving the largest single-year retention increase in institutional history (5%), and reaching a 98% employment or graduate-school placement rate.
- Led the first comprehensive general education reform in decades, in partnership with faculty, deans, and trustees. This laid the foundation for the Bear Bound community-college transfer partnership with more than a dozen North Carolina community colleges. The initiative streamlined credit transfer, enabled co-admission and campus housing, and more than doubled transfer student enrollment in the first few years.
- Streamlined degree requirements from 128 to 120 credit hours, in partnership with trustees and deans to decrease time to degree and align with peer institutions.
- Developed adult degree-completer programs in collaboration with Admissions, deans and faculty, designed as strategic enrollment pipelines and the foundation for LR Online, a flexible degree completion initiative offering professional online programs that maximize past credits and support working students to expand access across the region.
- Founded the Fritz Honors College in collaboration with faculty and advancement to recruit and retain high-achieving students, elevate academic distinction, and promote high impact learning.
- Launched the Nationally Competitive Scholarship Advising Initiative, in collaboration with dean of the Fritz Honors College, producing the university's first Goldwater and Gilman Scholars and building national visibility for student achievement.
- Partnered with the VP for Athletics to champion overall student-athlete success, ensuring academic performance matched national visibility. This led to record academic metrics (e.g., 362 Honor Roll honorees; multiple teams leading NCAA Division II in GPA) during landmark athletic achievements, including a National Championship and a World Series appearance.

### *Student Success and Retention*

- Established BEAR Central (Belonging, Equity, Access, and Retention), a comprehensive student-success hub integrating advising, tutoring, and early-alert services.
- Partnered with the Director of BEAR Central to establish LR's chapter of Alpha Alpha Alpha (Tri-Alpha), the national honor society recognizing first-generation college students, strengthening institutional commitment to supporting students who are the first in their families to attend college.
- Directly oversee Inclusion and Compliance (disability services, Title IX, multicultural affairs), ensuring equity, access, and belonging are embedded across institutional operations and student support.
- Created the Student, Faculty, and Institutional Success Collaborative, integrating advising reform, gateway course redesign, early-alert analytics, and career-readiness initiatives across Student Success, Student Affairs, General Education, and Institutional Assessment.
- Expand immersive, career-connected learning through leadership and structure for more than 1,000 credit-bearing internships annually, integrating career-connected, hands-on learning across disciplines; more than one-third of undergraduates and half of graduate students complete internships for academic credit each year, advancing the university's mission of immersive, experiential education.
- Revised and implemented comprehensive student policies (Academic Integrity, Alcohol/Controlled Substances, Harassment/Non-Discrimination, Grievance, Demonstrations), in partnership with the Dean of Students, resulting in the first comprehensive Student Handbook update in decades. This work fostered greater student success and belonging.
- Maintained high visibility with students through direct communication and consistent presence at athletics, arts, and campus events.

- Created the first dedicated fund for student research, scholarship, and creative endeavors in collaboration with dean through the Fritz Honors College, expanding faculty-mentored immersive learning opportunities across disciplines.
- Partnered with the Dean of Students and vocation colleagues to strengthen inclusion and vocational exploration throughout campus through the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) Belong Network and multiple NetVUE programs in vocation, humanities, and curricular development.
- Strengthened the student experience by modernizing policies, curriculum, and support structures that advance belonging, persistence, and career readiness.
- Partnered closely with the Dean of Students and Student Affairs to connect academic and co-curricular engagement.

#### *Academic Excellence and Program Development*

- Guided accreditation teams, alongside assistant provost and deans, through successful reviews (Business, Education, Nursing/DNP/PA, Counseling, Dietetics, Seminary), including a Physician Assistant program site visit with zero findings.
- Modernized Registrar Office operations, in partnership with assistant provost, after a 15+ year gap, providing leadership for staff and supporting implementation of new enterprise systems (Stellic, Maxient, SPOL, eRezLife, 25Live) to modernize processes and enhance student success.
- Led innovative academic portfolio creation and modernization by partnering with faculty and assistant provosts to produce 1,500+ curriculum proposals in recent years (more than the previous decade combined) and directly supporting the launch or redesign of 30+ academic programs aligned with student demand and workforce needs.
- Shaped faculty and staff culture by championing fairness, clarity, and equity, meeting regularly with committees, addressing concerns, and embedding equity across governance.
- Enhanced transparency with faculty through proactive communication, including “Popcorn with the Provost” open forums, weekly newsletters, website resources, and regular college meetings.
- Developed a teacher-scholar model, in collaboration with deans and faculty, formalizing reassign time and redesigning professional development allocations for projects with high student impact.
- Directed strategic redesign of faculty development funding in consultation with faculty committees, supporting prestigious leadership opportunities (BRIDGES, NC ACE, Rural Higher Education Leadership Institute).
- Partnered with executive assistant to implement new faculty contracts, streamlining hiring processes, enhancing transparency and efficiency.
- Partnered with the Director of Inclusion & Compliance and faculty colleagues to secure inclusion-focused funding and integrate equity across Academic Affairs. Advanced equitable faculty workload and evaluation policies, including bias mitigation training for hiring and standardizing peer-review frameworks.
- Expanded faculty development by connecting LR faculty to ACA opportunities such as the Teaching & Learning Institute, Faculty Fellowship Program, and Rural Higher Education Leadership Institute.

#### *Community Engagement and External Partnerships*

- Represented Lenoir-Rhyne in the Appalachian College Association (ACA) serving as a board member for the NSF ADVANCE equity grant (ACCE) and on the Summit Planning Committee.
- Supported collaboration with the North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities (NCICU) to streamline transfer pathways and modernize higher education data systems.
- Engaged local and state government, corporate, business, healthcare, education, and nonprofit leaders through the Catawba County and Regional Education Steering Committee, the K-64

Workforce Roundtable, and institutional advisory boards, fostering partnerships in workforce development and economic growth.

- Cultivated alumni, donor, trustee, and community partnerships, positioning the university as a regional hub for academic excellence, vocational formation, and student success, while building momentum for sustained philanthropic growth.
- Partnered with Advancement and deans to engage industry investors in a new academic initiative designed to strengthen the local workforce and expand applied learning opportunities for students.
- Aligned academic programs with community needs and advocated for public–private collaborations that strengthen institutional capacity and community vitality
- Championed collaborations with ACA member institutions on policy and process audits, equity workshops, and faculty diversification training, and supported annual convenings that advance shared strategy, professional development, and regional collaborations.
- Represented the University at regional and national conferences, civic forums, and professional associations effectively advancing the university’s visibility, partnerships, and reputation.
- Provided statewide leadership in equity and professional development, serving as a founding board member, treasurer, and mentor for the NC ACE Women’s Network and a board member for the BRIDGES Academic Leadership Program.
- Chaired the Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) Task Force, a university-wide group in collaboration with athletics and external supporters, crafting guidelines and bridging communication.
- Co-developed an academic advisor role for student-athletes funded by NCAA, co-reporting to both Academic Affairs and Athletics.

**Appalachian State University** is a public R2 university classified by Carnegie as a *Professions-focused Undergraduate/Graduate-Master's Large/Medium* with an enrollment of about 21,500 students (19,500 undergraduate and 2,000 graduate students). Appalachian is one of 17 campuses in the University of North Carolina System, with a national reputation for innovative teaching and opening access to a high-quality, affordable education for all. The university offers more than 150 undergraduate and 80 graduate majors at its campuses and through App State Online.

### **Department Chair**

June 2018 – July 2022

Physics and Astronomy Department, *Appalachian State University – Boone, NC*

Led one of the largest Physics and Astronomy departments in the nation, distinguished by a strong applied integrated learning focus with an MS in Engineering Physics and applied physics focused bachelor’s degrees. Directed a community of 31 faculty, 5 staff, 170 majors, 35 minors, more than 2,800 non-majors, and up to 60 student employees annually. Under this leadership, the department was nationally ranked by the American Institute of Physics (2021): 3rd in BS graduates among master’s-granting institutions, tied for 2nd in MS graduates at the master’s level, and tied for 4th nationally in MS graduates across all institutions, including PhD-granting universities.

### *Strategic Leadership*

- Advanced strategic planning through shared governance, achieving 84% of 47 goals initiated or completed within four years.
- Coordinated the COVID-19 response, transitioning 1,300+ lab students per semester to online/hybrid formats, retrofitting classrooms, and securing PPE and safety protocols.
- Guided the first comprehensive external review and modernized governance documents including revised promotion and tenure, tenure-track merit, and non-tenure-track merit documents.

- Managed departmental goods and services budgets up to \$700k annually.
- Built partnerships with local and regional industry for student internships and future jobs.
- Oversaw seven undergraduate programs, one MS program with two Professional Science Masters (PSM) concentrations, four minors, and a 4+1 program.
- Represented the department with donors, and at open houses, recruitment, and advancement events.
- Supervised program directors, laboratory directors, and staff across three observatories, undergraduate teaching labs, and graduate electronics labs.
- Improved efficiency through new policies for timesheets, travel, purchasing, and reporting.
- Mentored 30+ undergraduate majors annually and 10+ research students.
- Provided professional development for faculty and staff in online teaching and telework.
- Advocated resources for faculty stipends, research support, travel, and professional development.
- Expanded communications through coordinated social media campaigns.

### *Notable Achievements*

- Served as PI on a \$1M NSF ADVANCE award (supporting recruitment and retention of faculty and staff) and \$300k PhysTEC award (strengthening teacher preparation).
- Secured \$240,000 in philanthropic giving by building foundation accounts from \$0 to ~\$70,000, establishing the department's first endowed scholarship, and partnering with the dean's office to direct ~\$170,000 in donor funds to faculty research.
- Led ~60 curriculum changes, including the first full revision of concentrations in 50+ years, resulting in four new degree programs, two new minors, and two dual MS degrees.
- Increased student credit hour production at larger rate than both the college and university growth through increased efficiencies in scheduling and seats management, enabling greater faculty release time for research, grant writing, and department initiatives.
- Positioned the department as one of only five nationally invited to pilot the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Sea Change Initiative. This initiative sought to create systemic, structural change regarding inclusive excellence within the department including a self-study and five-year plan with measurable outcomes.
- Increased women's participation in the MS program from 13% to 25%, surpassing the national average, diversified the student population to 22% vs. 18% university-wide, achieved a 71% hire rate of underrepresented populations in new faculty/staff searches, compared with near-zero representation previously.
- Recognized with the 2020 inaugural College of Arts & Sciences Inclusion Award.
- Established the department's first Alumni Group and new donor-supported student initiatives.
- Maintained community engagement with outreach to 4,000+ K-12 students annually.
- Secured funds for student research, travel, internships, and national lab placements.
- Students recognized nationally with Outstanding Chapter Awards (SPS) and the Blake Lilly Prize for community outreach.
- Established the Student Inclusive Excellence in STEM Club, a departmental food pantry, and collaborated to open the first campus lactation lounge.

**Chair of Council of Chairs**

July 2020 – May 2021

**Principal Co-Chair of Council of Chairs**

July 2019 – July 2020

Council of Chairs, *Appalachian State University – Boone, NC*

Led the Council of Chairs, representing 64 department chairs, assistant chairs, and academic leaders across the university. Served as the primary liaison between faculty leadership and the provost, advancing shared governance, inclusive excellence, and professional development. Collaborated with

senior administrators, Faculty Senate, and academic leaders to strengthen communication, enhance faculty support, and build institutional strategies in times of growth and crisis.

#### *Strategic Leadership*

- Represented all department chairs as liaison to the provost, meeting monthly to advocate for faculty needs and elevate Council concerns.
- Partnered with the Council's executive committee to update bylaws and shape Council strategy.
- Served as a non-voting member of Faculty Senate and its Governance, Budget, and Executive Committees, monitoring governance matters and recommending improvements.
- Collaborated with the Vice Provost of Faculty Affairs and the Center for Academic Excellence to deliver professional development for chairs, including new chair orientation and ongoing leadership workshops.

#### *Notable Achievements*

- **Crisis Leadership during COVID-19:** Represented all department chairs in partnership with senior leadership to safeguard health, sustain academic continuity, and protect staff/student well-being. Convened deans and chairs to coordinate reopening strategies, advocated for equity measures (continued pay, deadline flexibility, parental accommodations), and ensured continuity of research and instruction through lab access and remote teaching resources.
- **Inclusive Excellence Leadership:** Established the Council's first inclusive excellence working group, launching a systemic study of equity across campus and creating the university's first inclusive excellence training plan for department chairs.
- **Enrollment Growth Strategy:** Convened the chancellor, provost, deans, and department chairs to design strategies that enabled the university to meet a chancellor directive to grow enrollment by 4.2% in under one year.
- **Shared Governance Reform:** Implemented a new chair/chair-elect leadership model, strengthening continuity, succession planning, and shared governance across the Council.

#### **Associate Dean**

May 2017 – June 2018

#### **Interim Associate Dean**

July 2016 – May 2017

College of Arts and Sciences, *Appalachian State University – Boone, NC*

Served as one of two associate deans for the largest college at the university, encompassing 16 departments, two standalone academic programs, ~5,800 undergraduate majors, ~640 faculty (450 full-time), and 91 academic majors. The college also delivered more than 75% of all general education courses on campus. Provided leadership for faculty, staff, and students while managing curriculum, budgets, advancement, assessment, and external engagement.

#### *Strategic Leadership*

- Incorporated faculty input into the college's strategic plan.
- Directed initiatives to advance teaching, scholarship, service, and global engagement; supported curriculum development, promotion and tenure processes, and faculty/chair evaluations.
- Collaborated with associate deans across the university on academic policy, undergraduate definitions (majors, minors, certificates), and institutional strategy.
- Partnered with the advancement officer, advancement council, and dean to strengthen donor relations through on- and off-campus engagement.
- Secured philanthropic support to establish undergraduate internships and scholarships in partnership with donors.

- Represented the college at recruitment, orientation, open houses, and other outreach events, directly engaging prospective students and parents.
- Co-led the rewrite of the university diversity statement (adopted 2017).
- Participated in Inclusive Leadership training, Diversity Institute, Unintentional Bias in Hiring, and Interpersonal Violence Training, advancing inclusive leadership capacity.
- Resolved academic issues for students and parents (including grade appeals).
- Partnered with the Office of International Education and Development on study abroad, faculty exchanges, and international partnerships.
- Led a delegation to the University of Zululand (South Africa) to establish student teaching and faculty exchange collaborations.
- Managed the college's \$2.1 million summer school salary budget.
- Directed assessment and accreditation processes as chair of the university institutional effectiveness committee and chair of the college assessment committee, including annual program reviews, departmental assessments, and comprehensive reviews of departments and centers; trained faculty on assessment and institutional effectiveness.
- Oversaw interdisciplinary collaboration through the University Humanities Council, supporting innovative programming and supervised the university liaison to the Blue Ridge Parkway and the Humanities Council Coordinator.
- Coordinated college commencements each semester, serving as name reader and recruiting student speakers, marshals, and faculty banner carriers.

#### *Notable Achievements*

- Founded and chaired the first university-wide Associate Deans Group, fostering cross-college communication and collaboration.
- As chair of the university institutional effectiveness committee, led the restructure of the campus-wide periodic comprehensive review processes, improving efficiency and institutional effectiveness.
- Improved faculty advising in collaboration with the advising director and department chairs.
- Strengthened faculty and staff development through policy updates, professional development opportunities, and integration of faculty input into the college's strategic plan.

<b>Director of MS Engineering Physics Program</b>	<b>July 2014 – July 2016</b>
<b>Professional Science Master's (PSM) Coordinator</b>	<b>July 2013 – July 2016</b>
<b>Assistant Director of MS Engineering Physics Program</b>	<b>May 2012 – July 2013</b>
Physics and Astronomy Department, <i>Appalachian State University – Boone, NC</i>	

Administered one of the largest MS programs of its kind in the nation (AIP data), growing enrollment by 63.6% in the MS program and 15.3% in Professional Science Master's (PSM) concentrations between 2013 – 2016. Program was recognized as Appalachian's top-growing graduate program (2014 – 15) and produced the largest number of MS graduates in the College of Arts & Sciences (May 2016). Achieved some of the institution's highest employment outcomes: 86.4% of students seeking employment accepted offers before graduation, 100% secured positions within two months, and 96% were employed within six months of graduation.

#### *Strategic Leadership*

- Directed enrollment, recruitment, admissions, curriculum assessment, and graduate program evaluation, supervising 20+ teaching assistants and 10 faculty each semester.
- Built industry collaborations that created internship pipelines, permanent hires, and future grant partnerships.

- Led a major graduate curriculum overhaul, including significant revisions to PSM programs and coordination of three MS concentrations.

#### *Notable Achievements*

- Implemented an accelerated 4+1 master's program and established dual degrees: two PSM/MBA programs (30% of PSM students), four internal interdisciplinary programs (44% of students), and an international dual degree with MCI Innsbruck, Austria.
- Mentored 30+ graduate students annually, advancing research, professional skills, and career preparation; designed a professional skills course and facilitated employer partnerships that regularly converted internships into jobs.
- Achieved 63.6% enrollment growth in the MS program and 15.3% in PSM concentrations, graduating the largest MS class in the College of Arts & Sciences (2016).
- Program recognized as top-growing graduate program (2014 – 15), with 96% employment within six months of graduation and 100% of job-seekers employed within two months.

### SELECTED SERVICE (last five years)

#### *Lenoir-Rhyne University – Hickory, NC*

##### *University Service*

- Capital Planning Committee – Member (Fall 2024 – present).
- Lenoir-Rhyne University – Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council – Member (Fall 2023 – present).
- Strategic Enrollment and Retention Committee – Chair (Spring 2023 – present).
- Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Committee – Chair (Summer 2022 – present).
- Provost's Council – Chair (Summer 2022 – present).
- Dean's Council – Chair (Summer 2022 – present).
- Undergraduate Policy Committee – Co-chair (Fall 2024 – present)
- Graduate Policy Committee – Co-chair (Fall 2024 – present)
- Faculty Senate/Assembly – Member (Summer 2022 – present).
- LR Physician Assistant Advisory Board (Fall 2022 – present).
- University Strategic Planning Group – Member (Fall 2025).
- NIL Collective Task Force – Chair (Fall 2024 – Summer 2025).
- Academic Policy Committees – Chair (Summer 2022 – Fall 2024).

##### *Community and Professional Service*

- Founding Member (2017), Executive Board Member (2017 – 2022, 2025 – present) and Treasurer (elected) (2018 – 2021) – North Carolina American Council on Education (ACE) Network.
- North Carolina American Council on Education (ACE) Network Mentoring Program – Mentor (Spring 2025 – present).
- Appalachian College Association Summit Planning Committee – Member (Fall 2024 – present).
- Member (2014 – present) and chair (2016 – 2017) of advisory board for the statewide BRIDGES Academic Leadership Program.
- Catawba County and Regional Education Steering Committee, a collaborative group including leaders from business, government, education, and nonprofit sectors tasked to develop a comprehensive plan for attracting, developing, and retaining a skilled workforce – Member (Fall 2024 – Spring 2025).
- Appalachian College Association's (ACA) National Science Foundation (NSF) ADVANCE Grant Steering Committee – Member (Fall 2023 – Summer 2025).

- Identifying and Advancing Training & Skills Development Needs Workforce Roundtable for K-64, a collaborative initiative in Catawba County, NC, focused on aligning education and workforce needs to meet future talent demands – Member (Summer 2023 – Fall 2023).

#### *Appalachian State University – Boone, NC*

- University Planning and Priorities Council (UPPC) – University Strategic Plan - Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion subcommittee member (Fall 2021 – Summer 2022)
- University Faculty Development Collaborative Team – Member (Fall 2021 – Summer 2022)
- University Mentoring Programs Collaborative Team – Member (Fall 2021 – Summer 2022)
- College of Arts and Sciences Inclusive Excellence Committee (Fall 2021 – Summer 2022)
- Campus team co-lead of university's NCBI (National Coalition Building Institute) campus training program (Spring 2021 – Summer 2022), appointed by Chief Diversity Officer
- Appalachian State University – Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Coordination Team – Member (Spring 2021 – Summer 2022)
- Appalachian Aspire Alliance – Self Assessment Team member – NSF supported program aimed at supporting the development of and success of underrepresented groups in the STEM disciplines including natural sciences, mathematics, social sciences and beyond (Fall 2020 – Summer 2022)

### HONORS and AWARDS

- 2023 and 2024 Winner – Lenoir-Rhyne Cooking Contest – with Academic Affairs Team!
- Recipient of the International 2020 OSA Diversity & Inclusion Advocacy Recognition.
- Recipient of the 2020 College of Arts and Sciences Inclusion Award for Department.
- Nominated for the 2020 College of Arts and Sciences Inclusion Award as an Individual.
- Nominated for the 2020 College of Arts and Sciences – Jimmy Smith Outstanding Service Award
- Nominated for the 2020 Undergraduate Advising Excellence in Academic Advising award.
- Nominated by six students for Appalachian State University's 2017 Undergraduate Research Mentorship Excellence Award.
- Recipient of the 2015 University of North Carolina System – Board of Governors Award for Excellence in Teaching (nominated by 16 students).
- Selected participant in the 2014 UNC – Chapel Hill's BRIDGES Academic Leadership Program for Women, sponsored by Academic Affairs and the College of Arts & Sciences.
- Named as one of the *Most Helpful Faculty and Staff* in 2013, 2014, 2016, 2017, and 2019 by freshmen and transfer student MapWorks Survey.
- Recipient of the 2013 Appalachian State University Harvey R. Durham Outstanding Freshman Advocate Award, presented to one full time employee each year.
- Nominated for 2011, 2012, 2013 College of Arts & Sciences William C. Strickland Outstanding Junior Faculty Award.

### SELECTED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (last five years)

- Applied Agentic AI for Organizational Transformation, Fall 2025, MIT Professional Education Certificate.
- AI Ready program, Fall 2025 – present – Council of Independent Colleges (CIC).
- Future Presidents Intensive – Fall 2025 – EAB
- Title IX and Sexual Harassment and Title IX: Role of Employees, Fall 2024 – Lenoir-Rhyne University.
- New Provost Intensive – Summer/Fall 2022 – EAB

- Year-long conflict management learning community – *Leading through Conflict*, Fall 2021 – summer 2022
- HR Diverse Faculty/Staff Recruitment Certification Course, December 2021 – The Academic Network
- National Coalition Building Institute: Train the Trainer Seminar (three days), November 2020 – Appalachian State University

#### SELECTED PRESENTATIONS (last five years)

- **Invited Panelist:** "Reflections on Your Leadership Journey", 2025 BRIDGES Academic Leadership Program, Chapel Hill, NC, scheduled for November 2025. (Moderator: Thorn, L.; Panelists: J., et al.)
- **Invited Presenter:** "Giving and Receiving Feedback", 2025 BRIDGES Academic Leadership Program, Chapel Hill, NC, September 2025, September 2024, September 2023, September 2022, September 2021. (with L. Floyd)
- **Invited Panelist:** "Reflections on Your Leadership Journey", 2024 BRIDGES Academic Leadership for Women, Chapel Hill, NC, November 2024 (Moderator: Thorn, L.; Panelists: Burris, J., Davis, J., and Oliver, S.)
- **Invited Presenter:** "Equitable Evaluation, Promotion and Tenure: Faculty Success is Student Success", Department Chair and Dean Workshop, Appalachian College Association (ACA) Summit, Knoxville, TN, September 2024
- **Invited Presenter:** "Educational Partner Engagement for Talent Development", Leadership Catawba: Workforce Connectivity, Hickory, NC, January 2024 (with G. Henshaw and A. Wood)
- **Co-author:** "SEA Change in the AppState Physics and Astronomy Department", DEI Connect Research Symposium on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC, April 5, 2024 (Hester, B., Kananocish, A., Nischal, N., Weaver, W., Russell, Z., Silwal, R., Burris, J., McGahee C., Chandra, S., Brent, S., and Jansen, T.)
- **Invited Panelist:** "Cross Generational Leadership Reflections", 2023 BRIDGES Academic Leadership for Women, Chapel Hill, NC, November 2023
- **Panel Developer & Moderator:** "What's Good for the Goose: Challenging Double Standards in Academic Leadership" (WIELS), Appalachian State University, October 2023 (Moderator, J. Burris; Panelists: Gores, C., Medders, L., and Pate, K.)
- **Co-presenter:** "The Impact of and Response to ChatGPT in the Classroom", Appalachian College Association (ACA) 2023 Summit, Knoxville, TN, September 2023 (with J. Bellemer)
- **Co-author:** "Advancing Change: Equity, Inclusion, and Career Success for STEM Faculty", 2023 ADVANCE Equity in STEM, Durham, NC, June 2023 (McLemore-Salinas, T., Bellemer, A., Burris, J., Cartaya-Marin, C., Colby, S., Hester, B., and Parsons, J.)
- **Co-presenter:** "Advancing Change: Equity, Inclusion, and Career Success for STEM Faculty", AAC&U 2023 Conference on Diversity, Equity, and Student Success, Las Vegas, NV, March 2023. (McLemore-Salinas, T., Bellemer, A., Burris, J., Cartaya-Marin, C., Colby, S., Hester, B., and Parsons, J.)
- **Co-presenter:** "ADVANCE APPALACHIAN through Inclusive Excellence in STEM", Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Summit, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC, April 2022 (Burris, J., Bellemer, A., Cartaya-Marin, C., Hester, B., and McLemore-Salinas, T.)
- **Invited Co-facilitator:** "Your Future Leadership Journey", 2020 BRIDGES Academic Leadership for Women, November 2021 (with L. Floyd)
- **Invited Panelist:** "Senior Level Professional Development – Leadership Development Programs", NC ACE Women's Network, June 2021 (Moderator: Thomas, G.; Panelists: Banks, J., Burris, J., Dempsey, C.J.)

- **Invited Panelist:** "Grant Experience for New Faculty", Appalachian State University Office of Research, Boone, NC, June 2021 (Moderator Fletcher, K.; Panelists: Burris, J., Dickinson, D., McLemore-Salinas, T., Calamai, T.)
- **Invited Speaker:** "Promise, People, and Possibility – Opportunities and Challenges for public higher education", UNC Wilmington, College of Arts and Sciences, May 2021
- **Invited Speaker:** "Delivering and Growing Innovative and Long-Term Sustainable Programs that Support Diverse Learners", University of Northern Colorado, College of Natural and Health Sciences, February 2021
- **Invited Speaker:** "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for STEM Departments", Wake Forest University, Department of Biology, February 2021; Colorado State University, Department of Physics and Astronomy, March 2021; Appalachian State University, Department of Physics and Astronomy, Boone, NC, April 2021; Emory University, Department of Pharmacology and Chemical Biology, November 2021.
- **Invited Co-facilitator:** "Your Future Leadership Journey", 2020 BRIDGES Academic Leadership for Women, Chapel Hill, NC, November 2020 (with L. Floyd)
- **Co-presenter:** "Strategies for Leveraging Professional Networks to Build Your Leadership Potential", 2019 Empowered to Lead Women's Leadership Conference, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, Greensboro, NC, October 2020 (with A. Overman and G. Thomas)
- **Invited Panelist:** Mid-Career Faculty Learning Community Panel Discussion, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC, October 2020 (Moderator: Shulstad, R.; Panelists: Burris, J., Douthit, J., and McCaughey, M.)
- **Invited Presenter:** "Department Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives", Department Chair Professional Development, Center for Academic Excellence, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC, September 2020
- **Invited Co-presenter:** "Understanding and Managing Service Loads", Department Chair Professional Development, Center for Academic Excellence, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC, March 2020 (with C. Cartaya-Marin)

## RECENT GRANT ACTIVITY (last five years)

**Career Total**, \$3.9M externally funded (\$1.6M as PI and \$2.3M in other role).

### 2025

*Title TBD*

Agency: U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration

Program: Disaster Recovery – Readiness, Implementation, and Industry Transformation Paths

Amount: up to \$2.5M appropriation

Status: **In Progress**

Role: **Lead** with L. Floyd, C. Schreiber, and regional partners

*Title TBD*

Agency: Department of Education

Program: Title III Strengthening Institutions

Amount: ~\$2.1M

Status: **In Progress**

Role: **PI** with J. Shreve, T. Brookes, L. Floyd, J. Santiago, and N. Eschbash

### *Bridges to Nursing Excellence*

Agency: Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)

Program: Scholarship for Health Professions Students from Disadvantaged Backgrounds

Amount: \$2,290,717

Status: Grant Funding on Hold due to Federal Government Funding Changes

Role: **Senior Personnel** with T. Toney (PI), S. Hewitt, K. Thompson, J. Painter, and L. Floyd

### **2024**

#### *Addition of Assistant AD for Academic Success*

Agency: NCAA (National Collegiate Athletics Association)

Program: Division II Strategic Alliance Matching Grant Enhanced Position

Amount: \$114,050

Status: **Funded**: Effective 8/1/24 – 8/1/29

Role: **Collaborator** with K. Pate (PI)

### **2023**

#### *Recruiting Teachers and Enhancing Capacity in Culturally Responsive Teaching in High-need Schools*

Agency: National Science Foundation (NSF)

Program: Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program (Noyce)

Amount: \$1,199,135

Status: **Funded**: Effective 8/1/24 – 7/31/29

Role: **Senior Personnel** with S. Weddington (PI), L. Floyd, J. Perkins, S. Williams, and S. Thomas

## **RESEARCH AND MENTORSHIP**

- Co-directed the Biophysics and Optical Sciences Facility, one of the largest research groups at Appalachian State University, with up to 22 students each semester. The interdisciplinary applied research focused on optical engineering, automation, optical physics, and studies of biological and other materials using Raman spectroscopy, optical tweezers, and Laser Tweezer Raman Spectroscopy (LTRS).
- Mentored and collaborated with 98 students on individual research projects, serving as primary advisor for 49 students and secondary advisor for 49.
- Co-authored over 80 student presentations and authored several peer-reviewed publications with students.
- Secured 28 research stipends and facilitated 37 student research grants to support student research.
- Secured ~\$4M in external grant funding in various roles, many of which supported student stipends, research opportunities, mentorship, and scholarships.
- Championed student research as a key component of my philosophy on education, integrating students into my scholarship and providing opportunities for presentation and publications.

*(Full publication list available upon request.)*