



THREADS

May 6, 2024

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Message from Provost Usher

If you are like me, sitting at my desk basking in the glow of a successful commencement season (if a little soggy), you might also be cleaning up your desk, checking through unanswered emails from the frenzy of the last weeks of the semester, and reorganizing my todo list for the summer. It was such a pleasure to see not only students and families at graduation, but also that our Academic Affairs community showed up in force. It reaffirms that Radford University is a community, and that I have “Found my place. Here.”

Radford University slows but doesn't stop for the summer. Many of you will be participating in “Our Turn” as you turn your attention to teaching and scholarly projects for the summer. I give extra thanks to CITL and everyone who is organizing and presenting. I know that many of you will continue to think about your Curriculum Lifecycle updates, and I look forward to more conversations about curriculum in the fall.

We'll have new faces in the fall. Dr. Jerel Benton will be joining us as Assistant Provost for Student Success, and you can learn more about him below. We will have completed the searches for deans for the College of Nursing and the Davis College of Business and Economics; the interim Assistant Provost for Graduate Affairs, and the University Librarian. Please feel free to participate in any search events as you are able.

Summer is a great time to read! Radford University Libraries supports *free* New York Times accounts for our faculty and students – please take advantage of this! You can also keep up with

higher education news through Radford supported Chronicle of Higher Education accounts. Finally, you can do some “beach” reading by checking out books from the popular section (more info on these below). I also am a member of the Radford Public Library, and appreciate their investment in free audiobooks through [the Libby app](#).

Please feel free to reach out to the Academic Affairs team if you need us. We’ll be working, traveling, and headed to conferences this summer, but we are also always here for you.

Bethany

Welcome Dr. Jerel Benton - Assistant Provost for Student Success



Dr. Jerel D. Benton is a distinguished leader in the field of higher education, celebrated for his extensive expertise in student success, diversity, equity, and inclusion. A first-generation college student himself, Dr. Benton holds a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies from Eastern Kentucky University, a Master of Arts in Adult and Higher Education from Morehead State University, and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Western Kentucky University. His professional journey has seen him hold several pivotal roles, including serving as the Special Assistant to the Provost and Associate Vice President for Student Success at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. Dr. Benton’s leadership has led to substantial advancements in student retention and graduation rates, particularly among underserved populations.

Dr. Benton's career is marked by his roles as a Senior Diversity Officer at the University of Wisconsin – Superior and as the Minority Retention Coordinator at Morehead State University, where he developed significant initiatives aimed at enhancing institutional diversity and student success. His commitment to educational leadership is also evident from his selection for the Emerging Leaders Program by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) in 2023. Beyond his professional achievements, Dr. Benton is a devoted husband to Gabrielle and a loving father to three daughters, Ayden, Alyssa, and Amari. His personal and professional life both reflect his dedication to fostering environments that support both academic excellence and comprehensive student support.



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University Libraries

The [University Libraries](#) wishes you a happy and book-full summer!

Check out our [Popular Reading collections](#), filled with best-seller novels, nonfiction, and more. Popular Reading books check out for 4 weeks and can be renewed if no one else is waiting. All you need is your Radford University One Card, which also serves as your library card.

If you're planning a road trip and want to listen to popular audiobooks, or if you prefer reading ebooks, stop by McConnell Library first. We can sign you up for a [Radford Public Library](#) card, so that you can access their digital audiobook/ebook services such as Hoopla.

New York Times Campus Subscription

All Radford University students, staff, and faculty have up-to-date unlimited access to most content on the New York Times. This includes full access to NYTimes.com and on the NYTimes.com smartphone apps. To sign up, [please click here and follow the instructions](#).

Through signing up, you will be able to access subscriber-only content including:

- Augmented Reality/Virtual Reality - found in the Mobile [App](#); NYT stories told through enhanced technology
- [Podcasts](#) (including The "Daily" podcast)
- All [Multimedia](#), including [video](#), [photography](#), [VR features](#), and new multimedia to come.
- [Newsletters](#) : Over 80 newsletters such as [Well](#), [Climate Forward](#), [In Her Words](#), and more.
- [Live Events](#) - conversations with inspiring personalities like [Tony Blair on How Russia's War Will Change the World: A Virtual Event](#), [Lin-Manuel Miranda and Shakespeare in the Park: A Times Summer Event](#), [Teaching 1619 Project: a virtual event for Educators and Librarians](#) and [Championing The Truth](#): a conversation between journalist and librarians on fighting misinformation, remaining balanced, and supporting communities.
- Up-to-date technology to make NYTimes.com [Accessible](#) with features such as closed caption and screen reader interface.
- [Spanish](#) and [Mandarin Chinese](#) translated versions of NYTimes.com.
- The New York Times in Education website and The Learning Network. ([nytimesineducation.com](#) and [nytimes.com/learning](#)).
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The Chronicle of Higher Education Campus Subscription

The RU Libraries provides access to [The Chronicle of Higher Education](#) for all RU faculty, staff, and students. You can access it while on campus or using the VPN from this [link](#). You will see a message that says SITE LICENSE ACCESS PROVIDED BY RADFORD UNIVERSITY in the upper left corner of the screen.

You can also create an account that gives you access to several of The Chronicle's newsletters that will be delivered straight to your inbox. To create an account:

1. You must be on-campus, connected to the RU network or using the VPN to create an account.
2. Go to [The Chronicle of Higher Education's](#) website and click on the "Log In" link at the top, right-hand side of the page.
3. Choose the "Sign Up" option.
4. Enter your name, campus e-mail address, and set a password. You will then need to confirm your email address through an email The Chronicle will send you.

Call for Interim Director of Appalachian Studies

The Radford University Appalachian Studies Program is seeking applicants for the position of Interim Director. The Appalachian Studies Program is undergoing a transition as it shifts leadership and administration from the College of Education and Human Development to the College of Humanities and Behavioral Sciences. Following a semester-long conversation with stakeholders across campus, “APST 2.0” is poised to renew the program’s role in the university as a vibrant, cross-campus, interdisciplinary undergraduate program whose graduates will leverage region-specific competencies to support holistic well-being, community-focused education, equitable prosperity, sustainable environments, and enriched cultural and social systems, both within and beyond Appalachia.

Responsibilities: The Director of Appalachian Studies will 1) provide leadership to move the vision of “ASPT 2.0” forward; 2) schedule sections of APST courses; 3) advise all students in the minor 4) hire, train, assign and evaluate adjunct faculty; 5) oversee the operating budget; 6) work with the APST faculty to plan co-curricular programming throughout the year; 7) work with APST stakeholders from across the university to improve and expand the program; 8) coordinate assessment and submit assessment data for the minor; and 9) submit periodic program review documents.

Compensation: Compensation for a stipend and course reassignments is subject to approval by the applicant’s department chair/school director, as well as the dean.

Qualifications: Ph.D. or terminal degree; Tenure or tenure-track faculty status, tenure preferred; Demonstrated expertise in Appalachian Studies; Demonstrated commitment to the field of Appalachian Studies.

Application Materials: 1) A cover letter that explains the applicant’s reasons for seeking this position, prior experience, and expertise in Appalachian Studies, and demonstrated commitment to the field of Appalachian Studies; 2) Curriculum vitae; 3) Confirmation from the department chair or school director supporting the application.

Application should be submitted to Dr. Aysha Bodenhamer (abodenham3@radford.edu) by close of business on Wednesday, May 8th, 2024. Appointments will begin in August 2024 and may be renewed for a second year. Thank you for your application.

Student Hourly Wages to Increase for 2024-25 Academic Year

As part of a presidential initiative to support Radford University’s commitment to access and affordability, wages for all student workers will be raised to a minimum of \$15 per hour beginning this fall. This is a commitment to both attract and retain students by helping them offset their cost of attendance, and to provide valuable and rewarding professional experiences that will help them prepare for their careers.

We encourage all units to plan for this change accordingly to ensure that student employment opportunities can be accommodated at the new rate within your current budget. In cases where that is not possible, please consult with your unit’s leadership and the budget office where necessary.

If you employ student workers, here’s how you can help us:

- Enter your open positions for fall 2024 in Handshake for new students to view by June 10.

- As you craft job descriptions, consider how the position will offer meaningful work experiences. The NACE (National Association for Colleges and Employers) [Career Readiness Competencies](#) are a helpful tool for supporting our students.

From May 28-31, and June 3-5, The Center for Career & Talent Development will provide training sessions for supervisors who will be posting campus jobs to Handshake for student employment at Radford. Staff from the center will be available to craft job descriptions that include the NACE Competencies. A link to sign up for the training sessions will be sent to student employers soon.

If you need access to Handshake, or have questions about how to use the system, please contact Debbie Fenderson at dfenderson@radford.edu.



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College of Visual and
Performing Arts

Announcing the call for entry to the annual Radford Art Show!

This regional exhibition hosted by Radford University Art Museum highlights the talent of artists living in the New River Valley area of Virginia. The exhibit is in collaboration with the City of Radford's celebrated Mary Draper Ingles Festival, featuring entertainment, art and history of the region.

This year's exhibition is juried by award winning artist and gallery owner, Pippi Miller (Miller off Main, Blacksburg, VA). The show features cash prizes and awards in categories for 2D and 3D artwork, including a \$500 prize for Best in Show.

All artists in Western and West Central Virginia age 18 and older are encouraged to apply. Entries must be received by Monday, May 13.

For more information and to enter



Please join us (in CITL or on Zoom) for the annual Summer Institute in Research and Creativity! This year's SIRC will include sessions on:

- publishing OER books and materials
- converting academic writing to writing for the public (such as *The Conversation*)
- campus resources for supporting your research and creative work
- publicizing your work and getting your news out
- productivity aids and making a plan for your summer work

We will operate conference-style and offer both in-person and Zoom options; feel free to register and then choose which (and how many) sessions you would like to attend. Lunch is included on select days.

Register for Summer Institute
in Research & Creativity!

Registration for Our Turn is now open! This is an opportunity for faculty and staff to come together as a teaching and learning community to discuss best teaching practices, participate in essential training, learn about and experiment with new technologies and become informed about new initiatives on campus. Click below to see this season's opportunities, including sessions on innovative, experiential, and inclusive pedagogies.

Register for Our Turn

REMINDER: CITL is open during the summer! Our services are available to you: course observations, course design, course revisions, audio and video studio, universal design support and maker space (sewing, t-shirt making, mug making, button making, glow forge laser cutting). Email us and let us know how we can help you: citl@radford.edu.

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Honors College

Radford hosts the Virginias Collegiate Honors Council annual conference:

Over 100 students and faculty from 17 honors programs in Virginia and West Virginia presented research projects and participated in workshops on April 19th and 20th. Dr. Ryan Sincavage (Geology) delivered the keynote address to attendees about the intellectual value of getting lost in the world. Workshops on career readiness presented by Lee Svete and Thallya Diaz (Career & Talent Development) provided students with first-hand advice from employers and graduate faculty. Participants joined Dr. Aysha Bodenhamer (Sustainability) to complete a service project at the Selu Conservancy that aligned with the conference theme *Honors: Into the Wilderness*. The Radford University Honors College is an active member of the Virginias Collegiate Honors Council, the Southern Regional Honors Council, and the National Collegiate Honors Council.

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Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarship

Dr. Tara Pelletier Recognized with 2024 OURS Outstanding Mentor Award:

Dr. Tara Pelletier was selected by the OURS Advisory Committee for an OURS Outstanding Mentor Award based on student nominations. From the student nominations it was abundantly clear that Dr. Pelletier has a profound impact upon students within the Department of Biology and beyond at Radford University. Dr. Pelletier “supports students not only in their research but beyond through personal and professional development as they discover their path for after graduation.”

Congratulations to Dr. Tara Pelletier on behalf of Radford University for providing incredible research experiences for our students!

Dr. Dayna Hayes Recognized with 2024 OURS Outstanding Mentor Award:

Dr. Dayna Hayes was selected by the OURS Advisory Committee for an OURS Outstanding Mentor Award based on student nominations. From the student nominations it was abundantly clear that Dr. Hayes has a profound impact upon students within the Department of Psychology and beyond at Radford University. "Dr. Hayes' priority is student growth, not only for the students in her classes, the undergraduates she mentors, but for any learner she interacts with."

Congratulations to Dr. Dayna Hayes on behalf of Radford University for providing incredible research experiences for our students!

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Citizen Leader

CONGRATULATIONS!

Tahirah Abdul-Raheem, a Citizen Leader, and **Layan Ibrahim** were chosen to attend the *N.E.W. Leadership* residential program this summer hosted by George Mason University. They join a cohort of 20 women chosen from more than 40 applications. They are most deserving!

**NEW Leadership®
Virginia**

M SCHAR
School of Policy
and Government
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

Ready to join a community dedicated to creating solutions for our country's current challenges?

Who: undergraduate students in Virginia
When: June 9-14, 2024
Where: Arlington, VA
George Mason University
Cost: Free!

Scan the QR code to learn more!

M-GAP
GENDER AND POLICY CENTER

Applications due by
March 1, 2024

NEW Leadership® Virginia is a non-partisan, six-day residential summer program that brings together undergraduate students and women leaders in public service.

Attendees will:

- Participate in panel discussions, workshops and projects
- Network with successful women leaders
- Build leadership skills
- Learn about the importance of women's participation in American policy, politics, and public life
- Become an effective advocate

Looking Ahead to Fall 2024

Campus Events hosted/co-hosted by Citizen Leader:

- Constitution and Citizenship Week – September 16 – 20
- Leadership Summit – October 16 – 19

If you would like to participate in either of these events, please contact Dr. Jean Mistele: jmistele@radford.edu. Planning is underway.

Think about becoming a UNIV 100 Faculty Instructor!

Want to positively impact the lives of first-year students?

Want to mentor and co-teach a first-year seminar course with a remarkable student leader?

Want to feel the spark of being in a classroom full of Radford's inspired first-year students?

If so, teach UNIV 100!

UNIV 100 Faculty Instructors:

Teach twice a week for 50 minutes for the fall semester (Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday)

Must have a master's degree or higher education

Get paid \$1,500 for the semester (if permitted)

Co-teach with a highly trained student Peer Instructor

Questions? Email Jason Lucas at jlucas5@radford.edu any time!

UNIV 100 Faculty Instructor Interest Survey

Faculty Survey: Artificial Intelligence in Teaching and Learning

Dear Instructors,

The increasing accessibility of artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT, Bing AI, Claude, and Bard have raised many questions for instructors around issues such as assignment design, incorporating AI into teaching, class policies, and more. To better understand these topics and to help us in developing resources to aid faculty, we are seeking instructors of record who have taught at higher education institutions within the past two years to participate in this study.

We are looking for instructors to complete a 15–30-minute needs assessment survey and follow-up focus groups to aid in the development of resources to support teaching. This study, Mega-SoTL Investigation of Artificial Intelligence in Teaching and Learning: Faculty Perspectives, has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through George Mason's Institutional Review Board (IRB #2035233).

If you have any questions, please feel free to email Dr. Bayraktar (bbayrakt@gmu.edu) at any time.

Dr. Breana Bayraktar, George Mason University

Dr. Dayna Henry, James Madison University

Dr. Jessica Taggart, University of Virginia

Co-Principal Investigators, *Mega-SoTL Investigation of Artificial Intelligence in Teaching and Learning: Faculty Perspectives*

[Access Survey](#)

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