

Walker College of Business
Strategic Plan 2017-2022
Adopted May 3, 2017

Preamble

The Walker College of Business is one of six academic colleges and schools at Appalachian State University, a public, comprehensive university in the University of North Carolina system of higher education. Appalachian is located in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains of northwestern North Carolina. Serving mostly undergraduates from the metropolitan areas of North Carolina, Appalachian and the Walker College of Business are known for their transformative educational experiences that combine a broad, liberal arts education with strong disciplinary knowledge; meaningful faculty-student-staff interactions; desirable location; sustainability efforts and expertise; opportunities that connect students' academic experiences to the world; and preparation of students to succeed in their post-graduate goals.

Vision

We aspire to be a national leader in business education that emphasizes experiential learning, interdisciplinary collaboration, social engagement, and value driven innovation to address complex issues and help co-create a more sustainable world. In doing so, we seek to develop students who adapt well to and are resilient in an ever changing world.

Mission

We deliver transformational educational experiences that prepare and inspire students to be ethical, innovative, and engaged business leaders who positively impact our community, both locally and globally.

Dedicated to instructional excellence, our faculty is also actively engaged in scholarship in the areas of practice, theory and pedagogy, as well as service activities that make possible these transformational educational experiences and serve to benefit the business discipline and the broader community.

Values

In fulfilling our mission and pursuing our vision, we espouse the following values.

- **Integrity** - We are committed to honesty and ethical behavior in all that we do;
- **Quality** - We seek quality in our programs and emphasize its virtue to our students;
- **Meaning** - We cultivate meaningful relationships among students, faculty, and staff so that each can learn, grow, and be fulfilled in their work;
- **Global** - We provide opportunities for multicultural and international learning and experiences;
- **Diversity** - We respect and celebrate our differences and emphasize the power of combining our uniqueness;
- **Innovation** - We are discoverers, explorers, and experimenters, constantly challenging the status quo to create value for our many stakeholders;
- **Collegiality** - We maintain a supportive, collegial learning environment that respects individuals, preserves academic freedom, and promotes interdisciplinary collaboration;
- **Responsiveness** - We respond to the needs of students, alumni, the business and wider community, and other stakeholders through active listening;
- **Sustainability** - We cultivate a deep understanding of the powerful role of business in advancing a productive and healthy society.

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Strategic Goals and Plan

Our strategic plan is purposefully aligned with the UNC System's strategic initiatives, Appalachian State University's strategic directions, and AACSB's areas of emphasis. Following a process to systematically collect stakeholder input through surveys, focus groups, and retreats with the college's faculty, staff, students, alumni, Business Advisory Council, Executive Committee, center directors, and Strategic Planning Committee, the college developed aspirational goals for the next five years. Building on the academic and student support strengths that have made the Walker College successful thus far, these goals are to:

- (1) increase collaboration and innovation in curricular and co-curricular offerings,
- (2) enhance community and industry engagement,
- (3) broaden teaching, learning, and scholarship,
- (4) design a more sustainable organization, and
- (5) re-engineer external funding processes for optimization.

Goal #1 Increase Collaboration and Innovation in Curricular and Co-Curricular Offerings, With a Focus on Sustainability

Many challenges we face today result in part from deeply entrenched routines and structures that leave our organizations rigid, ineffective, and potentially unsustainable. To address these issues, we look to leverage interdisciplinary perspectives to understand interdependencies and to heighten our ability to continuously improve. We need to model such behaviors inside our own institution and develop these skills in our students. Doing so will enable them to become productive change agents as they progress in their careers and lives. To reach this goal over the next five years, we will...

- Encourage and develop interdisciplinary classes and specialized programs across the college and university, through experimentation and funding support
- Assist and support faculty in developing lessons, classes, and programs that intentionally develop analytical *and* creative skills in our students
- Assist and support faculty and staff in developing lessons, classes, and programs that impart knowledge of sustainable business practices and principles and that advance solutions to global sustainability challenges
- Scale successful programs to reach greater numbers of Walker College of Business (WCOB) students
- Leverage programs to increase WCOB visibility
- Strengthen disciplinary classes, identify outdated classes, and utilize increased capacity to support experimentation and innovation

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Goal #2 Broaden Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship

Given the speed by which the world changes, students must develop the ability to constantly adapt. While the traditional classroom setting plays an important role, it must be complemented with a diversity of other approaches that more fully develop our students' adaptive capabilities and enhance their readiness for an ever-changing world. To reach this goal over the next five years, we will...

- Widen experiential learning opportunities through increased internships, practicums, and study abroad
- Strengthen certificate program offerings
- Increase project-based applied research and learning opportunities through partnerships with external entities
- Expand opportunities for students to participate in discipline-based competitions at the state, regional, national, and international levels
- Enhance support of meaningful co-curricular programs, clubs, and student organizations whose actions and activities enhance classroom instruction
- Encourage research collaboration across departments, campus and other institutions
- Increase student involvement in faculty-led research
- Attract, support, and retain faculty and staff who successfully create synergy across teaching, learning, and scholarship

Goal #3 Enhance Community and Industry Engagement

The chasm that separates business education from practice is in some cases wide, inhibiting the value that can be co-created with industry partners. We seek to narrow this gap by building tighter collaborations with industry to cooperatively build knowledge, develop talent, and enhance readiness, and to co-create sustainable businesses and communities. To reach this goal over the next five years, we will...

- Reward faculty and staff outreach and engagement at the local, regional, national, and global levels
- Host local and regional events to bring together business leaders, community, faculty, staff and students to discuss current issues and challenges facing the business community
- Include local and regional community engagement opportunities within study abroad courses
- Design and implement an executive education program that significantly contributes to the success of businesses in our region through planning, goals, and action
- Actively enhance industry relationships

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Goal #4 Design a More Sustainable Organization

A sustainable organization is one that recognizes that the economy, environment, and society are interconnected and interdependent, and strives to enhance the business model so that it can flourish and thrive over time. As a microcosm of the world, the Walker College seeks to serve as an example, through innovation and efficiency of our business processes (“economy”), care of our surroundings (“environment”), and value of the people who comprise our organization (“society”). To reach this goal over the next five years, we will...

- Advance a purposeful, ethical, and vibrant culture that provides meaningful faculty, staff, and student support and that encourages a high level of engagement
- Create more efficient business processes by identifying redundancies and exploring shared services models across the WCOB where appropriate
- Better align faculty and staff rewards, recognition, and incentives to our mission and vision
- Secure adequate and appropriately designed facilities to deliver our programs
- Encourage, support, and enable faculty and staff to constantly consider novel ways of creating value for our stakeholders through ongoing innovation

Goal #5 Re-Engineer External Funding Process for Optimization

To achieve our vision, we will need to acquire and make significant investments in existing programs and support the design and implementation of new offerings. To do this well, we must build upon internal resources that help us develop compelling stories and rich descriptions of development projects to share with a diverse set of identified, viable funding sources. To reach this goal over the next five years, we will...

- Work with University Advancement to systematize our development process
- Work with University Advancement to widen our corporate relations and deepen our foundation relations
- Work with University Advancement to strengthen our alumni relations
- Work with the Office of Research to increase our funded research grants and contracts