

Empowering student success through business fundamentals

Learn how **Pamplin College of Business, Virginia Tech**, leveraged **Business Fundamentals** to better prepare their students before entering their program.

This partnership aimed to equip their **Part-time and Online MBA students**, particularly those immersed in the demanding schedules as working professionals, with **essential skills and knowledge** prior to entering the rigorous curriculum.

The challenge

Facing the constraints of time due to professional commitments, many working professional students found themselves apprehensive about their preparedness for the MBA program. The reluctance to seek assistance and uncertainty about how to adequately prepare heightened their concerns. This is when Dana Hansson, Director, and Ginny Wagg, Assistant Director of MBA Programs at Virginia Tech looked beyond for resources that would ease these fears.

The team grappled with the following challenges:

- Students with a significant gap in their last classroom experience.
- A condensed eight-week semester that required a quick assimilation of information.
- Students' lack of exposure to fundamental MBA courses due to the diverse academic backgrounds of applicants.

Additionally, after the program kicks off, “students underestimate the amount of time the classes and the program take” – says Dana. This has led to difficult situations like being late with assignments or not being able to complete all assignments.

“Students feel that the courses are not too cumbersome, and they are getting value and feeling more prepared coming into the accelerated program and feel they are all at a little bit more of a level playing field because they have that starting point with the [Business Fundamentals] courses.”

Ginny Wagg

Assistant Director MBA Programs



The solution

Recognizing the multifaceted nature of the challenges, the faculty at Pamplin College of Business found the Business Fundamentals courses to be a good starting point for the incoming students in their Part-time and Online MBA for working professionals.

These courses were strongly recommended not only for incoming students but also for those currently enrolled in the program who struggled with quantitative coursework. By ensuring that all students had the same base level, Pamplin College of Business's students were ready for classroom success from day one.

Pamplin College of Business purchased all 3 courses (Accounting, Statistics, and Finance) and provided them to students at no cost.



The outcome

The introduction of the Business Fundamentals courses in the onboarding process at Virginia Tech garnered a positive response from students and faculty alike.

Ginny notes, the program readiness was evident as students did well in Statistics in the first semester, an area of concern for many.

This proactive approach from Virginia Tech aimed to empower students with the foundational skills and knowledge, fostering confidence and competence as they embarked on their MBA journey.

In summary, by leveraging Business Fundamentals courses as a prep tool, Pamplin College of Business addressed the challenges evident in student preparedness.

“Finance and accounting were very beneficial and helped me prepare to know what to expect going into these classes.”

Derrick Fowles

Full time MBA student, Virginia Tech's Pamplin College of Business

