



Associate Vice Chancellor of Human Resources and Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO)

Position Profile

Appalachian State University (App State) seeks a dedicated and innovative leader to serve as its Associate Vice Chancellor of Human Resources and Chief Human Resources Officer.

University

As a premier public institution, [Appalachian State University](#) prepares students to lead purposeful lives. App State is one of seventeen campuses in the [University of North Carolina System](#), with a national reputation for innovative teaching and opening access to a high-quality, cost-effective education for all. The university enrolls more than 21,000 students, has a low student-to-faculty ratio and offers more than 150 undergraduate and 80 graduate majors at its Boone and Hickory campuses and through App State Online.

Appalachian State University aspires to strengthen its role as a leading public institution in the Southeast. We commit to empowering learners through innovative academic programs accompanied by experiences that take place beyond the classroom, access and excellence in all our activities, and the cultivation of scholarship, engagement and creativity.

Founded in the Blue Ridge Mountains in 1899 to provide North Carolinians with expanded access to education, Appalachian State University is located in a place of great beauty, cultural heritage and recreational opportunity. App State's core values include:

- Faculty excellence in teaching and all forms of scholarship.
- Student success.
- Sustainability and resilience.
- Public service and engagement with community.
- Global perspective.

Appalachian State University is led by Chancellor, Heather Hulbert Norris, who was named to the position by University of North Carolina System President, Peter Hans, effective March 1, 2025, after having served as the Interim Chancellor of Appalachian State since April, 2024.

With more than two decades of academic leadership, vision and expertise at App State, Chancellor Norris' career has been characterized by her strong, collaborative leadership and service to both App State and the greater community. The university celebrated its 125-year anniversary as a leader and innovator in higher education under Norris' leadership. Her leadership has been defined by a strong emphasis on developing and expanding new models and

markets for academic delivery and expanding access to education for more people in North Carolina.

For more information on Chancellor Norris, please visit: [Office of the Chancellor](#).

Position

Reporting to the Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer, the CHRO is the University's Chief Human Resource Officer and is responsible for comprehensive and strategic leadership of all aspects of the [Office of Human Resources](#) and its operations for the campus, including: employment opportunity compliance in talent acquisition, classification and compensation, position management, employee engagement, employee rewards and recognition, employee relations, performance management, and learning and organizational development to attract, recruit, onboard, engage and retain a high performing workforce.

The CHRO will collaborate with campus leaders to understand their business needs; build organizational trust in HR operations; provide consultation and expertise; optimize resources to better enable the University to fulfill its mission and the goals set forth in App State's [Strategic Plan](#).

The CHRO will lead the HR operation to develop and implement: a modern HR strategy, philosophy and organizational structure; HR services and business processes that align with University strategic goals and organizational needs; operationalized and standardized HR communications; an integrated human capital management system and an issue tracking/knowledge management solution; a culture of continuous improvement; and metrics to monitor HR performance and capabilities.

The CHRO will lead change and generate buy-in for those changes; advocate for HR employees and stakeholders; tackle problems head on and invite opinions and solutions from others; provide expertise in HR and University technology systems; cultivate a knowledge base for the HR team; establish best practices and clear policies, processes, and procedures and ensure the HR operation complies with them; lead the HR operation beyond transactional tasks; and confront the unique challenges of App State with a fresh perspective.

The CHRO maintains collaborative relationships with the UNC System Office, the Office of State Human Resources, CHRO peers across the UNC System, the Chancellor's Office, the [Division of University Operations](#), Vice Chancellors, Deans, Directors, Department Chairs/Heads, and the Office of General Counsel at App State. The CHRO also interacts routinely with the Office of Administrative Hearings, the Office of the Attorney General, the Employment Security Commission, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance (OFCCP), and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

Core Competencies/Qualifications

Business Acumen

- Demonstrates fluency in the university's financial model, including state appropriations,

auxiliary revenue, tuition policy, and sponsored research funding.

- Engages in informed discourse with institutional leadership and System Office stakeholders regarding budget priorities, resource allocation and labor cost modeling.
- Integrates strategic financial insights into workforce decisions that impact both academic affairs and operational units.

HR Leadership & Operational Excellence

- Drives a high-performing HR function that aligns with institutional priorities, advances workforce effectiveness, and ensures compliance with policy standards.
- Oversees talent development, performance management, succession planning and faculty lifecycle processes to strengthen leadership capacity across the institution.
- Translates federal, state and system policies into transparent and effective campus practices.
- Partners with leaders to implement strategic, efficient recruitment and retention strategies, while improving service quality through streamlined processes, modern tools and continuous improvement initiatives.

Strategic Advisor & Principled Leader

- Serves as a trusted partner to executive leadership, providing insight on workforce dynamics, organizational risk and strategic opportunities.
- Navigates complex change with emotional intelligence and institutional pragmatism, fostering trust and alignment even in challenging circumstances.
- Brings the courage to surface difficult truths—on climate, performance or organizational health—while maintaining constructive, solutions-focused engagement with senior leaders.
- Lead the development and implementation of a strategic workforce planning framework that guides decisions on hiring, role redesign and position prioritization in alignment with institutional goals and budget parameters.
- Partner with executive and senior leadership to evaluate vacant and proposed positions, providing data-informed recommendations on where to invest and restructure, and where to eliminate roles, ensuring the university’s talent strategy supports the long-term mission and financial sustainability.
- Champions transparency and shared accountability in service to the institution and the public good.

The successful candidate must possess a bachelor’s degree in Human Resources, Business Administration, Public Administration or related field. Additionally, it is preferred that the successful candidate demonstrates:

- Minimum of 10 years of progressive HR leadership in large complex organizations.
- Advanced degree in Business, Human Resources, Higher Education Administration, Public Administration or related field.
- Professional certifications (e.g., SHRM-SCP, SPHR) and HR technology fluency.
- Demonstrated experience engaging with governing boards, governing systems and other external oversight bodies.

- Familiarity with the UNC System's HR policies and state-level reporting requirements.
- Demonstrated success leading organizational change initiatives or transformations.
- Proven ability to lead cross-functional teams.

Nomination and Application Process

The University invites letters of nomination, applications (letter of interest, full resume/CV, and contact information of at least five references), or expressions of interest to be submitted to the search firm via emails below or the Parker Executive Search [website](#). Review of materials will begin immediately and continue until the appointment is made. It is preferred that all nominations and applications be submitted by Friday, January 30, 2026. For more information, please contact:

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Appalachian State University is committed to providing equal opportunity in education and employment to all applicants, students, and employees.