

J. Joy Davis, Ph.D., MBA

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EDUCATION

University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Charlotte, NC

Ph.D., Curriculum & Instruction (Urban Education) | 2022–2025

Dissertation: *Scaling the Ivory Tower: Higher Education, High Achievement, Educational Equity Processes, and Women's Socioeconomic Mobility*

Kaplan University / Purdue University Global, Chicago, IL

Master of Business Administration (MBA) | 2012–2014

University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Charlotte, NC

B.A., Communication Studies (Public Relations) | Journalism Minor | 2006

HIGHER EDUCATION & EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

UNC Charlotte | 2017–Present

Assistant Teaching Professor, Business Communication (2026- Present) | Department of Communication Studies

Adjunct Professor (2017-2026) | Department of Communication Studies & WGST

Executive-level scholar and program leader responsible for designing, delivering, and scaling inclusive, experiential -based learning experiences across business communication, leadership, and interdisciplinary studies.

- Leads curriculum innovation, student engagement initiatives, and instructional team development aligned with institutional priorities.
- Designed and delivered high-impact courses serving undergraduate and honors students within a top-tier business college environment.
- Leads and supervises graduate instructional teams, developing onboarding systems, performance evaluations, and pedagogical training.
- Creates and facilitates flagship leadership programming connecting students with executives across finance, entrepreneurship, nonprofit, and corporate sectors.

- Serves as a trusted facilitator and moderator for high-visibility university events with 80–100+ attendees.
- Integrates data, feedback loops, and inclusive design principles to continuously improve learning and engagement outcomes.

Courses Taught

- Business Communication (COMM 3160 – Belk College of Business)
- Honors Business Communication
- Small Group Communication
- Introduction to Public Speaking
- Advanced Public Speaking
- Women's & Gender Studies: Race, Gender, Class & Beauty
- Women's & Gender Studies: Gender, Feminism and Wellness

Signature Programs & Experience Design

- Panel Host & Moderator, “A Panel of Power Players”
Designed and facilitated a university-wide experience connecting students to leaders in finance, entrepreneurship, nonprofit, and corporate sectors. Attendance exceeded 100 students; integrated live coaching on interviewing, networking, and career readiness.
- Founder, Women in Excellence & Leadership Series
Created UNC Charlotte's first leadership series focused on women's advancement. Secured multi-department funding, curated speakers, facilitated panels and breakout sessions, and welcomed 80+ students, alumni, and faculty.

Supervisor of (Communication Studies, MA) Graduate Assistants | 2019–2025

- Led recruitment, onboarding, training, and evaluation of graduate teaching assistants across multiple academic years.
 - Designed instructional workshops and mentoring systems to prepare GAs for independent teaching and leadership roles.
 - Served as liaison between faculty leadership and GAs, ensuring instructional alignment, quality assurance, and inclusive classroom practices.
 - Embedded entrepreneurial-minded principles into mentoring, curriculum delivery, and performance coaching.
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Wake Forest University | 2024-Present

Adjunct Professor, Department of WGS

Courses Taught

- WGS 150
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UNCINE (US) | 2023- 2026

Researcher & Leadership Consultant (2026) | Executive Fellow, Office of the Executive Director (2023-2025)

Served as senior advisor to the Executive Director, providing leadership on fundraising strategy, operations, and capacity building with a focus on long-term equity goals and organizational resilience. I managed cross-functionally with research, evaluation, and communications partners to support data-informed grantmaking, portfolio strategy, and continuous improvement. Principal architect of the organization's grant strategy, serving as principal grant writer and leading end-to-end funding development, trust-based donor relations, and grant management for an award-winning multi-state nonprofit advancing workplace mobility opportunities, representation, and narrative change for girls to scale equitable media and creative education programming nationally.

Scope & Impact

- *As the principal grant writer, I wrote over \$1 million in grants on behalf of the organization over a two-year period.*
- *My work resulted in the organization's increased KPI by 200% in grant funding through trust-based grantmaking, donor relations, and grant management and development by increasing organizational improvement and mission-aligned communications.*
- *I collaboratively led multi-state, cross-functional programming, research, and data evaluation rooted in organizational improvement to ensure BGFC advanced an equitable representation of diverse stories in media, and those stories drive narrative and policy change for social transformation.*

Core Responsibilities

- Located requests for proposals and funding opportunities; developed and wrote grants; sourced, administered, and produced impact reporting for national funders, including Surdna Foundation, Ms. Foundation, and MacArthur, aligning philanthropic strategy with measurable program outcomes and stakeholder priorities.
- Led multi-state, cross-functional programming, research, and evaluation initiatives rooted in social justice, arts, and literacy using culturally responsive frameworks to support organizational improvement, scalability, and long-term impact.
- Designed and implemented continuous improvement tools to track progress against organizational goals, enabling data-informed decision-making and cross-team accountability.
- Managed relationships with funders and high-level stakeholders through strategic networking and mission-aligned communications.
- Managed a portfolio of grants and strategic initiatives, identifying high-impact opportunities and ensuring alignment with mission area priorities.
- Conducted comprehensive due diligence, including financial analysis, organizational assessment, and risk evaluation, to inform grant recommendations and investment decisions.
- Monitored grant performance through reports, stakeholder engagement, and evaluation frameworks, capturing outcomes and identifying opportunities to enhance effectiveness.
- Analyzed qualitative and quantitative data to assess program alignment, leverage, and sustainability, translating insights into actionable recommendations.
- Designed strategic program models, experience architecture, and evaluation frameworks grounded in national data on students, youth development, and girls of color.
- Built and sustained high-trust relationships with national funders, institutional partners, and senior stakeholders through mission-aligned communications and strategic storytelling.

Founder & Principal Consultant | 2022-Present

Independent Research, Grant Writing & Program Strategy Consulting

- Manages a portfolio of nonprofit and for-profit clients across human services, education, and community development, advising on program design, funding strategy, and organizational positioning.
- Leads end-to-end grant development processes, including opportunity identification, funder research, proposal writing, and submission, securing funding from foundations and institutional donors.

- Conducts due diligence on funding opportunities and client readiness, including organizational assessments, program feasibility, and alignment with funder priorities.
- Analyzed qualitative and quantitative data to inform program strategy, strengthen proposals, and support evidence-based decision-making.
- Developed program frameworks, logic models, and evaluation plans to support measurable outcomes and long-term sustainability.
- Monitored grant performance and supported clients in tracking deliverables, outcomes, and reporting requirements.
- Built and maintained relationships with nonprofit leaders, organizational stakeholders, and funding partners to support ongoing collaboration and funding success.
- Produced high-quality reports, briefs, and research summaries, translating complex data into actionable insights for clients and funders.

CURRENT RESEARCH AGENDA

- Maps the intersections of high-achieving identities through my conceptual framework High Achieving Woman Identity Schema (HAWIS)
- Reconceptualizing how higher education defines achievement and student success for women collegians
- Higher education's impact on African American women's socioeconomic mobility
- Pedagogical Wellness Approaches to Self-Care

PUBLICATIONS

- Smith, D. & Davis, J. J. (in publication). *Soul Labor: A practice of self-care and pedagogy of love for women of color in the academy*. Cognella Press.
- Davis, J., Hatch, C. & Hawkins, J. (2025). Beyond Barriers: Resilience and Success Stories of High-Achieving Black Mothers in PhD Programs. *Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogy*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15505170.2025.2593641>
- Davis, J. Hash, A. & Parson, T. (2025). Edited by Wiggan et al. *Critical Race Structuralism, Equity, and Inclusion in Education*. Springer Nature.
 - Book Chapter: *The Looking Glass*: An examination of the literature and framework of bell hooks' engaged pedagogy and its intersectional impact on education and Black Girlhood.
- Davis, J. & Smith, D., 2024. *Mamas, Martyrs, and Jezebels*. Black Lawrence Press.
 - Book Chapter: *Heavy is the head that wears the crown*
- Smith, D. & Davis, J., 2020. *Films as Rhetorical Texts: Cultivating discussion about race, racism, and race relations*. Lanham: Lexington Books.
 - Book Chapter: No Filter: Counter-Storytelling and The Help

RESEARCH & IRB PROJECTS

- **Wallace Foundation** Funded Grant, “Youth Arts and Wellbeing” (2026) in collaboration with PIs, Vaughn Schutz, Janaka Lewis, and Beth Murray
 - **Co-PI**
- **IRB Approved Study, *Scaling The Ivory Tower*** (2025) - An Epistemological Examination of How Race, Gender, and Class Impact High-Achieving African American Undergraduates' Women's Lived Experiences and Socioeconomic Mobility in Higher Education
 - **PI (University of North Carolina at Charlotte)**
- **Oral History Documentary, *Solidarity* (Production dates: February- May 2024)**
 - Funded by Women's and Gender Studies and Film Studies, UNC Charlotte
 - *Solidarity* is a documentary by J. Joy Davis, who also served as an oral history qualitative researcher and interviewer of over 20 subjects. The documentary is permanently housed in a digital archive in Special Collections at UNC Charlotte's Atkins Library. The film celebrates the stories, lived experiences, history, and dynamic individuals who, in varied capacities, served as the pillars upon which UNC Charlotte Women's and Gender Studies (WGST) was built. The UNC Charlotte Women's Studies program was one of the first formed in the country. The film screening took place in Charlotte, NC, at the Women's and Gender Studies Program (WGST) 40th Anniversary in March of 2024.
- **IRB Approved Study, *Who Can I Run To?*** (2024) A mixed-methods examination of Stress & Occupational Burnout in High Achieving WOC Faculty (In Pilot Study)
 - **Co-PI**
 - Participant Incentives funded by: UNC Charlotte Center for Educational Measurement and Evaluation
- **National Science Foundation (NSF) Research Team (Fall 2023)**
 - PI: Dr. Brittany N. Anderson, Associate Professor, UNC Charlotte (NSF Career Scholar)
 - Worked on an NSF-funded research team conducting qualitative studies on data compiled by the PI on Gifted Black Women as they navigated the doctoral process. As a member of the research team, worked with the PI to complete data transcription of participant narratives and conducted extensive data analysis using coding and thematic analysis to provide recommendations to improve system processes.

GRANTS (Funded)

- Smith, D., Ramsey, S., **Davis, J.** & Howell, K. (2025). Center for Community, Heritage, and the Arts (CHArt) - UNC Charlotte (\$2000). Role: Grant Writer and Project Implementation.
- Anderson, J. & **Davis, J.** (2024). Black Girls Film Camp. MacArthur Foundation (\$150,000). Role: Grant Writer
- Anderson, J. & **Davis, J.** (2023). Black Girls Film Camp. Sony Create Action Grant (\$100,000). Role: Grant Writer
- Anderson, J. & **Davis, J.** (2023). Black Girls Film Camp. Ally (\$5,000). Role: Grant Writer
- Anderson, J. & **Davis, J.** (2023). Black Girls Film Camp. Black Girl Freedom Fund (\$70,000). Role: Grant Writer
- Anderson, J. & **Davis, J.** (2023). Black Girls Film Camp. Southern Black Girls And Women Consortium. (\$37,000). Role: Grant Writer
- Anderson, J. & **Davis, J.** (2023). Black Girls Film Camp. MacArthur Foundation (\$30,000). Role: Grant Writer

ACADEMIC CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- National Council on Public History (March 2025)
 - General Conference Presenter: WGST 40th Anniversary Roundtable and Solidarity (Documentary) Screening. Montreal, Canada.
- National Women's Studies Association Conference (November 2024)
 - General Conference Workshop Presenter (Davis & Smith): *Soul Labor: A practice of self-care and pedagogy of love for Women of Color in the academy*
- The 45th Annual International Research Conference of the Stress, Trauma, Anxiety, and Resilience Society (STAR) (May 2024)
 - General Conference Presenter (Davis & Carroll): *Who Can I Run To?* A mixed-methods examination of Stress & Occupational Burnout in high- achieving WOC Faculty
- WGS South (Summer 2024)
 - General Conference Roundtable Presenter: *Reflection, Resilience, and Restoration: UNC Charlotte Women's Studies Celebrates Its 40th Anniversary*
- Faculty Women of Color in the Academy (April 2024)
 - General Conference (Workshop Presenter): *Soul Labor: A practice of self-care and pedagogy of love for women of color in the academy*
- American Association of Blacks in Higher Education (March 2023)
 - General Conference Presenter (Davis & Smith): *Soul Work as Course Work: Self-care and women of color in the academy*

MEMBERSHIP, SERVICE & HONORS

- Doctoral Fellow, Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction (2024-2025) - UNC Charlotte, Cato College of Education. *‘This award includes recognition of your emerging leadership and scholarly potential to disseminate transformative research in curriculum, instruction, and urban education.’*
- Peer Reviewer - Anderson, B. & Richardson, S. (2023). *Gifted Black Women Navigating the Doctoral Process*. Routledge.
- Panelist: Hosted by Antioch University Office of Undergraduate Studies -A virtual discussion on *Light and Legacies: Stories of Black Girlhood and Liberation* by Dr. Janaka Lewis, University of South Carolina Press. (7.2023)
- Featured Workshop Speaker: Sponsored by Ally Financial and hosted by UNCC Belk College of Business’ *Women in Business - Leadership Development Summit, Building Connections for Success: Cultivating Your Network in Unique Ways* (10.2023)
- Panelist: Hosted by Routledge Press Co-Editors, Drs. Anderson and Richardson of *Gifted Black Women Navigating the Doctoral Process* - A virtual release and Webinar-based discussion (11.2023)
- Adjunct Learning Community Participant (2018) - UNCC Center for Teaching and Learning
- Co-Advisor, National Society of Leadership and Success (2018-2020)
- Adjunct Council Committee, Department of Communication Studies (2017)
- Member, National Women’s Studies Association
- Member, American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
- Member, National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity