



HULL

2021 - 2022

ANNUAL REPORT



A BUSINESS COLLEGE

**LIKE NO
OTHER.**

Many “Firsts” Highlight Another Impactful Year!

Academic Year 2021-2022 was another incredibly impactful year for the James M. Hull College of Business. Our faculty and staff came out of the pandemic with renewed vigor to positively impact our students and our academic, business, and local communities.

This Annual Report provides an insightful look into some of the activities, programs, and people that impacted these constituencies. We are particularly excited because this was a year of many “firsts” for the College, and we proudly display many of them in this report.

Our main focus in the Hull College is on workforce development, and we had two “firsts” that significantly impacted our ability to support our local and statewide workforces. While we launched our first completely online and asynchronous MBA program in August 2020 as part of the Georgia WebMBA®, we had our first graduates of the program in May 2022. This program allows working professionals to earn an MBA degree in situations in which they are unable to attend our campus program, providing our workforce with emerging leaders.

During this academic year, we also launched our first professional development training program where we offered a preparation course for the Project Management Professional (PMP®) certification offered by the Project Management Institute (PMI). This program addresses the growing need in our area for certified project managers, particularly for the U.S. Army and local defense contractors.

Other firsts impacted our students and local community. Through a generous donation from Wayne Brown, the Hull College launched its first endowed Hull Ambassador program. This program provides professional development opportunities for select Hull College students and allows the students to network and brand the College in the local business community.

We impacted the community through the first-ever “J-Tank” program which assisted local entrepreneurs in developing their small businesses through a pitch competition and business coaching.

As we always do in our Annual Reports, we present the impactful people and programs of the Hull College. In this year’s edition, we introduce our new Advisory Board, 13 leaders of our business community who help guide the College and its interaction with

businesses. We also highlight three alumni entrepreneurs who have leveraged their Hull experiences into successful businesses.

Finally, we look at our faculty’s outstanding research and show how it has positive impact on business and society.

As you can tell, it was a busy and productive year in the Hull College and we hope this Annual Report allows you to take pride in how the College you support positively impacts those around us.

Rick

Dean Richard Franza, Ph.D.



Business for Life

Contents

Richard Franza, Ph.D., Dean
Mark Thompson, Ph.D., Associate Dean
Kate Channell, MBA, Assistant Dean
Tim Rausch, Communications Specialist

Our Mission

The mission of the Hull College of Business is to deliver high-quality programs of instruction, to engage primarily in applied research, and to address workforce development needs. We impact our regional community through interdisciplinary activities and achieve our mission by developing business professionals through experiential learning, community engagement, and career development activities.

Our Strategic Priorities

Distinctive Educational Programs

Offer distinctive educational programs (degree and non-degree) that support the unique needs of the local area and differentiate the Hull College of Business from other business schools in the State of Georgia.

Collaborations and Partnerships

Develop sustainable collaborations and partnerships with institutions and organizations.

Career Preparation and Development

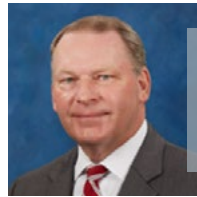
Provide career preparation and development for Hull College of Business students to increase their competitiveness for careers and support the workforce development needs of business communities.

Faculty Engagement and Research

Improve portfolio of faculty's business engagement and research productivity.

Employee Engagement

Foster a collegial environment through enhanced faculty and staff engagement.



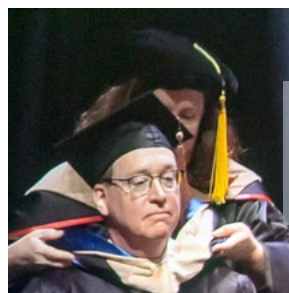
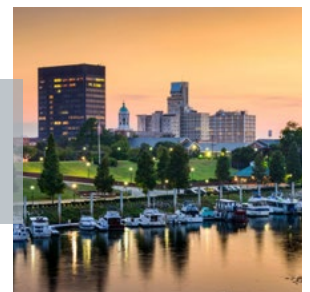
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New Advisory Board Works on Initiatives

The Hull College of Business Advisory Board was revived at the beginning of the 2021-2022 academic year.

The 13-member board meets twice a year and assists the College with advice on curriculum, fundraising, community engagement, and branding.

Richard Franza, Ph.D., dean of the College, said one of the purposes of the board is to be the voice of the customer. “One of the important things for us, both as a university and as a college, is to be engaged with the business community. They are really our customer. What we do is provide talent and workforce for the business community.”

Franza said the College administration intentionally identified people in different industries to cover the key industries in Augusta – healthcare, manufacturing, military, accounting, commercial real estate, and banking, for example.

“I was very conscious in having all of our members in different industries to be better connected to the business community.”

Franza said he seeks their input on curriculum and skill sets for students so that they meet the needs of businesses.

“We seek their advice on how to provide a better business education,” Franza said.

The board is divided into three subcommittees: curriculum, engagement, and philanthropy.

Franza said the board is also a “branding mechanism” for the College. Looking at the makeup of the board, there are significant players in the CSRA who are connected to the community, sit on other boards for example, and interact with others in the business community.

The members serve a three-year term.

Hull College Advisory Board



Dave Brendza
Division Vice President and General Manager, OneADP Augusta

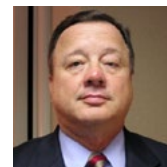
Helen Caldwell
Vice Chair
Group Vice President and Commercial Banker, Synovus



Alan Griffin
Chair
President/CEO, MCBS



Garnett Johnson
President/Owner, Augusta Office Solutions



Walton Johnson
Former Senior Director, The Masters Tournament

Lt. Col. Jeff Keenan
Professor Military Science, Augusta University



Ross McDaniel
Director Client Success, Jolly Sherpa - Growth Marketing Agency

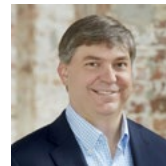


Beth Morrison
CPA and Partner, Cherry Bekaert, LLP

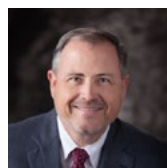


Erwin Reid
Senior Vice President of International Restaurant Development, Chick-fil-A, Inc.

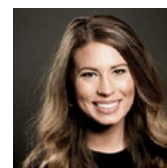
Dennis Trotter
Founding Partner, JordanTrotter Commercial Real Estate



Greg Van Bladel
Operations Group Controller, John Deere



Kevin Wade
Founder and President/CEO, IntelliSystems



Ashleigh Wilder
Chief Human Resources Officer, TaxSlayer

Hull College

BY THE

Numbers

696

UNDERGRADUATE
STUDENTS



41

INTERNATIONAL
STUDENTS

80%

PLACEMENT
RATE



25%

HIGHER FRESHMAN
ENROLLMENT

85

MBA
STUDENTS



25

AVERAGE
CLASS SIZE

578

BUSINESS
MAJORS



118

ACCOUNTING
MAJORS

23

FULL-TIME
FACULTY



College Ventures Into Training Professionals



Professional development. Lecturer Roger Duke teaches project management examination material to professionals in a Georgia Cyber Center classroom.

At the beginning of the academic year, the Hull College branched out from teaching traditional college students and introduced professional development instruction.

The College became an approved authorized training partner for the highly coveted Project Management Professional (PMP®) certification through the Project Management Institute (PMI).

The month-long exam preparation course was offered in the fall and spring semesters, with an expansion in the frequency of offerings coming in the next academic year.

“This program was launched through our relationships with the Georgia Cyber Center and the local government contractor community whose employees need this certification for their companies to bid on Department of Defense and Department of Energy contracts,” said Rick Franza, Ph.D., dean of the College. “However, almost every company and industry in Augusta requires certified project managers to successfully compete in their markets.”

Franza said it was a way for Augusta University and the College to contribute to local workforce development beyond the normal degree programs.

In some cases, the company is looking for its own advancement by training its employees.

“Having project managers on the roster is an asset to the company,” said Gary Stewart, a special project team lead for OPS Consulting, who took the course in February. “In the contract world, being able to manage projects will open future opportunities.”

One of his co-workers was able to get a

“I wouldn’t have had a shot in the dark in getting the job if I hadn’t had the PMP®.”

– Caleb Pierce, Maine Technical Group

different job because of the certification.

Caleb Pierce, then a data flow analyst for OPS Consulting, quickly passed the exam, earned his certification, and found a new job as a technical project manager for IT service provider Maine Technical Group that installs computers and networks for other businesses.

The course instructor, Roger Duke, who is a lecturer in the Hull College, has more than a decade of training experience and more than 40 years of project management experience. Pierce said he followed Duke’s advice and used the practice exam material from PMI.

“When I took the test, there wasn’t anything that I didn’t feel unprepared for. He did a good job of preparing us for learning the rest of the material. He taught us what to expect,” Pierce explained. “I took the exam, passed it, and had my second interview with [Maine Technical] less than an hour later. I wouldn’t have had a shot in the dark in getting the job if I hadn’t had the PMP.”

Faculty Assist Local Business Owners

Who better to assist with business operations than the experts who teach it every day?

The Hull College of Business supported a community effort to start local businesses in collaboration with the Jessye Norman School of the Arts. Efforts to boost entrepreneurs later involved the assistance of students.

The College's dean and four faculty members served as mentors and/or judges in September 2021 for J-Tank, a program to assist young entrepreneurs and their families to take their interests and turn them into a viable business.

Gary Dennis, executive director for the School, described the event, a spin-off of the nationally renowned show *Shark Tank*, as an economic empowerment program supported by a number of partners.

While the participants did not ask for

funding as on the TV show, they did make a pitch for their business ideas. The business proposals ranged from property management to shirt printing to career assistance.

"I was impressed with the students in Dr. Mathur's class."

– Alexis Galloway,
Sew Sweet Academy

Hull College faculty judges gave written feedback on the proposals. Many took advantage of a 13-week phase of the program called the J-Tank Academy that assisted the entrepreneurs in all aspects of developing

a business, from planning, design, and branding, to accounting and sales.

Dean Richard Franza and economics professor Simon Medcalfe served as coaches.

Franza said his coaching primarily centered on the basics of a business plan.

More than two dozen students in the introduction to digital marketing course, taught by Manisha Mathur, Ph.D., assisted Sew Sweet Academy with its digital and social media marketing, culminating into several end-of-semester group presentations.

Sew Sweet Academy owner Alexis Galloway provides embroidery instruction tutorials, primarily online through her website, designed to help others build an embroidery business.

"I was very impressed with the students in Dr. Mathur's class. They listened to the needs of my business and formulated presentations with the exact strategies for me to implement immediately to enhance my visibility in the embroidery industry," Galloway said.

She said some of the student ideas were implemented immediately, such as changing the name of the business to Sew Sweet Academy on her social media accounts so that the brand would be uniform. "I also began working with a social media manager to grow my social media platforms through posts and hashtags," she said.

"I am thankful for this experiential learning opportunity for students to help a minority-owned business," Mathur said.

The Jessye Norman School of the Arts is an after-school program designed to develop and nurture the artistic and creative talents of students. The School was founded in 2003 to provide a free arts education to economically disadvantaged children.

The School, named for Jessye Norman, a world-renowned opera singer born in Augusta, will host another J-Tank in the spring.



Expert Advice. Hull College of Business representatives served as judges for J-Tank, a business pitch competition held in September 2021.

Hulltrepreneur

Augusta offers plenty of opportunity to young alumni entrepreneurs

*By Milledge Austin
Jagwire*

An estimated 24,600 Augusta University alumni live in the Central Savannah River Area. Augusta and the surrounding areas have a lot to offer business owners and employees alike – especially younger alumni interested in either working for or starting a small business.

Three AU alumni in particular – Cole Watkins, T’Shawn Carter and Amy Richardson – have flourished in the Augusta area after graduation, using their degrees to help launch their own small businesses in three unique areas.

What sets Augusta apart?

Augusta and the surrounding area offer plenty of opportunity to jobseekers, both those with aspirations to own a small business and those simply looking for steady work. The potential for jobs and the safe family atmosphere in the area have helped businesses begin and grow, and it’s a huge selling point, according to Dr. Rick Franza, dean of the James M. Hull College of Business at Augusta University.

“This is a great place for businesses to set up shop because there are plenty of benefits for businesses,” Franza said. “Our location is close to two ports – which is obviously critical for both bringing in supplies and shipping final products. Augusta is also right on the interstate, a rail system runs through Augusta, and we’re not that

far away from a big airport. Augusta is in a really nice location and we’re still growing as far as adding jobs and people.”

Augusta is home to about 22,500 manufacturing jobs. The Savannah River Site, which produced a job boom between the 1960s and 1990s, is projected to begin another hiring boom prior to 2032. One of the latest reasons businesses and young professionals are flocking to the area is the recent growth in the cyber and computer industry highlighted by the Georgia Cyber Center.

“Jobs in cyber have seen a big boom recently, and Augusta is going to continue to be fertile ground because of cyber and how important it is to every element of our way of life,” Franza said. “It’s important to businesses, but it’s clearly critically important to all of our utilities, our financial system, and even our health care system. Everything is run with zeros and ones these days, so you have to keep information secure.”

And then there are smaller, niche areas for businesses, particularly in the entertainment industry.

Augusta is home to some of the best jobs in hospitality. The Masters is the crown jewel, but there are also the Augusta GreenJackets and the many events put on by the Augusta Sports Council – which includes three Augusta University alumnae in CEO Michelle Naval, Marketing Coordinator Savanna Gonzales and Community Affairs Coordinator Monica Martinez-Canty.

“Obviously, our hospitality sector is pretty big, even though it is highly centered on the two weeks around the Masters and the Augusta National Women’s Amateur,” Franza said. “I think there’s



Entrepreneurs



plenty of opportunity to continue to add more in this area. I look at Augusta's growth as similar to places like Chattanooga, TN, and Greenville, SC. I think there's a lot of room for growth here because I think this area has potential to draw young professionals in their 20s and 30s who are looking for a good work-life balance."

Cole Watkins (Class of '12): Cole Watkins Tours and Kayak Rentals

With Augusta sitting on the western bank of the Savannah River, multiple boat ramps around Clarks Hill Lake, and the Augusta Canal, it is easy to see how Cole Watkins' love of the outdoors could present the opportunity for a great business venture: Cole Watkins Tours and Kayak Rentals (CWT).

Watkins, a 2012 Augusta University graduate, was named the Hull College of Business Outstanding Young Alumnus this year. He turned a newfound hobby into a successful business over the last decade-plus.

Even through the COVID-19 pandemic, Watkins has watched as his "side hustle" has grown from a series of projects he completed



while studying business at then Augusta State to a business that attracts customers from both near and far.

And, it even helped get him featured on GPB TV's Hometown Georgia in 2018, as well as on FOX Sports South's The Excursion with David Zelski in 2018 and again in 2022.

"The plan was to run the company as mostly a weekend thing and have everything where I just meet customers at the river, and now we're in our 11th year. Even though now I'm 33 and I have a wife (Ashley Watkins, Class of 2012) and two kids, there's very little free time, but every free day that I have is spent on the water. It's been a very fun experience, and I'm glad I decided to run with it."

Watkins' business has thrived even in recent years, to where out-of-towners are calling from all over the southeast saying they saw his business on social media. Even if he or his other guides can't take a group on a tour, his main goal is to make sure out-of-towners have a great experience in Augusta, so he's not hesitant to point them in the direction of another "rival" outfit or to even lend some of his 28 kayaks to those companies.

"I think each kayak company understands that we each have our own specialty, our own niche. CWT is the primary company for guided tours and also the Stallings Island route, where guests can see the wild donkeys and goats. We tell our customers about the rich history of the island and let people feed the animals from their kayaks. People always have a good time on that trip."

The Stallings Island trip with Watkins' outfit is part of a larger

project that the Columbia County Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB), which includes 2017 AU graduate Tera Bonsell, has introduced in recent years: The Serene 18.

The Serene 18 is 18 square miles of waterways stretching from Clarks Hill Lake, along the Savannah River and into Richmond County via the Augusta Canal.

“The Columbia County CVB put together the Serene 18, and it has really taken off,” Watkins said. “It’s really well put together, and it features a passport where you get a stamp each time you go on one of the five adventures. It is a really fun challenge that is bringing tourists to the area. We are proud that we can show them a good time on our beautiful river during their stay.”

T’Shawn Carter (Class of ’16): Pledge Fitness

Like Watkins, 2016 graduate T’Shawn Carter has seen his side hustle, Pledge Fitness, grow in recent years, partially thanks to the COVID-19 pandemic that saw people begin to focus more on their health and fitness.

Carter, whose 9-5 job is tech support manager at ADP, is also a Natural Pro Men’s Physique competitor and personal trainer who offers both in-person and online training, as well as programs aimed at weight loss, mass gain and healthy eating habits, to name a few.

Originally from Springfield, MA, Carter grew up in Marietta, GA, and knew from an early age that he wanted to own his own business.

“Around my neighborhood, I was the ‘Candy Man.’ I had everything from a snow cone machine to a popcorn machine. I’ve always been interested in running some sort of business, even at 8 years old. I didn’t necessarily know what a profit was, but I knew that if I spent \$10 buying cups, I knew I needed to sell everything I had for more. As you get older, those same beginner techniques just expand, and I have just stuck with it.”

Carter started his college career at Savannah State University before transferring to then Augusta State along with his girlfriend, now wife (Gabbi Carter, Class of 2018, Psychology), who transferred to Augusta from Columbus State University. The couple wanted to find a campus where both could pursue their majors together. Carter ultimately graduated with a Bachelor of Business Administration in Management in 2016.

Not only did they earn quality degrees, but they also found a supportive community that both challenged them and introduced them to lifelong friends. Carter attributes some of his drive to succeed to having a strong support group in the form of his fraternity brothers through Omega Psi Phi.

“It definitely gave me a different support system and a different viewpoint of being held accountable. There were a few professors in the business program that challenged me mentally to be prepared, and then I met some of my greatest friends through my fraternity. The best part about it is we push each other to be great. We’re not competing with each other, but nobody wants to be that friend that dropped the ball.”

While he has always known he wanted to one day own his own business, being a personal trainer and bodybuilding coach is a



fairly new idea.

“I originally had no interest in personal training. I have always been an athlete and enjoyed playing sports, but it wasn’t until when I was working out with a buddy of mine at the Wilson Family Y in 2016, when I even thought about it,” Carter said.

“I was helping him because he had a whole bunch of clients at the time and he used to run group sessions, so I would help him from time to time. He came to and me and said people just loved my energy. Then, maybe a few months later, the Y needed a group class instructor, so my buddy gave me the money to get the needed certification, and I started teaching the class, and then everything just took off from there.”

Amy Richardson (Class of ’16, ’17): Richardson Professional Solutions

Amy Richardson is a name that many on campus, particularly around the Hull College of Business, may recognize.

Richardson, who started out as a graduate assistant at Hull before transitioning to business engagement coordinator, earned both her Bachelor of Business Administration (2016) and Master of Business Administration (2017) from the College.

After departing the university in 2019 to focus on raising her family, she launched her own business, Richardson Professional Solutions, in January 2020.

“It was something that was supposed to be a side hustle, trying to bring in a little bit of extra income, and it quickly took off,” Richardson said.

Her company provides office services – desktop publishing, social media management, bookkeeping and time management to name a few – to small business owners in a variety of fields, including higher education, manufacturing, food and beverage and nonprofit.

Richardson says the best part of owning her own small business in Augusta has been the ability to not only draw on her previous networking skills but continue to build new and better relationships.

“Being the business engagement coordinator for the business school at Augusta University, I was out in the community a lot, and I really built a strong network, and so now I’m able to do a deep dive in that network and remake those connections. I know that being a student at AU, they’re always talking about networking and how you’ll never get a job without networking. It helps to know people, and it’s really true as far as not only building my team but also building my client base.”

One of the best networking tools for Richardson has been the small-town feel in and around Augusta that is embodied at Augusta University.

“There’s a great opportunity to be connected with our community. I love being engaged with the community and going to Chamber events and supporting local business. I enjoy the close connectedness, the small-town feel that our very big small town offers. The University is unique in the sense that it is a large institution, but you are not just a number.”



Hull Graduates First Online MBA Students

May 12 was a historic date when three of Hull College's MBA graduates, the first of its online graduates, walked across the stage at the Bell Auditorium.

They started their graduate degree journey in fall 2020 as the first cohort from Augusta University enrolled in the Georgia WebMBA® program, a consortium of seven University System of Georgia business colleges.

"It is a good universal degree. I feel like I can do anything. It will help me when I open my chiropractic practice," said Amber Roberts of Augusta, one of those first online MBA graduates. "I'm able to break out and do anything that I want to do."

She attained her doctor in chiropractic medicine from Life University in Marietta, GA, in 2020 and has been working as a chiropractor. She is also a store manager for the apparel retailer fab'rik Augusta in Surrey Center.

Despite the busy work schedule, she was able to complete her master's degree in five semesters due to the flexibility and cohort nature of the online program.

Richard Franza, Ph.D., dean of the College, said it is important for Hull to have an online education presence and provide options for working professionals who don't have the ability to come to campus.

"It is another program in our portfolio," he said. "We've had a very successful campus MBA. We have a lot of people who want a degree from AU. Joining the consortium has worked out great for us."

According to data from the College's accrediting body, the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), there were more students enrolled in online programs during the 2020-2021 academic year than in-person campus programs, a milestone moment for online MBA programs.

William "Gene" Cannady, M.D.,



First online MBAs. Dr. William "Gene" Cannady is hooded by Hull College of Business accounting professor Dr. Susan Murray during spring commencement.

pediatrician at Pediatric Partners of Augusta, was initially signed up for the campus MBA and switched to the WebMBA when the option became available. He thought it would work better with his work schedule since pediatricians don't always end their work day at 5 p.m.

Cannady said getting his MBA was something he considered for many years as he became more involved in the business side of the 11-doctor pediatric practice. "I had no business knowledge, it was all learned on the fly."

He enjoyed the online learning experience because of the flexibility, doing most of his classwork in the morning prior to going to work. "I have a wife and three kids, but I didn't miss any ballet performances and

baseball games while getting my degree."

Cannady said his favorite course was entrepreneurship, which surprised him because he didn't consider himself to be an entrepreneur even though he is a business owner.

"I look at reports differently. I make plans better. Even the way we look at buying buildings, [the MBA] has been an asset. It has paid for itself just this year with some of the business ventures that we've done."

Students enrolled in the WebMBA have access to top professors in the participating USG business colleges.

The courses are asynchronous, meaning the students can accomplish their classwork at the time of day or days of the week that suits their needs.

Faculty Research

The last year was extremely productive for our faculty, who are collectively and individually valued for their contributions to academic research. Following is a sample of their findings:

A RESTRICTIVE DRIVER'S LICENSE CAN AFFECT TEENAGE OBESITY

Less driving due to graduated driver's licensing (GDL) restrictions increases teenage body weight, an effect found in the research of healthcare management professor Dr. Qihua Qiu and a colleague from Georgia State University.

Their findings, published in the November 2021 issue of *Health Economics*, concluded that the presence of a graduated driver's license program that imposes restrictions, such as a curfew, reduces adolescent physical

activity and increases sedentary behavior, like watching television.

"To our knowledge, no existing study has looked into the effect of driving on body weight among teenagers, despite mounting evidence showing a positive correlation between vehicle travel and body weight among adults."

Future study will focus using data to investigate the effects of a GDL on youth working hours as another pathway by which driving restrictions influence their body weight.



THE REASON FOR LOBBYING HAS AN EFFECT ON ITS EFFECTIVENESS

Management professor Dr. Dinesh Hasija seeks to build a theory that past literature on political lobbying failed to consider whether a firm is competing to maintain or alter the status quo as a measure of its effectiveness.

In *Organization Science*, published in June 2022 with three colleagues, the study looked at evidence from contract disputes in the U.S. Government Accountability Office.

"Particularly, we argue that although investing resources and time to build

relationships with politicians and government officials fosters trust, solidarity, and reciprocity – likely producing desired outcomes for both firms attempting to maintain the status quo and those trying to alter it – such relationships are more strongly positive for firms maintaining the status quo."

The study contributes to corporate political activity literature and advances a more nuanced, but realistic, understanding of rivalry for governmental outcomes.

MERGING INSTITUTIONS SLOWS FACULTY RESEARCH PRODUCTIVITY

Merging together two higher education institutions isn't easy, and it may also have an unintended consequence on faculty's research productivity.

Through the journal *Studies in Higher Education*, Dr. Cathy Slade, professor of management, makes the case that merging two disparate institutions – with the goal of increasing a research presence – results in the opposite.

"The merged university experienced a

consistent reduction in research following the merger, with the most pronounced productivity decline university-wide by year five."

Using the University System of Georgia as data for the study, Slade and other researchers from Georgia State University and Augusta University make the case that greater attention to cultural differences between the legacy institutions is required, offering advice to policy makers and administrators who might be considering such a merger in the future.





UNDERSTANDING THE DYNAMICS OF THE SHARING ECONOMY

Dr. ChongWoo Park, associate professor of information management systems, examined a rarely studied dynamic of the peer-to-peer sector of the sharing economy – companies such as eBay and Uber.

The study examined the effects of homophily, the tendency for people to seek out or be attracted to those who are similar to themselves, on consumer behavior.

“Our results suggest that homophily

does contribute to peer-users’ consumption intention through trust and attitude, and that ethnicity and gender, two strong homophily factors identified in the literature, do not have statistically significant effects on homophily in this context.”

The research, conducted with colleagues from Georgia State University and the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, was published in the March 2022 issue of the journal *Behaviour & Information Technology*.

RESPONSIBLE FASHION FIRMS HAVE A BETTER BOTTOM LINE?

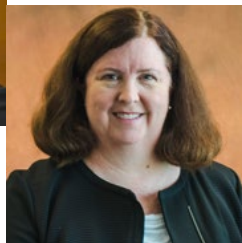
Companies with better sustainable practices have significantly better financial performance. Economics professor Dr. Simon Medcalfe and business student Eva Miralles Miro examined fashion firms through publicly available financial data.

“The research shows that there is a strong positive correlation between sustainable practices and financial performance in fashion firms. There is stronger evidence

that better sustainable practices lead to better financial performance and vice versa.”

Their findings were published in the *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management* in January 2022.

Consumers, employees, government, and non-governmental organizations are advocates for greater corporate responsibility in fashion firms. Given the positive relationship between sustainable practices and return on equity, shareholders can also be added to this list of advocates.



JUDICIAL HELLHOLES LEAD TO HIGHER AUDIT FEES

Accounting professors Dr. Sang Hyun “Sam” Park and Dr. Susan Murray make an investigation of the concept that there is an effect on audit fee pricing from state-level legal risk.

They believe that this is the first study to comprehensively test this association of legal risk and audit fees. The research, with the help of colleagues from other higher education institutions, was published in the *Managerial Auditing Journal* in April 2022.

“This study hypothesizes that auditors are more likely to charge higher audit fees to clients headquartered in states with higher legal risk in terms of probability of being sued, expected size of damages allocated to the auditors, and breadth of third parties able to claim damages.”

The scope of the study included fees for 56,576 “company years” from 2001 to 2018 using the three measures of state legal risk with other factors known to affect such fees from auditors.

HEALTH EXPENSES UNDERVALUED IN INSURANCE DETERMINATION

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, economics professor Dr. Jonathan Leightner makes an argument in his study published in *Journal of Financial Economic Policy* for a reevaluation of certain health expenses.

“As COVID-19 sickens millions while depriving millions of their normal means of generating income, what constitutes out-of-

pocket health expenses should be expanded when determining health insurance. This paper’s results imply that even prior to COVID-19, health insurance covered much less than the optimal amount of actual out-of-pocket health expenses.”

Leightner’s research used the estimates of the change in consumption due to a change in out-of-pocket-health expenses for 43 countries.



Hull College Relaunches Student Ambassadors

The Hull College started a new program at the beginning of the academic year to recruit students as ambassadors to represent the College at campus and business community functions, while having additional opportunities for professional development.

The first cohort of ambassadors were selected from the recipients of the Hull/Knox Scholarship for 2021-2022.

“This is our pilot, but it is something that we have wanted to do for years,” said Associate Dean Mark Thompson, Ph.D.

As ambassadors for the College, students shared their experiences as students to other students and community leaders. Students talking to students resonates well, Thompson explained.

Kate Channell, MBA, assistant dean, said the program will be beneficial for the students and the College, as the students will receive opportunities for leadership development and experiential learning.

The students were invited to attend the College’s events and major functions throughout the academic year, including the CEO Series, Beta Gamma Sigma induction ceremony, the Russell Blanchard Lecture Series, and multiple business showcases.



Wayne Brown



College representatives. Students in the Hull Ambassador program represent the College at important functions and events throughout the academic year.

Now that the first-year pilot is complete, future ambassadors have been tapped following an application process – six students were chosen to begin the fall 2022 semester.

“They are going to be the face of the Hull College,” said Dean Richard Franza, Ph.D. “We’re excited to give them all additional experiences and to be our brand ambassadors. Our role is to make sure they get good careers in business. This is part of networking and career development.”

Also new for the second year of the program is the Aggressor Adventures Ambassador Award, named for Aggressor Adventures, founded by Wayne Brown, the benefactor of the Hull Ambassador Program.

The award will be given to the student(s) who exhibits the most commitment and activity in promoting the Hull College brand.



Thank You

Top 15 Employers of 2021-2022

ADP	Chick-fil-A Grovetown	Meybohm Commercial
AFLAC	Farmers Insurance	Patterson-Brown & Associates
Augusta Country Club	Fuller-Frost & Associates	Security Federal Bank
Augusta National Golf Club	Greater Augusta Arts Council	Textron
BJ Jordan State Farm	Hull Property Group	The Swank Company

The Hull College of Business thanks its business partners for hosting students for internships during the academic year. Internships are an important component of the experiential learning that students receive while attending the College. Businesses interested in becoming a partner with the Hull College to host student interns can connect by visiting Hire Hull, www.augusta.edu/hull/hire-hull.php.

85

TOTAL
EMPLOYERS

COMPLETED
INTERNSHIPS

120

TOTAL
INTERNSHIP
HOURS

14,500



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