

VIRGINIA TECH PAMPLIN COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

STRATEGIC PLAN

SPRING 2025



PAMPLIN COLLEGE OF
BUSINESS
VIRGINIA TECH.



**PAMPLIN
HALL**

800 West Campus Dr.

- Pamplin College of Business
- College of Business
- Accounting & Finance
- Business & Economics
- Finance, Insurance & Real Estate
- Management
- Marketing
- Economics

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- 3. Increase top-tier, R1 PhD student permanent tenure track placements (per our target school list) by department
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- 5. Expand the use of technology and data to drive Pamplin's mission and key priorities



DR. SAONEE SARKER

A Word from the Dean



Our strategic plan provides a critical framework to assist an institution as complex and dynamic as Pamplin in reshaping ourselves to meet the future head-on by anticipating the needs of our students and producing high-impact research. It is more than an aspirational document and serves as a strategic road map to guide our decisions as we evaluate opportunities and identify the stepping stones for meaningful growth. This document is the foundation for our Next-Gen Pamplin, a place that prepares visionary leaders, fosters innovative business solutions, and conducts impactful research addressing real-world challenges

This booklet outlines the first phase of the strategic planning process that brought together approximately 55 members from across the Pamplin community into five strategic teams and tasked them to identify bold ideas and initiatives. The five key areas were: undergraduate education, graduate education, Ph.D. program and research, overall research, and organizational excellence. Each team included faculty at all ranks, Professors of Practice, Instructors, staff, and directors of centers and units, together with the Associate Dean for Strategy, Global Initiatives, and Innovation—and worked under the guidance of designated leaders and co-leaders, alongside the strategic consulting firm Segal.

Each team met biweekly for two-hour sessions, accounting for 98 hours of in-person discussions, in addition to extensive virtual collaboration, including document reviews and electronic correspondence.

Importantly, the predecessor for this strategic plan was created even before the formal team discussions began. The groundwork started with the preparation for our AACSB accreditation, which we successfully secured shortly after my arrival. Additionally, my personal engagement, including over 150 interviews with faculty, staff, and students, along with a preliminary organizational review report from Segal, helped shape the direction of this initiative.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who contributed their time, energy, and insights to this process. As we move into Phase 2, we will refine our action items in consultation with associate deans and department heads, assigning metrics and milestones to track our progress into 2025 and beyond. This process will ensure that our strategic plan remains a living document—adaptive to evolving environments and emerging technologies. It will serve as an enabling guide, fostering alignment within Pamplin and across the broader university ecosystem.

You are all part of this journey as we continue shaping the future of Pamplin.

Saonee Sarker, Ph.D.
Dean, Pamplin College of Business

Acknowledgements

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PAMPLIN COLLEGE OF
BUSINESS
VIRGINIA TECH®

Our Mission

To provide a Next-Gen, STEM-based business education, conduct rigorous and relevant research, and create positive social impact through responsible behaviors.

Our Vision

To be a pioneering, world-class business school that transcends borders and harnesses the transformational power of business as a force for good, fostering innovation and integrity to improve quality of life. We strive to elevate the human condition and inspire a deep sense of purpose in our students, empowering them to drive positive change.



At Pamplin College of Business, we are dedicated to empowering students with the knowledge, skills, and experiences they need to excel in their careers and lead fulfilling lives. Our academic programs evolve with the dynamic demands of industry, ensuring that our graduates are well-equipped to thrive in the digital age. Through rigorous and relevant curricula, we prepare students to be competitive, productive, and successful from Day One of their chosen professions. Our graduate programs foster deep competence and leadership, enabling students to navigate and excel in a highly competitive business landscape.

Pamplin's culture of groundbreaking research enables our PhD graduates to secure prestigious positions at leading global institutions. Through innovative research and entrepreneurship, we tackle significant national and global challenges, reinforcing the strategic priorities of Pamplin and Virginia Tech.

Guided by the spirit of *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve) and the principle of #OnePamplin, we foster an inclusive academic environment recognizing contributions by all. By attracting students from varied backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives, we provide a rich learning environment that inspires innovation, critical thinking, and meaningful contributions to society.

Pamplin cultivates a collaborative and transparent organizational culture that prioritizes unity, respect, and responsibility. We are committed to creating an inclusive work environment where open communication and shared information empower our faculty and staff. Through technological innovation and operational efficiency, we alleviate administrative burdens, enabling our team to focus on their academic and institutional mission.

By enhancing Pamplin's brand and reputation, we raise the visibility and impact of our academic and research achievements, deepen our connections with alumni, and foster a culture of philanthropy. These efforts strengthen the resources, reputation, and responsibilities of the entire Pamplin ecosystem.

Together, we are shaping a future that is not only academically rigorous but also socially impactful—driving meaningful change within the business world and beyond.

Strategic Focus Areas

The Pamplin strategic plan was organized around five thematic areas:

- 1 Undergraduate Academic Excellence
- 2 Graduate Academic Excellence
- 3 Overall Research
- 4 PhD Research
- 5 Organizational Excellence





A photograph of a classroom setting where students are working on laptops. In the foreground, a young man with glasses and a dark jacket is focused on his laptop. To his right, a young woman is also working. In the background, another student wearing a purple hijab is visible. A teacher or adult male is standing on the left, looking over the students' work. The desk is cluttered with various items including a white water bottle, a pink water bottle, a red pitcher, and stacks of papers. A Christian Dior shopping bag is also visible in the background. The text "PAMPLIN GOALS 2025-2030" is overlaid in large white letters on the right side of the image.

PAMPLIN GOALS 2025-2030



We, the Undergraduate Academic Excellence team, are committed to positioning the Pamplin College of Business as a global talent magnet, attracting the best students from across Virginia, the nation, and the world. We will elevate and enhance our distinctive undergraduate programs, ensuring they are relevant and aligned with the evolving demands of business. We envision Pamplin as a highly-ranked business school, known for its compelling brand, which resonates with prospective students and industry partners alike. We will foster a culture of collaboration, both within the College and beyond, as we prepare students to tackle global business challenges and emerge as innovative and impactful workforce leaders.

UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE GOAL #1

Become a talent magnet for in state, out of state, and international students**IMPERATIVE**

A. We must recognize why students choose us as a destination institution

STRATEGIES

1. Identify and validate the values, wants, and needs of our current and future students, which may include:
 - a. Offering a flexible and dynamic education through co-curricular and extracurricular opportunities
 - b. Considering offerings such as experiential learning, micro-credentials, and professional certifications
 - c. Highlighting the bridge program
2. Identify why employers choose us as a destination institution, including:
 - a. The attributes and values of our graduates
 - b. Pamplin's reputation and brand
 - c. Strong alumni support
3. Encourage interdisciplinary collaboration
4. Temper our major growth and focus on being "great" in specific areas
5. Be the best at what we do and increase our visibility through national and international business school / program rankings and reputation
6. Identify specialized areas of expertise to attract out of state and international students
7. Improve outreach and enhance Pamplin's reputation

IMPERATIVE

B. We must provide an environment that supports a sense of belonging

STRATEGIES

1. Provide sufficient resources to support out-of-state and international students throughout their Pamplin journey
2. Provide additional support for transfer students coming from community colleges
3. Recognize our land grant mission to provide access and support to the underserved and underrepresented communities of Virginia, including:
 - a. First generation students
 - b. Military veterans
 - c. Southwest Virginia Residents



UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE GOAL #1

Become a talent magnet for in state, out of state, and international students**IMPERATIVE**

C. We must ensure that Pamplin is a great return on investment

STRATEGIES

1. Identify particular skills sets in current demand among employers
2. Expand our students' understanding and awareness of career possibilities and opportunities to guide them into careers that best align with their goals, aspirations, and values
3. Provide opportunities for students to build strong and robust networks throughout their academic journeys (e.g., employers, alumni)
4. Provide programs and opportunities that best equip our students to navigate their lives and careers (e.g., financial literacy)
5. Highlight post-graduate career outcomes
6. Make education affordable and accessible (e.g., scholarships)
7. Consider course modalities when cultivating the student experience

IMPERATIVE

D. We must ensure the appropriate resources that best support a strong Pamplin student body

STRATEGIES

1. Establish the appropriate student to faculty ratio
2. Establish the appropriate student to student-support services ratio as programs change over time
3. Consider the appropriate sizes and modalities for classes, striking the right balance of appropriate levels of interaction among faculty and students
4. Prioritize connections with students at the department level as they navigate their career journey (e.g., faculty mentorship)
5. Ensure our students are aware and well-versed in the student code of conduct in their time at Pamplin



UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE GOAL #2

Further develop distinctive and advanced undergraduate programs that leverage College strengths and anticipate future business needs

IMPERATIVE

A. We must train Pamplin students to where the industry is going, not only where the industry is today

STRATEGIES

1. Continually reevaluate what programs need to be developed, maintained, and discontinued
2. Consider the role of research in the development of undergraduate programs

IMPERATIVE

B. We must identify and focus on key areas of distinction within our seven academic disciplines

STRATEGIES

1. Enhance additional key areas of strength that span across all Pamplin departments (e.g., international business, DSS, AI, sustainability, ethics)
2. Provide students with a challenging and demanding curriculum in a respectful environment
3. Bring greater consistency in student performance expectations within and across departments within the College
4. Create consistency in reporting across departments

IMPERATIVE

C. We must continue to focus on our core business strengths

STRATEGIES

1. Consider the relative opportunities available in an inter/multi-disciplinary pursuit
2. Evaluate and understand our current strengths and weaknesses
3. Provide students with access to programs that prepare them for the jobs of the future, including those that do not presently exist
4. Leverage our strengths in data decision sciences for solving meaningful business problems as a key differentiator in our largely STEM/engineering-related environment



UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE GOAL #2

Further develop distinctive and advanced undergraduate programs that leverage College strengths and anticipate future business needs

IMPERATIVE

D. We must provide an undergraduate education that produces alumni (including international alumni) who are proud and excited about their Pamplin education and experience

STRATEGIES

1. Focus on where offering smaller class sizes may be beneficial to the student experience
2. Understand our current alumni and what components of their experience make them want to give back to the College
3. Focus on the international alumni experience and encourage Pamplin ambassadors globally
4. Preserve and leverage the familial and high-touch culture of VT and Pamplin
5. Ensure students have opportunities and are encouraged to develop lifelong connections within their cohorts
6. Have the right support systems, structures, and resources in place to ensure students feel valued and cared for throughout their educational experience
7. Ensure our students graduate within 4 years (also ties to ROI goal)
8. Ensure sufficient class availability to accommodate our students needs (also ties to ROI goal)
9. Ensure our students have a rich, holistic VT experience that builds connectivity

IMPERATIVE

E. We must be thoughtful about the “end to end” experience of the Pamplin student journey from the point of entry to the point of graduation and beyond

STRATEGIES

1. Ensure undergraduate research opportunities are available and visible
2. Develop regenerative programs within Pamplin's departments that continue to serve our needs
3. Provide mechanisms for lifelong learning after graduation
4. Explore incorporating “Bridge Programs” within the UG experience (e.g., internships, study abroad, etc.)



UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE GOAL #3

Elevate Pamplin's status as a top business school with a strong, compelling, and meaningful brand

IMPERATIVE

A. We must ensure that we are considered a prestigious and high-quality business undergraduate program

STRATEGIES

1. Decide on which rankings offered by which provider are most relevant and important for our main stakeholders with a focus on students and employers
2. Put ratings and rankings in their respective place by using a robust understanding of ranking components and elements as a driver to improve our ranking through targeted action in support of selected and prioritized rankings
3. Consider the internal rankings developed by external stakeholders as a reflection of the quality and prestige of Pamplin's offerings
4. Be recognized as a leading program in certain areas and dimensions (e.g., experiential learning, etc.)

IMPERATIVE

B. We must provide an outstanding educational experience for students that builds our reputation, both externally and internally

STRATEGIES

1. Encourage an interdisciplinary education
2. Encourage and support experiential learning opportunities across our programs and among our co-curricular and extracurricular activities
3. Provide coordinated undergraduate research programs
4. Be recognized by internal and external stakeholders for a holistic and leading-edge business education that provides tangible value and provides a clear differentiation from offerings of competing business schools
5. Translate positive educational and program outcomes into enhanced external recognition
6. Actively manage and measure our reputation and the strength of our brand with our main stakeholders
7. Continue to emphasize the importance of the teaching mission of Pamplin and Virginia Tech as an integral part of the broader context of an R1 institution and the research mission
8. Build broad competencies among our students, especially critical thinking
9. Continue to emphasize the importance of the teaching mission of Pamplin and Virginia Tech as an integral part of the broader context of an R1 institution and the research mission
10. Build broad competencies among our students, especially critical thinking



Elevate Pamplin's status as a top business school with a strong, compelling, and meaningful brand

IMPERATIVE

C. We must produce an environment and program outcomes where top employers actively seek out Pamplin graduates

STRATEGIES

1. Develop coordinated communications strategies (including effective modalities) and resources to ensure our students are aware of all program offerings and experiences
2. Ensure that Pamplin UG students are seen by employers as reliable, adaptable, resilient, ethical, resourceful, and able to navigate ambiguity, with a strong work ethic and service orientation consistent with the Ut Prosim spirit
3. Further build and develop existing strategic partnerships and alliances with large companies that produce strong recruitment pipelines
4. Leverage our strong alumni network to provide opportunities for both employers and students along the whole end-to-end student experience including internships, mentoring by industry leaders and recent alumni, etc.
5. Identify new partnerships and alliances, including finding companies worldwide that are willing to take international students
6. Break down siloes in our relationships with individuals
7. Ensure our courses are cutting-edge and aligned with industry demands / needs
8. Cultivate the trust that employers and recruiters have within Pamplin and its' students and graduates
9. Prepare students for a career, not only a first starting position but those that follow, and measure mid-career level success on a continuous basis
10. Integrate employer feedback about the strengths and improvement opportunities of our graduates in the continuous improvement of our curricular and co-curricular offerings that provide real-world scenarios, applications, and experiences



Elevate Pamplin's status as a top business school with a strong, compelling, and meaningful brand

IMPERATIVE

D. We must establish and leverage our brand

STRATEGIES

1. Define the core of what Pamplin stands for, our Unique Selling Proposition (USP), and a clear "right to win" in a competitive market of higher-ed
2. Establish a tag line and slogan for Pamplin that is highly recognizable and used consistently in our communication
3. Instead of trying to be "everything to everyone", we develop a clear profile of our competitive edge and areas of competitive differentiation among the programs that we offer and the experiences that we provide to our students
4. Consider our relative sub-brand within the broader VT brand as part of our future strategies



We, the Graduate Academic Excellence Team, embrace the challenge to be transformative. In response, we envision graduate education that delivers impactful, sustainable, and regenerative offerings designed to meet the needs of our students while addressing critical societal issues. The education we aspire to create will attract students who embody the Hokie-centric culture, fostering an environment of collaboration and excellence that enhances both student academic and experiential learning, ultimately producing business leaders poised to make a meaningful impact.

GRADUATE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE GOAL #1

Provide impactful, sustainable, and regenerative graduate programs and offerings that address business needs and solve societal problems

IMPERATIVE

A. We must produce graduate programs that contribute to our broader university goals

STRATEGIES

1. Ensure we have systems in place to continually evaluate our existing and future programs to meet the evolving needs of graduate education
2. Ensure our programs are revenue generating
3. Make sure our programs are offered at a competitive tuition rate that reflects a strong return on investment
4. Ensure our program is complementary to other programs

IMPERATIVE

B. We must produce graduates that are highly successful in securing and/or advancing careers that encourage their professional development and growth

STRATEGIES

1. Ensure we have the support required to develop the skills necessary for students to be competitive in their careers (e.g., career coaching)
2. Develop and employ robust mechanisms and approaches that regularly track career changes and outcomes (e.g., salaries, promotions)
3. Recognize and appreciate all students and their unique needs
4. Balance the need for strong foundational skills with timely curriculum topics
5. Continue to provide avenues and opportunities for students to develop relationships with alumni and prospective employers
6. Ensure our faculty and students are proficient with the latest cutting-edge innovations (e.g., generative AI)



GRADUATE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE GOAL #1

Provide impactful, sustainable, and regenerative graduate programs and offerings that address business needs and solve societal problems

IMPERATIVE

C. We must recognize collaboration opportunities within VT and with other universities (domestic and international)

STRATEGIES

1. Continue to benchmark ourselves against our many competitors within the DMV area and amongst peer and aspirant institutions (e.g., tuition, programs)
2. Collaborate with University leaders who oversee international programs (e.g., Vice President for Outreach and International Affairs)
3. Continue to develop collaborations with other state schools to expand graduate offerings
4. Continue to develop opportunities to collaborate with other departments within Pamplin and across other colleges and schools within VT (e.g., stackable credentials)

IMPERATIVE

D. We must inform, advise, and consult on the administrations' goals and strategies for graduate programs as they relate to balancing high revenue and high quality

STRATEGIES

1. Ensure our programs are revenue generating
2. Ensure we have an understanding of enrollment goals for all programs
3. Make sure our programs are offered at a competitive tuition rate that reflects a strong return on investment
4. Develop a regular cadence for connecting with administration to understand current and future goals

IMPERATIVE

E. We must identify, understand, and meet the needs of our unique audiences and recognize the differences in expectations

STRATEGIES

1. Invest in advertising that tells our story about meeting the needs of our students and industries
2. Regularly conduct a market analysis to determine the real appetite for these programs
3. Develop mechanisms to meet needs of our audiences in non-traditional graduate education



GRADUATE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE GOAL #1

Provide impactful, sustainable, and regenerative graduate programs and offerings that address business needs and solve societal problems

IMPERATIVE

F. We must continuously adapt our programming to meet and proactively address the needs and expectations of our industries and strategic partners, recognizing the opportunity to be at the forefront of both innovation and technology

STRATEGIES

1. Engage industry and strategic partners in the academic experience
2. Develop programming that continues to benefit our respective industries and community partners
3. Develop opportunities for more graduate certifications, stackable programs, and executive education

IMPERATIVE

G. We must link new curriculum areas to broader College and University strategic goals and continue to develop our graduate programs to ensure they are meeting industry standards and trends

STRATEGIES

1. Incorporate sustainability, climate change, and global / international focus areas into our curriculum areas
2. Continue to proactively identify opportunities to collaborate across VT (e.g., joint degrees)



GRADUATE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE GOAL #2

Attract students that are best served by our unique graduate program offerings and will embody the Hokie-centric culture

IMPERATIVE

A. Develop Strategies Tailored to Various Geographical Markets and Global Partners Across Delivery Modalities

STRATEGIES

1. Be sensitive to the opportunities, challenges, and changes in programs across various locations
2. Proactively consider the STEM-designated potential of our programs
3. Identify the interest and approach across modalities among graduate students that align with the needs and interests of our global partners

IMPERATIVE

B. We must ensure that our programs are valuable, practical, and applicable to our graduate students

STRATEGIES

1. Ensure that our students are learning critical and practical skills (e.g., critical thinking, dealing with ambiguity, collaboration)
2. Ensure our faculty recognize that they need to meet students where they are in providing high value programming and engagement
3. Have adequate faculty resources to meet student demands and avoid burnout

IMPERATIVE

C. We must ensure that our programming is geared towards current and future professionals

STRATEGIES

1. Incorporate a variety of teaching styles and approaches (e.g., case-based, project-based, team-based, and experiential learning), outside of lecture-based learning, into graduate curriculum
2. Ensure that our programs are geared towards students who are pursuing degrees voluntarily and are genuinely interested in adding to their experience and education
3. Ensure that our education / programs reflect the cutting-edge and innovative trends of our respective industries (recognize the value-add)



GRADUATE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE GOAL #2

Attract students that are best served by our unique graduate program offerings and will embody the Hokie-centric culture

IMPERATIVE

D. We must ensure that our students build strong connections, collaborations, and relationships in an engaged and interactive community across all modalities

STRATEGIES

1. Ensure our faculty and students are engaged with one another, independent of modality
2. Be mindful of student assignments and explore opportunities for these assignments to help students build connections and foster collaboration
3. Build mechanisms for us to stay in touch with our students, maintain connections, and provide information on graduate program offerings

IMPERATIVE

E. We must continue the idea of “One-Pamplin” by strengthening the connection and communication between Northern VA and Blacksburg

STRATEGIES

1. Expand the knowledge and awareness of Northern Virginia opportunities and programs among our undergraduate students to build prospective graduate program pipelines

IMPERATIVE

F. We must minimize barriers and enhance opportunities to provide access to our graduate program offerings

STRATEGIES

1. Advocate for opportunities to reduce barriers for students (e.g., GA positions)
2. Continuously identify, understand, and address geographic-specific and logistical barriers



GRADUATE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE GOAL #3

Create an environment that fosters excellence in student learning and experience

IMPERATIVE

A. We must define and promote leadership capacity that produces students who are equipped to handle complex, ambiguous, uncertain, and volatile business environments

STRATEGIES

1. We must create a student experience that produces leadership capacity
2. Provide experiential learning opportunity that gives students experience with complex, ambiguous, uncertain, and volatile business situations
3. Lean into the innovation campus opportunity to provide interdisciplinary project-based learning / work both within and outside Pamplin
4. Gain support from Pamplin and other university entities to force interdisciplinary connections
5. Embed executive level skills into across our programs and core courses / curriculum (e.g., leading self, others, and organizations; teaming – followership and leadership, social / soft skills, power skills)

IMPERATIVE

B. We must provide sufficient support resources for all students

STRATEGIES

1. Strike a sustainable balance between appropriate class sizes and the student experience
2. Build and tailor our resources to support all students that are participating in our programs (international, mid-career, evening, undergraduate plus students)
3. Develop career support programs and opportunities, including specific support for graduate programs that are both within and outside of Northern VA (e.g., internships)
4. Mirror the resources that are provided among our DC area competitors
5. Provide an equal or better graduate experience within the Northern Virginia landscape
6. Be intentional about involving our alumni to contribute to the graduate student learning and experiences (e.g., mentorships, guest speakers, adjuncts, job connections)
7. Leverage shared resources between Blacksburg and Northern VA
8. Create opportunities for students to share feedback with Pamplin about the resources they need



GRADUATE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE GOAL #3

Create an environment that fosters excellence in student learning and experience

IMPERATIVE

C. We must achieve staff and faculty excellence by being a great place to work

STRATEGIES

1. Provide and encourage staff professional development
2. Provide opportunities for faculty and staff to continuously gain professional experience in the industries and companies in which we serve (e.g., corporate shadowing)
3. Ensure proper leveling and adequate compensation for staff and faculty (including adjuncts)
4. Genuinely apply a “One Pamplin” approach across all aspects of the graduate faculty and staff employee experience
5. Build greater awareness about and provide opportunities for all faculty and staff to experience the comprehensive offerings, roles, and practices that exist in both Blacksburg and Northern Virginia



We, the Overall Research Team, heard and accepted the challenge to be bold. In response, we reimagined Pamplin as a top ranked business school that attracts and retains the best faculty and students in the world because of its cutting-edge, interdisciplinary research integral to the University's efforts to address global business and societal problems. The Pamplin we envision is one in which we are collaborative, within and outside of both the College and University and one in which our research is impactful by any standard.

OVERALL RESEARCH GOAL #1

Achieve Research Excellence that is Recognized Both Within and Outside of the University for its Global Business and Societal Impact

IMPERATIVE

A. We must establish a culture that promotes research excellence and overcomes barriers

STRATEGIES

1. Develop a comprehensive definition of research excellence
2. Create programs that foster a strong interdisciplinary research culture
3. Build and support cross-disciplinary academic communities that share research interests
4. Encourage and support faculty research that impacts global business and society
5. Invest in talent development to build an ecosystem of support for research excellence
6. Monitor and support faculty progress in their research programs

IMPERATIVE

B. We must publish research in high-quality journals and other outlets

STRATEGIES

1. Reward faculty accomplishments on the basis of knowledge creation and dissemination with a premium placed on outlets our disciplines consider excellent
2. Facilitate research collaboration between senior and junior faculty within discipline and across the College
3. Recruit senior faculty candidates with a track record of mentoring and publishing with junior faculty and PhD students in high quality journals
4. Facilitate connections with industry and government organizations to generate research that has business and societal impact



OVERALL RESEARCH GOAL #1

Achieve Research Excellence that is Recognized Both Within and Outside of the University for its Global Business and Societal Impact

IMPERATIVE

C. We must strengthen capacity and support for disciplinary and interdisciplinary research to achieve excellence

STRATEGIES

1. Provide extensive resources and support for research
2. Strengthen capacity and support for acquiring and participating in sponsored research
3. Support and reward acquiring and participating in sponsored research
4. Identify, unify, and leverage faculty expertise in areas of shared strength
5. Reward and support interdisciplinary research in faculty promotion, recognition, and compensation processes
6. Seek opportunities to involve undergraduate and masters students in our research endeavors
7. Recruit high-quality doctoral students and provide resources for their success—Refer to PhD Research Committee

IMPERATIVE

D. We must enhance Pamplin's research reputation within and outside of the University

STRATEGIES

1. Reward all scholarly activities that enhance the faculty and College reputation
2. Reward scholarly activities that signal leadership and reputation within the professional community
3. Strengthen marketing efforts and media relations related to Pamplin's scholarly activities
4. Help faculty to curate their external visibility in regard to their research



OVERALL RESEARCH GOAL #2

Be an Integral and Integrated Part of the University's Research Priorities, Portfolio and Endeavors

IMPERATIVE

A. We must participate in and incentivize research efforts that align with the university's strategic priorities

STRATEGIES

1. Understand the university's research priorities, portfolio, and endeavors
2. Foster interactions between Pamplin researchers and the VT Research community
3. Support and recognize faculty collaborations on research initiatives that are aligned with the University's strategic goals
4. Leverage university resources and provide support to help Pamplin faculty access these resources for research

IMPERATIVE

B. We must foster Pamplin faculty research with an emphasis on the Pamplin pillars that can uniquely contribute to the University's research efforts

STRATEGIES

1. Establish a Pamplin Center where faculty can engage with research opportunities aligned to Pamplin pillars and that link to the university research efforts
2. Fund disciplinary and interdisciplinary initiatives that contribute to the university's research priorities, portfolio, and endeavors, and that stimulate research opportunities associated with the Pamplin pillars
3. Collaborate with non-academic partners to support and fund pillar related research (e.g., industry, government, public agencies, community, not-for-profit, etc.)
4. Encourage Pamplin faculty to lead and engage in research efforts that enhance discovery aligned with university's research vision



OVERALL RESEARCH GOAL #2

Be an Integral and Integrated Part of the University's Research Priorities, Portfolio and Endeavors

IMPERATIVE

C. We must build an ecosystem to support sponsored research efforts in applicable areas (e.g., internal and external partnerships, centers, funding, connections)

STRATEGIES

1. Strengthen appreciation for the value of sponsored research for Pamplin faculty and stakeholder
2. Enhance connections with funding agencies, corporations, foundations and other potential research sponsors by removing barriers that limit the ability of faculty to network and partner with funding organizations (companies, agencies, foundations, etc.)
3. Establish a Pamplin Center where faculty can engage with research opportunities aligned to Pamplin pillars and that link to the university research efforts (see Imperative B)
4. Brand Pamplin as a problem-solving entity with a reputation for solving organizational problems, to better appeal to potential external partners

IMPERATIVE

D. We must strengthen support and recognition for international research collaborations that bring global perspectives to address research problems, consistent with the University's endeavors of global distinction

STRATEGIES

1. Strengthen capacity and support for participating in international research
2. Leverage our strengths as it relates to international collaboration
3. Strategically highlight faculty achievements that impact global business and society
4. Establish innovative partnerships with the global business and non-academic community



OVERALL RESEARCH GOAL #3

Lead and Engage in Research Efforts to Address Big Challenges Spanning Multiple Disciplines

IMPERATIVE

A. We must leverage Pamplin's academic disciplinary strengths and recognize and support research that addresses big challenges

STRATEGIES

1. Prioritize addressing the big challenges that match Pamplin's strengths
2. Facilitate, support and recognize Pamplin faculty involvement in interdisciplinary efforts that address big challenges
3. Facilitate relationships and foster interactions between Pamplin researchers and the VT Research community
4. Support and recognize faculty for collaborating on responsible research initiatives that are aligned with the University's strategic goals

IMPERATIVE

B. We must broaden our collaborations and engagement with non-academic partners to facilitate Pamplin research that addresses big challenges

STRATEGIES

1. Engage with industry and other non-academic partners to help identify and address real-world challenges through our research
2. Develop and maintain strong research relationships with industry and other nonacademic partners
3. Understand, align with, and leverage to the University's ecosystem for external partnerships



In an ever-evolving academic landscape, the demand for visionary, impactful scholars and inspiring educators has never been greater. This strategic plan illuminates a bold path toward establishing a PhD program that embodies these ideals, cultivating a community of curious thinkers and creators whose contributions will resonate across academia and industry.

Our goal is clear: by 2030, to be a top destination for ambitious, motivated PhD students seeking not only academic achievement but a legacy of meaningful impact. By focusing on four core pillars—Recruitment, Training and Development, Placement, and Long-Term Career Success—this plan outlines an inspiring and actionable vision. Through these goals, we aim to attract the brightest minds, equip them with cutting-edge skills, secure influential placements, and support them in building lifelong, distinguished careers.

This strategy emphasizes flexibility and innovation. From modular coursework and global partnerships to a robust teaching academy, we are redefining what a PhD journey can be, ensuring each student gains the intellectual depth, resilience, and professional network essential for success. In fostering a collaborative and inclusive environment, we will build a culture that doesn't just prepare students for the future but empowers them to shape it. Through this plan, we commit to a legacy of excellence and transformation, a space where knowledge is advanced, careers are launched, and boundaries are continually expanded.

We invite all students, faculty, and partners to join us in bringing this vision to life.

PHD RESEARCH GOAL #1

Establish the reputation as a top destination for PhD students who have the ability and motivation to achieve success in high-impact research, top-tier journal publications, effective teaching, and exemplary service

IMPERATIVE

A. We must enhance PhD student recruiting reach and outcomes

STRATEGIES

1. Review Peer and Aspirant program strategies for success
2. Analyze past internal admissions data to determine characteristics of successful students. Each department will use these analyses to develop objective and selective admission criteria
3. Consider a college-wide recruitment event where shortlisted applicants visit before making final offers and Pamplin covers their costs
4. College GSC to determine best practices for making offers given the April 15th acceptance deadline
5. College GSC to work with Development to establish named endowments (from donors and PhD alumni) that provide multiple high-profile and lucrative fellowship(s) for each department to supplement stipends to attract top PhD candidates
6. Provide summer funding for all five years to all PhD students making adequate progress (as determined by College & Department GSC members)
7. Create milestone metrics that measure recruiting progress against stated goals between 2024 and 2030
8. College and Department Directors to consider which administrative (if any) functions can be centralized to free up department resources (e.g., Slate entry and tracking of applications, training, GA contracts and admin, plans of study, milestone completion, web presence, etc.)
9. Consider coordinating recruiting functions (e.g., PhD Project, webinars, internal recruiting, hold a Pamplin PhD information fair and create materials to attract top Undergraduate and Graduate students from Pamplin and across campus)
10. Partner with external sources such as the PhD Project, conferences and meetings, colleagues and GMAC, associations, etc. to extend our reach to quality candidates
11. Partner with new Pamplin and VT Undergraduate research programs
12. Consider offering research assistantships for master's students that are specifically tailored to expose them to high quality research and recruit them into Pamplin's PhD programs
13. Consider external partnerships with other institutions w/o PhD Programs
14. Optimize and enhance the College and departmental websites to improve usability, content, and visibility



Develop and deliver a flexible PhD curriculum that makes our students attractive to target institutions and gives them the intellectual capacity for long-term career success while recognizing and balancing the unique needs of each department

IMPERATIVE

- A. The GSC must have the discretion to redesign the PhD curriculum to:
- Include a flexible PhD course work component that can be coordinated across multiple departments. This will require allowing some course work to be delivered in a modular format not tethered to the three-credit hour/one instructor requirement such as offering 1 credit, 1.5 credit, etc. and/or team-taught courses (allows faculty to teach courses other than 3 credits – either in-load or out-of-load).
 - Allow students to take some specialized for-credit independent modular curated methods coursework from legitimate and College GSC-approved outside methods content delivery entities, such as the Consortium for the Advancement of Research Methods and Analysis (CARMA), Instats, MIT Open Learning, Econometric Mixtape Sessions, etc.
 - Allow for flexibility and modular methods without compromising the holistic view needed for the development of strong conceptualization, theoretical frameworks, and ethical considerations of high-level research.

STRATEGIES

1. The College GSC will utilize data-driven approaches to refine the curriculum and assess its impact, including target institution placements and career outcomes, while reviewing departmental PhD seminars and learning objectives
2. College GSC will benchmark aspirational schools to determine best practices for modular curriculum components and review the critical approaches, methods, content, and learning objectives our students must master to be competitive on the job market
3. College GSC will coordinate seminar offerings one to two years in advance to ensure students have access to material they need to earn placements in target institutions and ensure adequate numbers of students are enrolled in seminars
4. In 2025, College GSC will review key milestones (e.g., first- and second-year papers/presentations, comprehensive exams, dissertations, etc.) to ensure students are effectively receiving the critical thinking skills, methods, and content training needed to achieve placement and long-term career success
5. College GSC will review each department's progress toward College and Department goal attainment at the end of each spring semester
6. Each department will review the market every two years to determine what courses students in each department should teach while in the program



PHD RESEARCH GOAL #2

Develop and deliver a flexible PhD curriculum that makes our students attractive to target institutions and gives them the intellectual capacity for long-term career success while recognizing and balancing the unique needs of each department

IMPERATIVE

B. We must match the market expectations for our students by department and establish incentives that reward the achievement of our key impact drivers

STRATEGIES

1. Make 5-year funding available for PhD students making adequate progress in order for them to be competitive in the job market regarding publication success
2. College GSC will develop approaches that innovatively measure our impact (e.g., industry partnerships, sponsored research, altmetrics, conference presentations, podcasts, popular press and media citations, peer-reviewed publications) with a focus on top tier outlets, and other societal impact milestones (publications, conference acceptances, awards, etc.)
3. Increase the percentage of PhD students in each department to aid in the impactful dissemination of research content prior to entering the job market. College and Departmental GSC's will evaluate impact, defined as research content that aligns with the overarching vision and four goals

IMPERATIVE

C. We must better prepare our students to ensure they are attractive in the job market

STRATEGIES

1. Offer incentives for faculty who disseminate high-impact research content with Pamplin PhD students
2. Begin coordinated Pamplin-level and department-level Future Research Faculty Development activities to introduce students to the profession and respective areas
3. Enhance PhD student teaching effectiveness by instituting a Pamplin Teaching Academy (PTA) – an instructional training program required of all PhD students
4. Consider partnering with organizations like Toastmasters to help students enhance their teaching and presentation skill
5. Develop a Pamplin culture that emphasizes the value of effective teaching as a means to reduce stress, enhance career success, provide a realistic job preview for new assistant professors, and strengthen the undergraduate program. Achieving this vision requires the commitment of all department heads and tenure-track faculty, with clear connections to placement outcomes and long-term career success



PHD RESEARCH GOAL #2

Develop and deliver a flexible PhD curriculum that makes our students attractive to target institutions and gives them the intellectual capacity for long-term career success while recognizing and balancing the unique needs of each department

IMPERATIVE

D. We must build a culture of lifelong, career excellence for our students s

STRATEGIES

1. Establish a 'Pamplin Faculty-Student Community Values' document and include all faculty in this cultural initiative
2. Consider which seminars and activities can be centralized to enhance student development and leverage economies of scale. Explore opportunities for integration, such as a cross-Pamplin methods core and multidisciplinary courses that support multiple areas, including theory development and professional socialization

IMPERATIVE

E. We must create opportunities for current students to engage and network with successful alumni

IMPERATIVE

F. We must create opportunities for current students to engage with successful colleagues in the field



PHD RESEARCH GOAL #3

Increase top-tier, R1 PhD student permanent tenure track placements (per our target school list) by department

IMPERATIVE

A. We must identify a list of target placement schools

IMPERATIVE

B. We must build and foster a strong reputation internally and externally (within Virginia Tech and the Academy)

STRATEGIES

1. Financially support PhD student travel to conferences, job fairs, industry meetings, and other opportunities to elevate their status with potential future employers. While conference presentations are essential, students may also benefit from attending conferences even without presenting
2. Coordinate with Pamplin Marketing and Communication to unify Pamplin logo/identifying materials (e.g., slide deck templates, letterhead, CVs, etc.) and to publicize PhD student milestones (publications, conference acceptance, awards, etc.) via podcasts, media, videos, etc.
3. Coordinate with Marketing and Communications to impart the value of distilling research effectively for media and practitioner consumption to our PhD students
4. Hold an annual working session with VT Library and Research experts to train students on effective use of media sources to extend their research impact and enhance their and VT's reputation (e.g., Research Impact Coordinators, VT Research Experts, Marketing and Communications, etc.)



PHD RESEARCH GOAL #4

Create an engaged multi-faceted community that fosters long-term (professional career) scholarly success for our graduates

IMPERATIVE

A. We must prepare students and continue to help our graduates achieve tenure on schedule, promotion to full professor, continued publication success

STRATEGIES

1. Conduct exit interviews with graduating PhD students to learn about how we can engage in continuous improvement of the program
2. Review current annual performance reviews of employees

IMPERATIVE

B. We must help our students and alumni enhance their teaching effectiveness
 *Reference Pamplin Teaching Academy, Doctoral Student Teaching Development

IMPERATIVE

C. We must cultivate our network of engaged alumni who remain active with Pamplin and assist with PhD student development, mentoring, etc.

STRATEGIES

1. Collect and maintain up-to-date alumni data and contact information
2. Develop a department PhD alumni groups and website pages/newsletters/Slack channels, etc. to spark engagement
3. Maintain strong connections with alumni and provide ongoing guidance to keep students engaged with Pamplin. Explore strategies such as listservs, a YouTube channel, and other initiatives to integrate alumni into the College's culture
4. Bring successful alumni back to campus via annual alumni/student conferences, class sessions, virtual seminars, etc.
5. Create mentoring and advisory opportunities between successful alumni and current students
6. Establish outstanding PhD alumni awards – bring recipients back to campus to interact with students and recruits



We, the Organizational Excellence team unite around five core goals to create a collaborative environment, build adaptive structures, strengthen partnerships, increase our impact, and leverage technology. This strategic alignment ensures that we cultivate a culture of recognition, transparency, and accountability, creating a thriving environment for faculty and staff. By valuing each individual's contributions and fostering a sense of connection to Pamplin's mission, we set a strong foundation for continued growth and engagement. We are committed to continuously assessing and refining our organizational setup to adapt to evolving needs, cultivating a culture of innovation, and ensuring that we are equipped to meet the demands of a dynamic educational landscape.

ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE GOAL #1

Enhance Organizational Culture and Employee Experience

IMPERATIVE

A. We must foster a culture of collaboration, transparency, and accountability across the college

STRATEGIES

1. Cultivate a culture of recognition, service, and collaboration
2. Develop trust and enhance open communication
3. Establish consistent and transparent policies and procedures across the college
4. Ensure consistent cultural values and practices across Pamplin campus locations

IMPERATIVE

B. We must improve employee experience and career development

STRATEGIES

1. Foster a culture in which faculty and staff are valued for their contributions
2. Connect all faculty and staff to the Pamplin mission
3. Develop comprehensive career paths and professional development approaches

IMPERATIVE

C. We must proactively enhance processes that affect the employee experience

STRATEGIES

1. Conduct exit interviews with departing faculty and staff to identify issues and seek suggestions for improvement
2. Seek feedback from external constituents, including employers, advisory boards, and alumni
3. Create an operational team to establish a process for reviewing feedback and advising on implementation of improvements on an annual basis

IMPERATIVE

D. We must create positive cultural impacts

STRATEGIES

1. Develop a comprehensive communications plan to enhance internal communications by leveraging traditional, social, and internal media to publicize and celebrate achievements by students, faculty, and staff



ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE GOAL #2

Align Organizational Structures and Resources to Achieve Strategic Priorities and Operational Efficiency

IMPERATIVE

A. We must have an effective organizational structure that is properly resourced and aligned with College goals and strategies

STRATEGIES

1. Implement a continuous assessment framework for organizational structures, centers, and committees to align with evolving strategic goals and operational needs
2. Establish a responsive process for refining organizational structures and resource allocation to meet strategic priorities and enhance agility
3. Cultivate an environment that empowers innovation, adaptability, and continuous improvement across all levels and departments

IMPERATIVE

B. We must seek to understand leading practices and implement them where applicable

STRATEGIES

1. Identify areas for improvement by benchmarking peer and aspirational schools
2. Create a knowledge-sharing platform for faculty and staff to access insights from peer and aspirational institutions
3. Establish a continuous improvement program to adopt relevant best practices and measure impact



ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE GOAL #3

Strengthen Internal and External Partnerships**IMPERATIVE**

A. We must develop and enhance partnership initiatives within the college, university departments, and the broader business community

STRATEGIES

1. Identify areas where partnerships can be developed to benefit the College and University
2. Establish a culture that values and recognizes contributions toward partnerships

IMPERATIVE

B. We must foster connections through centers and non-Blacksburg locations to create collaborative research and teaching partnerships

STRATEGIES

1. Evaluate and align Pamplin's centers with strategic goals to ensure optimal impact on the College's mission
2. Explore and develop potential new centers and initiatives that can strengthen Pamplin's academic and geographic reach

IMPERATIVE

C. We must expand engagement with alumni, employers, and other external constituencies to facilitate life-long relationships and philanthropy

STRATEGIES

1. Expand opportunities for additional engagement with external constituencies that can measurably benefit the College
2. Build a sustainable structure for non-academic engagement to strengthen long-term external relationships
3. Enhance career services support for alumni to create an enduring connection to Pamplin
4. Develop structured opportunities for students and alumni to connect and collaborate

IMPERATIVE

D. We must improve the coordination of activities and efforts across the College (at all locations) and with departments, students, groups, and external stakeholders

STRATEGIES

1. Increase the ability to schedule and promote activities across locations to strengthen visibility and engagement
2. Promote a collaborative culture that bridges activities and initiatives across all Pamplin locations



ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE GOAL #4

Expand Pamplin's Reach, Reputation, and Influence, both with existing (internal) stakeholders and cultivate new (external) stakeholders

IMPERATIVE

A. We must expand Pamplin's visibility and impact through strategic communication in strategic locations and with key constituents

STRATEGIES

1. Enhance the College's visibility and reputation among alumni, employers, prospective students, and other constituents
2. Identify and expand outreach to other geographic regions (domestic and global) that can provide strategic value to the College
3. Cultivate strategic relationships with various media outlets and a broader business community
4. Strengthen the College's engagement with key industry associations and external entities

IMPERATIVE

B. We must expand programs, resources, and services that build long-term relationships with alumni, employers, and other external stakeholders

STRATEGIES

1. Expand the scope of educational initiatives to foster professional growth in the business world
2. Better align alumni and employer access with the departmental and program opportunities
3. Broaden the reach of alumni participation with Pamplin
4. Identify and cultivate relationships with targeted organizations to leverage academic service, career readiness, and alumni engagement efforts

IMPERATIVE

C. We must enhance public understanding of Pamplin's alumni, faculty, and student successes

STRATEGIES

1. Establish the best practices for evaluating the effectiveness of communication strategies within the College and University
2. Focus on the contributions to society and future orientation

Collaboration: It's Our Competitive Edge



ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE GOAL #5

Expand the use of technology and data to drive Pamplin's mission and key priorities

IMPERATIVE

A. We must embrace technology to advance and support the Pamplin mission

STRATEGIES

1. Develop a comprehensive, dynamic technology strategy for Pamplin
2. Integrate technology-focused courses and modules across academic programs to ensure students acquire essential technological skills
3. Enhance Pamplin's capabilities in emerging technologies to support teaching, research, and operations

IMPERATIVE

B. We must leverage data in decision-making

STRATEGIES

1. Implement integrated data infrastructure to support Pamplin's decision-making and operational needs
2. Foster a data-centric culture within Pamplin through skills development and accessible tools
3. Strengthen data literacy across departments to maximize data utility
4. Implement and uphold comprehensive data governance to protect and enhance data assets

IMPERATIVE

C. We must leverage technology to support the delivery of academic services and programs

STRATEGIES

1. Explore and implement cutting-edge educational technologies to enhance learning
2. Invest in a robust and scalable technology infrastructure to support online and hybrid program expansion
3. Expand alumni and employer engagement through tech-enabled networking and collaboration opportunities

IMPERATIVE

D. We must utilize technology to enhance the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of administrative processes

STRATEGIES

1. Continuously assess and adopt technologies to improve operational efficiency
2. Develop a digital-first approach to streamline and integrate administrative processes
3. Build digital competencies through targeted technology training programs







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