Eastern Kentucky University's College of Business and Technology has continuously advanced since its formation in 1999 towards its vision of inspiring minds, enriching communities, creating leaders, and making a difference. The history of the College of Business and Technology spans nearly a century and can be traced back to Eastern Kentucky State College through the School of Business and School of Applied Arts and Technology.

A New Dean is Selected

1998 marked a transition year for what was then known as the College of Business. Dr. Robert Rogow had been selected to replace the retiring dean, Dr. Alfred Patrick. He, along with Drs. Jana Vice and Rich Robinson, formed the triumvirate team that inherited the work that had been led by Dr. Patrick in attaining accreditation for the College of Business through the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). After meeting with the AACSB review team in October of 1998, Dean Rogow decided to withdraw EKU’s application for accreditation. Withdrawal of the application allowed more time to implement the recommendations that had been provided by the review team and prevented Eastern from ever being denied accreditation, leaving their reputation unblemished.

Reorganization

Discussions with another consultant closely associated with AACSB schools brought attention to the makeup of the College of Business, which lacked an associate dean. The College had been composed of five departments leading up to the fall of 1998: Accounting, Economics and Finance, Information Systems, Management, and Marketing. With the initiative of creating an associate dean’s position, the college consolidated from five departments to two. During the consolidation process, the economics department was moved to the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. The finance department, being a functional area of business, joined with the accounting and information systems programs to form their own department: AFIS. The departments of administrative communication, management, and marketing merged to form the other department, MMAC. Dr. Jana Vice was selected as Associate Dean for the College of Business, later becoming the College of Business and Technology, and served in that capacity for 8 years before ultimately becoming the provost for the University.

The consolidation of departments was not the only major change affecting the College of Business. A year later, in 1999, reorganizing the structure of the University meant that the College of Business would be merging with the College of Applied Arts and Technology. The decision was made that Dean Rogow would be the dean of the newly formed College of Business and Technology. The Dr. Glenn Klein Capstone presentations, presented every spring, were named in honor of the dean of the College of Applied Arts and Technology to recognize all of the hard work and contributions he had made to the University.
Upon leaving the President’s office with the news of reorganization in April of 1999, Dean Rogow realized that he faced a large project ahead of him. The merger of the two colleges entailed bringing a diverse collection of programs, ranging from accounting and finance to aviation and agriculture, under one umbrella: the College of Business and Technology. Before the reorganization officially began in July of 1999, the dean called a retreat with all the department chairs and center director at the agriculture extension office. The day was spent talking through decisions that would need to be made to make the merger successful, such as moving the Department of Aviation under the Department of Technology. The reoccurring theme in discussing the reorganization was that the College of Business and Technology was extremely diverse. The goal was, with all of the diversity, to have unity. The key to successfully combining the Colleges of Business and Applied Arts and Technology was bringing together an entire college in a united way.

Building a New Home for the College of Business & Technology

The organizational structure was not the only aspect of the College of Business that needed consideration in 1998, as the physical structure posed issues as well. The business program was housed in the Combs building, with faculty strung throughout its three floors and also in the Miller, Beckham, and Keith buildings. There was an apparent need to get the business faculty under one roof; however, a new building for the College of Business was not on the radar of the University’s strategic plan. Over the next couple of years as the proposal went through legislature, a new building for business had risen to one of the top priorities for the University. In 2000, the Business and Technology Center building had been approved and was funded with 5 million dollars.

A major opportunity surfaced for both the College of Business and Technology and the community in 2000. Discussion between the president, board of regents, and legislative delegation led to the question of whether the college could support a center for the performing arts. The answer from Dean Rogow was an immediate and unequivocal, “Yes.” Pairing the performing arts center with the College of Business and Technology presented a great opportunity for economic development and a chance to really improve the quality of life within the greater geographic region. Following the meeting, the goal had been laid out to find a design for what the complex might look like and to acquire additional funding dedicated to economic development.

The first task was determining what was feasible based on the anticipated budget. The planning team took a trip to Somerset, Ky., to look at the Center for Rural Development, which also was the headquarters of Eastern’s small business development center at the time. The complex featured a 760-seat theater integrated along with office space, exhibition space, and additional space for conventions and other events. The group agreed that the Center for Rural Development was a good starting model for the complex to be built at EKU.

A substantial amount of progress had been made since the initial proposal for a new building in 1998; and, in efforts to keep things moving forward, an advisory council was formed. Dean Rogow took the lead in bringing together a group that included several influential people from both the county legislature and at EKU. The first major challenge facing the council was to hem up all the funds needed
to make the construction of a new complex possible. There were opportunities to acquire additional funds, with the College’s commitment to economic development, through Kentucky Economic Development Financing Authority (KEDFA) and also through monies awarded to the county for economic development. Within the next couple of years, the council was able to assemble all of the resources into one pot and move forward with architectural work.

**Planning the Groundwork**

The goal of the planning and architectural work was to have a building with character to it, something with the ambiance of the buildings that could be found in corporate America. A key question that arose was whether the design should have the classrooms separate from the offices of the faculty. Dean Rogow’s response to this issue was that philosophically the faculty is really close to their students at EKU. It was his vision that the labs, classrooms, and faculty offices would be integrated in a single structure that would provide student and faculty interaction, in which they shared the same hallways.

With the funds gathered and the architectural work for the buildings planned, the last task was to designate an area on campus for construction. Several locations were suggested, such as the land next to the hospital (now the women’s soccer field) or converting Keene Hall into office space and building on classroom space. The course of action that was selected was to build a state-of-the-art facility that would stand alone in proximity to Keene Hall. The facility would replace Vicker’s Village, which was a housing complex for faculty built in 1965 that had been suffering from deferred maintenance and deteriorating buildings.

The tragedy of September 11, 2001, impacted everything financially from the federal government down to the local government, and dampened the prospect of getting the additional funding initially expected in the next legislature. Although time horizon for acquiring additional funds had been lengthened, a commitment remained that the resources needed to move forward would eventually be attained. The recommendation of the state architect was to build a stand-alone building with the money that had already been collected, and it was agreed upon by the advisory council that this was the best option. The construction process was ready to begin, initiated by ground work and grading of the site for the Business and Technology Center as well as for the future Center of the Arts.

**AACSB Accreditation**

The prospect of a new Business and Technology Center did not overshadow the goal of gaining accreditation for the business program. The suggestions made by the AACSB review team in 1998 had been implemented over the next several years and in 2002 EKU Business was again ready to go up for accreditation. A peer review team acknowledged that the business program met all of the standards, except for one minor issue. The risk management program, which had been transferred to the College of Justice and Safety in 1996, would need to be transferred back to the College of Business and Technology under the business program. The application was again postponed, and the program was moved. 2003 marked the culmination of nearly 30 years of hard work and continuous improvement as EKU Business gained accreditation from the AACSB.
The business program was not the only accredited program featured in the College of Business and Technology. The **Applied Engineering Management** program received accreditation from the National Association of Industrial Technology (NAIT) in 1999. NAIT is now known as the Association of Technology, Management and Applied Engineering (ATMAE). Two other programs, the **Graphic Communications** and the **Network Security and Electronics** program, have joined the Applied Engineering Management program in claiming the prestigious ATMAE accreditation and reaccreditation. The **Construction Management** program has been accredited and reaccredited through the American Council for Construction Education, while the **Public Relations** program has been certified through the Public Relations Society of America.

**Welcoming a New Program**

EKU welcomed a new program to the College of Business and Technology in 2006 with the approval of the **PGA Golf Management Program**. Dr. Norb Elbert, while department chair for the Management, Marketing and Administrative Communication department, presented the idea after realizing the University had all of the resources necessary to implement a program. These resources included the Arlington golf course, a turf grass management program through the department of agriculture, AACSB accredited business programs, as well as others. Kim Kincer was hired from Methodist University, which was known for their strong golf management program, and they were able to put together a proposal to the Professional Golfers Association of America. After a thorough review by members of the PGA board, the Eastern Kentucky University PGA Professional Golf Management was approved and became the 18th program in the United States. The EKU program represents the only PGA Golf Management program offered in Kentucky and its surrounding states.

**Conclusion of Phase I of Construction**

2006 also marked the conclusion of a seven year process with the completed construction and dedication of the first phase of the Business and Technology Center. The dedication, held in the atrium of the new building, featured several dignitaries and Governor Ernie Fletcher. The Governor and President of the University were presented bricks from Vicker’s Village in commemoration of what once stood at the site. The first phase of the center housed the dean’s offices, college advising offices, the Center for Economic Development, Entrepreneurship and Technology, EKU Small Business Development Center and EKUBusiness.³

Dean Rogow expressed his optimism on the impact that the Business and Technology Center would have saying, “The Business and Technology Center is now a focal point of Eastern Kentucky University and the community. The activities conducted in this facility will enhance business education and will expand and promote economic development throughout Madison County and the region. Through its innovative economic development programming, the center will literally touch and improve the lives of all Eastern Kentucky students.” Joanne Glasser, the EKU President in 2006, echoed that optimism stating, “My hope is that our Business and Technology Center comes to epitomize Eastern Kentucky University’s commitment to excellence and the cooperative, can-do spirit that we share with the citizens of Richmond, Madison County and Central and Eastern Kentucky.”³
Phase II of Construction

An additional 38.6 million dollars was awarded from the state to EKU in 2006 to finish the second phase of the Business and Technology Center and to build the Center for the Arts. The second phase of the Business and Technology Center included the business library and academic commons, the insurance and professional golf management suites, as well as additional classrooms and faculty offices. The project was completed in the summer of 2010, with the Center for the Arts being opened in 2011. The plan that had been envisioned in 2000 was accomplished over a 12 year period thanks to the work and dedication of the dean, the advisory council, the legislative representatives, and support from the administration.

Creating a More Efficient Organizational Structure

The College of Business and Technology experienced another change to its organizational structure in 2010. Dean Rogow again teamed up with Dr. Jana Vice, who was now provost of the university, to propose a change that would create two schools under the College of Business and Technology. They presented their plans to the president of the university, Dr. Doug Whitlock, who was very supportive. The College of Business and Technology was divided into the School of Applied Arts and Technology and the School of Business in 2011 with Dr. Ed Davis and Dr. Rita Davis serving as associate deans, respectively. The change has been very beneficial to the university, as it has created a much more modern, up-to-date, effective and efficient model for running a college as diverse and complex as the College of Business and Technology.

The School of Business was reaccredited in November of 2012, displaying the commitment to continually strengthen and improve the quality of the program. The School also experienced a departmental name change from Management, Marketing and Administrative Communication to Management, Marketing and International Business. The name change was in correspondence with the greater importance of international business and the emphasis that has been placed on international business in the department. Eastern Kentucky University has expanded its international exchange opportunities through its membership with the AVANS and Magellan exchange programs. These programs provide students the opportunity to study international business in countries such as France, Germany, Spain, and many others.

Unique Program Offerings

The College of Business and Technology has continued to change with the times and expand its offering to its students. The PGA Golf Management program, the Risk Management & Insurance program, and the Aviation program, offered within the college, are the only ones of their kind that can be found in Kentucky. PGA Golf Management has expanded from around 25 students when the program was first started in 2006 to nearly 115 students spanning everywhere from California to Maine. The Aviation program is another program that has grown tremendously and is looking for accreditation through the Aviation Accreditation Board International (AABI). The flight program has expanded enrollment numbers from 40 to over 140 in the past couple of years. EKU’s flight training program is the only program in the
nation that offers 100 hours of experience in multi-engine aircraft, which is a huge competitive advantage for students looking to fly for commercial airlines.

The Eastern Kentucky University College of Business and Technology has continued to provide a quality education to its students through numerous accredited programs, giving them the opportunity to excel in their careers. The College of Business and Technology has also been very successful in enriching the surround economic region and community. The Center for Economic Development, Entrepreneurship and Technology has been effective in linking the resources of EKU with the needs of communities, businesses, industries and institutions in the region. The history of the College of Business and Technology shows that it has been committed to its mission of challenging and changing lives through rigorous, dynamic teaching, scholarship and service to enhance student success and contribute to the entrepreneurial, technological, professional capacity of the global society.²

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