



MEMO TO: Davis College of Business and Economics Faculty and Staff
FROM: Dr. Donna McCloskey, Dean *Dmccloskey*
RE: Dean's Report 2024-25
DATE: March 29, 2025

In accordance with the guidelines outlined in the T & R Handbook (1.4.3.1) and referenced in the AP Handbook, it gives me great pleasure to highlight the remarkable achievements and goals realized during this timeframe. This report aims to delineate the progress made towards our college-wide objectives and my personal goals as Dean, while also offering a preliminary outlook for the upcoming 2025-2026 academic year.

Eight months ago, I had the absolute privilege of stepping into the role of Dean of the Davis College of Business and Economics (DCOBE). It has been a period of rapid learning, adaptation and significant progress. The start was not without its challenges — transitioning into leadership following a time of tumultuous change required a commitment to discovery, patience, building connections and communicating transparently to foster stability. Despite the complexities, I am proud to report that DCOBE has made meaningful strides in key areas that position us for long-term success.

Foundational Priorities and Accomplishments

1. Connecting with Stakeholders

From the outset, I prioritized building relationships with faculty, staff, students, university partners, local business leaders and alumni. Through one-on-one meetings, discussion groups, advisory boards, events and meetings, we have strengthened our connections and enhanced collaboration across the College and beyond. These efforts have reinforced the value our College brings to the broader university and the business community.

Taking the time to build strong relationships provides a firm foundation for achieving our strategic objectives. Appendix A provides partial listings of the College, University, student, community and professional development events I have participated in this academic year.

2. Building a Transparent, Inclusive and Engaged Culture

Establishing a culture of transparency and inclusivity has been at the heart of our efforts this year. We introduced regular DCOBE meetings, discussion groups and open forums, regular email updates, created feedback channels for students and

launched initiatives to ensure diverse voices are heard in decision-making. I believe our collective commitment to communication and shared governance is fostering a more engaged and motivated community where individuals have the freedom, support and encouragement to “find their place” and align their work to both our mission and their areas of interest.

Our building and shared spaces reflect our culture. At our opening DCOBE meeting, we toured our building and considered whether it reflects our values of connection, innovation, global environment and celebrating achievements. Over the year we have made changes such as publishing the Dean’s List outside the Dean’s Suite, updating display cases to highlight student and faculty achievements, installing directories and a phone charging station and adding the first wave of adirondack chairs on the patio. We are also in the planning stages for re-imagining a “hub” for student success, converting at least one classroom into a space that supports active learning, creating an AI lab and expanding and relocating our VR/AR lab.

We continue to work on bringing Saxby’s, a student managed coffee shop, to our first floor. The pursuit of this initiative has been a journey involving faculty, students, administration and auxiliary partners. “Saxby’s” appears on my calendar 19+ times dating back to July 31st, my third week in this role. I’m pleased to report that we have a pro-forma and are now able to analyze the financial feasibility. As you know, I believe this addition would have a profound impact on building a culture of connecting, demonstrating active learning, contributing to our students’ career outcomes and elevating our recruitment messaging. I remain hopeful.

The Microsoft suite of tools has enabled us to support a transparent and inclusive culture with a shared calendar of DCOBE events, a structure for sustainably storing data and distribution lists for communication. While tools, such as Teams, are not without learning curves, they ensure that we create a repository of thoughts, actions, data and results to create a lasting continuation of stable operations.

We Challenge, Cultivate, and Connect to create meaningful experiences for our students and faculty/staff. These tenets have become a central part of how we operate and communicate. It has been an honor to join this dynamic community, and I take immense pride in showcasing the incredible achievements of our students and faculty. I hope my enthusiasm has helped energize our college, amplifying our impact and strengthening our shared sense of purpose.

3. Defining Roles, Responsibilities, and Filling Open Positions

A strong institution is built on a foundation of clearly defined roles and a team that is capable, empowered and inspired. This year we focused on our core competencies and refreshed job descriptions for roles in the Dean’s Office,



Graduate Assistants and work study positions. We concluded a search for an Associate Dean and the search for a College Coordinator is on-going. We successfully advocated for a dedicated Career Coach, to fill 5 faculty lines, one additional administrative assistant to support student engagement, five additional summer Graduate Assistants, two Faculty Fellowships to support accreditation and the use of analytics and a part-time temporary position to support budget and operations.

I am very proud of what we accomplished this year despite being woefully understaffed. I am looking forward to starting the 2025-26 academic year with our open positions filled so we can aggressively pursue the ambitious tactics in our refreshed strategic plan.

4. **Refreshing the Strategic Plan**

A forward-looking strategy is essential for sustained success. Along with leadership from the DCOBE Strategic Management Committee (SMC) and Chairs, we reassessed our strategic priorities, aligning them with evolving industry needs, a competitive market and student aspirations. We engaged our stakeholders through polls, meetings, class activities and discussion groups. We reaffirmed our commitment to the tenets in our mission and vision: analytics, innovation, global environment and an active learning culture delivered through challenging, cultivating and connecting.

Our refreshed strategic plan, endorsed by the faculty on December 6, 2024, is focused on the next 5 years and has fifty-seven tactics across four broad goals. Recognizing that the University is under-going a strategic planning process that may require adaptations to our plan, we used an agile approach and identified a sub-set of critical priorities for Spring 2025 through Spring 2026. We have made significant strides in enhancing student success, career outcomes, faculty support, and operational excellence. We launched new initiatives like Career Launch and Shadow Day, expanded active learning opportunities and strengthened student recognition efforts. Faculty have benefited from increased research support, professional development opportunities and a structured approach to societal impact. Additionally, we have improved communication strategies, engaged alumni more effectively, and made progress in graduate program sustainability. I am pleased to present the specifics of our progress on our 2025-2026 tactics in Appendix B.

I am grateful for the warm welcome you have extended to me. It has been a privilege to join this vibrant and dedicated community, and I am deeply thankful for the kindness, collaboration, and support. While the progress we have made is commendable, there is still much work ahead. Strengthening experiential learning opportunities, expanding community engagement, and enhancing student success initiatives will be at the

Office of the Dean

forefront of our next steps. I am confident that through our collective efforts, we will create new opportunities for our students, strengthen our programs, grow our enrollment and resources and make a lasting impact on our region. The foundation we have built together sets the stage for even greater accomplishments in the years ahead.

Go Highlanders!

CC: Dr. Bethany Usher, Provost



APPENDIX A – Connections July 2024-March 2025

DCOBE Communication:

- One-on-one meeting with all DCOBE faculty and Staff
- Weekly meetings with Chairs (FA24)
- Bi-weekly meetings with Chairs and bi-weekly meetings with a broader Leadership Team (SP25)
- Bi-weekly “balcony hours” for informal talks
- DCOBE Advisory Board meetings each semester
- Monthly meetings with DCOBE Faculty and Staff
- Re-engaged with Emeritus faculty
- Weekly emails to faculty, staff and students for news, announcements and events

University Committee Memberships:

- Dean Representative on the University Strategic Planning Committee
- President’s Leadership Council
- Academic Affairs Leadership Team (AALT)
- Council of Deans
- Academic Policy and Procedures Committee (APPC)

Introductory Meetings to Connect DCOBE with University Partners:

- Emily Paisley and Juan Urista, Highlander Success Center
- Jeanne Mekolichick, Assoc Provost Research, Faculty Success & Strategy
- Lee Svete, Career and Talent Development
- Dannette Gomez Beane, Enrollment and Communications
- Laura Turk and Sandra Bond, Alumni Relations
- Angela Joyner, Economics Development
- Corey Durant, Athletics
- Tracy Burcham, AA Business and Operations Manager
- Adam Neal, AA Finance and Operations Director
- Rob Hoover, CFO
- Charlie Cosmato, Center for Innovative Teaching & Learning (CITL)
- Heather Keith, Director Faculty Development
- Alba Alvarez, Emily Ewoldt and Sarah Tate, Admissions
- Anthony Graham, Admission data
- Eric Lovik, Institutional Research
- Niels Christensen, Honors College

- Ishmael Betancourt Velez, Global Education & Engagement
- Ed Oakes, CIO
- Jessica Stowell, Assistant Provost of Faculty and Curriculum
- Tom Cruise, Sponsored Programs & Grants
- Glen Mayhew, Associate Provost at Roanoke
- Jerel Benton, Assistant Provost Student Success
- John Cox and Derek Neil, Foundation
- Katie Piper, Registrar
- Agida Manizade, Assistant Provost Graduate Affairs
- Carolyn Clayton, Annual Giving
- Bonnie Webster, Advancement Services
- Holly Cline, Faculty Athletic Rep (FAR)
- Jason Lucas, Student Connections

Participation in Student Engagement Events:

- Welcome Week tables
- Club Fair
- Attended events/meetings for Davis Fellows, DSP, SMIPO
- Alpha Kappa Psi co-club professionalism event
- Fed Challenge prep
- World Food Day
- MKT 370 Professionalism etiquette dinner
- MKTG 446 Marketing Research project (FA24 and SP25)
- CFO in Residence
- Creative Activities and Research Days (CARD)
- Career Launch
- Truist Global Capitalism Lecture Series – Fall and Spring
- Super Bowl Cookie Celebration – Go Birds!
- Shadow Day
- Creativity Workshops

Participation in University Events:

- Board of Visitor Meetings
- Convocation
- Meet the Firms and multiple Career Fairs
- Major/Minor Fair
- Open Houses
- Highlander Days
- Alumni Volunteer Summit
- Provost Speaker Series
- Artis Center Opening Gala
- Wicked Festival
- Creative Activities and Research Days (CARD)



- Beta Gamma Sigma Induction
- Several athletic and art events

Participation in Alumni Events:

- Alumni Nationals Game
- One-on-one and group meetings with DCOBE Advisory Board members
- Homecoming events including 50th Reunion, Alumni Awards Luncheon, Women of Radford and Campaign Celebration
- Partners in Excellence Luncheon
- Shadow Day
- Individual meetings/calls with 10+ alumni interested in partnering in various capacities

Participation in Community Events:

- RadFest – Community Festival
- Radford Chamber of Commerce monthly meetings
- Roanoke Chamber of Commerce awards ceremony
- Lt Governor's visit to Kyle Hall
- Junior Achievement
- Onward NRV
- University representative at event with Senators Warner and Kaine in Dublin to celebrate a federal investment in Volvo Group North America
- Highlander Festival
- New River Valley Knowledge Work Consortium
- RBTC Disrupt AI Conference

Participation in Professional Development Events:

- Deans Institute, American Conference of Academic Deans, November 2024
- Southern Business Administration Association (SBAA - regional AACSB group) Annual Meeting, November 2024
- AACSB Deans Conference, February 2025
- Active member of the AACSB Special Interest Group – Women Advancing Management Education (WAME)
- Active member of WiBE, a business school administrators group
- Leadership Coach, monthly meetings
- Appalachian Research Business Symposium (ARBS) Deans Group
- Virginia Business Dean's Group

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APPENDIX B – Strategic Plan Progress

DAVIS COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS 2024-26 STRATEGIC TACTICS – Endorsed 12/6/2024

ACADEMIC SUCCESS

TACTIC (note SP25 priorities in bold)	PROGRESS
Launch an AI pedagogy group that leads innovation and brings best practices and training to faculty (SP25)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion group formed and met several times. Paused due to personnel issues but will reconstitute this summer
Create opportunities to recognize and celebrate student achievements, both big and small (SP25)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Launch tradition started with jobs posted on monitors and student designed t-shirts • Dean’s List published outside of Dean’s Suite • Display cases throughout KH updated with current award recipients, pictures of student engagement and certifications • Refreshed Honors Banquet • Active engagement with students on LinkedIn • Livestreamed Beta Gamma Sigma induction so family and supporters could attend
Review & reinvigorate AOL to ensure learning objectives are mission aligned & measures support data informed, continuous improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate Dean to attend AOL workshop Summer/Fall 2025
Expand active learning opportunities to better engage Davis College students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created a High Impact/Active Learning faculty questionnaire to quantify pedagogical practices • Hosted 2 faculty meetings with McGlothlin Center for Global Education and Engagement regarding study abroad and course embedded study trips • Hosted inaugural Shadow Day to provide an opportunity for students to network with alumni and partners

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported student travel including Davis Fellows (Nashville), SMIPO (NYC), U.S. World Excel Championship, College Fed Challenge Conference (D.C.) and Diverse Economics Conference (Richmond) • Supported continued collaboration with Junior Achievement (JA). This provided leadership opportunities for students who were the primary presenters and support our recruiting initiatives • Exploration of bringing Saxby's, a student-run coffee shop, to Kyle Hall. Pro Forma has been completed and negotiations continue. • Participated in project-based learning project with three Marketing Research classes to explore student perceptions of the student experience • Hosted two creativity workshops to explore participation in a 30-day creativity sprint in 2025-26
<p>Create a reimagined, impactful and sustainable first year experience for business students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosted 2 faculty meetings with the new Director of Student Connection Programs to learn about UNIV 100 •
<p>Define the Davis Fellows purpose and enhance offerings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Davis Fellow mission and Director roles/responsibilities defined • Increased budget to support Davis Fellow travel • Intentionality in including Davis Fellows in special events such as the Truist Global Capitalism Lecture Series and Honors Banquet
<p>In partnership, expand the size and scope of Entrepreneurial Living Learning Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awaiting the hiring of an Associate Director of Student Connections who will coordinate LLCs
<p>In partnership, advocate for processes & tools that minimize cost of student access to high quality course materials & classroom tools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted exploratory analysis on the cost of course materials in DCOBE classes
<p>Include cost of materials as a fee so it is covered by Financial Aid</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I've been strongly advocating for this in the University strategic planning meetings. • Growing a dedicated fund to support students to have difficulty affording course materials and certification exam fees is part of our Advancement plans • In addition to advocating for an expansion of the Day 1 (course materials billed with tuition) program, we added fees to 2 classes to ensure students will be able to sit for course aligned certification exams



Develop and deploy concentrations / minors / certificates in unique core competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved an MBA concentration in Innovation • Approved SAS Academic Specialization in the MBA program
Create a hub for student success in Kyle Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secured an additional administrative assistant position to staff this office and support student advising and Centers • Partnered with Design students to reimagine this space
Lean into our strengths and employ a data analytics and innovation approach to address student success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created a Faculty Fellow – Analytics position to address these questions • Create a data hub for on-going reporting/analysis of student outcomes and success initiatives

CAREER OUTCOMES

TACTIC (note SP25 priorities in bold)	PROGRESS
In partnership, increase impactful connections between students and employers such as career fairs (SP25)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported, promoted and attended multiple Career Fairs • Monthly meetings with Career and Talent Development • Hosted inaugural Shadow Day which connected 160+ students with 30+ alumni and partners
Develop and deploy a best-in-class internship program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the bi-weekly Career and Talent Development internship newsletter by amplifying internship opportunities in DCOBE Happenings weekly email and posting on monitors • Goals for a best-in-class internship have been outlined and exploratory work has begun

Embed career preparation in the curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage faculty to participate in the Career Champions program to evaluate whether the V-Top materials will meet our needs for career preparation • Successfully advocated for a dedicated DCOBE Career Coach
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FACULTY SUCCESS

TACTIC (note SP25 priorities in bold)	PROGRESS
Expand research support (travel, summer GAs, summer funding etc.) (SP25)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secured funding for 5 summer GA positions • Revised GA job descriptions, application and hiring process to ensure we are matching human capital to our needs • Funded a Faculty Development account to award soft money
Develop and deploy comprehensive strategy for a focused societal impact that includes identifying direct and indirect measures of the impact of teaching, research and service on the focus area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with faculty to define our societal impact areas • Funded an additional faculty research grant for work aligned with our societal impact areas: education and lifelong learning; innovation and entrepreneurship; health and wellness.
In partnership, offer, measure and incentivize participation in meaningful professional development in areas such as pedagogy, advising, applied learning and DEIB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight professional development activities in the Monday Musing email and directly to faculty/staff based on interest • Created a DCOBE Advising Cheat Sheet to support advising • Revising data collection in Faculty Success to better capture participation
Ensure that faculty have the opportunity and encouragement to maintain currency in their field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and support faculty to earn certifications that align with the courses they teach • Provide clarity on faculty qualifications, including the distinction between Scholarly Academics (SA) and Practice Academics (PA) • With the elimination of the Graduate College, updating Graduate Teaching qualifications • Celebrating and acknowledging faculty accomplishments through amplifying their work on social media and through university channels, sharing points of pride at College meetings, supporting 4 promotions and several nominations for internal and external awards



ENROLLMENT / BRANDING / OPERATIONS

TACTIC (note SP25 priorities in bold)	PROGRESS
Develop and deploy comprehensive communication strategy (SP25)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with Marketing & Communication to develop a comprehensive messaging strategy. Components that have been implemented thus far: • Weekly email to DCOBE faculty and staff to ensure transparency in the dissemination of news and events • Weekly DCOBE Happenings email to undergraduate students • Developed an initial social media strategy and messaging calendar which has resulted in greater engagement. Revising with MarComm • Redesigning DCOBE web page to highlight our unique differentiators and appeal to all of our stakeholders • Holiday cards to engaged alumni and partners • Valentine cards of appreciation to internal stakeholders • Maximize value from rankings including the Princeton Review Best Online MBA, 2024
Develop and deploy a comprehensive recruiting and event strategy for engaging with admitted students (SP25)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed a plan for how recruiting events are distinct in content and format • Made retrospectives a standard operating procedure allowing us to document and continually improve our events • Sent handwritten notes to Open House and Highlander Day attendees • Revised Open House programming to include using individual whiteboards for a game • Revised Highlander Day programming to include a interactive experiences for students and a tour and presentation to families on our value proposition • Initiated 4 events (online and in-person) to invite admitted students to engage with us

<p>Develop and deploy a comprehensive plan for graduate sustainability, growth and scalability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosted faculty sessions with RisePoint and Instructional Partners to develop strategies to support larger class sizes, including the use of AI and coaches • Supported a program for faculty to do scalable or major refreshes to 6 MBA classes • Redesigned and launched new course shells • Offered online opportunities to connect with current MBA students including a popular, Ask Us Anything
<p>Develop a perpetual schedule and reports to forecast section demand</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chairs have developed preliminary perpetual schedules which will be augmented this summer with course demand forecasts. Intend to publish version 1.0 for Fall 2025
<p>Develop and deploy an advancement plan to support DCOBE mission and strategies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual reporting of Advancement - see Appendix C • Worked to build relationships through attendance at Alumni events – see Appendix A • Created and distributed a postcard (below) for alumni to tell us how they would like to engage • Developed an alumni engagement list and sent Holiday cards • Increased Giving Day participation by over 35%
<p>Develop and deploy a comprehensive strategy for Centers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We've had numerous discussions about structure and potential revisions to the focus of our centers. Implementation was intentionally deferred until we are fully staffed
<p>In partnership, explore interdisciplinary curricular opportunities (ex/ healthcare administration/management)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with Waldron on ways to coordinate and potentially integrate coursework in the Master of Health Administration (MHA) • Early work on establishing a conference on The Business of Sports for Fall 2025. Could be followed-up with The Business of Healthcare, Science, Education, Entertainment, etc. to forge collaboration with other Colleges.



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Challenge Cultivate Connect

We're inviting Davis College of Business and Economics (DCOBE) alumni to share their knowledge and expertise with our current students. Explore the many ways to get involved and make a meaningful impact. Together, we can continue to challenge, cultivate and connect the leaders of tomorrow.

- Join us for a networking event with students
- Host an information session for our 2024 Princeton Review Best Online MBA at your place of employment
- Celebrate your impactful DCOBE experience writing a review on Niche.com
- Review a student's resume
- Provide an internship opportunity
- Present to a class or club
- Collaborate with faculty on research
- Sponsor an event
- Propose a real-world project to be used in class
- Recruit a new Radford student
- Participate in a Job Fair
- Hire a Radford graduate
- Invite a student to shadow you
- Offer input on curriculum offerings
- Share your career success story
- Serve as a mentor or judge of the Truist Innovation Challenge



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APPENDIX C – Summary of DCOBE Advancement

Totals by Funds	
	Total Gifts 3/12/24- 3/11/2025
Adkins Family MBA Scholarship	\$25,000
Beta Alpha Psi Fund	\$3,000
Business Scholarship	\$750
College of Business Capital Building Fund	\$500
Davis College of Business and Economics	\$35,018
Department of Accounting, Finance and Business Law Fund	\$50
Department of Management	\$1,004
Dr. Shalini Elizabeth Perumpral Endowed Scholarship Fund	\$2,800
Drs. Wayne & Lynn Saubert Accounting Scholarship	\$1,000
Global Capitalism (BB&T)	\$4,000
Harold and Vera Gardner Family Scholarship in Education Fund	\$10,000
Holding for Further Instruction - DCOBE	\$2,000
Robinson Family Goldman Sachs Scholarship Fund	\$26,250
Sara Silk Endowed Scholarship	\$25,000
SMIPO Scholarship	\$100
The Lois Smith Manahan Endowed Sch for the Davis College	\$1,000
Business & Economics	\$137,472

Totals by Gift Types	
College	Total Gifts 3/12/24- 3/11/2025
Cash	\$97,003
Pledge	\$31,525
Recurring Gift Pay-Cash	\$4,919
Stock/Property	\$4,025
Business & Economics	\$137,472



Total First-Time Donors	
Total # New Donors	Total \$ New Donors
13	\$2,750

FY25-26 Total Available Scholarships	
College	FY25-26 Total Scholarship \$
Davis	\$147,462

Giving Day Participation	
Total # Donors	Total \$
32	\$5,625
Ranked 5 th	Ranked 1st