



Faculty and Staff Mentors 2020-2021

Photo	Mentor Name	Title, Department, Links	About
	Andrew, Hazael	Associate Director, UNC Worldview	I am originally from the Commonwealth of Dominica, a small island in the southern Caribbean. I moved to the United States on an athletic scholarship (basketball) and attended Fayetteville State University where I double majored in Managerial Economics and Finance. My PhD research is on the academic, cultural and social experiences of Caribbean students at U.S. universities. I enjoy guiding students through the Carolina experience by sharing resources that could contribute to their success. When I am not working, you can find me watching sports, reading books and travelling.
	Austell, Todd	Teaching Professors and Associate Director of Undergraduate Studies, Department of Chemistry	I'm a NC person through and through...born and raised in Shelby, NC. I attended UNC for both U'grad and Grad school....so yep, I've been here a very long time. As an u'grad I was any of several majors at one time or another: math, biology, pre-med, and finally chemistry. I almost went to med school, but had a last minute epiphany that led me in a different direction. Come ask me what happen sometime? I worked in the pharmaceutical industry for one year before grad school and have now been a prof at UNC for 21 years in the chem dept. I also have served as a prof for 2 years at the USAF Academy. At UNC I've served as an academic advisor for 25 years and work mainly with STEM and pre-health sci profession majors... but I'm happy to talk to anyone. My FAVORITE role is helping others navigate UNC to achieve high goals... and to help them avoid the mistakes I made as an u'grad. I LOVE YOU AND AM FOR YOU!
	Blanton, Robin	Academic Coach and Biology Specialist, The Learning Center, Center for Student Success and Academic Counseling	I am originally from Columbia, South Carolina but lived in Tallahassee, Florida and Los Angeles, California before settling in North Carolina with my husband and three children. I have the pleasure of serving as the biology learning specialist in the Learning Center here at UNC. I have a passion for all things growing including students in their journey through higher education. I have enjoyed over the past 15 years helping students navigate the path to medical school, dental school and other allied health programs. My background and areas of interest are in biological sciences and public health. My family loves to play sports and have impromptu dance parties! We also spend a lot of time outside with friends.
	Bliem, Carribeth	Teaching Assistant Professor, Department of Chemistry	As a chemistry instructor, I love my job: getting to know Carolina undergrads who bring boundless energy and passion in their efforts to make the world a better place! In class, I like to help students see how chemistry topics connect to their daily lives. When I'm not thinking about chemistry, I enjoy cooking (chemistry!), knitting, mysteries (books and netflix) and playing board games (Scrabble and Dominion are two favorites).
	Borger, Maribel	Undergraduate Labs Supervisor, Department of Chemistry; Rural Medicine Scholars Program	I am a first generation Latina UNC Carolina Covenant alum. I graduated from UNC in 2014. I received my PhD in organic chemistry at Florida State University in 2019 and currently work as instructor and supervisor of the Undergraduate chemistry labs. I love teaching chemistry and working with thoughtful, bright and dynamic Carolina students - particularly, empowering Latina women in STEM like me. I love Chapel Hill - best place in the whole world, pupusas con mi familia y amigos, hikes with my family, and scrapbooking!



Chavis, Euna Victoria

[Program Coordinator,
Summer Bridge, Center for
Student Success and
Academic Counseling](#)

I am originally from Maxton, NC, a small town in Robeson County. I am a citizen of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina and a first-generation college graduate. My role at UNC is to coordinate the Summer Bridge program and provide programming and support for Bridgees as they matriculate through Carolina. I am a Double Tar Heel alumni, graduating with my B.A in Psychology and Master of Social Work degrees. Counting undergrad, grad school, and employment, I have been at Carolina for 10 years. Currently, I am enrolled in a PhD program at NC State University in Educational Leadership, Policy, and Human Development. I love cooking, baking, family time, taking pictures, and watching sports!



Cohen, Marc

[Teaching Associate Professor,
Department of English and
Comparative Literature](#)

Hello, Tar Heels! I am a former Hollywood movie industry story editor who became an English professor. My first job out of college was on the movie Terminator 2. I am married to my UCLA college sweetheart and I have two kids--one who is a junior at UNC and the other who is a senior at one of Chapel Hill's high schools. At UNC, I teach multicultural American literature, world literature in English, and a variety of writing courses. I love new experiences, travel, art, food, reading, music, theater, movies, learning, and meeting new people. Because my dad was in the US Navy, I was born in Italy. I was raised in Portland, Oregon, and I lived in California for around 17 years. At UNC, I'm known as a professor who likes to create experiences. My students have shadowed in the UNC Hospital Emergency Department, have attended Tierra Whack's hip hop concert, have met one of the world's greatest ballerina's Wendy Whelan, and more. As a mentor, I specialize in helping set up students in internships.



Cooper, Toska

[Research Project Coordinator
at the UNC Injury Prevention
Research Center](#)

I was born in Boston, Massachusetts but grew up in a small town called Four Oaks, North Carolina. I hold a B.S. in Kinesiology and MPH in Social and Behavioral Health Sciences. I'm currently working at UNC as a project manager on health-related research projects. Outside of my immediate role, I love mentoring students and providing resources for students to become the best version of themselves. Whether it's bridging the gap between cross-campus units or exploring personal values, I enjoy serving students where I can. When I'm not working, you can find me building a house with Habitat for Humanity, running an obstacle race, baking a new dish or participating in an activity with my sorority.



Deardorff, Duane

[Director of Undergraduate
Laboratories, Department of
Physics and Astronomy](#)

I was born in Quito, Ecuador and grew up in Dayton, Ohio but have now lived in the Triangle area of North Carolina longer than any other place. My dissertation research at NCSU was on students' treatment of measurement uncertainty, and I enjoy teaching physics and directing our teaching labs here at UNC. My hobbies include juggling and kite flying, and I have traveled to over 40 countries.



DeSaix, Jean

[Teaching Professor in Biology](#)

My family has been in NC for generations, mostly Davidson County, though I grew up in the Eastern part of the state, graduating from Williamston High School with a graduating class of 72 students. I also went to a small college, Catawba College, so the transition to graduate school here where I got my PhD was not an easy one. I taught intro biology and advised health professions students for many years. I now teach courses about the health professions (Biology 117 & 118). Peter (DeSaix) and I met here in grad school and love having students come to our home for meals. We hope to do that again soon. We are also available to answer questions about applying to health professions.



DeSaix, Peter

Teaching assistant professor
in Biology; Adjunct Lecturer
in Cell Biology & Physiology

I lived in both High Point and Asheville then headed off to the University of the South (Sewanee). After graduation I came to UNC for my doctorate in Zoology. I then spent the next many years in Public Health supporting IT & Instructional Technologies while also teaching intro biology and Human Anatomy & Physiology. A few years ago I did, mostly, retire though I still work with Covenant Scholars and Episcopal Campus Ministry. I also like fishing :)



Egbert, Rebecca

[Senior Assistant Director and C-STEP Program Director/Office of Undergraduate Admissions](#)

I was born into a military family in the state of CA. We moved around a little bit to TX and Mississippi while I was young and then my family settled in NC. I was born a first generation college student and watched my dad work hard to earn his MBA while I was young. I have spent most of my professional career at UNC working with transfer students and I love what I do. I really enjoy the outdoors, traveling, and spending time with my family. I am ready to help!



Evans, Mara

[STEM Teaching Assistant Professor, Department of Biology](#)

I'm originally from California, but my growing up years were spent in Ecuador, Mexico and Kenya. I teach introductory biology and ecology and evolution. I am also a career adviser (career coach). I can help students navigate success in time management, STEM courses, finding research opportunities, identifying career options, and communication strategies. Outside of work I like to read, draw and sew and I love hearing about people's travel and pop culture interests.



Feldman, Evan

[Professor, Area Head of Brass, Wind, and Percussion, Department of Music](#)

I'm originally from New York, but have lived and taught in Iowa, Virginia, and, for the last 13 years, North Carolina. I've taught high school music, and most recently college wind ensembles (concert bands) and professional and amateur orchestras. I'm also involved in the music education program here at UNC, and a lot of what I do at an academic and professional level involves music education. If you're interested in music or education or the intersection of the two, let's chat! I'm "classically" trained, but I have an equal affinity for the pop/film/theater music side of things. I'm especially interested in incorporating multi-media into my concerts, which has allowed me to dabble a bit into video editing and finding creative ways to engage and teach audiences. These are the sorts of questions that make education a two-way street between teacher and student, so I'm really interested in connecting with anybody who wants to explore the same sorts of issues.



Goldstein, Bob

[Professor, Department of Biology](#)

I'm a Biology professor and I also co-teach an unusual course that bridges science and studio art. I love tinkering and making things. I run workshops all over North Carolina to teach elementary school teachers to build microscopes. It's been a thrill to get to other parts of the state, meet people, experience diverse cultures, and I love that I can share something that teachers and their students really enjoy. I run a research lab in the Biology Department, and I love thinking about solving complex problems as a team with people in the lab. In past years I've gathered scholars I mentor for mens basketball games, womens soccer games, chats over coffee, shooting my blood cells with a laser on a microscope in the lab (no kidding, it's fun, I swear!), and dinners at Top of the Hill. This year I'm thinking about socially distanced gatherings, and I'm hoping to gather a group to try out giant spin art... spinning canvases at high speed while dripping paint on them to make your own art.



Grant, Calvin

[Director of Undergraduate Laboratories and Instructor of Quantitative Chemistry, Department of Chemistry](#)

I was born in Jamaica, the second set of two sets of twins and grew up in Bronx, NY and the Metro Atlanta area. I went to a small HBCU in Huntsville (majoring in Chemistry and Spanish) Alabama and got my PhD in Organic Chemistry from Michigan State University. I've been a TA, a Tutor, and an Instructor of Chemistry. Now I am an Undergraduate Laboratory Supervisor in Morehead Labs and Instructor of first semester Gen Chem Lab. I love sharing and learning chemistry. I also love travelling (out of the country as much as possible), TV and movies (action, fantasy, anime, etc.), and video games (though I had to give away my Xbox 360 to survive grad school). I can sing though I hate being in front of people and have always wanted to learn an instrument (bass guitar preferable). I am interested in and attempted to write a work of fiction. Oh, and I babble from time to time. :)



Hackney, Anthony

[Professor of Exercise Physiology and Nutrition, Department of Exercise and Sport Science; Department of Nutrition \(Gillings School of Global Public Health\)](#)

I am a professor in Exercise Physiology and Nutrition here at UNC where I have been now for 30+ years. I am a first generation college graduate, and actually I am the first member of my family to graduate from high school. I have lived and worked in Europe as well as on the West and East coast of the USA. Currently, I have a small farm near Saxapahaw, NC where I raise lots of small animals. I am into sustainable agriculture, great food, and any chance to get outside.



Hammill, Olivia

[Assistant Director, Recruitment and Admissions, UNC School of Pharmacy](#)

I was born right outside of Chicago, IL but grew up in Raleigh, NC. I am a double Carolina grad, and I am THRILLED to still be on campus working with students! I studied political science and peace, war, and defense in undergrad and got a master's degree in public administration from UNC's School of Government. I currently lead recruitment and admissions efforts for the PharmD program at UNC's pharmacy school (which is totally different from what I studied!). I'm happy to chat with you about anything, but especially the transition to college, preparing for graduate school, pursuing opportunities that may be entirely different from your major, and all things UNC. When I'm not on campus, I love traveling, exercising, and spending time with friends. We're excited to have you as part of the Covenant family!



Harris, Patricia "Trish"

[Director of Recruitment and School of Education Diversity Liaison, School of Education; Vice Chair, Carolina Black Caucus](#)

I'm from a small town called Gay, GA (pop. 86). I am a first generation college student and a proud HBCU alumna. I hold a B.A. in Sociology and M.A. in Counseling. I'm currently pursuing a doctorate in Higher Education Management from the University of Georgia, where I'm conducting research on the racialized experiences of Black students at PWI's. I also studied comparative higher education in China and Europe. I am a proud member of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. I can assist with resource mapping, personal branding, applying to professional schools at UNC, preparing for graduate school, and networking and building connections to help support personal, academic and professional growth. Things I love: traveling, cooking, game nights, karaoke, being random, and making people smile.



Harris, Shauna

[Associate Director, Office of Student Life and Leadership, Carolina Union](#)

I was born in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina and love spending time at the beach. I hold a B.A. in History, M.Ed. in Higher Education and Student Affairs and a Ph.D. in Counseling and Student Personnel Services. My dissertation research focused on the impact colorism has on the identity negotiation of biracial women. I have worked in higher education and student affairs for over 13 years. I love mentoring students and can assist students with getting involved in leadership and involvement opportunities, preparing for graduate school and connecting with campus and community resources. I love reading, all things Harry Potter and Marvel, traveling, taking pictures of nature and being involved in my sorority.



Hogan, Brian

[Teaching Professor and Vice Chair of Education, Department of Chemistry](#)

I love teaching biology and chemistry and being part of the vibrant UNC community! My wife and I are UNC alumna and my two kids are Tar Heels born and bred. I'm a first generation college student (originally from NJ) and the first in my family to get a PhD. I'd be happy to talk with any student about "how to do college". Outside of teaching, I have a lot of diverse interests. I've been trying to learn Spanish for the past decade, I started playing guitar again at age 40, and I'm a big fan of the Harry Potter books.



Holman, DeVetta

[Resiliency and Student Support Programs Coordinator, Student Wellness](#)

Dr. D. has spear-headed several groups on campus such as SISTER TALK, P.E.A.C.E. and R.E.A.L.Talk with the Fellas. Her body of work emphasizes persistence, self-awareness, resiliency, a growth mindset and its relevance to personal agency both, in and out of the classroom. Dr. DeVetta is a two time alumnus of the University of North Carolina as an undergraduate, as well as, a graduate of the Gillings School of Global Public Health. She is an advocate of the Human Spirit and is committed to "meeting students where they are". She received her Doctorate in Leadership Studies focusing on Education, Resiliency and Belongingness. DeVetta serves on several campus committees. She is the past recipient of the C. Knox Massey Award, Member of the Frank Porter Graham Honor Society and Inducted into the Order of the Golden Fleece. To give back to the community, Dr. D. serves as the Executive Camp Director for Global Health Connections, Inc., a residential Summer STEAM camp for under-served students in the eastern-most parts of North Carolina. She is married to E. Rick Copeland and is the proud mother of one son, Robert-Anthony Nash.



Jones, Dawna

[Assistant Dean of Students, Office of the Dean of Students, and Chair, Carolina Black Caucus](#)

I was born and raised in New Jersey. I attended undergrad as a first-generation college student studying out of state at Penn State University. I am a proud social worker and student affairs professional. My degrees are in Sociology, Higher Education Management, and Social Work. I enjoy reading, movies, and sitcoms. I am very active in my community, serving with organizations focused on racial equity, environmental justice, affordable housing, and social justice.



Lambert Ward, Jessica

[Counselor and Coordinator for Academic Appeals, Academic Advising Program](#)

I was born in Okinawa, Japan but raised in Wakulla, NC a predominately American Indian community about 10 miles north of the NC/SC border. I am an enrolled member of the Lumbee Tribe of NC and a proud first-generation "double Tar Heel". I completed my undergraduate student with a BA in International Studies with a concentration in Asian Transnational Cultures and a minor in American Indian Studies. I also earned my MSW and a Certificate in Nonprofit Leadership all from UNC! In my free time I love to cook, bake sweet treats, karaoke, and hanging out with my family.



Lewis, Roderick

[Senior Associate Director, University Career Services](#)

I'm a native of Tuscaloosa, Alabama and a graduate of The University of Alabama in Electrical Engineering. I then went on to complete my MBA at The Georgia Institute of Technology. I've studied, worked, and lived outside of the USA for 10 years in Spain, Portugal, and various Latin American countries. Though I started my career in Engineering, I quickly found that I enjoy being a "social engineer" which is what led me to explore international business, culture, and politics. I'm a jack of all trades, and master of none. And that is what makes me unique. I'm a certified professional coach and also career consultant. I've got two kids, one in elementary and one in middle school. They make my life interesting as you can imagine! I look forward to meeting you and helping you to navigate any journey you're ready to take!



Lindquist, Jo

[Teaching Associate Professor of Spanish](#)

I am Australian born that lived in Spain for 18 years. I was lucky to live in Pamplona, Spain. I am a medievalist with Merlin and King Arthur in all their incarnations as the center of her academic research. When it comes to research, Lindquist is torn between teaching and scholarly research. The main focus of my research is the Arthurian Legend's literary texts and its representation in art and film. I am the coordinator of Spanish 105 and the Teaching Faculty Mentoring Director. It is my pleasure to work with students and colleagues in this wonderful organization and I am looking forward to meet you and help in any way I can.



Mitchall, Allison

[Assistant Dean, Academic Advising Program](#)

I'm a first-gen college student originally from Springfield, Massachusetts. I come from a single parent family without a lot of financial resources so I am passionate about helping students thrive in college, regardless of income. I went to NYU (on scholarship!) and majored in journalism and women's studies. After graduating, I worked in public relations in NYC for many years before getting my master's and PhD in Higher Education. Now I'm an Assistant Dean in Academic Advising in the Humanities and Social Sciences division, so I am happy to talk with students about major choice, academic policies, what advisors can help with, and how to make the most of your time in college. I also love talking about study abroad because going to Africa, Greece, and France in college was amazing! Outside of work, I love Zumba, SYTYCD, movies, the beach and hanging out with my husband & two daughters.



Nevins, Kathleen

[Undergraduate Labs Supervisor, Department of Chemistry](#)

Dr. Kathleen Nevins is a Supervisor of Undergraduate Laboratories within the UNC Department of Chemistry. Kathleen earned her Ph.D. in inorganic materials chemistry from SUNY Buffalo under Dr. David Watson and began working at UNC directly after graduate school in 2013, Kathleen loves to go to the beach and to travel. She has two young children who keep her on her toes!



Perez, Josmell

[Director, Carolina Latinx Center](#)

I was born in Lima, Peru. I came to the US at the age of 6 with my parents and 2 brothers. I grew up in Northern New Jersey in a household with limited financial resources but an abundance of encouragement. We had to overcome some of the typical immigrant struggles, but we always could turn to family for support. As a first gen-college student, I am excited to support our Covenant Scholars! It is common to see my partner and I on campus with our two daughters. We love spending time on campus and exposing our girls to the rich community of Carolina.



Porter, Robert

[Teaching Assistant Professor, Department of African, African American, and Diaspora Studies](#)

I am the first in my family to go to college. I'm a native of Texas and have taught at UNC-CH in the Department of AAAD Studies for more than 30 years. I'm extremely enthusiastic about mentoring for Covenant and have done so for more than a decade. I make it my business to learn as much about graduate and professional schools as well as available scholarships so as to help my mentees as much as possible.



Pruvost, Valérie

[Teaching Professor of French, Department of Romance Studies](#)

I was born and raised in Paris, France. I came to the US through an exchange/study abroad experience and made my life here. Transitioning to a new culture, new country, new life without family was challenging at times. I have a Masters in English (American Studies) from France and a Masters and PhD (from UNC) in French from the US. I taught at Wake Forest, years ago, then returned to Carolina. I was a Faculty Advisor for Academic Advising for 15 years and truly enjoyed talking to students about their studies and how to be successful in their coursework. Reading, going on walks, traveling and discovering new places are my favorite pastimes. My regular yoga practice inspires me every day. I really enjoy talking with students about their studies, worries and hobbies.



Reissner, Kathryn (Kate)

[Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology and Neuroscience](#)

I grew up in Lumberton, NC and this state is a huge part of my identity. I am so happy to be a part of the UNC-CH family in the Department of Psychology & Neuroscience. I am inspired by neuroscience and understanding how the brain works. I would be delighted to be a mentor to anyone who is interested in biological/biomedical sciences (and also to anyone who is not!). I am also happy to chat about how difficult it can be to be away from home for the first time and to find your way in college!



Shemer, Gidi

[Teaching Associate Professor,
Department of Biology](#)

Coming from Israel to Carolina only at the age of 40, I quickly found myself a devoted Tar Heel. In fact, my three daughters all went to UNC, including my youngest who joins Tar Heel nation this semester. I am a teaching professor in the biology department and also the faculty advisor of the biology majors and the one responsible for undergrad research. I love the nature here and often go kayaking and hiking in the area. Cooking (vegan) is another way I like to spend my time.



Smith, Eric

[Academic Advisor, Academic
Advising Program](#)

I am a first-generation college student from Bullock, NC. Going from a very small, rural town in NC to UNC was a major adjustment and I quickly realized that I had a lot to learn. Even though it was not always easy, I was able to prevail and I am happy to say that I have been professionally connected to UNC in some way ever since. Having experiences as a student and a staff at the university has deepened my passion for UNC and is one of the driving forces for me trying to be a positive resource for all students. Currently, I am Academic Advisor and I get to support students on navigating majors, minors, course selection and choosing the academic paths that are going to lead them towards their future goals and aspirations. Outside of work, I enjoy spending time with my wife, our one year old and friends, trying new foods and travelling the world when possible.



Strauss, Ron

[Executive Vice Provost](#)

I was born in New York City to parents who were refugees from Nazi Germany. As first in our family to go to college, I know how challenging it can be to juggle family expectations and the stresses of being a student. For me, I worked to support myself while going to Queens College of the City University of New York. After completing a bachelor's degree in Biology, I attended the University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine on a scholarship. While a dental student, I began to study Sociology and soon found myself in a masters and PhD program in Sociology with funding from the National Institute of Health. I am a faculty member in 3 schools at UNC: Dentistry, Medicine and Public Health. At Carolina I serve as the Executive Vice Provost and work with the faculty and academic affairs. As a clinician, I work on an interdisciplinary health team taking care of children with cleft lip, cleft palate and other facial and cranial differences. My research has been on the social and psychological implications of stigma and discrimination and I have worked on facial differences and on HIV/AIDS. I teach a large class called the HIV/AIDS Course and hope some of our Covenant students will take the course (PUBH 420). I am married to a Family Medicine physician faculty member at UNC and we have 2 terrific daughters and 3 grand-daughters. My spirit is helped by daily hiking, yoga and a love for cooking.



Woodard, Brian

[Assistant Director \(C-STEP
Program\), Office of
Undergraduate Admissions](#)

I'm from Snow Camp, NC and found my way to UNC as a transfer student from a NC Community College. At Carolina, I completed an BA in History and MEd in School Counseling. Currently, I work with the Carolina Student Transfer Excellence Program within the Undergraduate Admissions Office. I can help students navigate transfer/exam credit, connect to resources, and answer general questions.