

Dr. Hughlene A. Burton  
230 S. Tryon St, Unit 311  
Charlotte, NC 28202

September 19, 2019

Dean Search Committee  
Lutgert College of Business  
Florida Gulf Coast University  
Fort Myers, FL 33965

Dear Sir:

I am submitting my application for consideration for the Dean of the Lutgert College of Business at Florida Gulf Coast University. I am applying for this position because I think that Florida Gulf Coast University and the Lutgert College of Business are located in a vibrant and growing environment. Based on my experience, I think I could help the College meet its future goals. Below I highlight some of my professional achievements that I think would benefit the Lutgert College of Business.

I have been a professor in the Accounting program at the University of North Carolina Charlotte for the past twenty-two years. In that time, the University has grown from approximately 16,000 students to almost 30,000. During this time, the number of accounting majors has grown from approximately 225 to 400 undergraduate and 100 graduate students.

During my tenure at UNC Charlotte, I have been very active with the Accounting program. The department started a Master's of Accountancy program the second year I was at the university. I have taught in the master's program every year that it has been in existence and served as the Director for several years. My role for the past eight years has been as the Director of the Turner School of Accountancy. As part of that role, I oversee both the undergraduate and graduate programs.

The mission of the Accounting program is to educate students so that they can be successful in their careers. While I have been the Director, the master's program has been ranked nationally. For the past four years, our students have passed the CPA exam at an 85 to 90 percent rate, which is almost three times the national average. We have also had three Elijah Watt Sells winners, which is given to students that have an average score of 95.5 or better on the exam. We have also increased the opportunity for students to interview for jobs. Currently, over twenty firms and corporations recruit students from our program. For each of the past five years, ninety-five percent of our master's students have jobs within six months of graduation.

While I have been the Director, the School of Accountancy has reached a number of milestones. The first and most significant is the completion of a capital campaign that raised approximately \$6 million. I led the effort for the program in this endeavor. As part of the campaign, we were able to rebrand the Accounting Department and become the Thomas C. Turner School of Accountancy. Funds raised from this campaign will make a real difference for both our students and our faculty.

Another important change for the School was the turnover of our faculty. When I took the leadership role, we had a number of faculty at or near retirement age. In the past eight years, I have been able to hire thirteen new faculty members including a faculty member who specializes in Data Analytics and an Endowed Professor of Accounting. The new faculty have brought a fresh outlook to our program. As a result, faculty in the School of Accountancy have increased both the quantity and the quality of research produced without a decline in the quality of teaching. Because of the quality of the new faculty, the School has plans to start a doctoral program in the next few years.

As part of my role as chair of the Accounting program, I work extensively with the Charlotte business community. I have an Advisory Board made up of CPAs at both public accounting firms and corporations. I meet regularly with the Board to discuss issues important to both the accounting profession and the academic community. I also interact regularly with a number of firms that recruit our students on campus. In addition, for the past two years I have worked with the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce on a diversity initiative for accounting students.

I also work with groups outside of UNC Charlotte. I have held leadership roles with the American Accounting Association (AAA). I have served as President of the tax section of the AAA as well as Vice-President of the Accounting Program Leaders group. I have also served as the Chair of the AAA Council. I am a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) and served on the Tax Executive committee.

The Accounting program at UNC Charlotte is accredited separately by AACSB. I led the last two successful reaccreditation visits for the Accounting program. I have also served on reaccreditation teams for a number of schools and now serve on the Accounting Accreditation Committee for AACSB.

Based on the job description for the Dean of the Lutigert College of Business, I believe that my experience with students, faculty and business professionals would be an asset in helping the College meet its future goals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Hughlene A. Burton".

Hughlene A. Burton