



CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

Appalachian State University

Engineering a Faculty-Friendly Classroom Lectern for a Top-Ranked University

INSTITUTION

Appalachian State University,
Boone, NC

ENROLLMENT

~22,000 students (2026)

PRODUCT

EVOLVE Lectern

OVERVIEW

As Appalachian State University continues to grow — with nearly 22,000 students enrolled for 2026 — the university has earned a #4 ranking on U.S. News & World Report's *Most Innovative Schools in the South* list, marking its ninth consecutive year in the top five. A key driver of that distinction is App State's innovative use of technology in the classroom.

Sustaining that momentum brings real operational challenges. When the university needed a better way to manage classroom AV technology, Bryan Estel, IT Manager for Classroom Technology, turned to Computer Comforts, Inc.

I was looking for a company that could customize a lectern for our specific needs. As a state university on a tight budget, the product also needed to be durable and affordable.

— Bryan Estel, IT Manager – Classroom Technology, Appalachian State University

THE CHALLENGE

App State's top priority was a lectern that would be faculty-friendly — enhancing the user experience by combining classroom technology with a genuinely functional piece of furniture. Key requirements included easy access to all controls and input devices, ample workspace, ergonomic design, sit-or-stand functionality, and ADA compliance.

On the technical side, the lectern needed to provide a minimum of 14U of secure rack space to house a substantial AV and computing package, including:

- Dell OptiPlex 5000 desktop computer
- Extron UCS 601 multi-port dock (USB-C laptop connection)
- Extron DMP digital media processor
- Extron SW4 switcher
- Extron IN1608 switcher
- Tripp-Lite 12-outlet power supply

In addition, the lectern top required custom cutouts to accommodate an Extron 725 cubby, an Algo 8201 intercom unit, and a bolt-through LCD arm mount — all while preserving a clean, professional appearance for the classroom.

THE SOLUTION

App State selected the EVOLVE Lectern — often called “the Swiss Army Knife of Lecterns” — a fully modular platform that can be custom-configured to meet virtually any classroom requirement.

For Appalachian State University’s classrooms, the configuration featured a standing-height worksurface extension, a chair-height worksurface extension, and heavy-duty locking casters for enhanced functionality.



EVOLVE Lectern, configured with App State branding



Chair-height worksurface extension

ADDITIONAL DETAILS

Despite its expanded functionality, the EVOLVE cabinet maintains a remarkably small footprint — just 24” W x 30” D without the flip-up shelves extended. Universal shelving can be added as needed, and every cabinet is pre-drilled to accept shelves on either side, in high or low positions.

Surface-mounted cutouts were pre-drilled at the factory for the Extron 725 cubby, the Algo intercom, and the LCD arm mount — eliminating on-site fabrication and ensuring a clean, finished look.

Keyless combination entry locks come standard, keeping rack-mounted equipment secure while giving the AV team fast, convenient access. App State also specified the optional short front door configuration for easy access to the Dell OptiPlex computer.



16U of secure rack space for AV equipment



Shown with short front door option



Extron 725 cubby with integrated controls

THE RESULT

The outcome: a happy customer. App State's AV team now has a single, universal lectern design that works across classrooms of every size — large lecture halls and small seminar rooms alike. Where space allows, the college can add a push-button sit-to-stand ergonomic side table for even greater flexibility.

By standardizing on one configurable solution, App State also dramatically improved the faculty experience. With a consistent layout and control scheme across rooms, instructors face a much shorter learning curve, spending less time on technology and more time teaching.



Algo 8201 intercom integrated into the lectern top



On-site installation and final fit-out by the AV team

SEE THE EVOLVE LECTERN IN ACTION

Watch the 90-second EVOLVE Lectern overview video

computercomforts.com/products/evolve-lectern

Computer Comforts, Inc. • 281-535-2288 • www.computercomforts.com