

W. BRENT BURGIN LUNCH AND LEARN LECTURE SERIES

“Davidson and Dispossession: The Dismantling of the
Catawba Reservation, the Establishment of Davidson
College, and the Importance of ‘Hard History’”

Friday, August 28, 2026 | Noon



Sixth Annual
W. Brent Burgin
Lunch and Learn Lecture

Rose Stremmler, Ph.D.,
Charles A. Dana Associate Professor
History/Gender & Sexuality Studies,
Davidson College

In this lecture, Stremmler connects the stories of settler economic development, including land speculation and enslavement; marriage and family formation; institution building; and historical memory in the Catawba River Valley region. Stremmler will discuss early findings and the design of this multi-year project that integrates two processes that, until now, have been disconnected in historical narratives. Drawing evidence from a range of primary sources and informed by genealogical methods, Stremmler and students at Davidson College are learning how the founding families generated the financial means to establish the college through speculation in Catawba land and investment in plantations, including enslaved people, and the domestic slave trade.

