



Donna **PCLE NEWS**

PAMPLIN COMMUNITY FOR LEADERSHIP & ENGAGEMENT APRIL 2024

Hello everyone, this edition of the PCLE NEWS is being distributed to provide you with a recap of our recent PCLE meeting, which was held during the 2024 Pamplin Engagement Summit, April 18-19, 2024. Please remember that as members of the PCLE it is important that you share your PCLE experiences with your fellow advisory board members, so please share this issue of the PCLE News with your fellow advisory board members.

PCLE Meeting

PCLE Meeting, April 18, 2024

Jim Hatch, PCLE Chair welcomed everyone present, including PAC leadership and invited guests. Today's agenda includes a presentation from Dean Sarker and her new academic leadership team and presentations by several PCLE members on their board's best practices.

Pamplin Dean Saonee Sarker

Dean Sarker opened by describing a new organizational structure that will:

1. Create a new strategic plan that will foster a "Next-Gen" Pamplin, create action items, KPI's and accountability.
2. Envision new programs (preferable, transdisciplinary), that address market needs and enhance reputation/brand.

3. Continue to emphasize research excellence, elevate research programs and national/international reputation and encourage/create space for other types of research (e.g. sponsored research).
4. Make our centers front and center and envision new centers for excellence.
5. Digitalize Pamplin.
6. Foster a culture of responsibility and unity (#OnePamplin).

The Dean then introduced the new appointments representing the Pamplin leadership team:

Reza Barkhi, Associate Dean Strategic and Global Initiatives and Innovation.

Michelle Seref, Associate Dean Undergraduate Programs

Rajesh Bagchi, Associate Dean Research, Graduate Programs and Centers

Lara Khansa, Associate Dean Faculty Affairs and HR

Parviz Ghandfouroush, Associate Dean NCR Operations

Reza Barkhi, Associate Dean Strategic and Global Initiatives and Innovation

Reza, who has been a faculty member since 1997, obtained his BS, MBA, MA and PhD from Ohio State. He served as ACIS Department Head from 2011-2016 and Director of the ACIS PhD program from 2016-2019.

He articulated his objective to create synergies such that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. Reza will lead the major initiative to create the new 2024-2029 Pamplin Strategic Plan. The Plan will include these key elements;

- Dean Sarker's Vision ("Next-Gen" Pamplin)
- Consistent with the University's Strategic Plan

- Participative Planning- Team feedback
- Study Aspirant and Peer Strategic Plans
- Living Document
- Hokie Values and External Recognition
- True to our Land Grant Mission- Ut Prosim, Honesty, Integrity, Ethics, Sustainability

Michelle Seref, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs

Michelle obtained her BS, MS and PhD from the University of Florida. has been a faculty member since 2014, most recently as a Professor in the Department of Business Information Technology (BIT) since 2022. She led the very successful VT Engage Undergraduate Teaching Assistant Program from 2020-2023.

Michelle emphasized the following areas of Academic Affairs and Learning Support-

- Academic Advising and Student Success
- Curriculum Review and Degree Updates
- Recruitment and Enrollment Management
- Undergraduate Program analytics
- Assessment of Learning
- Engage TA Program
- Teaching and Learning Workshop
- Scholarships and Awards

The second half of Michelle's mission is Experiential Learning Programs-

- International Programs
- Career Services
- Undergraduate Research Program
- Living Learning Communities
- Pamplin Student Organization Coalition
- Peer and Alumni Mentorship
- Experiential Programs Showcase
- Bridge Experience Program

Michelle closed by stating two goals supporting the Pamplin Strategic Plan:

- Measuring, improving and reporting undergraduate academic excellence
- Showcasing experiential learning and student engagement

Rajesh Bagchi, Associate Dean Research, Graduate Programs and Centers

Rajesh has served as the Marketing Department Head since 2018 and Director of the Marketing PhD Program from 2013-2018. He is also Co-Editor of the *Journal of Consumer Psychology*. Rajesh received the following degrees: B. Tech, Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, MS University of Cincinnati and his PhD from the University of Colorado, Boulder.

The Research emphasis for Rajesh's role will include:

- Making Research Important (Changing beliefs)
- Focus on Customers, Managers, Firms and Policy
- Making Research inclusive (Pamplin Elites, Sponsored)
- Ranking and reputation

With respect to Graduate Programs Rajesh's plans include a focus on:

- Innovative, Transdisciplinary Programs
- MS, MBA, Executive Ed. And PhD
- Next Gen Business/Academic Leaders
- Reputation Enhancing

Rajesh emphasized that Centers serve as a bridge, connecting to other colleges and outside of Virginia Tech. They serve as:

- An outward facing unit
- Connector
- Support Research, Teaching, Outreach

The Guiding Principles for Rajesh's role include emphasis on:

- "Next-Gen" Pamplin, #OnePamplin

- Business/Academic Leaders of tomorrow
- Serve the Community, VT, Industry
- Responsible Citizens

Lara Khanza, Associate Dean Faculty Affairs and HR

Lara has been a faculty member since 2008. Serving as Interim Associate Dean for Research and Faculty Affairs in 2023-2024, she also led the recent Pamplin AACSB Accreditation. Lara has been an affiliated faculty of the Calhoun Honors Discovery Program since 2017, served as Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs from 2017-2023 and Director of Pamplin's Honors Development in 2017.

Lara obtained her B.Eng., Computer and Communications Engineering from American University of Beirut, MS, Electrical and Computer Engineering, MBA, Finance and Investment Banking, and Ph.D, Operations and Information Management from the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Lara addressed how she envisions her new role as being all about people, to champion people and support Dean Sarker's vision with following areas of emphasis:

Faculty & Staff Growth and Development

- Attract and retain top talent
- Recognize and celebrate achievements
- Provide learning opportunities
- Facilitate mentorship & support

Communication, Collaboration & Engagement

- Foster a culture of open dialogue and feedback
- Energize innovation: “Next Gen” Pamplin
- Encourage interdisciplinary partnerships
- Establish Faculty forums & peer learning

Ethical Leadership

- Lead by example
- Ensure transparent, fair, and equitable performance evaluation processes
- #OnePamplin

Faculty & Staff Empowerment & Well-being

- Pursue (and expect) excellence and innovation
- Cultivate inclusivity and collaboration
- Uphold responsible leadership and integrity

Parviz Ghandforoush, Associate Dean Pamplin NCR Programs and Operations

Parviz has been a faculty member since 1981 and has served as Associate Dean Graduate Programs, and Executive Director MBA Programs 2014 to present and Executive Director of the MIT Program since 1999. He obtained his BSEE

and MBA from the University of Texas at Austin and his Ph.D., from Texas Tech University. Parviz was not in attendance at this meeting, but was represented by Dean Sarker.

Dean Sarker talked about the initiatives that Parviz seeks to pursue:

- “Next-Gen” Pamplin at Innovation Campus which will begin operations in January 2025.
- Experiential Learning & Student success
- Innovative, Market-Driven Degrees & Certificates
- Corporate Engagement and Outreach
- Recruitment & Enrollment Management
- Faculty and Staff Resources
- Ranking, Branding and Reputation

Dean Sarker closed by describing the new organization as one that emphasizes excellence and collaboration that binds the team together. She also mentioned that the team began working in February, even though the effective date of the new positions is July 1. In addition, Dean Sarker mentioned that she had formed two task forces, one working on reputation, headed by Rajesh and the other on AI, led by Michelle and Reza. The Dean expressed appreciation for all of the support that she has received and looks forward to leading Pamplin to the next level.

Pamplin Advisory Board Best Practices

One of the most important objectives of the PCLE is to share best practices among all advisory boards. If one board initiates an activity or initiative that has demonstrated how it supports its department, program or center with new and creative ideas, it is possible that other boards might find some appeal for their board to adopt the same or similar practices. At this PCLE meeting, several members have board initiatives that they are excited to share with all advisory boards.

Donna Gibb, Apex Center for Entrepreneurship Advisory Board

Donna described board activities in three buckets:

Engagement with the board and alumni mentors-

- Recruit/attract a diverse group of board members coming from different colleges across Virginia Tech and different geographic + industry sectors as many VT entrepreneurs aren't always business school graduates.
- Conduct bi-annual in-person board meetings, with additional happy hours, tailgating, networking events quarterly. (Most recently, a group tour of the VT Innovation campus in Potomac Yards, Alexandria, VA).
- Monthly board check-ins via Zoom with Center leadership (formal business, but also informal networking among board members).

- Promote financial commitment from out board members as core, critical needs, funding for student programs and support VT Advancement overall.

Engagement with board leadership and university stakeholders-

- Apex Center Executive Director and Board Chairs remain committed to the vision by regular communication with university stakeholders and Dean Sarker.
- Our results = Visible impact. Communication/tracking of Apex Center success metrics to foster a full life-cycle experience. i.e., VT student, VT Apex Student, Alumni Entrepreneur > VT alum volunteer/give back, etc.)

Engagement with students-

- Develop programs such as Demo Days, Hokies Start-up Incubator, and Kick Start VT that intentionally engage alumni board members as mentors, judges, and coaches to support our entrepreneurial minded students. Apex also offers merit-based awards and funding to grow a student led business.
- Apex offers office hours, both virtual and in-person from our alumni mentors weekly to support student led projects/initiatives.
- Accompany/support student teams off campus to regional and national competitions. (Most recently, the ACC InVenture competition in Tallahassee, FL). Our board members also often host student startup groups in their local geographic areas, providing another engagement point without the alumni incurring travel.

Bob McDonald, Feiertag Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management Advisory Board

Bob noted that the HTM Advisory Board has six task force groups working in various initiatives. One of those is the Student Engagement Task Force. Its members have worked with advisory board members and current students to produce short personalized videos to send to prospective students who have applied to enter the HTM program, but have not yet committed to Virginia Tech. The videos are followed by a hand written note to the prospective student. Here are two great examples of these videos, one from Sara, a current student and one from Kristen Pierce an advisory board member. An interesting feature that accompanies the videos is the placement of three buttons at the bottom of the video frame:

- Email with a question
- Set a meeting to learn more
- View our Info Guide

Video #1

https://hokiehospitality.dubb.com/v/hNvMem?from_email=1

Video 2 Double click on image to start video



Michael Vitak, PRAAC (PRISM ALUMNI ADVISORY COUNCIL)

Michael, who is finishing his term as President of the PRAAC, will be replaced by Patrick Kampfmüller as the PRAAC representative on the PCLE. He spoke about how effectively the council works with marketing students who are members of PRISM, seeking experiential learning opportunities. PRAAC members support opportunities for students to engage former PRAAC members and other VT alumni who have senior positions in companies located in NYC, Washington, DC, Charlotte, LA and San Francisco. These connections open opportunities for more companies to host future visits and offer future job opportunities to students.

Christina Daves, Marketing Advisory Board

Christina highlighted the board structure which is unique to the Marketing Department. In addition to the senior Marketing Advisory Board (MAB), and PRAAC, there is a Junior Marketing Advisory Board to connect with students and a new Emeritus Advisory Board. The MAB seeks to further student's success and promote Marketing as a major. Student feedback indicated the most students did not have the opportunity to take a marketing class before having to declare a major. As a result, many were choosing other majors such as Finance. In order to address this issue, a new course, Careers in Marketing was added. Student retention has increased 20% since this new class was added to the curriculum.

Kevin Lane, ACIS Advisory Board

Kevin described an activity that was a feature of the board years ago, but had not been held recently. This event is a Department picnic, representing an opportunity to bring faculty, students and alumni together with no agenda other than to say, I like you, I enjoy spending time with you as we are all one family. The picnic will be held at the park in Christiansburg and Kevin will be serving as sous chef for the event.

The well-attended PCLE meeting concluded with everyone gaining greater knowledge about Pamplin and its advisory boards in a manner that helps strengthen the overall Pamplin Community. We appreciate the contribution of time and effort to provide great content for this meeting. I look forward to seeing everyone again at our next meeting in a few months.

Thank you and Ut Prosim.

Jim Hatch, Chair
PCLE

