



Appalachian
STATE UNIVERSITY

AACSB CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT REVIEW REPORT

July 2022 CIR Guidelines



WALKER COLLEGE OF BUSINESS APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY
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**Walker College of Business
Appalachian State University
Continuous Improvement Review (CIR) Report 2022**

I. Overview

A. Concise Situational Analysis

Appalachian State University (AppState) was founded in 1899 as Watauga Academy. Watauga Academy grew and evolved through several changes over the next 30 years to become Appalachian State Teacher's College in 1929, and then Appalachian State University in 1967 when the mission was broadened to include liberal arts and other professional and non-teaching degree programs. In 1971, AppState became a part of the University of North Carolina system of higher education. Today, AppState is a growing public comprehensive master's institution, offering more than 150 undergraduate programs and 80 graduate programs and employing over 1,400 full-time faculty members across seven colleges and schools. From 2002 to present, increasing portions of the university campus have been designated Millennial Campus status by the University of North Carolina (UNC) Board of Governors which greatly enhances the University's ability to seek funding and partner with others in growth opportunities. In 2021-22, AppState awarded 4,987 degrees, including 4,201 bachelor's degrees, and 768 graduate degrees. The only doctorate degrees offered by the University are in Education and Psychology. Throughout its growth, the University has maintained a strong sense of community, and continues to provide educational leadership and service to the state and region.

AppState is located in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains of northwestern North Carolina in Boone, a destination town of approximately 19,000. Although historically serving mostly the western part of North Carolina, today the University draws its enrollment of over 20,000 students from across the state and region. Approximately 92% of students are North Carolina residents, with the largest numbers coming from the metropolitan areas of Charlotte, Raleigh and Greensboro/Winston-Salem. Out-of-state students come from nearly every state in the nation and from a number of foreign countries, but the largest numbers come from the southeastern states of Virginia, Georgia, South Carolina, Florida, and Tennessee. Prospective students say their top reasons for choosing AppState are the University's strong academic reputation and small face-to-face classes taught by faculty with terminal degrees rather than graduate student teachers. AppState is also known for its value and emphasis on sustainability and service learning, appearing on *Kiplinger's* Top 100 Best Values in Public Colleges list on a recurring basis.

Although most of AppState's students are of traditional college age and attend the University's main campus, the University seeks to expand its reach and to serve a diverse student body. To meet the needs of the region's citizens and a wider population, AppState offers a variety of distance education degree programs serving approximately 1,752 students.

AppState has program strengths in education, business, the arts, and undergraduate education. Emerging strengths lie in the core sciences, sustainability, and health-related programs as well as research in renewable energy, environment, and health and human performance. The faculty are known for outstanding teaching and, increasingly, for both basic and applied research.

The Walker College of Business had its beginnings as a department in the College of Fine and Applied Arts. In 1971, the College of Business was established as a separate academic unit within the University. In 1976, the College of Business received its initial accreditation from AACSB, and was relocated to a new 55,000 square-foot four-story building. At that time, both the College of Business and the building were named for John A. Walker, a businessman, philanthropist, and civic and community leader from

North Wilkesboro, NC. Serving as president and a founding director of Lowe's Companies, Walker provided the first major gift in the initial capital campaign for the College. He maintained a strong relationship with the College and served as the first chairperson of the College's Business Advisory Council.

Rapid growth in the number of business students during the late 1970s and early 1980s led to the need for expanded physical facilities. In 1985, funds for the initial design and planning of a new building for the College were appropriated by the NC legislature. The 130,000 square-foot, four-story building was completed in the summer of 1990 and has been the home of the Walker College of Business since that time. The building was subsequently named Raley Hall, in honor of Thelma C. Raley, a prominent Florida citrus grower, Appalachian State graduate, and supporter of the Walker College of Business. In June 2014, Raley Hall was renamed Peacock Hall in honor of AppState's sixth Chancellor and former business dean, Kenneth E. Peacock. Peacock, who views his legacy as developing and supporting future leaders, accepted the naming recognition after the Raley family, together with members of University leadership boards, recommended the change to AppState's Board of Trustees. Continued growth and a need to create new engaging and collaborative work environments spurred Peacock Hall renovations that were completed in 2015 and 2019. These updates feature a redesigned lobby that creates co-curricular and extra-curricular collaboration space for students and organizations; the Broyhill Commons, a comfortable and attractive networking space for students, faculty, staff and visitors; fifteen new offices to house essential faculty and staff; modernization of existing classrooms into more flexible learning environments, the George & Ann Beasley and Yadkin Bank Classrooms, with new "break-out" areas to facilitate group learning; and renovated career services and student advising areas for improved functionality. Also included were a large computer lab/classroom and modernization of restroom facilities. In 2020-21, new space on the first floor was renovated to create active teaching/learning space. This was co-sponsored by the Walker College of Business and AppState Center for Academic Excellence. In November 2021, the state approved a \$25 million capital allocation for renovation and expansion of Peacock Hall.

As of Fall 2022, the Walker College of Business (WCOB) enrolls 3,666 undergraduate students and 182 graduate students, and has approximately 137 full-time equivalent faculty members and 40 staff. The vast majority of students are of traditional college age, enrolled full-time in on-campus programs. Approximately 95% of business students are undergraduates, and 34% are first generation.

The WCOB houses six academic departments (Accounting, Computer Information Systems, Economics, Finance, Banking and Insurance, Management, and Marketing and Supply Chain Management) and offers a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA), a Master of Business Administration (MBA), a Master of Science in Accounting (MSAcc), and a Master of Science in Applied Data Analytics (MSADA).

Within the BSBA undergraduate degree program, there are ten majors offered: Accounting, Computer Information Systems, Economics, Finance & Banking, Hospitality & Tourism Management, International Business, Management, Marketing, Risk Management & Insurance, and Supply Chain Management. Students earning a BSBA may also pursue minors in Accounting, Computer Information Systems, Cybersecurity, Employee Benefits, Hospitality & Tourism Management, Human Resource Management, International Business, Supply Chain Management, Sustainable Business, Business Analytics, Advanced Entrepreneurship, Professional Selling, Finance & Banking, or Risk Management & Insurance. Additionally, six minors are available for non-business majors in Economics, Entrepreneurial Studies, General Business, Digital Marketing, General Marketing, and Marketing Sales.

Six centers are housed within the Walker College of Business: the WCOB Academic Advising Center, Business Career Services in the Truist Student Leadership Center, the Brantley Risk and Insurance Center (BRIC), the Center for Analytics Research and Education (CARE), the Center for Economic Research and Policy Analysis (CERPA), and the Transportation Insight Center for Entrepreneurship (TICFE).

Specific Advantages

AACSB Accreditation: The Walker College of Business has been continuously accredited by AACSB International since 1976.

Prospective Student, Current Student, and Alumni Feedback: Appalachian State University and the Walker College are very often cited with these strengths: small class sizes with high student-faculty interaction, classes taught by faculty holding terminal degrees, faculty with significant business and industry experience, faculty accessibility, family-like atmosphere, student advising and professional career support, study abroad, and internship opportunities.

Academic Reputation: The U.S. News and World Report consistently ranks AppState among its top 15 public and private southern universities. For the third consecutive year, App State tops the list for Most Innovative Schools among Southern universities, identified as No. 1 by top college officials for making innovative improvements in curriculum, faculty, students, campus life, technology or facilities. The Princeton Review named AppState one of its “Best Colleges in the Southeast” for 2022. The Walker College of Business was again included in The Princeton Review’s 2022 edition of Best Business Schools.

High Quality Faculty: The Walker College of Business continues to maintain a full complement of highly qualified faculty. As of Fall 2022, the College had 137 faculty FTEs, 76% of which hold terminal degrees, and tenured or on tenure track. In the past five years our faculty have produced 543 peer reviewed academic journal articles, made 533 presentations, served on 28 editorial boards, and 40+ served as officers in academic and professional societies.

Engagement and Enrichment Opportunities and Programs for Students: Eight college and department/program advisory boards/councils, student research and entrepreneurship opportunities, a wide variety of unique curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular opportunities and programs including the signature events, strong participation in internship and practicum programs, global opportunities and study abroad programs, the College of Business Honors Program, the Bowden Student Managed Investment Fund, more than twenty student clubs and organizations, and college-supported regional and national student competitions.

Student Support Services: A strength in the Walker College of Business is its two in-house student support services areas: the Academic Advising Center and Business Career Services in the Truist Student Leadership Center, both of which are dedicated to fostering students’ academic and professional development, leading them to success in the achievement of their collegiate and post-graduate goals. Significant private funds have been devoted to the student support services areas over the last five years to bolster these efforts.

Private Funding: With the solid support of many donors, including the Dean’s Business Advisory Council, the College has been able to secure pledges and new gifts of more than \$18 million over the last five years.

Specific Challenges

Lack of Racial Diversity in Student Body, Faculty, and Staff: Given the lack of diversity in the immediate

geographic region in which the University is located, it has been difficult to attract and retain those who would enhance our diversity profile. More discussion is provided in B.) Learner Success, section v.) *Recruitment and Retention of Diverse Learners* of this report (p. 24).

Faculty and Staff Salaries: During most of the last five years, state faculty and staff did not receive salary increases. However, legislative increases and limited merit increases were approved for UNC System faculty and some staff members in 2021. Full-time faculty received one-time bonuses in fall 2022.

Physical Space: Peacock Hall, the building that currently houses the Walker College of Business, was constructed in the late 1980s. Classroom space is near 100% utilization in the prime days/hours, and full occupancy of office space has been exceeded. Peacock Hall's tiered classroom space is somewhat limited in functionality and lacks flexibility to support more interactive teaching methods. State funds have been used to convert some conference and work rooms into faculty and staff office space and private funds to convert computer labs into more functional meeting and Center space. Additionally, private and state funds have been used to create two active learning classrooms and significantly update the interior of the building, replacing carpeting, tile, and furniture, and repainting many of our offices and classrooms. Overall space in Peacock Hall is a limiting factor in future growth. App State received \$25 million in legislative funding support for an expansion and renovation of Peacock Hall as part of the FY 2021–22 biennial budget bill, signed into law by Gov. Roy Cooper on Nov. 18, 2021. The bill also included \$200,000 for upgrades to Peacock Hall's existing elevators. To supplement legislative funding, a private donor initiative is being carried out to raise additional financial support for the project. Upon completion, the Peacock Hall expansion and renovation project is expected to increase the lifespan of the building by 30 to 50 years.

Higher education has changed dramatically in the past decade, with more curriculum content becoming available online. While Appalachian State University and the WCOB are best known for face-to-face instruction and high levels of faculty-student interactions, the WCOB has grown its online programs and now offers three online pathways to earning a degree.

1. In Fall 2010, the fully online BSBA degree in Management launched through the University's Distance Education program at a reduced cost to the student based upon a lower fee structure.
2. In fall 2020, the fully online MBA program launched, with plans for a steady-state enrollment of 100 students. This online master's program takes the place of the distance education MBA program that was historically offered in Hickory, North Carolina. Each course in our online MBA degree program has been developed using Quality Matters standards. Quality Matters is an internationally-recognized organization leading quality assurance in online teaching. Many of the courses have undergone a certification process that ensures an online course design that follows research-supported and practice-based quality standards.
3. In fall 2022, our newest online pathway was launched as a fully online BSBA degree in Supply Chain Management. This program was created to address the rising need for highly skilled professionals capable of building and managing resilient supply chains.

Campus Housing: First year college students are required to reside in campus housing. Since campus housing is limited, and expansion is difficult with a lack of infrastructure, this has become a key limitation in first year admissions. As a result, our slow and steady enrollment growth has been fueled with transfer student admissions since additional non-campus housing is available off campus. Transfer student enrollment growth presents additional challenges since the capacities of upper level classes must grow faster than the overall enrollment growth. In addition, the quality of preparation of transfer students has greater variance and sometimes requires extra advising and support to help students succeed.

Four Year Fixed Tuition: The state legislature of NC enacted a legislative fixed tuition program starting in fall 2017 to increase access to more students. In-state undergraduate students entering UNC institutions now have a tuition guarantee for four years of continuous enrollment. Universities in the UNC system cannot adjust tuition for those students to meet rising costs in other areas such as maintenance, staffing and benefits costs.

B. Issues Identified in the January 2017 Peer Review Team Visit.

Related 2013 Standard	Concern
Standard 2: Intellectual Contributions, Impact, and Alignment with Mission	The college should develop clear quality criteria and expectations for intellectual contributions. Additionally, the college should benchmark impact measures of its portfolio of intellectual contributions against peer and aspirant schools in order to develop comparable evidence of impact.
Standard 15: Faculty Qualifications and Engagement	The college should continue to work toward aligning with recommended faculty qualification ratios in Finance, Banking and Insurance as well as Accounting. The team is confident that the school is addressing this issue; the school should continue its efforts toward aligning with the standard.

Standard 2 Response:

From April through June 2018, the Walker College of Business (WCOB) benchmarked faculty qualifications requirements, impact criteria, and intellectual contribution quality criteria at peer and aspirant schools using the custom report features in AACSB DataDirect. In addition, telephone calls were made to acquire additional data from 14 institutions. Based on the information obtained, the WCOB Executive Committee revised the “WCOB Standards for Faculty Sufficiency & Faculty Qualifications Document” (SFS&FQ). The following changes were approved and implemented in May 2019. The Faculty Development Committee revised this document again in 2021-22 to reflect the new AACSB 2020 Standards and more clearly state the consequences of not maintaining qualifications.

Consistent with comparable schools, the changes to our SFS&FQ document clarify minimum college level requirements for quality peer reviewed journal articles counted for academic qualification. Specific departmental requirements and expectations for promotion and tenure decisions are included in departmental policies and articulated by department Promotion and Tenure (PTC) committees.

Four changes were implemented in the 2019 revised SFS&FQ document:

1. References to AACSB standards were updated to the version effective January 1, 2019.
2. Additional wording was added linking the SFS&FQ document requirements and qualifications to the current AppState and WCOB mission, vision, and strategic goals with particular emphasis on interdisciplinary collaboration.
3. The section describing initial IP qualification criteria related to prior experience was modified to clarify existing practice and intent and more clearly match wording in SACS and AACSB standards criteria.
4. The most significant change to the document was to clarify requirements and define quality criteria for journal articles. A “Definition of a Quality Journal” segment was added to Section III of the Scholarly Academic (SA) subsection. In summary, quality peer reviewed journals should be listed in the Australian Business Deans Council (ABDC) list or Cabells Whitelist, and should

not appear in a journal meeting predatory criteria such as Cabells Blacklist criteria. The specific wording added to the SFS&FQ is shown below.

Definition of a Quality Journal Article

A Quality Peer Reviewed Journal Article is one:

- That is subjected to a documented peer and/or editorial review process.
- That impacts the theory, practice, and/or teaching of business.
- Published in an outlet that is widely disseminated and publicly available in a written form (either physically or electronically).
- That appears in journals listed in Cabells Whitelist or The Australian Business Deans' Council Journal Ratings List (ABDC), both of which have subjected journals to a documented formal review. (Cabells Whitelist is available to faculty through the AppState Library. The ABDC list is available on the web.)
- That does not appear in a journal meeting predatory criteria such as Cabells Blacklist criteria.

Quality Journal Article Notes

Since the college encourages broad, mission-related, interdisciplinary collaboration, some quality journals and journals in emerging fields may not appear on the ABDC or Cabells Whitelists. Departmental committees who maintain the departmental policies, may approve additional quality journals in their department that are not included in Cabell's Whitelist or the ABDC lists as long as criteria 1, 2, 3, and 5 are still met. In all cases of exception, it is the author's responsibility to provide evidence of the journal's review process, and present proposals to their departmental committee.

The number of authors on a paper is not relevant to academic qualification consideration. If a faculty member's name is on an article, it is assumed that she/he made a significant contribution. Adding authors who made little or no contribution to the article is a breach of academic integrity.

A "working paper series" published by a department, for example, is not an acceptable outlet by definition.

The college does not endorse any particular journal ranking resources or publications, but departments may have such criteria in their department level promotion and tenure guidelines.

Impact Measures

Additionally, the college benchmarked impact measures against peer and aspirant schools in order to document comparable evidence of impact. Based on information gathered from Data Direct and phone calls to peer institutions, reporting on leadership in professional societies was found to be common practice. This measure was considered appropriate and in alignment with the AACSB 2013 Standards definition of academic impact. Specifically, the following:

- Editorships, associate editorships, editorial board memberships, and/or invitations to act as journal reviewers for recognized, leading peer-review journals.
- Elections or appointments to leadership positions in academic and/or professional associations, standards setting bodies and professional societies.

As a result of this comparative work, the college compiled a list of faculty involvement with professional and academic societies as the most appropriate index of impact. This list is updated periodically and is used to continuously index academic impact. A list of Editorships and Elected/Appointed Leadership Positions in Academic and Professional Societies is updated periodically and available upon request.

Standard 15 Response

Due to high program growth in the previous five years before the PRT visit in January 2018, there were several new positions filled by temporary instructors while tenure track searches were underway. At the time of the January 2018 PRT visit, there were two open positions in the Finance, Banking and Insurance Department and two in the Accounting Department. These positions have been filled and enrollments have stabilized. Both departments now meet AACSB all qualification ratio criteria. Report Table 3-1 shows that these and other disciplines meet AACSB criteria. Since this issue was addressed, the University went through a hiring freeze period during the peak months of the pandemic. However, faculty were added in 2021-22 to backfill retirements and support growth areas.

C. Substantive Changes since the Last Review: N/A.

D. Consultative Guidance

The WCOB is interested in learning more about best practices, tools, and technology for design and administration of online and hybrid courses and degree programs with specific interest in maintaining effective learner engagement and academic integrity.

E. New Degree Programs

No new degree programs have been added since the last review. However, based on constituent input from strategic studies and discussions, two programs are now being offered in fully online modes of delivery in addition to the campus formats. A new online MBA program was started in fall 2020, and a fully online BSBA in Supply Chain Management was started in fall 2022. The programs of study, text books, and faculty are the same for the campus and online versions of the programs.

II. Three Areas of the Business Accreditation Standards – Past and Future Look

A. Strategic Management and Innovation

The Walker College of Business mission, vision, values, and strategic plans flow from the University of North Carolina System and Appalachian State University strategic directions. Priorities set by the UNC System-AppState Performance Agreement are made specific to the Walker College of Business with continual input from constituents. Input from business advisory boards/councils, alumni, employers, faculty, staff and students inform strategic planning. It should be noted from the details below that sustainability, inclusiveness, societal impact and engagement with our community, region and the world are major themes at every level. Our strategy for societal impact and advancing diversity and inclusion are discussed at the end of this section.

As an example, AppState has long been recognized for sustainability. The university has been consistently recognized since 2012 in the Association for Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) 2021 Sustainable Campus Index, which recognizes top-performing colleges and universities in 17 sustainability impact areas measured by the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS). AppState has been ranked in the top 10 for master's universities and received Gold status multiple years. Additionally, the WCOB is a member of the UN's Sustainable Development Solutions Network and the Principles for Responsible Management (PRME) organization.

i) Strategic Management Planning Process

The College's mission, vision, values, and strategic plans are developed with input from faculty, students, professional staff, advisory board members, alumni, and employers. The WCOB Strategic Planning Committee reviews and aggregates all input and recommends strategic goals to the Executive Committee (composed of department chairs, associate deans, and the dean) and the Strategic Operating Committee (composed of the center directors) to support the mission. After input from these three groups is

incorporated, the mission and strategic plan are discussed and voted on by the WCOB faculty for adoption. Although the mission and strategic plan updates are adopted for a five-year window, the Executive Committee reviews them regularly, and revisions are proposed and voted on by the faculty when appropriate. In 2021 the new strategic plan underwent initial development and review. In August of 2022, the Executive Committee retreat focused on review and refinement of the strategic plan that will guide the WCOB through the next five years.

Strategic planning involves a review of the WCOB's mission statement. The WCOB mission statement is widely and continuously disseminated to faculty, staff, students, alumni, donors, sponsors, supporters and the business community. The mission, vision, and values in place for this review period was adopted in May 2017. The current version of the mission statement is published on all WCOB event programs, on the WCOB website, and in the University's student bulletins; highlighted on WCOB promotional items; and displayed prominently in Peacock Hall, the College of Business building. The latest revisions to the WCOB mission, vision, and strategic plan add emphasis on engagement which includes experiential learning, diversity and inclusion, sustainability and resilience, and global mindset in keeping with these areas of emphasis in the University mission and strategic plan.

The existing mission statement and strategic goals were reviewed in fall 2020 by the Dean's Business Advisory Council, in January 2021 by the WCOB Executive and Strategic Operating Committees, and a comprehensive review with feedback on the college's strategic initiatives was completed by the Dean's Business Advisory Council and the Strategic Planning Committee in December 2021. In 2022, the WCOB Strategic Planning Committee gathered feedback from faculty, staff, students, and community stakeholders, completed a SWOT analysis, and developed a draft strategic plan. Several stages of revisions took place that incorporated advice from faculty and staff. The updated 2022 version of the strategic plan was approved by full faculty vote on October 7, 2022.

As part of the 2021-22 work to revisit the mission, vision and strategic initiatives, several changes in the vision and values have followed from the strategic planning process. These updates focus the strategic initiatives on business as a positive force for social and economic impacts and are queued for implementation in the next five year cycle.

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.

The Walker College of Business Strategic Plan 2017-2022

Five Goals

1. Increase Collaboration and Innovation in Curricular and Co-Curricular Offerings, With a Focus on Sustainability
2. Broaden Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship
3. Enhance Community and Industry Engagement
4. Design a More Sustainable Organization
5. Re-Engineer External Funding Process for Optimization

Strategic Initiatives with Significant Progress at the College, Department, and Center Levels since 2017

College/Inter-Departmental Initiatives

1. New fully online MBA program
2. Encouragement and support for Quality Matters Certification of online courses. Ten courses fully certified.
3. Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) Excel certification required for all BSBA students, support and testing built into the curriculum.
4. Business analytics minors for both WCOB students and interdisciplinary non-WCOB students
5. Interdisciplinary graduate and undergraduate programs and business minors for non-business majors
6. Revised WCOB undergraduate admissions requirements for earlier engagement and advising, at 45 sch, rather than 60 sch completion.
7. Faculty recording studio and training for producing high quality online content
8. Additional technologies and training for enhanced online instruction

Accounting Department

1. Increase collaboration and innovation in curricular and co-curricular offerings, with a focus on sustainability
2. Encourage Excel certification and basic and expert levels
3. Expand internship program opportunities
4. Expand community engagement through VITA, the Impact Clinic, and local business support through the Entrepreneurship Center.
5. Increase employer and alumni support.
6. Business Analytics track added to the MS in Accounting program

7. Faculty partner with the NCACPA and counselors and teachers in Title 1 schools to increase student awareness of accounting as a career path

Computer Information Systems Department

1. Create and support a new required course, an introduction to analytics, for all business majors, integrating Excel certification testing.
2. Developed/co-developed new concentrations and minors (Business Analytics minor includes 5 courses); cybersecurity concentration for CIS majors.
3. Cyber security minor approved effective fall 2022

Economics Department

1. Increase student involved in research initiatives
2. Building IMPLAN, economic impact assessment study software, into undergrad regional economics course
3. Co-development of business analytics minor
4. Develop a study abroad opportunity focused on international climate policy and negotiations
5. Spearhead the Appalachian State University application for UN observer status

Finance, Banking and Insurance Department

1. Create and implement a Fintech and Surtech elective course to support analytics programs.
2. Create minors in Finance & Banking and in Risk Management & Insurance
3. Support state and national student competitions.
4. Provide Financial Literacy programming for a range of stakeholders

Management Department

1. Grow Management Internships
2. Re-evaluate and implement updated Management curriculum in light of economic and business changes and new directions
3. Develop a *Signature* International program partnering with a business school abroad.

Marketing and Supply Chain Department

1. Increase Digital Marketing curriculum content
2. Increase employer engagement, internships, competitions and mentoring in professional sales program
3. Online BSBA SCM program approved and launched in fall 2022

Graduate Programs & Research

1. Launch of Online MBA in fall 2020
2. Launching 2 new courses for MSADA in data analytics
3. Adding MBA concentration in finance
4. Required and elective experiential projects relating for MSADA and MBA students, respectively
5. Analytics Team competitions
6. SBTDC pandemic research
7. Partnering with Office of Research to increase external funding

Risk Analysis and Mitigation

Details describing the progress listed above are available. Progress and challenges are discussed regularly at Executive Committee Meetings. In addition, at the semiannual retreats of the Executive and Strategic Operating Committee in August and January, more detailed discussions are held regarding resource needs

and faculty and staff support needed to accomplish the initiatives. At each of these meetings, actions are taken to seek resolution of issues and support for continued progress.

The most common risks, past and future, are related to demographic shifts, uncertainty of future state budgets, faculty recruitment and retention, challenges to attract and retain diverse faculty, staff and students, and unexpected interruptions to business operations. To mitigate these risks factors, the WCOB plans to:

- Expand the geographic reach with a new campus in Hickory and an online MBA program that facilitate recruitment of non-traditional student populations
- Strengthen private donations to support teaching, research, service, student services and scholarships
- Supplement faculty salaries through research grants, and stipends for exceptional teaching and service activities
- Work with the university to provide and support inclusive and affinity mechanisms that attract and retain individuals from more diverse backgrounds
- Provide ongoing support for faculty and staff training in remote work practices and modality shifts

How the school strategically intends to make a positive societal impact.

The WCOB works strategically to engage and make positive societal impacts with students, faculty, staff and external stakeholders in a broad variety of ways. Organizational leadership is executed strategically to include an Associate Dean for Global and Civic Engagement. Global and civic engagement is an overarching theme in college/university level signature events, experiential learning, entrepreneurship support, student competitions, discipline specific community support, and student led club activities. These initiatives are explained below.

1. Organizational Staffing Assignments

The college has an Associate Dean for Global and Civic Engagement continually promoting the global issues requirement required of all BSBA students, study abroad opportunities, and international speakers and events. Additional support for these efforts is provided by a Global and Civic Engagement Specialist, development officers/staff, an Entrepreneurship Center, as well as facilities and event staff, who are all continually working on activities to engage faculty, students, and stakeholders for societal impact.

2. Signature Events

- a. The Boyles Distinguished Lecture Series, started in 1988, continues to be held once or twice annually for students, faculty, staff, and regional business leaders often hosting close to 2,000 in attendance. Many internationally known leaders have come and spoken on highly relevant societal topics such as Nobel Peace Prize recipient, Kailash Satyarthi who spoke on child labor issues globally.
- b. Since 2003, the Walker College has hosted an annual Entrepreneurship Summit for students, alumni, and state and community business entrepreneurs. In recent years the Summit included approximately 20 sessions led by successful entrepreneurs and was attended by over 300 state and community business leaders, faculty and students.
- c. Walker Business Connections career event began in 2013 and is held each fall primarily to prepare Walker College of Business students for the realities of the business world. It

features interactions among faculty, staff, students, and industry professionals on current industry trends and issues, career concerns, and professional development. Workshops, professional panel discussions, and corporate information tables are all part of the day. As many as 1220 students, 250 industry representatives, and 60 faculty members have participated in a given year. Many business leaders stay a second day and participate in practice interviews and mentoring sessions, and student club presentations. The success of this fall career event increased industry relationships to the extent that a spring career fair was added to better facilitate recruiting efforts. In 2018, the first business specific spring career fair (Walker Spring Connect) was added to the career event lineup and now takes place each spring semester.

- d. Since August 2015, the Walker College has hosted the Business for Good Conference for faculty, staff, and community and regional business leaders. The event highlights advances and trends in sustainable business practices and has featured both local and internationally known speakers.
- e. The annual Global Opportunities Conference highlights innovative and entrepreneurial ways of addressing global challenges with the goal of inspiring students, faculty and the local community to use their knowledge and skills in the business of building a better world.

3. Experiential Learning

- a. Internships are strongly encouraged, or required, in each discipline. Historically, about 50% of BSBA students complete at least one internship. The internship rate fell to 37% in 2020 as a result of the pandemic when many internship offers were rescinded. The current BSBA internship rate for the 2021-22 academic year is 41% and shows an upward trajectory. Internship rates are projected to return to pre-pandemic levels in the next academic year.
- b. The WCOB Entrepreneurship Center hosts many student competitions and has supported over 1,000 start-up projects, 55+ new companies, and supported 75+ local community businesses.
- c. The WCOB is home to more than 20 business specific clubs, many with strong ties to industry professionals that offer students professional development opportunities. Clubs are supported and encouraged in their participation at regional and national competitions.
- d. The Accounting Department engages students in tax preparation support for low income families through the IRS VITA program. Through the Impact Clinic in the Accounting Department, students assist local organizations with sustainability performance assessments and strategies to implement sustainable business practices.
- e. The Finance Department involves finance majors in financial literacy training for local high schools.
- f. The Economics Department involves students in local and regional studies.
- g. The CIS department provides extensive internship support with well established connections to industry professionals who network extensively with students.
- h. The Management department is home to the only business major with a required internship, Hospitality and Tourism Management.
- i. The Marketing department frequently prepares and supports student participation in regional and national professional sales competitions.
- j. All 20+ WCOB student clubs are encouraged to adopt student-led projects that demonstrate business for good and support for the environment.

- k. MBA and Data Analytics masters students work with industry partners to solve real business problems.

Other activities supporting societal impact are: the emphasis and measurements related to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in various courses, faculty research and service activities; leading the effort for the university application to receive UN Observer status and attending the Conference of the Parties (COP) Global Climate Conference in 2021 and 2022; encouragement of faculty and staff to be involved in regional and local business related organizations, such as the Chamber of Commerce; and creating and supporting scholarship programs aimed at helping underserved students and students in need. To help better understand total impact, faculty use Watermark Faculty Success (formerly Digital Measures) to track research, teaching and service, and fields have been added in Watermark to allow each activity to be linked to relevant UN SDGs.

Explain what the school is doing to advance diversity and inclusion, consistent with its mission.

The WCOB created a Diversity Advisory Team (DAT) in September 2015 composed of faculty, staff and students and university representatives who meet once a month in order to advise Walker College administrators on diversity and inclusiveness opportunities and needs within the College. The basic purpose of the DAT was to help students from a minority or diverse background find community within the College of Business. In 2018, the team was expanded both in mission and membership and renamed the Inclusive Excellence Team (IET). One of their most successful events has been Courageous Conversations held regularly to promote understanding and respect for differences. The faculty chairperson for this team has played an important role in advancing diversity and inclusion and was named the University's Chief Diversity Officer in 2022.

To enhance learner success, the College has sponsored a *Business for Good Residential Learning Community* starting in the fall of 2022. This program seeks to engage first-generation college students who typically face significant challenges in their higher education journeys. Students receive mentoring, participate in social activities and career workshops and learn about business-focused student clubs.

Another successful effort is the ongoing Women of Walker (WOW) initiative, founded in 2015 with the mission of helping prepare female students for success in business. This organization has been very active in recruiting more women into business disciplines and sponsoring professional development activities for female business students. Both the IET and WOW sponsor events that promote inclusiveness and provide mentoring support. The College has also worked, pre-pandemic, with the state of NC FBLA and DECA to invite prospective business students to campus for tours and open house events. Demographic analyses were used to establish targeted recruiting efforts with high schools in areas of underrepresented populations.

To enhance diversity within accounting, faculty are working in conjunction with the NCACPA and school counselors and teachers in Title 1 schools to increase student awareness of accounting as a career path. They have hosted groups of counselors on campus and led discussion groups to accomplish this goal. The department also coordinates school visits by accounting clubs such as Beta Alpha Psi or by alumni working in accounting firms to discuss their experiences in accounting directly with students.

ii) Financial Situation and Funding for Strategic Initiatives

Slightly more than 90% of the budget is funded by allocations that come from tuition, fees, and state government appropriations, and just under 10% of the budget is funded by private sources (current private gifts and earnings from endowed funds). Approximately 94% of college expenditures go to salaries and benefits for faculty and staff, with the remainder covering other operating expenses (primarily travel, operating supplies and services, and technology equipment and supplies). The College budget has grown by approximately 12% in the last five years.

At the end of June 2022, the total value of endowment funds designated for the College was \$30,474,879, approximately double the amount held in June 2017. The amount of privately donated funds received or pledged to the College since the last visit is \$14,896,776.37. The table below shows the trend in state funding, and listed below that is a list of private donations and pledges since the last visit.

Annual WCOB Funding

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Total WCOB Operating Budget (\$)	20,795,385	20,502,857	20,937,777	19,133,687	23,242,569
WCOB Endowment Assets Total (\$)	18,530,740	20,021,573	21,247,031	28,834,081	30,474,879

In spite of the pandemic, new applications for admission and enrollment at Appalachian continue to be strong, but capacity and design limitations in facilities pose challenges. Peacock Hall is one of the most utilized academic buildings on campus, and the State of NC has approved a \$25 million expansion and renovation with planning and design beginning in 2022. In addition, the University has acquired significant educational space in Hickory, NC. Academic programs to be offered in App State Hickory are under discussion, with the facility slated to open for classes in fall 2023. State operations funding has remained stable with limited growth to support added faculty positions in priority programs.

Private funding support for many of the College of Business activities has been strong and continues to increase, even enabling an expansion of research grant funding and added Dean's Club professorships.

Significant University investments in technology resources and training occurred throughout the pandemic so that the College of Business has developed a strong repertoire of technical resources to support online modes of course delivery, including a faculty recording studio for producing high quality online content.

Financial Strategies and Allocation of Resources

Annually, the Dean makes a budget presentation to the Chancellor and university at large summarizing progress and future needs. The College's financial strategy to secure strong support for state funds is directly related to student credit hour generation. Semester plans are developed to maximize facility space and faculty utilization while targeting increases in programs and minors where capacity exists. The College of Business has had among the highest classroom utilization factors on campus and has been supported with the addition of faculty positions to manage targeted growth. Within capacity constraints, the College of Business has also sought to grow the masters' programs which bring in additional revenue through differential tuition.

Financial support for several of the most important strategic initiatives is shown in the table below.

Financial Support for Strategic Initiatives

Initiative	Start Date	First-Year Cost	Continuing Annual Cost	Source or of Funds
Goal 1. Faculty				
Faculty Research and Innovation Grants	Ongoing		\$301,253	Combination of state and donor funds
Professorships	Ongoing		\$160,129	Endowed & Donor Cash funds through the Appalachian State Foundation
Goal 2. Curriculum				
MS Applied Data Analytics	Sep-16	\$61,714		Combination of state and donor funds
Collaborative work space 2 nd floor	Ongoing		\$135,978	Donor Cash funds through the Appalachian State Foundation
Goal 3. Students				
WCOB Advising	Ongoing		\$488,822	Combination of state and donor funds
Truist (BB&T) Student Leadership Center	Ongoing		\$479,239	5 year commitment of \$100,000/year from Truist (Formerly BB&T).
Walker Business Connections	Ongoing		\$9,084	Combination of state and donor funds
Goals 4, 5, and 6. Support University, Partnership and Strategic Goals				
Business for Good	Ongoing		\$13,015	Combination of state and donor funds
Diversity Advisory Council	Ongoing		\$4,500	Combination of state and donor funds
Entrepreneurship Center	Ongoing		\$159,826	Combination of state and donor funds
Entrepreneurship Summit	Ongoing		\$3,527	Endowed fund through the Appalachian State Foundation

Boyles Lecture Series	Ongoing		\$19,745	Endowed fund through the Appalachian State Foundation
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The College's financial strategy to increase outside private funding is guided by three staff members devoted to donor development activities in five primary areas:

1. Promoting unrestricted giving to the Dean's Club.
2. Promoting scholarship giving to the WCOB Scholarship program which awards over \$500K to students annually, the majority of which goes to students in need.
3. Promoting endowed gifts to specific ongoing needs in the college.
4. Promoting large named gifts and endowments for professorships and facility needs. Many of these cases are developed around prominent faculty who have made big impacts in their career field and the business community in NC.
5. Cultivating ongoing relationships with new and longstanding alumni through advisory boards and many signature campus events.

External funding strategies seek to capitalize on areas of program strength and enrollment growth and contributions by faculty members who have achieved extraordinary recognition from both business and academic professionals across the region. Other general strategies include broadening the base of smaller donors through enlistment into the Dean's Club, and seeking to develop stronger relationships with younger alumni.

Since the last accreditation visit, receipts and pledges have been received for \$14,896,776.37 in private donations including:

- \$500,000 gift for the use of an Investment Learning Lab.
- \$1,782,277 in unrestricted giving to the WCOB Dean's Club.
- Two \$500,000 donations toward the Center for Entrepreneurship.
- \$500,000 renewed corporate commitment to Business Career Services in the BB&T Student Leadership Center.
- \$300,000 private donation to Business Career Services.
- \$80,000 raised for Business Career Services in Covid-year mini-campaign focusing on advisory board members.
- \$600,000 gift (\$100k current, \$500k in estate) secured for Sywassink endowment to continue Faculty & Staff Day of Excellence dinner and awards program in perpetuity.
- \$100,000 anonymous donation to establish an endowed scholarship in Computer Information Systems.
- \$550,000 in private donations to establish endowed scholarships in Accounting.
- \$300,000 raised to honor the retirement of former professor and dean Randy Edwards designated to three areas: Accounting, Career Services, and unrestricted Dean's Club fund.
- \$75,000 grant over 3 years from Spencer Foundation to support Diversity & Inclusion initiatives in Risk Management & Insurance.
- \$1,500,000 over 3 years from an anonymous trade organization to focus on international travel for insurance students.
- \$1,000,000 Martha Guy estate gift received.
- \$937,000 unrestricted gift received to create Raley Endowment.
- Harry Davis Distinguished Professorship gifts/pledges all received from multiple NC banks, match applied for one year ahead of schedule, will create a combined \$1,000,000 endowed professorship. State match was approved in fall 2021.
- Wayne Sumner Distinguished Professorship in Insurance supported by the Independent Insurance Agents of North Carolina and the North Carolina Surplus Lines Association; each provided

approximately half of the private funding (\$333,000) required to qualify for the state match for a \$500,000 endowment. The professorship has been approved by the state, and is in the queue for the state match.

- David A. Thompson Professorship gifts/pledges all received, match applied for to create a combined \$500,000 endowed professorship.
- Doubled number of donors to unrestricted Dean's Club fund from FY20 to FY21.

Notably, 2020 was the first time in college history that more than \$4 million was raised, and in 2021, the total exceeded \$5 million. Donor and state funds are used to meet challenges that arise when additional resources are needed to meet strategic initiatives. For example, the Walker College provides financial support to business faculty engaged in curriculum redesign and development in keeping with our mission and strategic objectives.

iii) Faculty Qualifications, Sufficiency, and Deployment

Faculty Profile

The WCOB faculty and staffing strategy, as seen from the faculty profile below, has for many years been built on having a high percentage of faculty with terminal degrees, tenure track faculty in each discipline. Overall, the College has averaged about 65% of SCH generated through faculty with terminal degrees, SA faculty. Though Appalachian State is classified as a masters intensive regional university predominantly focused on undergraduate education, the WCOB has put high value on hiring faculty who produce relevant and impactful research that informs and supports the college mission, strategies, and educational goals in the classrooms and engagement goals in the region. The College also places value on faculty who have had significant business experience and enhance the relevance and application of theory in the classroom. To the extent possible, hiring has targeted qualified full-time and part-time faculty who are typically SA or IP in order to meet AACSB qualification standards.

Number of Faculty by Year and Academic Rank

		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total Faculty		127	131	137	140	142	153
FTE		117.68	120.36	124.34	126.77	129.84	136.9
Rank	Professor	44	43	41	44	44	41
	Associate Professor	27	24	24	23	18	20
	Assistant Professor	21	23	25	26	29	31
	Instructor		2		2	2	1
	Lecturer	23	24	31	26	28	29
	No Academic Rank	12	15	16	19	21	15
Tenure	Tenured	63	62	60	63	59	58
	On Track	21	26	27	27	29	31
	Not on Track	43	43	50	50	54	48

Highest Earned Degree	Doctorate	96	98	99	102	99	99
	Master's	29	28	33	35	39	34
	Other	2	5	5	3	4	4
Full or Part Time	Full-Time	110	115	118	118	121	124
	Part-Time	17	16	19	22	21	13

Faculty Policies, Sufficiency and Qualifications Summary

Through our well-established faculty management policies, including recruitment, hiring, mentoring, evaluation, and reward systems, the Walker College of Business has been able to successfully attract and retain highly qualified faculty to fulfill our growing needs due to enrollment growth and retirements. Faculty lines are calculated and allocated by UNC System and University Academic Affairs based on rolling averages in student credit hours taught in the fall and spring semesters. Over time, and with consistent higher enrollments, the College has added new tenure track faculty lines to support growth.

Administrators, chairs and deans, are almost always chosen from within the University, with generally very good success and support from faculty and staff.

All full-time faculty are expected to be qualified at the time of hire, expected to maintain qualifications yearly, and expected to be active participants in student learning success and college/departmental administrative activities. The WCOB Standards for *Faculty Sufficiency & Qualifications* Document provides detailed criteria reviewed and approved by faculty and the WCOB Executive Committee.

Table 3-1 shows that overall 65% of SCH are taught by SA faculty, and 97.7% by SA+SP+SP+ IP faculty. All disciplines meet the AACSB criteria ranging from 60-84% SA faculty, and 94-100% SA+SP+SP+ IP faculty. Overall, participating faculty teach 94.5% of SCH with disciplines ranging from 79.6% to 100%.

Table 3-2 shows that over 99% of SCH in each degree program are taught by qualified faculty with 41.81% SA in the BSBA, 95.67% SA in the MBA and 90.23% SA in the specialized masters programs. The deployment strategy for faculty is simple. To the extent possible, seek to have graduate and upper level SCH taught by SA terminal degreed faculty and use qualified lecturers and instructors for lower level, generally 2000 level business and general education SCH. The one exception in the MBA program is one Senior Lecturer with advanced computer security certifications who teaches computer security courses.

Currency and relevance in teaching is maintained through several strategies. In recruiting and hiring, significant value is placed on candidates with professional experience in their discipline. Since teaching is a high priority, experienced faculty are often sought, many with ongoing connections to industry and business. Competitive instructional and research grant programs are offered annually incentivizing faculty to further develop knowledge in key areas aligned with the mission and strategic goals. Faculty research is also classified according to the 17 UN Sustainable Development goals to promote “business for good” thinking and applied research that informs the classroom. Lastly the faculty of the WCOB are encouraged to participate in the many signature engagement activities, departmental advisory board meetings, and activities in professional and academic societies, and community business organizations.

Recruitment and Hiring

Appalachian's Office of Equity, Diversity and Compliance (EDC) oversees all faculty recruitment and hiring practices at the University. The Office of EDC guides and monitors search and hiring procedures, affirmative action and equal opportunity compliance, recruitment and admission strategies, and the exit interview process.

Position Management is an administrative process. Positions are allocated by the UNC System to Appalachian State University. Positions are then allocated to each college. At the college level, positions are allocated based on student credit hour to faculty ratios and strategic initiatives.

The WCOB joined the PhD Project in 2011-12 to enhance recruitment of diverse faculty. The primary benefits of the PhD Project are to give visibility to Appalachian and the Walker College of Business through a published profile and the posting of faculty openings in a venue dedicated to promoting opportunities for minority faculty and doctoral students. The Project also allows us access to CVs of diverse business professor candidates. The College posts all current faculty search information there.

Mentoring

Both the University and College conduct new faculty orientation sessions. The Center for Academic Excellence conducts the university wide orientation. The WCOB orientation covers all policies, procedures, and standards relevant to faculty members' success at the institution, including AACSB Standards and the University's and College's expectations for Promotion and Tenure, as well as the College's requirements for maintaining scholarly academic (SA) and/or instructional practitioner (IP) status. The orientation also familiarizes new faculty with the College's mission and strategic plan. Academic departments within the College, in coordination with the University's Center for Academic Excellence, help facilitate mentoring relationships for new faculty. Most departments also assign mentors to junior faculty.

Evaluation and Reward Systems

The evaluation and reward systems in the Walker College of Business are formalized in the College's Faculty Personnel Guidelines, along with the departments' supplemental personnel guidelines. All guidelines are consistent with those of the University, as set forth in the University's faculty handbook.

Annual Review

The College's Faculty Personnel Guidelines describe the annual (calendar year) goal-setting process for faculty, through which the Department Chair and individual faculty members determine relative weights of the three required dimensions of performance: instruction, intellectual contribution, and service. In terms of the faculty annual evaluation, the *Faculty Personnel Guidelines* describe minimum expectations, as well as what constitutes performance above expectations, for each of the areas of the three dimensions. Supplemental guidelines may be added by departments to further describe expectations at the department level.

In concert with the University's uniform faculty annual reporting, faculty are required to update their accomplishments in instruction, intellectual contributions, and service through the Watermark (formerly Digital Measures) reporting tool by December 31 each year. During each spring semester each year, the Department Chair consults with the Dean regarding the performance of departmental faculty members. After this consultation, each faculty member meets with his/her Chair for an evaluation conference prior

to the end of the spring semester. During the meeting, the Chair and the faculty member discuss the faculty member's accomplishments for the year, the extent to which current year goals were attained, and any problems perceived by either the faculty member or the Chair. The discussion is facilitated by the use of the WCOB Faculty Annual Performance Appraisal Form. Through the use of the WCOB Faculty Annual Goal Form, the faculty member and the Chair may also arrive at an agreement concerning the faculty member's goals and the distribution of effort and time among the three areas (instruction, intellectual contributions, and service) that is appropriate given individual, department, and College goals. During evaluation conferences, Chairs also provide written feedback to non-tenured tenure-track faculty regarding progress towards tenure.

Merit Rewards

The College's policy on merit rewards and resource allocation is documented in the *Faculty Personnel Guidelines*. As stated in Section III of the *Guidelines*:

"In order to qualify for merit salary increases, a faculty member must meet the minimum expectations established for instruction, intellectual contribution, and service. Faculty eligible for merit consideration will be rated by the department chairperson on the basis of relative performance in each of the three areas."

Access to all departmental resources are generally allocated by the chair with the dean's input in ways that focus most on mission and strategic contributions. Those faculty members who qualify for merit adjustments shall get priority consideration for other resources, such as travel funds, graduate assistant help, summer teaching opportunities, and favorable teaching schedules. Also, future workload assignments will be related to performance in previous evaluation periods.

Tenure and Promotion

Sections I.A. and I.B. of the *Faculty Personnel Guidelines* describe expectations for tenure and promotion to the ranks of Associate Professor and Full Professor. These are often accompanied by departmental supplemental guidelines. As with annual review expectations, all tenure and promotion guidelines are consistent with those of the University, as set forth in the University's *Faculty Handbook*. As stated in Section 4.4.2. of the *Faculty Handbook* (July 2021 revision), "the decision to reappoint, promote or tenure a faculty member may be based on any factor(s) considered relevant to the total institutional interests, but those responsible for making the decision must consider the faculty member's demonstrated professional competence, potential for future contribution, and institutional needs and resources."

In terms of the governance of the tenure and promotion process, as is described in Section 4.1. of the *Faculty Handbook* (July 2021 revision), each promotion and tenure committee (PTC), comprised of (a) at least four faculty members elected by the department's faculty and (b) the department chair (non-voting), reviews the question of the granting of permanent tenure and/or promotion. The PTC makes a recommendation to the Department Chair, who in turn makes a recommendation to the Dean. The Dean then makes a recommendation to the Provost. All recommendations are accompanied by the results of the PTC's vote, supporting material, and all documentation submitted to the PTC.

Post Tenure Review

In addition to the annual review process and the reviews that occur for tenure and promotion, tenured teaching faculty are also subject to the University system's post tenure review process, a comprehensive review to provide for the evaluation of all aspects of the professional performance of faculty whose primary responsibilities are teaching, and/or research, and/or service. As outlined in Section 4.7. of the

Faculty Handbook (July 2021 revision), post tenure reviews occur at least once every five years. Any faculty member who receives an unsatisfactory rating in the post-tenure review is given the opportunity to improve performance. The faculty member's Chair in consultation with the Dean provides a written individual professional development plan for the faculty member, which includes a specific timeline including steps for improvement. The Chair is encouraged to assign one or more mentoring peers to the faculty member, and the Chair must hold a progress meeting with the faculty member on at least a semi-annual basis during the specified timeline.

Criteria for Participating and Supporting Status

The College has well-established criteria that guide the development of intellectual contributions, participating and supporting status, and academic and professional qualifications. These criteria are documented in the College's *Faculty Personnel Guidelines* and the College's *Standards for Faculty Sufficiency and Faculty Qualification*. Departmental supplemental guidelines provide additional performance and promotion and tenure expectations at the department level. Where applicable, College criteria are consistent with the University's expectations, as outlined in the *Faculty Handbook*.

Criteria for participating and supporting status are described in the College's *Standards for Faculty Sufficiency and Faculty Qualifications*. As stated in Section II of that document, a participating faculty member actively engages in the activities of the College in matters beyond direct teaching responsibilities, including service and/or research activities that help the school achieve its mission. A supporting faculty member only engages in direct teaching responsibilities (preparing, teaching, grading, and holding office hours) and there is not an expectation to be involved in other activities of the College.

Tenured, tenure-track, and full-time non-tenure track faculty members are normally expected to fall into the category of participating faculty members, and part-time non-tenure track faculty members are normally expected to fall into the category of supporting faculty members. However, many part-time faculty members volunteer their time in service activities supporting learner success. The determination of a faculty member's status as participating or supporting is based upon an annual review of the actual level of involvement of each faculty member.

Instructional Teaching Models

The College of Business does not use instructional teaching models, such as lead teachers supported by teaching assistants, tutors, instructors, or other support staff. However, graduate assistants may proctor exams. Though lead teachers are not used, departments often assign course coordinators for BSBA core courses so that faculty teaching different sections of the same courses can work together to create more consistent learning experiences.

B. Learner Success

i) Curricula Management

Faculty are continually encouraged to revise and update course content to address strategic directions and relevant topics in their disciplines. Instructional innovation grants, and occasionally release time, are granted to promote larger changes. Each year, the dean's office extends a call for instructional innovation proposals aligned with strategic priority themes that year. Though faculty implement many changes within the scope of the courses they teach, changes requiring updates in catalog or prerequisite information, and all new courses go through the structured college and university processes described below.

Curricular management and development are governed by two primary documents at the university level: The Faculty Handbook, and the Academic Policy and Procedures (AP&P) Manual. The Walker College specifies additional detail in the WCOB Advisory Committee Structure and Purpose document. In summary, the departments and individual faculty have the primary responsibility for curricular management. Any faculty member can make proposals for change. These proposals are voted on by the departmental or program specific curriculum committee within the department. The curriculum committee is the governing body for change recommendations to BSBA, MBA, and MSADA programs. If the committee supports the recommendation, the proposal moves forward to the College curriculum committee. If supported at that level, the proposal moves to the WCOB Executive Committee for endorsement. If endorsed, the proposal moves forward to the university level AP&P committee. If supported at the university level, the proposal moves to the Provost for approval. For changes involving the addition of majors or new degree programs, the Chancellor, Appalachian State Board of Trustees, the UNC General Administration and the UNC Board of Governors must also approve the proposal. This review process involves a wide range of university and departmental representatives whose informed decisions collectively ensure the BSBA and masters level curriculum is current and relevant.

Delivering a curriculum that is current and relevant demands that it also be forward-thinking and globally oriented. The Walker College supports global and civic engagement for all students, faculty and staff with three areas of emphasis: social & environmental sustainability, diversity & inclusion and international programs. The College provides a variety of international programs designed to develop international business skills and intercultural knowledge. These faculty-led programs include short and long-term study abroad, exchange programs, and international internships. Grants and scholarships are available to make international programs attainable for more students. The College offers a BSBA in International Business and an International Business Minor. The major is designed to prepare students for a career in international business or public service through the development of competency in a foreign language and cultural awareness and providing students with specialized international business skills.

The core curriculum is informed by the initiatives and goals set forth in the five-year strategic plan. The core BSBA curriculum was last reviewed in 2017 as part of a larger study to benchmark and revise admissions requirements, and make improvements to enhance retention and graduation rates.

ii) Current and Emerging Technologies

CIS 1060 Introduction to Business Analytics Using Spreadsheet Technology was added to the BSBA core and is required of all business students. This course introduces students to business analytics concepts that include extracting information from data through formulas and functions, creating data visualizations, data modeling through pivot tables, summarizing and analyzing data, data-driven decision-making through what-if analysis, and the role of statistical functions. This course was developed to ensure computer proficiency across degree programs and provide stackable credentials that enhance the professional qualifications of students. Additional information on the impact of this course can be found in the *BSBA AoL Details* document and is summarized in Section B. vi) a) *BSBA Comprehensive Example of Closing the Loop*.

Microlearning credentials are offered in the WCOB to enhance student competencies with current and emerging technologies. These include Microsoft Excel certifications, SAS certifications, CPA exams, CFA exams, Lean Six Sigma Green Belt Certification, and Summit Certifications for RMI and Actuarial students. A graduate level Business Analytics Certificate program is offered in partnership with SAS that utilizes the cutting-edge cloud based platform, SAS Viya. The partnership between Appalachian State

University and SAS allows participants to also receive a SAS joint certificate upon completion of the program.

iii) Curricula Revisions

In the past five years, 122 changes in undergraduate programs and 58 changes in graduate programs have gone through the College and University Academic Policy and Procedures (AP&P) change process. Most curricular changes addressed strategic topics or relevance and emerging technologies in their disciplines. Examples include the addition of sales, advanced sales, and digital marketing curricula content in marketing, and cost accounting in the global context, ethical hacking and countermeasures, and most programs adding applied analytics content based on discipline specific needs. The College will continue emphasis on analytics skills, emerging topics appropriate for each discipline, the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and inclusive excellence.

iv) Curricular Elements that Lead to Positive Societal Impact

In order to promote positive societal impact, sustainable business principles have been integrated throughout the curriculum. The Faculty Development Committee developed discipline-specific definitions of sustainability and its relevance to each business discipline. These definitions inform the design of courses across the curriculum to prepare graduates to be ethical, innovative, and engaged business leaders who positively impact our community, both locally and globally.

Many departments in the WCOB offer courses focused on sustainability and ethical issues in specific disciplines. The Department of Computer Information Systems offers coursework in strategy and ethics, ethical hacking, and privacy. The Department of Economics offers courses in environmental economics and policy. The Department of Management offers courses in sustainable business theory, sustainable tourism, and a foundations course in ethics, sustainability, and inclusion. The Department of Accounting offers a course in assessing sustainability in a global environment. In addition to specific courses, three formal programs are offered to reinforce sustainable business in the curriculum. The College offers an undergraduate minor in sustainable business, and two master's level concentrations in sustainable business.

v) Recruitment and Retention of Diverse Learners

Business students are not admitted directly into the BSBA. Admission occurs at the university level, and therefore, the diversity of business students is largely reflective of diversity at the university level. However, strategies are in place to support and promote success for learners in underrepresented groups. The College upholds a strong commitment to developing and fostering an inclusive environment for all business students. This commitment is guided by an Inclusive Excellence Team composed of faculty and staff who advise college administrators on diversity and inclusiveness opportunities. Their continued efforts include the development of a specific action plan with clear goals and timelines to enact positive change in the college as well as the community. As the college trains business leaders for success in their field, it also aspires to empower them to be a positive force for change.

Several initiatives are underway that are designed to support and enable the success of diverse learners. The Appalachian Advocates program began as an initiative of the Walker College of Business in 2020 and has now expanded as a campus-wide initiative. This initiative was created to equip, expand, and make visible the network of support available to members of underrepresented groups within the AppState Community and the greater Boone community. Appalachian Advocates has grown to play an essential role in creating an inclusive campus environment, just as it did in its early stages in the business college.

A number of additional initiatives serve to support diverse learners in the college. These include a shared reading program, panel discussions around issues of discrimination and implicit bias in the workplace, programs designed to prepare female students with essential skills needed for success in business, professional attire assistance, mentoring, a shared reading initiative, and membership in The PhD Project.

The Walker College of Business is equally committed to recruiting diverse learners. The Business for Good Residential Learning Community was established in 2022 for first-generation business students to explore how businesses can address social, environmental, and economic issues. A renewable annual scholarship (We are Walker Scholarship) supports and recognizes outstanding incoming intended business majors from underrepresented populations. An annual dinner hosted by the Risk Management and Insurance Faculty and Gamma Iota Sigma focuses on the recruitment of freshman, sophomore, and transfer students from diverse backgrounds. More information on the impact of these recruitment efforts can be found in section B. vii) *Learner Demographics and Enrollment Trends*.

vi) Robust Description of Assurance of Learning (AoL) Program

The WCOB has a mature assessment and continuous improvement process which has been in use, with ongoing curricula improvements, for over 22 years. The process is designed to involve the faculty and faculty representatives on various committees, as well as other internal and external stakeholders. In general, responsibility for the AoL continuous improvement process encompasses the following groups and activities within the WCOB:

The WCOB Executive Committee has primary responsibility for the continuous improvement process. The Strategic Planning Committee, Strategic Operating Committee, and Business Advisory Council (BAC) are also involved in establishing the College's *Mission, Strategic Goals, and Learning Objectives*. Significant changes require approval by a vote of the WCOB faculty.

Primary responsibility for monitoring and implementing the College's BSBA AoL process rests with the WCOB Assessment Committee. The WCOB Assessment Committee is chaired by the Associate Dean for Global and Civic Engagement and comprises representatives from each of the College's departments. Ex-officio members include the directors of the MBA and MSAcc programs as well as the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and Administration. The Assessment Committee meets as needed throughout the academic year. Committee members review and analyze the assessment data collected from students and report results to the Executive Committee and the Curriculum Committee(s). The data review and analysis usually take place during the summer. On an as needed basis, faculty members have been engaged in summer assessment work and received stipends as compensation for their work.

The results of the AoL data analysis from the Assessment Committee, are shared with the Chair of the Curriculum Committee and the Executive Committee as well as other interested groups (e.g., the Department Curriculum Committees, Strategic Planning Committee, etc.) for evaluation. The Curriculum Committee generates formal recommendations when necessary. These recommendations are passed on to the Executive Committee for review and ultimately voted on by the entire WCOB Faculty, when appropriate.

Department-specific curricular changes require approval by one of the WCOB Department Curriculum Committees, the WCOB Executive Committee, and all relevant University Committees, including the

Academic Policies and Procedures Committee. Significant changes to the College's degree programs, such as changes to admission requirements or graduation requirements, are voted on by the entire WCOB faculty.

Over the past five years the Walker College of Business (WCOB) has continued to administer a comprehensive assessment process across the four degree programs offered by the College: Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA), Master of Business Administration (MBA), Master of Science in Accounting (MSAcc), and the Master of Science in Applied Data Analytics (MSADA).

As a result of findings from the assessment processes, the College has adjusted the content of several courses, added required courses, and made changes to the curriculum structure, including tightening admission requirements, changing prerequisites for some courses, and making changes in the program of study for certain majors.

The following sections describe the learning goals, assessment approach, recent results, and examples of closing the loop modifications made in each of the four WCOB programs (BSBA, MBA, MSAcc, and MSADA).

a) BSBA Degree Program Assurance of Learning

BSBA Degree Program Learning Goals

In order to fulfill the WCOB mission to “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” the WCOB faculty and stakeholders identified the following learning goals for our BSBA graduates. These goals were in place through the 2021-22 academic year.

Goal 1: Students will think analytically to successfully solve problems.

- a. Students will be able to analyze situations and identify relevant information to logically solve problems.
- b. Students will be able to identify possible alternatives and exercise sound judgment for decision making.

Goal 2: Students will communicate effectively in writing and speech.

- a. Students will demonstrate effective oral communication skills necessary for a professional business environment.
- b. Students will demonstrate a competency in writing to effectively communicate in a professional business environment.

Goal 3: Students will understand ethical issues and responsibility to society.

- a. Students will recognize and analyze diverse perspectives to cultivate inclusive practices.
- b. Students will understand the relationship among people, planet, and profit (triple bottom line/sustainability).

Goal 4: Students will possess functional business knowledge and technology skills.

- a. Students will know the core concepts within each business discipline: accounting, economics, information technology, finance, management, marketing, and supply chain management.
- b. Students will exhibit a working knowledge of common software programs used in the business environment.

Goal 5: Students will be knowledgeable about the global environment of business.

- a. Students will understand global and intercultural issues as they relate to sustainable business practices.
- b. Students will understand practical aspects of international business such as foreign exchange management and the international monetary system.

Summary of Updates Since the Last AACSB Review

The learning goals reflect updates in several areas since the prior AACSB review. Goal 3 “Students will understand ethical issues and behavior” was changed to “Students will understand ethical issues and responsibility to society.” Goal 3.a. was changed from “Students will recognize and analyze ethical dilemmas and propose solutions for practical business situations” to “Students will recognize and analyze diverse perspectives to cultivate inclusive practices.” Goal 3.b. was changed from “Students will exhibit behavioral intentions to act ethically” to “Students will understand the relationship among people, planet and profit (triple bottom line/sustainability).”

Goal 4.a. was changed to add supply chain management, and goal 4.b. was added “Students will exhibit a working knowledge of common software programs used in the business environment.”

Former Goal 6 “Students will demonstrate appropriate technology skills” was eliminated and its content included in goal 4.b since technology and analytics has become very important in virtually all business disciplines.

BSBA Degree Program – Summary of AoL Approach

Learning goals assume an assessment cycle of at least two assessments in a given five-year accreditation period. For each learning goal, results are deemed acceptable if 75% or more of the students assessed meet or exceed expectations. In the case of the ETS Major Field Test in business, the WCOB institutional mean score should rank at or above the 75th percentile. The table below shows the BSBA five-year assessment plan.

BSBA Five-Year Assessment Cycle of Learning Goals

Learning Goal	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Analytical		Problem Solving	Problem Solving		Problem Solving
	Critical Thinking		Critical Thinking		
Communication		Oral Communication		Oral Communication	
	Written Communication		Written Communication		Written Communication
Ethical	Diversity	Diversity	Diversity		
	Sustainability		Sustainability		Sustainability
Business/ Technology	Business Knowledge	Business Knowledge		Business Knowledge	
	Technical	Technical			Technical
Global	International Sustainability		International Sustainability		International Sustainability
	International Business	International Business		International Business	

Following the plan schedule above, the table below summarizes student performance per year on each goal assessed based on direct measures of student knowledge. The *BSBA AoL Details* document offers additional details of the methodology, performance levels, and results of direct measures related to each learning goal. The *BSBA AoL Details* document provides a year by year accounting of assessment activities, outcomes, and specific changes that have resulted from issues identified in the assessment process.

BSBA Assessment Summary 2017 to 2022

Percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on direct measures

Goal/Year	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
1. Analytical Skills		76%	68%		71%
a. Problem Solving					
b. Critical Thinking	80%		76%		
2. Communication		94%		95%	
a. Oral					
b. Written	69%		82%		79%
3. Ethical					
a. Intercultural/Diversity	72%	82%	89%		
b. Sustainability	69%		65%		68%
4. Business / Technology					
a. Business Knowledge	86 th	86 th		83 rd	
b. Technical Agility	55%/100%*	57%/100%*			94%**
5. Global Environment					
a. Global Natural	51%		76%		63%
b. International Business	69 th	71 st		63 rd	
*The first percentage reflects students who passed the Computer Proficiency Test (required for admission to the BSBA). All who did not pass were required to enroll in CIS 2025. The second percentage reflects students that passed the test after completing the course.					
** Reflects the percentage of WCOB students who passed the Microsoft Office Specialist Exam in CIS 1060.					

Direct assessment measures indicate that overall student proficiency is strong over time. Indirect measures are also used to monitor the continual improvement process for our BSBA curriculum. The WCOB uses the Educational Benchmarking Institute (EBI) senior exit survey where anonymous feedback is solicited from all graduating seniors. The Educational Benchmarking Institute (EBI) survey is administered via the Skyfactor assessment website and reporting dashboard and sent to all seniors taking the Business Capstone Course, BUS 4000. The assessment questions are developed and validated utilizing research standards. They are analyzed and presented via a reporting dashboard that offers actionable information.

There is consistently a 97% response rate from our students and have been able to utilize the information to help identify issues and program areas that need further analysis, better serve and engage students, and continuously improve our programs. The responses to this survey constitute indirect measures of student learning and satisfaction with program coverage. Our 2022 survey indicated that overall, students are very satisfied with our program. Satisfaction scores exceed benchmarks in all three categories that serve as major indicators of performance.

Major Indicators of Performance

Overall satisfaction, learning, and program effectiveness scores all exceed benchmarks as summarized in the table below.

Benchmarked Mean Performance Scores

Factor	Mean Performance Score (Scale 1-7)	Benchmark Comparison (5.5)
Overall Satisfaction	5.87	↑ .37
Learning	5.70	↑ .20
Program Effectiveness	5.67	↑ .17

A more detailed review of our 2022 results showed that, in the view of graduating seniors, our top three strongest factors were satisfaction with advisors, cognitive complexity of learning, and learning concerning ethical and legal responsibilities. These strengths suggest that learners are confident in their ability to think critically to define and solve problems in an ethically responsible way.

The weakest factors were satisfaction with opportunities for interaction with practitioners (4.62) and partnerships with industry in course projects (4.79). These scores tend toward the neutral region of the measurement scale. While they do not necessarily indicate a strong sense of dissatisfaction, the WCOB considers these factors areas for continued improvement. Scores on these factors were reported to the strategic planning committee. In response, the strategic planning committee added an intentional emphasis on increasing experiential learning in the latest revision of the WCOB strategic plan.

BSBA Comprehensive Example of Closing the Loop

The 2016 results of the ETS data indicated that the greatest opportunities for improvement were in data-driven decision making, multiculturalism/diversity, global economies, and supply chain management. The BSBA learning goals were revised in 2017 to provide greater emphasis in all of these areas. Feedback from employers and members of all of our advisory boards helped provide more specific details related to these opportunities.

In 2017, a WCOB faculty team worked with the Math Department to revise the required Business Calculus course to be more applied and specific to support math skills in upper level business classes. An MS in Applied Data Analytics was started. Also in 2017, software tools were acquired and made available to all WCOB students to study for and take Excel certification exams. Initiatives were added to the annual strategic action plans, as well as Instructional Innovation grants offered, to promote these improvements. After multiple pilot course successes, the college voted to include a required introduction to business analytics course (CIS 1060) in the curriculum in 2018 and as of Spring 2022, 94% of students are earning Excel certifications. More advanced analytics content was added in finance and accounting courses, and

technology applications were also added in other majors like computer information systems, marketing and supply chain management. In 2019, the College added a minor in Business Analytics.

Over the years 2017-2021, the College also performed a detailed student success and retention analysis and made several curriculum changes. A general weakness in quantitative skills was found to be an issue. Admissions requirements were changed to engage and advise students earlier, add the required introduction to business analytics course as a requirement, and identify several other required BSBA core courses where departments needed to look at course content and help find ways to promote student success. Further work on retention and early identification of students at risk is ongoing. As of spring 2022, test scores have improved and employer and advisory board members have also noted improved abilities by student interns and as seen in student projects. Data analytics is a very important knowledge area and skill in all business fields, and will continue to be a strategic priority for the WCOB.

b) MBA Degree Program Assurance of Learning

MBA Degree Program Learning Goals

The Associate Dean for Graduate Programs and Research and the Graduate Curriculum Committee oversees Assurance of Learning for the MBA program. In order to fulfill the WCOB mission to 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,” the WCOB graduate faculty and stakeholders have identified the following learning goals for our MBA graduates:

Learning Goal 1: Functional Business Knowledge: Students will demonstrate an interdisciplinary understanding of relevant business disciplines, and apply knowledge to integrate and solve problems in changing and unfamiliar environments.

Learning Outcomes:

- 1.1 Students will demonstrate conceptual understanding and mastery of concepts, principles and knowledge related to accounting, finance, management, and marketing.
- 1.2 Students will exhibit the ability to analyze and synthesize information from theoretical situations.
- 1.3 Students will demonstrate proficiency across all functional areas of business.

Learning Goal 2: Leadership Skills: Students will demonstrate an understanding of the leadership skills necessary to foster team effectiveness for making decisions and accomplishing goals in a business environment.

Learning Outcomes:

- 2.1 Students will demonstrate facilitation and organization skills.
- 2.2 Students will identify effective leadership methods.

Learning Goal 3: Business Ethics and Social Responsibility: Students will demonstrate an ability to identify ethical dimensions of business decisions and understand the role of businesses in addressing social responsibility issues (e.g., diversity, sustainable development, environmental sustainability, and globalization of economic activity across cultures).

Learning Outcomes:

- 3.1 Students will recognize ethical dilemmas, identify relevant stakeholder impacts associated with these dilemmas, and articulate the ethical and social responsibilities of business in choosing appropriate courses of action.

3.2 Students will be able to articulate a course of action that demonstrates the ethical and social responsibility of the business, and provide defensible support for selecting a course of action.

Learning Goal 4: Communication: Students will demonstrate effective professional and communication skills.

Learning Outcomes:

- 4.1 Students will communicate complex ideas and points of view clearly and concisely.
- 4.2 Students will demonstrate the ability to make use of the conventions regarding the genre of business communication while efficiently attending to the needs of the audience.

Learning Goal 5: Global Understanding: Students will demonstrate knowledge of the issues involved in conducting business in a diverse, global environment.

Learning Outcomes:

- 5.1 Students will be able to provide a thorough and accurate analysis of the differences in culture among diverse business environments.
- 5.2 Students will clearly demonstrate the ability to frame management decisions, recommendations, and implementation actions in the context of global opportunities and challenges providing supportive reasoning for their decision.

MBA Degree Program - Summary of Current AoL Approach

Synopsis of the assessment activities since the last AACSB visit

2017 - 2018 Learning Goals Assessed	2018 - 2019 Learning Goals Assessed	2019 - 2020 Learning Goals Assessed	2020 - 2021 Learning Goals Assessed	2021 - 2022 Learning Goals Assessed
Functional Business Disciplines/ Integration	Functional Business Disciplines/ Integration	Functional Business Disciplines/ Integration	Functional Business Disciplines/ Integration	Functional Business Disciplines/ Integration
Leadership Skills	Leadership Skills		Leadership Skills	Leadership Skills
Business Ethics & Social Responsibility	Business Ethics & Social Responsibility		Business Ethics & Social Responsibility	
Communication - Oral	Communication - Oral and Written	Communication - Oral	Communication - Oral and Written	Communication - Oral and Written
Global Business Understanding	Global Business Understanding			Global Business Understanding

Functional business knowledge/strategic integration (Goal 1) is assessed every year. Other learning goals (leadership skills, business ethics, professional and communication skills, and global business environments) are assessed, at least, every other academic year. However, the two year cycle does not limit a goal from being assessed more than once within the two years. For example, Oral Communication was measured every year from 2017 - 2022. The reason for doing this was because assessment criteria

were undergoing revision to refine the measures Oral Communication Skill. For each learning goal, results are deemed “acceptable” if 75% or more of the students assessed meet or exceed expectations.

The table below summarizes student performance per year on each goal assessed. The detailed results are discussed in the *MBA Aol Details* document.

MBA Program Assurance of Learning

Percentage of Students Meeting/Exceeding Expectations

Learning Goals Assessed	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Functional Business Disciplines / Integration	68% (78th) / 55% (79th)	73.3% (78th) / 56% (84th)	72.2% (85th) / 55% (84th)	33.3% (39th) / 44% (19th)	60% (42nd) / 48% (38th)
Leadership Skills	94%	94%		100%	60%
Business Ethics & Social Responsibility	92%	89%		100%	
Communication - Oral	88%	100%	91%	100%	93%
Communication - Written		88%		100%	71%
Global Business Understanding	92%	91%			33%

Goal 1: Functional Business Disciplines/Strategic Integration – The MBA program utilizes the ETS Major Field Test for MBA to assess knowledge in the functional business disciplines. Our goal is for 75% of students measured to score at or above the 50th percentile in the functional business disciplines of marketing, management, finance and accounting, and strategic integration. Pre-COVID (that is, 2017 - 18 to 2019-20), the performance was around the mark that was set; however, during the pandemic (2020 - 2021), the scores went down significantly. When students fail to achieve the required grade on the exam, they have to respond to complete a case study so they can meet graduation and candidacy requirements. During the periods of 2019 - 2020 and 2020 - 2021, this requirement (of completing a case study) was dropped due to the pandemic. Post-pandemic, the scores have increased significantly from the pandemic periods. This upward trend is expected to continue as normal exam procedures resume and improvement strategies are implemented.

The MBA Director extensively discusses and highlights the importance of the ETS exam during new-student orientations (held in Fall, Spring and Summer). Regular reminders are sent to students who are scheduled to take the test; the MBA Director makes a brief presentation regarding the importance of this exam to these same students a couple of weeks before the scheduled dates. The faculty member

administering the exam provides multiple dates, times and modes (i.e. in-person or online) to ensure that students have the flexibility to take the exam as per their convenience. Discussion is ongoing with Faculty members, especially those teaching Finance and Accounting courses (since results show that students' performance is depressed in these areas relative to the others), as to how to warrant better performance in these areas.

Finally, the MBA Director is developing a curriculum map to illustrate the alignment of courses with the student learning outcomes of the MBA program. Hence, the map can be used to identify gaps in the curriculum, can show the program where the optimal places in the curriculum are to collect assessment data for a particular outcome, and can be used to communicate with students and others why certain courses are required for completion of the program. It has been some time since curriculum mapping was done in the MBA program and hence this might be a worthwhile endeavor.

Goals 2 Leadership Skills, 3 Written Comprehension, and, 5 Global Understanding: Performance on Goals 2, 3 and 5 have fluctuated in the 5 year period with the most recent assessment period, compared to the periods before, showing a decrease in all three. While student performance on the remaining goals (Goal 3: Business Ethics and Social Responsibility and Goal 4: Oral Communication) has been adequate, a continual monitoring process for all goals is in place. As mentioned earlier, the items measuring Oral Comprehension (Goal 4) have been revised in order to increase the reliability and validity of the measure. Furthermore, both the MBA Director and the MBA Advisor assess the four goals jointly which ensures inter-rater reliability.

The case study used for assessment of Goals 2, 3, and 5 was changed in the most recent assessment year to reflect the burgeoning effects of the pandemic. Specifically, the attempt was made to ensure that our students understood the seismic shift that the world has gone through due to the pandemic. Students used a variety of sources to gain perspective on how the business world has changed due to the pandemic. They used this updated perspective to explore leadership and global business knowledge that were challenged due to a rapidly changing, global business environment.

This approach was experimental, but was thought to be a prudent way of making the assessment timely and more rigorous. Getting students exposed to different information sources and making them comprehend and synthesize the information from a wide range of sources was valuable, even though the final results showed a need for additional guidance on thoughtful approaches to unique case studies.

MBA Closing the Loop Activities

The Graduate Management Admission Council's (GMAC) 2019 Prospective Students Survey showed that 65% of those interested in an online MBA program preferred to attend part-time and GMAC's 2019 Application Trends Survey Report showed that among 34 responding US online MBA programs, most either grew (50%) or maintained (10%) their application volume compared with the year before. Additionally, the School of Graduate Studies, the App State Online Office, and the Walker College of Business increasingly received inquiries from prospective students interested in pursuing an online MBA.

Based on the rationale provided above and from discussions with the advisory boards and the Graduate Curriculum Committee, Appalachian successfully launched its fully online MBA program beginning in Fall 2020. From the University's mission perspective, the offering of this program specifically endeavored to fulfill several initiatives of the University's most recent Strategic Plan. Curriculum revisions to

accommodate this addition of the Online MBA program are presented below as examples of closing the loop activities as they align with *Learning Goal 5: Global Understanding*

- International Experience - MBA 5020 (a study abroad experience) was a compulsory requirement for MBA students. Due to issues arising due to students' resources and time, this requirement was dropped in 2020. However, students are still required to have a global/international immersion - either by taking a class with an international/global theme or doing a study abroad. In 2021, based on the feedback from the Graduate Curriculum Committee and from the students enrolled in the Online MBA program, a Global Supply Chain Management class was introduced for the Online students for them to meet the goal of global/international immersion.
- Based on the same rationale and advice as mentioned above, Global Perspectives in FINTECH was also introduced for our Online MBA students.
- The above classes, although intended primarily for the Online students, are available for our main campus students as well.

The assessment process has initiated additional procedural improvements that are being implemented to improve outcomes.

- Scores on Leadership Skills assessment tend to be high and have (Learning Goal # 2) largely met the criterion set to assess this goal. This has allowed focus on incremental improvements to further refine the assessment of leadership skills over time.
- Discussions are underway to see if and how the ETS Major Field Test for MBA can be included in the MBA curriculum wherein all students would need to take the exam and earn a minimum prescribed grade.
- A proposal has been introduced in the Graduate Curriculum Committee to discuss the ETS Major Field Test in MBA as a requirement for candidacy.

c) MS in Accounting Degree Program Assurance of Learning

MS in Accounting Degree Program Learning Goals

1. Students will demonstrate written and oral communication skills appropriate for the profession.
 - Students will demonstrate competence in business and/or professional writing.
 - Students will demonstrate effective oral communication skills.
2. Students will demonstrate an awareness of ethical considerations facing the profession.
 - Students will implement a framework for ethical decision-making.
3. Students will demonstrate technical competence in advanced accounting topics.
 - Students will demonstrate knowledge of advanced topics.
 - Students will demonstrate situational applications of technical knowledge.
4. Students will demonstrate research and analytical skills related to their chosen concentration.
 - Students will demonstrate proficiency in the electronic retrieval of information.
 - Students will demonstrate critical thinking skills .

MS in Accounting Degree Program – Summary of Current AoL Approach

The MS in Accounting is housed in the accounting department. Accounting faculty members develop assessment practices and rubrics to evaluate outcomes. Outcomes are reviewed by the Accounting graduate faculty. Early versions, (which are then updated and replaced by final, presented, and discussed versions) of the assessment documents are included in the MS-Accounting Assessment Report. Detailed meeting minutes, exhibits, rubrics, and assessment artifacts are included in the MS-Accounting Assessment Report.

Assessment of most goals occurs in individual classes associated with each concentration in the program (“General” or “Tax”). In this manner, student learning is assessed within the context of the requirements of a specific area of expertise. The table below indicates the schedule on which each learning goal is measured.

Summary of assessment activities since the last AACSB visit

2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Learning Goals Assessed	Learning Goals Assessed	Learning Goals Assessed	Learning Goals Assessed	Learning Goals Assessed
Written and Oral Communication Skills	Written and Oral Communication Skills Ethical Considerations Research and Analytical Skills Technical Competence	Written and Oral Communication Skills	Ethical Considerations	Ethical Considerations Research and Analytical Skills Technical Competence

The table below summarizes student performance per year on each goal assessed. The *MSACCT AoL Details* document offers more specific information about activities carried out each year and provides specific changes to the program.

MS-Accounting Program Assurance of Learning

Percentage of Students Meeting/Exceeding Expectations

Learning Goals Assessed	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Written and Oral Communication Skills	Written – 33% Oral – 49%	<u>General:</u> Written – 87% <u>Tax:</u> Written – 93% <u>General:</u> Oral – 71% <u>Tax:</u> Oral – 100%	<u>General:</u> Written – 74% <u>Tax:</u> Written – 92% <u>General:</u> Oral – 67% <u>Tax:</u> Oral – 92%		

Ethical Considerations		<u>General:</u> 91% <u>Tax:</u> 57%		<u>Tax:</u> 80%	<u>General:</u> 37% Tax: 90%
Technical Competence		<u>General:</u> Trait #1 – 88% Trait #2 -84% <u>Tax:</u> Trait #1-90% Trait #2-63%		<u>General:</u> Trait #1-64% Trait #2-67%	<u>Tax:</u> Trait #1-75% Trait #2-75%
Research and Analytical Skills		<u>General:</u> Research-70% <u>Tax</u> Research-95% <u>General</u> Analytical – 100% <u>Tax</u> Analytical – 63%			<u>General:</u> Research not assessed <u>Tax</u> Research -75% <u>General</u> Analytical -52% <u>Tax</u> Analytical -50%

MS in Accounting Closing the Loop Activities

Several examples of “closing the loop” activities in the MS-Accounting program as a result of the AoL process are listed below. A full discussion of the assessment results and changes made in the program over the last five years is included in the *MSACC AoL Details* document.

Goal 2 Ethics:

- Measured students’ ethical understanding (before any instruction) using an ethics assignment that involved a hypothetical case and used the results to tailor the discussion to deficient areas which were addressed by expert guest speakers.

Goal 3 Technical Competence:

- Required Gleim BEC CPA review materials and in-class quizzes on each topic covered.

Goal 4 Analytical/ Research:

- Introduced students to the processes to be used for ethical reasoning, critical thinking, and research early in the course. Students used processes outlined in May and May’s (2015) *Effective Writing: A Handbook for Accountants* for ethical reasoning (a seven-step approach) and critical thinking (a six-step approach). Additionally, a six-step process provided in the *Guide to Intermediate Accounting Research* by Collins (2017) was used to supplement the six-step critical thinking process.
- Assigned additional homework assignments and a case requiring critical thinking skills before material was presented in class.

d) MS in Applied Data Analytics Degree Program Assurance of Learning

The director of the MS in Applied Data Analytics (MSADA) program and the Graduate Curriculum

Committee (GCC) oversee Assurance of Learning in the program. The program was established in 2017 to meet the growing demands in analytics talent. The MSADA learning goals that were put in place in 2016-17 are:

Goal 1. Students will demonstrate knowledge of how data are used to create information used to arrive at decisions.

- Students will demonstrate the ability to apply the appropriate techniques to acquire data.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to cleanse and transform data into formats appropriate for analysis.

Goal 2. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the various analytics approaches used to gain actionable insights.

- Students will demonstrate an understanding of descriptive analytics.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of predictive modeling.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of prescriptive analytics.

Goal 3: Students will demonstrate their ability to effectively communicate results of data analyses.

- Students will demonstrate their ability to create visualizations to convey the appropriate story.
- Students will demonstrate their ability to make recommendations to organizational stakeholders based on results of data analyses.

MSADA Program - Summary of AoL

Table below was the initial plan set in 2016-17 for how each learning outcome will be measured and criteria by which demonstrated achievement was to be recognized.

Initial (2016-17) plans for MSADA AoL

Learning Outcome	Measure	Demonstrated Achievement
1.1 Students will demonstrate the ability to apply the appropriate techniques to acquire data.	Course: CIS 5860 Applied Analytics Project Tool: Faculty-developed rubric Artifact: Individual student project	At least 75% of students measured will meet or exceed expectations
1.2 Students will demonstrate the ability to cleanse and transform data into formats appropriate for analysis.	Course: CIS 5860 Applied Analytics Project Tool: Faculty-developed rubric Artifact: Individual student project	At least 75% of students measured will meet or exceed expectations
2.1 Students will demonstrate an understanding of descriptive analytics.	Course: MBA 5820 Executive Skills Tool: Faculty-developed rubric Artifact: Case analysis	At least 75% of students measured will meet or exceed expectations
2.2 Students will demonstrate an understanding of predictive modeling.	Course: MBA 5820 Executive Skills Tool: Faculty-developed rubric Artifact: Case analysis	At least 75% of students measured will meet or exceed expectations
2.3 Students will demonstrate an understanding of prescriptive analytics.	Course: MBA 5820 Executive Skills Tool: Faculty-developed rubric Artifact: Case analysis	At least 75% of students measured will meet or exceed expectations

3.1 Students will demonstrate their ability to create visualizations to convey the appropriate story.	Course: CIS 5860 Applied Analytics Project Tool: Faculty-developed rubric Artifact: Individual student project	At least 75% of students measured will meet or exceed expectations
3.2 Students will demonstrate their ability to make recommendations to organizational stakeholders based on results of data analyses.	Course: CIS 5860 Applied Analytics Project Tool: Faculty-developed rubric Artifact: Individual student project	At least 75% of students measured will meet or exceed expectations

Since the MSADA program was new and only three students graduated in 2017-2018, the assessment committee focused on ensuring the correct courses to collect the AoL data. It was determined that MBA 5820 (Executive Skills class) was not the best place to assess LO-2. The course was taken both by MBA and MSADA students with a focus on professional development. The case study used in the class did not have a focus on analytics. In addition, for LO-1 it was determined to use CIS5630 Data Management that focused on data collection, cleansing and preparation for analysis. Hence, it was decided to change the courses for collecting data for the respective learning goals. Likewise, for LO3, it was decided that CIS5450 Project Management and Visualization was the most appropriate course to collect the AoL data.

The following table provides a 5-year assessment plan. In year one (2017-18) the focus was on determining appropriate courses to assess all three learning goals. For the next two years (2018-19 and 2019-2020) all three learning goals were to be assessed, ensuring that each goal is measured at least twice the 5-year assessment cycle. Should any deficiencies be noted, remedies will be imposed and the goal measured again in the subsequent year. For 2020-21 an IRAP grant was obtained to do a curriculum mapping to updated Learning Goals and assessment areas.

Revised 5-year Assessment Plan

2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Only three students graduated and hence no AoL data was collected. Efforts focused on revisiting the assessment plan and determining the appropriate courses to collect AoL data.	Goal 1: Students will demonstrate knowledge of how data is used to create information used to arrive at decisions. Course: CIS5630 Data Management Tool: Faculty-developed rubric Artifact: Individual student assignment	Goal 1: Students will demonstrate knowledge of how data is used to create information used to arrive at decisions. Course: CIS5630 Data Management Tool: Faculty-developed rubric Artifact: Individual student assignment	Based on feedback from IRAP and assessment committee, efforts were focused on conducting a curriculum mapping to update Learning Goals and courses for collecting AoL	Goal 1: Students will demonstrate knowledge of how data is used to create information used to arrive at decisions. 1.1 Students will demonstrate the ability to apply the appropriate

	<p>Goal 2: Students will demonstrate their understanding of the various analytics approaches used to gain actionable insights. Course: CIS5860 Applied Analytics Project Tool: Faculty-developed rubric Artifact: Individual student project</p> <p>Goal 3: Students will demonstrate their ability to effectively communicate results of data analyses. Course: CIS5450 Project Management and Visualization Tool: Faculty-developed rubric Artifact: A business analytics consulting project.</p>	<p>Goal 2: Students will demonstrate their understanding of the various analytics approaches used to gain actionable insights. Course: CIS5860 Applied Analytics Project Tool: Faculty-developed rubric Artifact: Individual student project</p> <p>Goal 3: Students will demonstrate their ability to effectively communicate results of data analyses. Course: CIS5450 Project Management and Visualization Tool: Faculty-developed rubric Artifact: A business analytics consulting project.</p>	data.	<p>techniques to acquire data.</p> <p>1.2 Students will demonstrate the ability to cleanse and transform data into formats appropriate for analysis.</p> <p>Course: CIS 5630 Data Management</p> <p>Tool: Faculty-developed rubric Artifact: Individual student assignments</p>
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Based on the above plan, the table below summarizes student performance per year on the learning goals assessed. The *MSADA AoL Details* document shows the details of the activities for each assessment year and specific changes based on results identified during the assessment process.

Goals/Year		2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Goal 1: Students will demonstrate knowledge of how data is used to create	1.1 Students will demonstrate the ability to apply the appropriate techniques to	Too few students graduated to collect AoL data. Efforts focused on revisiting the	72%	85.7%	Curriculum mapping to update Learning Goals and	85.7%

information used to arrive at decisions.	acquire data.	assessment plan and determining the appropriate courses to collect AoL data.			identify courses for collecting AoL data.	
	1.2 Students will demonstrate the ability to cleanse and transform data into formats appropriate for analysis.		56%	85.7%		85.7%
Goal 2: Students will demonstrate their understanding of the various analytics approaches used to gain actionable insights.	2.1 Students will demonstrate an understanding of descriptive analytics.		100%	100%		NA
	2.2 Students will demonstrate an understanding of predictive modeling.		90%	85.7%		NA
	2.3 Students will demonstrate an understanding of prescriptive analytics.		84%	85.7%		NA
Goal 3: Students will demonstrate their ability to effectively communicate results of data analyses.	3.1 Students will demonstrate their ability to create visualizations to convey the appropriate story.		100%	100%		NA
	3.2 Students will demonstrate their ability to make recommendations to organizational stakeholders based on results of data analyses.		80%	100%		NA

MS in Applied Data Analytics Closing the Loop Activities

Following are some examples of “closing the loop” activities for the MSADA program as a result of the

AoL process. A more detailed description of the assessment results and changes made in the program over the last five years is included in the *MSADA AoL Details* document

Goal 1: Students will demonstrate knowledge of how data is used to create information used to arrive at decisions. There were some discrepancies with the course description for Data Management and skill sets students would gain for data retrieval, preparation and analysis. A Graduate AP&P proposal was submitted and the course description was updated the following year. Many students in the program did not seem to understand how the data needs to be formatted in the analysis. Most were able to do some basic cleaning and assessment while addressing some quality issues, but few could approach adequate feature engineering to appropriately set up for detailed analysis. One recommendation was to ensure the emphasis on projects that involved students collecting data, cleansing it and preparing for analysis. The goal was assessed in the following year where improvements were noted. In addition, based on feedback from alumni and industry partners, it was decided to include more SQL skill sets to improve students ability to use SQL to retrieve, cleanse, and analyze data.

Goal 2: Students will demonstrate their understanding of the various analytics approaches used to gain actionable insights. While the learning goals were met in both cycles, some students faced challenges getting relevant data for their applied analytics projects. For future terms, a process was put into place to ensure an organization's commitment to share data was assured before students were assigned to a project. A second issue was related to requiring students to do the analytics projects twice in the program. Most students did not have all the necessary skill sets to do a meaningful project over two semesters. The curriculum was revised to require the applied analytics project only in the final semester, thereby allowing room to add another course to the MSADA core. A new graduate course - Applied Econometrics, was approved by the GAP&P and added to the core from 2020.

Goal 3: Students will demonstrate their ability to effectively communicate results of data analyses. Although students met the goals to create appropriate visualizations of the data and communicate their results, there was a challenge in obtaining real data from organizations in a timely manner. As the course where the assessment was done is taught over a five-week summer course, having students find a meaningful project took time. So, the faculty made a commitment to find organizations who could share identified real data for students to use in the class. In the following cycle, this helped alleviate the issues with students having to find projects from a company during the course. The faculty was also able to set-up internal team competitions with fewer but meaningful projects.

vii) Learner Demographics and Enrollment Trends

In spite of the pandemic, enrollment has continued to grow in the BSBA and graduate programs, with the underrepresented population growing slightly faster. Recruiting diverse faculty has been more successful than recruiting diverse students, in spite of significant outreach efforts. All other demographic trends have been steady. The student challenge is largely due to state demographics. The population of North Carolina is about 34 % underrepresented, however, in Western NC it is only 14% and in all the counties surrounding AppState it is 5%. The table below summarizes WCOB enrollment trends since 2017.

WCOB Enrollment Trends

	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021
Total Population	3,023	3,028	3,024	3,198	3,536

Student FTE		2,966.0	2,970.3	2,961.5	3,119.3	3,438.0
Total SCH		43,503	43,602	43,540	45,426	49,610
Avg SCH		14.4	14.4	14.4	14.2	14.0
Career	Graduate	161 5%	142 5%	161 5%	180 6%	208 6%
	Undergraduate	2,862 95%	2,886 95%	2,863 95%	3,018 94%	3,328 94%
Campus	Main	2,948 98%	2,938 97%	2,944 97%	3,104 97%	3,405 96%
	App State Online	75 2%	90 3%	80 3%	94 3%	131 4%
FT/PT Status	Full-Time	2,880 95%	2,893 96%	2,869 95%	2,996 94%	3,286 93%
	Part-Time	143 5%	135 4%	155 5%	202 6%	250 7%
Student Type	Continuing & Graduate	2317 77%	2350 78%	2361 78%	2430 76%	2617 74%
	New First-Year	448 15%	436 14%	422 14%	529 17%	644 18%
	New Transfer	258 9%	242 8%	241 8%	239 7%	275 8%
Class Level	First-Year	572 19%	532 18%	513 17%	595 19%	802 23%
	Sophomore	706 23%	705 23%	672 22%	710 22%	790 22%
	Junior	722 24%	798 26%	805 27%	796 25%	828 23%
	Senior	862 29%	851 28%	873 29%	917 29%	908 26%
	Graduate	161 5%	142 5%	161 5%	180 6%	208 6%
Ethnicity/ Race	American Indian/A..	7	9	12	7	7
	Asian	64	60	61	59	64
	Black/African Ame.	85	105	93	104	112
	Hispanic/Latino	158	169	192	232	262
	Native Hawaiian/..	1	2	1		1
	Two or more races	84	97	110	118	129
	Foreign National	22	26	28	22	19
	Unknown	33	35	29	26	25

	White	2,569	2,525	2,498	2,630	2,917
UR	Underrepresented	421 14%	468 15%	497 16%	542 17%	594 17%
Gender	Female	976 32%	986 33%	986 33%	1,057 33%	1,166 33%
	Male	2,047 68%	2,042 67%	2,038 67%	2,141 67%	2,370 67%
1st Gen	First Generation	955 32%	905 30%	905 30%	955 30%	1,025 29%
Residency	In-State	2,795 92%	2,799 92%	2,823 93%	3,004 94%	3,319 94%
	Out-of-State	228 8%	229 8%	201 7%	194 6%	217 6%
Rural	NC County	819 30.9%	872 32.7%	885 33.1%	908 32.0%	967 30.9%
Housing Status	On-Campus	753 25%	726 24%	685 23%	709 22%	879 25%
	Off-Campus	2,270 75%	2,302 76%	2,339 77%	2,489 78%	2,657 75%

viii) Support for Underrepresented Populations

Results of direct measures of learning are disaggregated and visualized in order to compare scores for subcategories of ethnicity, gender, and major. This makes it possible to identify a particular sub-group that may not be progressing adequately. Tracking and analysis of sub-groups allows specific and targeted interventions should they become necessary. To date, statistically significant differences in mean outcome scores by ethnicity have not been present. However, analysis of learning goals and outcomes for sub-populations continues to be part of the assessment process. Outcomes are continuously monitored for changes in learning along these lines.

It is likely that significant differences in scores for underrepresented populations have not been detected due to proactive processes that are in place to address student difficulties early. The university has numerous means of identifying and supporting students who might be experiencing difficulty. A highly effective example is the Early Intervention Team, which is a faculty and staff-led entity whose main function is to meet with students who are showing signs of difficulty with attendance, academic performance, or personal wellbeing. The university operates a Writing Center, a Student Learning Center, a Counseling Center, and a Department of Wellness and Prevention Services. WCOB faculty frequently engage with the Early Intervention Team to connect students with these additional resources.

ix) How High-Quality Teaching is Encouraged

Appalachian State University utilizes CoursEval™ for campus and online student evaluation of teaching. All evaluations are read by the associate dean for undergraduate programs and department chairs and factored into annual faculty evaluation discussions. The associate dean also reviews the data looking for general College of Business issues and opportunities for improvement. In addition, department chairs periodically assign peer mentors to observe classes and provide constructive feedback on teaching

performance.

The Teaching and Learning Spaces Advisory Group works to implement newer digital technologies in learning spaces across campus. Representatives from the WCOB worked closely with this group to enhance learning spaces for business students. To support high-quality teaching and learning in Peacock Hall, two new active learning classrooms have been added. These rooms make use of round table seating with connections to shared displays that facilitate collaborative learning and multimodal teaching. In the last year, a new general computer lab and a specialized marketing sales lab have been created to support the growing need for instructional technology. In addition, existing computer labs have been expanded to support the instructional needs of a wide range of faculty in different disciplines.

The University Center for Academic Excellence (CAE) holds many workshops monthly aimed at helping faculty develop and improve teaching skills. The College of Business also has one full time professional staff member assigned from the CAE to assist WCOB faculty one on one and with specific requests to improve courses and teaching. Faculty continually report that this individual is one of the most valuable resources in the College.

C. Thought Leadership, Engagement, and Societal Impact

The faculty are encouraged to produce high-quality and impactful intellectual contributions in a variety of ways: innovation and research grants, travel grants to present research and engage with other academics, industry engagement, and a focus on SDG classification of research. The College offers competitive instructional innovation and research grants for contributions aligned with strategic goals and impact priorities. In the past five years the focal topics have included sustainability, analytics, diversity, equity, and inclusion, and experiential learning. Innovations in pedagogy and basic and applied research have informed and supported an agile and responsive curriculum as seen in the many continuous improvement initiatives undertaken.

In addition, the Dean's office also supplements operating funds to support conference and research travel where mission impact can be improved through collaboration with others. The College, and virtually all programs, have external advisory boards which enable faculty to explore business trends and challenges with professional practitioners and apply more research time to relevant topics and challenges in business. Lastly, research entered into Watermark Digital Measures is given UN SDG impact classifications. Collectively, these efforts frame societal impact with deliberate emphasis on sustainability, and diversity, equity, and inclusion.

i) Impactful Intellectual Contributions

Discussion of Table 8-1 & 9-1

From Table 8-1, several things should be noted. Of the more than 1,175 intellectual contributions (IC) in the last five years, nearly half are applied or integration/application scholarship. Almost 77% of faculty are producing ICs. In reference to ICs mentioned in Table 9-1, ~20% of research articles are related to SDGs 3 and 4, good health, well-being, and quality education; ~23% are related to SDGs 8 and 9, decent work, economic growth, and industry, innovation, and infrastructure; and ~17% are related to SDGs 11 and 12, sustainable cities and communities and responsible consumption and production. Overall, 45% of research articles relate to at least one SDG.

Quality Tracking

The quality of the journals in which our faculty publish is tracked and assessed. Faculty have published in

339 journals, 78% of which are listed in ABDC, Cabell's, or both. Of those listed in Cabell's, 92% have an acceptance rate of 50% or less and 68% have an acceptance rate of 30% or less. Of those listed in ABDC, 81% have a rating of A*, A or B, with 51% rating A* or A. The remaining 22% are either included in a department's journal list or were reviewed by the department to determine quality standing, allowing for interdisciplinary research.

Research Grants

Research grants are offered to incentivise scholarly impact with purpose. The Walker College of Business Dean's Club funds research grants each academic year to assist faculty in conducting impactful research. Grants are available to tenured and tenure track faculty for research expenses in increments of \$1,000. These grants are designed to encourage high-quality, impactful research by specifically supporting new research projects (i.e., research that has not already been conducted) and/or a new direction of a current research project (i.e., the researcher has conducted research in a subject area and now wishes to extend the study in a new direction). The Walker College of Business Office of Graduate Programs & Research provides additional support to business faculty. The office administers Dean's Club research grants to tenured and tenure track faculty for research expenses.

In alignment with our mission statement, business faculty and staff with instructional responsibilities are encouraged to submit proposals for the Walker College's Innovation Grants for Transformational Educational Experiences Promoting Engagement and Impact. The purpose of this grant is to foster educational engagement, accelerate innovation, and amplify the impact of Walker College of Business education. Academic and practice-oriented engagement is reflected in activities that support the integration of relevant, current theory of business and management across teaching, research, and service consistent with the Walker College mission and its supporting strategies. Proposals are reviewed annually by the Instructional Innovation Grants Committee. Grant awards range from \$500 - \$5,000, with higher dollar amounts being awarded to those proposals that require substantial effort and have the highest potential for innovative engagement and impact. Priority is given to proposals focusing on attainment of the Walker College mission, vision, values and strategic goals.

The Scholarship of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Grant is a collaborative program supported by the Office of Research in collaboration with the College of Arts and Sciences, College of Fine and Applied Arts, Walker College of Business, Beaver College of Health Sciences, Reich College of Education, Hayes School of Music, The Honors College, and Belk Library and Information Commons. This program is intended to support projects that will investigate issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Collaborations

The Appalachian Research in Business Symposium (ARBS) is a collaborative effort of Appalachian State University, Eastern Kentucky University, East Tennessee State University, Marshall University, Radford University, and Western Carolina University. The ARBS is an opportunity for the business faculty of universities in the Appalachian region to share current research interests and outcomes aligned with the needs of the region. Appalachian State University hosted the ARBS in 2017 and our business faculty continue to serve as reviewers, present research, and serve on conference committees each year. The Dean's office covers expenses related to the conference.

In 2020 and 2021 the Walker College of Business hosted Business Research Day with the National Science Foundation. This event is hosted by the Walker College of Business and Appalachian State's Office of Research in partnership with the National Science Foundation (NSF). Workshops taught at this

event are designed to introduce faculty to the NSF, opportunities within NSF, detail the NSF review process, and find funding sources for applied research in business. A panel of Appalachian business faculty was featured along with speakers from the NSF, including the Deputy Division Director of Social and Economic Sciences. The Dean's office will cover the expenses related to the conference.

Support for scholarship and collaboration have led to hundreds of refereed publications that serve as exemplars of research with a positive societal impact. Noted here are two areas of focus that frame scholarship with societal impact for the Walker College of Business: 1) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and 2) Sustainable Business. Select publications are provided as examples within each category below.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Research Authored by Walker College of Business Faculty

2022

- Kish-Gephart, J., Moergen, K., Tilton, J. D. & Gray, B. (in press). Social Class and Work: A Review and Organizing Framework, *Journal of Management*. Article, Academic Journal.
- Mishra, V., Stavely, S., Davison, H. K. & Vijaykumar, P. Gender related inclusiveness in the organizational context: The challenge of sexual harassment In Towards inclusive societies: Psychological and sociological perspectives. New Delhi: Routledge. Book Chapter.

2021

- Cowden, B. J., Creek, S. A., & Maurer, J. D. (2021). Gender role congruity and crowdfunding success. *Journal of Small Business Management*.
- Perera, B. Y., Ray Chaudhury, S., Albinsson, P. A., & Nafees, L. (2021). This is Who I am: Using Instagram as Counterspace for Shared Ethnic Identity Expressions. *Journal of the Association for Consumer Research*.
- Peslak, A., Ceccucci, W., Hunsinger, S., & Sendall, P. (2021). Equity and satisfaction in IT: A current analysis. *Issues in Information Systems*, 22(4).

Sustainable Business Research Authored by Walker College of Business Faculty

2022

- Hervani, A., Nandi, S., Helms, M. & Sarkis, J. (2022). A performance measurement framework for socially sustainable and resilient supply chains using environmental goods valuation methods, Sustainable Production and Consumption, *Elsevier*, (vol. 30, issue 2022, pp. 31-52). Article, Academic Journal.
- Runzel, M. A. S., Hassler, E. E., Hadley, B. E., Ratcliffe, A. H., Wilkes, J. T. & Cazier, J. A. (2022). Harvesting Intrinsically Verifiable Trust: Building a Honey Traceability System for Sustainable Development, *Journal of Information Systems Applied Research*, Information Systems and Computing Academic Professionals, (vol. 15, issue 1). Article, Academic Journal.
- Westerman, J. W., Acikgoz, Y., Nafees, L. & Westerman, J. H. (2022). When sustainability managers greenwash: SDG fit and effects on job performance and attitudes, *Business and Society Review*. Article, Academic Journal.

2021

- Cherry, T. L., Kallbekken, S., Kroll, S., & McEvoy, D. M. (2021). Does solar geoengineering crowd out climate change mitigation efforts? Evidence from a stated preference referendum on a carbon tax. *Climatic Change*, 165(1), 1-8.
- Edgar E. Hassler, Joseph A. Cazier, Brandon Hopkins, James T. Wilkes, Kiefer Smith & Max Rünzel (2021) A century of discovery: Mining 100 years of honey bee research, *Journal of Apicultural Research*, 60:1, 3-12.

- Jan, A., Mata, M. N., Albinsson, P. A., Martins, J. M., Hassan, R. B., & Mata, P. N. (2021). Alignment of islamic banking sustainability indicators with sustainable development goals: Policy recommendations for addressing the covid-19 pandemic. *Sustainability*, 13(5), 2607.

As a specific strategic aspiration, our Economics Department has focused research attention on environmental topics that have brought global recognition to the program. As of June 2022, AppState's Department of Economics is in the top six percent overall and the top ten percent worldwide for experimental, cognitive and behavioral, and environmental economics, according to the Economics Departments, Institutes and Research Centers (EDIRC) index. The overall Economics Department ranking, as of June 2022, places Appalachian as 276th among 15,141 in 232 countries and territories worldwide. Appalachian is #113 on the list of environmental economics, listed among 3,217 institutions. For cognitive and behavioral economics, there are 2,021 institutions listed, and Appalachian is #111 on the list. Appalachian is #82 on the list for experimental economics, listed among 2,241 institutions. AACSB's vision and Guiding Principle 2 state that business education is a force for good. This principle resonates strongly in the Walker College's mission, vision, values and strategic planning. Activities and initiatives described in Section II above on strategic planning show that topics in sustainability, corporate social responsibility, and inclusive excellence are high strategic priorities.

Teaching, service, and research activities are mapped to the UN SDGs in order to better understand the impact the college has in all facets of its mission (Standard 1). Learning goals have been updated to incorporate these strategic priorities, and curriculum innovation incentive awards are being given to support accelerated implementation in curricular content. The Sustainability Literacy Test is consistently used to assess student knowledge of sustainability across all 17 UN SDGs. Results are benchmarked in comparison with other institutions in the United States and worldwide.(Standard 4). Faculty IC's are analyzed, and in particular PRJs, to assess mission and strategic alignment. Text analysis of article/presentation titles and journal titles and self-reported SDG alignment help us evaluate the societal impact of our scholarship (Standard 8).

ii) Activities and Initiatives Supporting Societal Impact Strategic Aspirations

Finally, perhaps the greatest societal impact comes from the many initiatives and signature events aimed at engagement, beyond the classroom and research, with our community, region and the world. Many of these activities were mentioned in Section II.A.i) and are provided in more detail below. The Boyles Distinguished COE Lecture Series is a significant signature event that hosts speakers with a wealth of knowledge that connects us to industry and community leaders making a positive global impact.

- Pamela Mars Wright, former CEO of Mars, Inc., Lessons Learned in Family Business, 2022
- Jose Minaya, CEO Nuveen, Responsible Investing/Sustainability Approach, 2020
- Kailash Satyarthi, 2014 Nobel laureate for children's rights advocacy, Positive Changes, 2019
- Joby Carlson, Director of Global Sustainability, Walmart Inc., Presentation 2018

In 2015, the Walker College began hosting our Business for Good Conference each year with internationally recognized business and government leaders in sustainability and social responsibility. This event is focused on advancing sustainable business practices through student engagement, research, and community involvement. Many faculty, staff, students, as well as community and regional business leaders have attended. In 2022, notable Business for Good speakers included:

- Brian Matt, head of ESG Advisory for the New York Stock Exchange
- Jordan Feigh, Sustainability and Product Stewardship Manager for UNIFI
- Michael Winters, President & Chief Revenue Officer for WinCup

In 2018, a collaborative initiative was established called, *Innovate for Good*. The Walker College of Business partners with Alex Lee, Inc., Lowe's Companies, and the Department of Computer Information Systems to offer interdisciplinary programs that increase students' awareness about STEM education and career pathways. Information technology affects business, manufacturing, health care, sports, entertainment and tourism, and virtually every other field. *Innovate for Good* aims to promote activities to arrive at innovative solutions to address social problems in a variety of areas. This initiative offers opportunities for primary and secondary-aged students as well as those in collegiate environments. Support from key partners enable ongoing programs. Collaborating entities include:

- Watauga County Schools
- National Center for Women in IT (NCWIT)
- American Association of University Women (AAUW) Greensboro Branch
- Watauga High School Robotics
- Appalachian State University faculty and staff

In 2019, the WCOB led the effort for the university application to take part in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as a non-governmental organization, which allows the university to send delegates to participate in the UN Climate Change Conference (COP). In 2021, Appalachian State University was admitted as an observer institution to the 26th Annual UN Climate Change Conference (COP 26). The WCOB associate dean of global and civic engagement, the WCOB chair of the department of economics, and the university's chief sustainability officer attended COP 26 in Glasgow. This delegation attended COP with the goals of representing the institution, gathering information about COP logistics, and establishing professional networks. In 2022, Appalachian State University students attended COP for the second consecutive year as part of a UN Climate Negotiations course. These efforts work toward the aspirant goal of enabling future Appalachian State students to observe and participate in climate negotiations.

The annual Global Opportunities Conference highlights innovative and entrepreneurial ways of addressing global challenges with the goal of inspiring students, faculty and the local community to use their knowledge and skills in the business of building a better world. The title and focus of the 2022 conference was, "Global Climate Change and Ideals to Impact" and included the following speakers:

- Anton Seimon of National Geographic Explorer
- Sam Teicher, Chief Reef Officer and Founder of Coral Vita
- Victor Salvati, Institutional Development/Innovation Director, Sustainable Amazon Foundation

In the spring of 2022, an NC Commerce and Walker College of Business partnership launched a pilot Rural Community Capacity Program. This program provides educational programming, technical assistance, and focused guidance to local government staff in rural and distressed communities. Instruction includes on-campus and virtual classes, community level engagement, and targeted training programs. The Rural Community Capacity Program includes four core courses that are required by the Department of Commerce and additional targeted courses that are designed by App State faculty. Representatives from 19 rural communities in North Carolina met at Appalachian State University to kick off the program. It is expected to prepare local governments in rural communities to secure economic projects and bolster the state economy.

The Walker College of Business also recognizes the importance of entrepreneurship in driving economic development in rural communities abroad. The University of Zululand has partnered with the Walker

College of Business to collaborate on entrepreneurship education. The University of Zululand received a grant from the US Embassy in South Africa to integrate entrepreneurship into curriculums across its university and to launch its own Center for Entrepreneurship. Faculty from across campus and staff in the Walker College of Business' Transportation Insight Center for Entrepreneurship (TICFE) lend expertise in incorporating entrepreneurship and innovation into classroom and experiential learning. The Walker College of Business has hosted a delegation of faculty and students from the University of Zululand and a team from our business college visited Unizulu in the summer of 2022. During this visit the TICFE director served as the keynote speaker for a conference of global entrepreneurs. This and other international collaborations contribute to a comprehensive portfolio of ongoing societal impact efforts both locally and globally.

The economic needs of our region also remain a top priority. Walker Business Connections/Spring Connect is a business specific career development event that takes place each semester, bringing employers from around the state and region to meet with business students to share knowledge and job opportunities. Visiting employers are surveyed about the professional readiness of our graduating seniors. Overwhelmingly, employers report that our students are well prepared, well spoken, knowledgeable, and have an unrivaled work ethic. First destination rates confirm this and are consistently above 90%. These results demonstrate a strong connection to the needs of businesses in our region and our ability to meet them now and in the future. Collectively, these activities serve as support structures to amplify positive impacts locally and globally to achieve our mission. They ensure that our program is continually guided by principles and focused on outcomes.