

ROMAIN • COLLEGE OF Business

ENGAGEMENT IMPACT INNOVATION

Dean's Remarks

Dear Colleagues, Students, Alumni and Friends of the Romain College of Business,

Throughout the Business and Engineering Center you can feel the pressure of the pandemic lifting and the anticipation of a return to a more familiar normal. We are looking forward to filling the offices, hallways, classrooms and study spaces in the way Romain College of Business students and faculty are so well known for doing. We wish our new graduates well as they move on to attractive and productive careers, and we thank them for trusting their academic experience to us.

The Romain College of Business continues to make an impact despite the pandemic's ongoing restrictions and obstacles. Through this spring's newsletter, we provide examples of how we have adapted and persevered through conditions that could not have been foreseen when I came to USI less than two years ago. Read along as we learn how a lucky group of taxpayers received free tax filing assistance from accounting students and how our students have shown adaptability and resilience to participate in competitions. Meet some of our superstar students and faculty. While the content lessons in the classroom may resemble normal times, valuable experience with new delivery methods, new communication techniques and inconvenient obstacles may be here to stay in the future of work.

They say if you love what you do, you will never work a day in your life. Graduates and students in the Romain College of Business learn that everything has a business side, even such things as video games and farming. Two of our recent graduates put their knowledge to work in the creation of a successful video game content company. The data is being used by top NBA teams for team strategy and play analysis. Read how faculty and courses at USI impacted their careers as budding entrepreneurs. And this summer we kick off our highly anticipated new agricultural business program with an innovative new course that introduces students to drone technology. Students will explore how drones can be used in agriculture to track weather patterns, photogrammetry and field mapping. They will have the opportunity to fly our very own Romain College of Business drone. Completion of the course prepares students to take a portion of the FAA's pilot license exam for drones.

Looking toward our future in the College, our accrediting agency, AACSB International, now emphasizes thought leadership through its new standards on which they will base our reaccreditation. Fortunately, our faculty are already on that. Thought leadership is the explicit connection between an intellectual contribution and the impact that activity has on society. Witness one faculty member's work with the nation's blood supply chain. She not only contributes to the literature on the matter, but she also uses her expertise to inform those who make policy.



You can help our College rise to the next level. If you are an alum or friend of the College and have been involved with our students in some way, please continue to stay engaged with faculty and students. If you have not been involved, but would like to be, contact me, and we can discuss ways that you can still present to classes, mentor students and/or contribute financially to advance the excellent work of the College in a way that impacts the lives of faculty, staff, students and the community for which we serve. Your support changes lives.

Best wishes for a safe and healthy summer!

Dr. Cathy Carey, Dean

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Protocols Ensure Safety of VITA Tax Assistance Program

Dr. Brett Bueltel, Assistant Professor of Accounting, leads USI's annual Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program every Spring. Through the USI VITA program, students in the Romain College of Business provide free federal and state income tax preparation. Students in Accounting 390 interview and prepare the taxes for clients who make an appointment for the service.

In VITA programs, the Internal Revenue Service partners with national and local organizations to provide tax services to individuals with low-to-moderate income at no cost to the taxpayer. This annual service is so valuable to the community that Bueltel wanted to ensure it would still be offered despite the pandemic. Working with a safety team at USI since late last year, he implemented protocols to ensure everyone's safety, including screenings, temperature readings, physically distanced appointments and plexiglass partitions separating students and clients.



In fact, the season went so smoothly that even a snow day that closed campus didn't create much of an issue. Bueltel accommodated those clients by moving them to an appointment on a different night.

"Although there have been challenges, our students have done a terrific job this tax season," said Bueltel. "We have new protocols in place and limited client capacity due to the pandemic, but we are still providing a great service to the community and our students are gaining real-world professional experience."

Students enjoy interacting with clients, gaining real-world experience and being part of this community service. "I've loved being a part of the VITA program!" reflected Thomas Busche '21, accounting. "While a lot of other accounting classes tend to be more theoretical, this one really lets every student get hands on. Not only that, but you also get a chance to interact with clients while you're doing their taxes, which is something I've never experienced even at my tax internships. My favorite part has definitely been talking with the clients and getting to know them while I do their taxes. VITA is really the ultimate accounting class because it's a mix of a class, hands-on experience and community service. Hard to beat that!"

On average, USI students provide tax preparation for more than 100 taxpayers each season. USI has offered the VITA program for nearly two decades.



MBA Program Recognized by Fortune

We are thrilled to be recognized for our academic excellence after being named to Fortune's 2021 list of top ranked online MBA programs. Explore the rankings and be sure to share the good news!

Enroll now in our affordable, nationally ranked MBA program! Earn your MBA on-campus or online in as little as 11 months with your choice of concentration. Experienced faculty are here to support you every step of the way.

USI.edu/MBA

Technology Makes Not-for-Profit Business Case Competition Possible During the Pandemic

A team of students from USI competed in the 2021 Alberta Not-for-Profit Association Case Competition (ANPA), the only live Not-for-Profit case competition in Canada and the first interdisciplinary case competition. It was sponsored by the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Alberta Canada. The USI team was one of 16 from business schools across the globe invited to compete in this dynamic and innovative initiative.

Students representing USI were Alleigh Dillman, management major with a French minor; Alyssa Munday, management major with a human resources certification and a psychology minor; Mayson Riley, accounting and French studies; and Nicholas (Leo) Ziemer, accounting and finance. They were coached by Romain College of Business faculty member Jeanette Maier-Lytle, Instructor in Accounting.

This year's competition was held virtually. Instead of travel delays and quickly adapting to a new environment, participants had different obstacles to overcome, such as Internet connectivity and time zones. "My team and I were able to persevere through conflicting schedules, Wi-Fi/Internet issues and successfully communicate while never meeting in person or knowing one another prior to this," said Riley. "The virtual environment was very casual

when networking with other delegates which made it easier to relax before the case release later in the competition, and it still had a professional atmosphere when speaking with judges and business leaders."

Technology made the competition possible, but Maier-Lytle agrees it created challenges. "Since the students aren't all in the same place, it is more difficult to evaluate their team cohesiveness," she said. "With so many hours already on our computers, it was tough spending another hour during our scheduled practices." However, she also thinks the unique experience gained by the students balances things out. "They have learned to consult in a virtual world, which is an experience you cannot gain in the classroom. I believe this provided a unique training that they otherwise would never have received. They will now be able to present from remote locations and better understand what it would be like to work in a virtual global environment."

No matter the setting, students experience a wide range of emotions throughout case competitions—from feeling very stressed to the self-confidence that comes from a job well done—and they consistently rate it as a top college experience and one that prepares them for job interviews and

their career after graduation. Riley has "nothing but great things to say" about being a team member. "The 24-hour case release was very stressful to say the least, but it was eye opening to know what my small team and I could do in a short period of time. The whole experience of practicing for a month leading up to the competition developed many necessary skills that will help me once I graduate. Speaking of graduation, experiencing this whole professional competition virtually I do feel more comfortable entering into the virtual work force come May, because I gained nontraditional skills of holding myself accountable, self-discipline and staying focused when I am working from the same room I sleep."

The ANPA case competition gives students a unique opportunity to apply classroom knowledge to the financial reality of a not-for-profit organization and give back to the community in the process. This year's not-for-profit organization was AIESEC, an organization that expanded to countries worldwide as a not-for-profit organization that aims to provide young people with leadership development, cross-cultural internships and global volunteer/exchange experiences, with the goal of empowering the next generation to make a progressive and significant social impact. The University of Melbourne placed first in this year's competition.



Let the Games Begin!

Late in the Fall 2020 Semester, Dr. Daria Sevastianova, Associate Professor of Economics and Center for Economic Education Director, received an email from her colleague and Center Director at Northern Kentucky University, Dr. Abdullah Al Bahrani, inviting USI to participate in the 2021 Econ Games to be held in March. Always interested in providing experiential learning opportunities to students, Sevastianova accepted the offer enthusiastically. “It seemed like a great opportunity for our students to see how economics can solve real-world problems and also learn what professional economists do,” she said. Early in the Spring semester, she recruited 14 students and formed four USI teams.

The Econ Games challenge is an opportunity for students to solve a business problem using real-life applications of the data and statistical methods they learn in class. The 2021 event was held virtually, and it was set up as a course on Canvas, a learning management system, and featured practice challenges. During the final weekend, the teams received a dataset from the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, which contained more than 200 time series variables on the U.S. real economy, labor, and financial markets. Teams were asked to identify a problem, work out their findings, and recommend policy solutions. “The students were able to pick out key series from the data, which was a challenge on its own,” said Mark Schweitzer, Senior Vice President of Research at the Cleveland Federal Reserve and a judge for the games. There were also two webinars: one with a health economist speaker and one in which Federal Reserve interns and officials explained their work and expectations for the final challenge. Sophomore economics major Isaac Sullivan was inspired by these professionals, noting “I really enjoyed the presentations. These people have gone far, and that’s where I could end up.”

Students used Stata software for data analysis, as well as Tableau Public for data visualizations. “I liked the crash course on Tableau. It was a good starting

point,” said computer science major Joseph Almanza de Leon. The event also included social media components and advice on adding the games to their LinkedIn profiles and resumes. Upon uploading their profiles, students could network with the other teams. Junior Tatiana Gilpin, a psychology major, said she received “eighty LinkedIn invites immediately!”

The four USI teams each submitted an 8-minute video presentation. Evaluating the presentations were:

- Dr. Cathy Carey, Dean of the Romain College and Professor of Economics
- Dr. Tim Schibik, Assistant Dean of the Romain College and Professor of Economics
- Dr. Trent Engbers, Associate Professor of Political Science and Director of the MPA Program
- Dr. Bohan Ye, Assistant Professor of Economics
- Dr. Daria Sevastianova, Associate Professor of Economics and Center for Economic Education Director
- Tim Puckett '09, economics, Investment Executive and VP at Fifth Third Securities
- Elle Floyd '18 M'20, Pinnacle Teaching

They narrowed it down to one team to represent USI. Team members were seniors Sheridan Arnold, economics; Mara Monterrosa, business administration; Cole Stephenson, economics and philosophy; and Andrew Zieg, accounting and finance. Their presentation addressed the issue of “Small Businesses in the Time of Covid-19.”

Participating in the challenge served as a valuable mini-internship opportunity. Students built their portfolios and strengthened the skills that are highly sought

after in the job market: communication, teamwork, networking, problem solving, data analysis and visualizations. “Skills in data analytics continue to dominate conversations that I have with employers as more of them are seeking employees with those skills,” said Dr. Cathy Carey, Dean of the Romain College of Business. Andrew Zieg learned that in addition to analyzing data to make better decisions, “it is extremely important how you communicate information.”

Judges from the Cleveland Federal Reserve announced the winners after hearing final presentations: first place: University of Kentucky; second place: Mount Royal University; third place: University College London. Schweitzer noted that the winning team from the UK “used a lot of data and showed how different data sources tie in and can inform policy recommendations.” Northern Kentucky University was named *Most Enthusiastic Team* based on completing all challenges. All students received participation certificates, and the winners earned cash prizes.



Four teams of students participated in The Econ Games.

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Several USI team members have already decided to improve their data analysis skills by enrolling in the Econ Games Stata Camp this summer. Sevastianova plans to participate in the Econ Games in 2022. She would like to recruit well-rounded teams from diverse majors and collaborate with political science students who would have a good perspective on policy solutions.

The Games were launched in 2018 by the University of Kentucky and Northern Kentucky University, in collaboration with the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland. This year, the opportunity was extended to 18 universities, including USI, University of

“I realized just how much I must learn not only to compete in the job market, but also to achieve my personal career goals.”

-Cole Stephenson

Arizona, Elon University, Carnegie Mellon University, Mount Royal University in Alberta, Canada, Virginia Tech, Xavier University and University College London, with 266 domestic and international students participating.

Startup Weekend Evansville Online Kicks Off Series of Entrepreneurial Events

Startup Weekend Evansville (SUW) has become an establishment in our community's innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem. The pause button was pushed on last year's SUW Evansville and many similar events due to the pandemic. Following an entire year of experience with virtual technologies and adequate time to plan, it became clear that a virtual SUW event was feasible and a first step in the reopening of activities in the ecosystem. The USI Romain College of Business has long supported this initiative and was a gold sponsor once again, along with newly-formed Evansville Regional Economic Partnership (EREP).

Just as for the annual in-person event, the community came together and engaged to fully deliver Startup Weekend Evansville Online in April 2021. Bryan Bourdeau, Instructor in Business at Romain College, has been at SUW Evansville's helm since it began. This year the team was expanded to include additional organizers and community partners. New to the organizing team were Josh McWilliams, Instructor in Computer Information Systems at Romain College, and Evansville Regional Economic Partnership's Director of Innovation & Entrepreneurship Stephanie El Tawil.

“Much like the potential startups that come through SUW, the event itself was very much a ‘beta test,’” said McWilliams. “We were amazed at the response from the community to join and mentor prospective entrepreneurs. Community support has always been the cornerstone of this event; this year was no different, even after a tough year in yet another virtual setting.”

Events like SUW give budding entrepreneurs a unique opportunity to network and learn directly from local subject matter experts. These mentors provide feedback to teams formed around potential startup businesses to improve their business model and ultimately their pitch to potential investors. In addition to mentors, the event is supported by speakers who

provide insights into resources available to startups. This year, speakers included David Watkins, Director for the Indiana Small Business Development Center, who talked about state resources for startups, and Tyler Droste, Gutwein Law IP Attorney, who spoke about entity formation and intellectual property.

The entrepreneurial team whose idea was a lockable GPS-type device designed for parents to track children who are not old enough to carry a phone or other fragile technology, called Scout Family Protection, generated a lot of interest. The team consisted of three local high school students who are competing in Indiana Innovate WithIN, an annual statewide pitch competition. Mentors and judges took this opportunity to ensure the team was well-prepared for the high-stakes competition with a chance at winning \$25,000.

This year's turnout was about 30% of what the in-person event attracts, but organizers felt the turnout was better than peer events. “Startup Weekend is a global brand with events most weekends of the year, but overall, turnout has been lower across the board,” said McWilliams, adding that “The following weekend an event with 900 participants in 2020 had 27 registered three days prior to kickoff.” Most are suffering from overall suppressed turnout created by a dormant entrepreneurial scene and Zoom fatigue due to Covid-19. However, it is encouraging that this year's SUW Evansville kicked off the first in a series of comparable activities across Indiana this spring, such as the Radius Indiana Pitch Competition (Crane-Indiana); Crossroads Pitch Competition (Bloomington-Indiana); Innovate WithIN (Statewide); Elevate Nexus (Statewide); and Changemaker Challenge (Evansville). Organizers are optimistic that this innovative arena will soon be active and thriving once again.



Fortsch's Research on Nation's Blood Supply Impacts Policy Makers



Dr. Sima Fortsch, Assistant Professor of Management, has received national recognition for her ongoing involvement in studying our nation's blood supply chain management. Her research has been particularly important during the pandemic when blood is in very short supply. Fortsch's research article, "The Pandemic, and the Strategic Vulnerability of the Blood Supply Chain," examines how the coronavirus shutdown caused significant problems with donor and volunteer availability in the United States, which could have collapsed the nation's blood supply chain.

Fortsch gave some background on her research interest. "I chose to study blood supply chain management in 2010 for my PhD dissertation. The idea to research blood was that the aging populous had reached nearly 50% of the population across many world regions. This trend has had significant consequences for our nation and the world regarding blood (the older population has a higher demand for blood.) In the spring of 2009, the World Health Organization (WHO) published an article that refers to the last decade as "the calm before the storm" due to lack of sufficient blood to save lives for this decade. Similarly, for the first time in history, during the London 2012 Summer Olympics, the host country was worried about the lack of blood inventory and possible catastrophic consequences due

to having more than 10,000 athletes, not to mention the public, attending the event.

"Today, the blood-inventory margins are below the safety level worldwide due to inventory costs and lack of available donors. This has caused one of the world's oldest charitable organizations, the Red Cross, to suffer from the rising blood operation costs. This is problematic because the community blood centers are essential for hospitals' profitability, and many of these blood centers are losing money on their per-unit sales and are worried about survival (RAND, 2016). Therefore, in 2010, I worked with the American Association of Blood Banks (AABB), a government organization, to obtain time-series data and analyze the blood inventory management for my dissertation."

Fortsch published research papers in the journal *Operations Research for Healthcare* between 2016-2018. During the pandemic she connected with blood community centers in Iowa, Michigan,

on some of the existing vulnerabilities of the blood operation that have been mostly ignored and now urgently need to be addressed." Her team offers strategic and operational strategies for mitigating risk.

"Dr. Fortsch's research and expertise in the blood supply chain highlight the importance of thought leadership faculty can have in society. We are very proud and fortunate that she uses her expertise in such an innovative way with such far reaching impact," noted Dr. Cathy Carey, Dean of the Romain College.

The Covid-19 outbreak focused attention on some of the existing vulnerabilities of the blood operation that have been mostly ignored and now urgently need to be addressed.

Indiana and New York as well as several major hospitals in Michigan and New York states. Fortsch was contacted by the CEO of the Commonwealth Transfusion Foundation, a foundation for blood research, and awarded a \$45,000 grant to write a research article and present it at their annual meeting. "As I started to write my paper, the pandemic hit and I adjusted my goal to accommodate the pandemic," she said. The foundation had a think-tank meeting in which she presented her work. Many blood center CEOs, government officials and five representatives from the U.S. Congress were present. "I presented my work and answered all their questions."

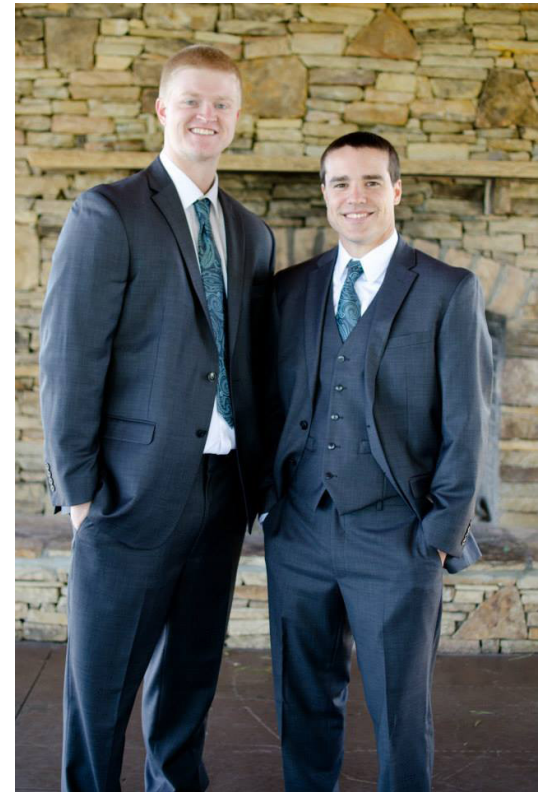
Fortsch's research article concluded that "the Covid-19 outbreak focused attention

NBA2KLab is a Three-Pointer for Alumni

Two Romain College graduates, Shawn DeWitt M'19 and Matt Ellis '14, computer information systems, used an entrepreneurial mindset to become successful video game content providers in the NBA 2K world. As the name implies, NBA 2K is a series of basketball simulation video games that has been around since about 1999. Their NBA2KLab portal uses automated samples and scripts that deliver data and statistics to subscribers wanting to up their game and become better virtual basketball players. DeWitt said they started out doing everything manually, but through increasingly complex technology, they were able to remove all variables and human error from the process. "We weren't seeing much return in the first 18 months or so. But we stuck with it, and eventually it paid off."

According to nba.com, there are an estimated 1.6 million people who play daily. Now in its 22nd version, NBA 2K appeals to anyone from casual gamers and their buddies to professional players drafted for NBA 2K League teams. The salaries and perks can be quite lucrative for those drafted. "There's a lot of money on the line for these players," said DeWitt, "so there's a lot of incentive for young players who are pretty good at this game to want every advantage they can find. So they use our website and YouTube channel to try to better their chances to get into that league." Several NBA teams have a virtual team through the NBA 2K League, and the Indiana Pacers, Orlando Magic and Washington Wizards use NBA2KLab data for team strategy and player analysis. "The Wizards are the team that just won the finals, we won in our first season with them. They do most of the work there, but we do get to claim a tiny share of the credit," DeWitt said with a laugh. NBA 2K got a lot of exposure early in the pandemic. It was broadcast regularly on ESPN2 and filled a void as many other sports were suspended.

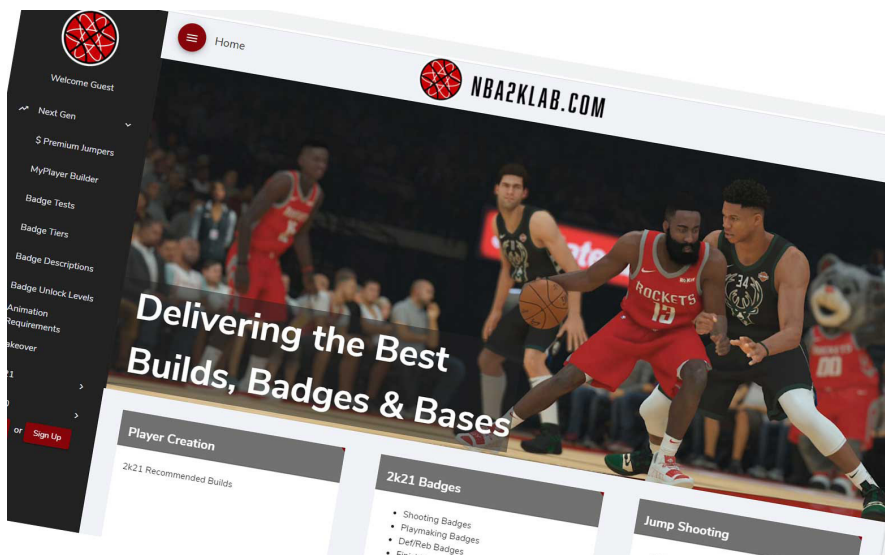
Their entrepreneurial venture coincided with their business education at Romain College. While in Dr. Jack Smothers' 611 Leadership Skills and Organizational Behaviors class, DeWitt



DeWitt (left) and Ellis.

worked on a basketball-related app and a business model for advertising it. Next up was Dr. Jill Oeding's 618 Business Law class in which students studied forming their own company and about LLCs and S Corps. "We were doing those same things as we were forming our own company. It lined up very nicely as I was taking classes," he said. Ellis said CIS classes help him with database work and data analytics. Another member of their team and a Romain College alumnus, Matthew Notter '19, computer science, has been instrumental in taking the automation of data to a new level. They also have people dedicated to research and development and to the NBA2KLab YouTube channel.

NBA2KLab currently has more than 215,000 YouTube subscribers, nearly 127,000 Twitter followers and more than 3 million unique website visitors. Surrounded by an All-Star team, DeWitt and Ellis have more projects in their playbook. Their presence inside the NBA 2K professional community gives them a natural way in to expand into other game modes. In 2021 they hope to launch a project that is currently in development. "It should ideally make us appeal to potentially millions of new customers. We are pretty excited about that one," DeWitt said proudly.



Everything Has a Business Side, and Agriculture is No Exception

Agriculture is more than just the family farm. It touches every part of the food supply chain, from the field to the dinner table. It plays a major role in other industries, like apparel and furniture manufacturing. Many of our business students' careers will touch one or more of these industries—sales, financing, marketing products and services, and accounting.

Indiana is the 10th largest agricultural producing state in the United States with a net farm income of more than \$2.1 billion. The Tri-state region includes Illinois and Kentucky, ranked 6th and 24th respectively, in cash receipts. There are no agribusiness programs offered in the southern region of Indiana to support this industry, so the Romain College of Business is launching agricultural business classes to meet the demand in this increasingly sophisticated field. The courses will be taught by two familiar faces at USI.

Alumnus Ryan Loehrlein M'20, a member of the team that built and launched USI's UNITE CubeSat, the first orbiting satellite designed by students at an Indiana public university, will teach this summer's class that focuses on the use of drones in agriculture. Not only will students examine topics like weather patterns, photogrammetry and field mapping, this hands-on course will prepare them to take the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Part 107 Exam to enable them to get a license to fly a drone. A Farm and Ranch Management course offered in the Fall introduces the principles of farm organization, management and operations. The course will be taught by Dr. Les Nunn, Professor Emeritus of Business Law, who manages Nunn Ranch in Oklahoma. He has an extensive background in law and agriculture, and a long list of accomplishments and accolades.

Dr. Jill Oeding, Associate Professor of Business Law and Business Administration Coordinator, is overseeing the launch of the agribusiness program, with an eye toward continually evolving it to fulfill regional needs. "We would like to partner with local farmers and agricultural associations to determine their greatest needs," she said. "In addition, we will build relationships with businesses and farmers who are interested in the development of the program."

The courses are for anyone from current students to non-degree seeking individuals. Dr. Cathy Carey, Dean of the Romain College of Business, expects to see the program flourish and eventually offer a full concentration and a certificate program in Agribusiness in the Business Administration program. If there is a demand, it will move to a full degree program. "Our goal is to provide an exceptional educational opportunity, contributing high-quality research and thought leadership in the area that serves the community well."

Everything has a business side. Even agriculture.



USI.edu/agribusiness

Getting to Know Noah Barnett, Chair of Student Advisory Board

Noah Barnett '22, management, is the chair of Romain College's Student Advisory Board (SAB). The Romain College's Student Advisory Board provides support and advice on matters of interest to the College, its faculty, students and external constituents. Here Noah talks about his experience as a student at USI and Romain College and as a board member of SAB.

What makes USI and the Romain College of Business special to you?

USI, like for so many others, has become like a second home to me. The people I've met, the faculty I've studied under and the experiences I've had at USI have helped me grow as a person and make me feel very comfortable here. As for the Romain College of Business, ever since I started attending USI, I had a special connection to the RCOB. The professors, staff and peers I've met through the College of Business have been some of my favorite people to work and collaborate with.



What are some of your favorite classes at Romain College and why?

I've enjoyed so many courses at Romain College that it's difficult to narrow it down. If I had to choose a couple, I would choose Business Law with Dr. Jill Oeding, Global Economics Issues with Dr. Daria Sevastianova, and Business Communication with Dr. Cindi Clayton! In all three of those courses, I learned so much that has really stuck with me into my personal and professional life. Each course taught me new skills and ways of viewing the business world around me! Also, the professors always worked very hard to make sure their students understood complex subjects and made coming to class exciting.

Why did you choose your current major?

I chose Management because I have a passion for working with others. Ever since I first started attending high school, I found that working in groups, collaborating and managing interpersonal connections in a professional setting was something that I really enjoyed doing. This combined with advice from multiple mentors throughout USI led me to the decision to pursue a degree in Management!

What has surprised you about college?

For me, I've been surprised by how willing most of my professors have been to work with students on a personal basis to ensure their success. So many people always seem to have horror stories of professors or faculty from their days in college, but I've rarely experienced a negative interaction with most of my professors throughout the University.

What are some of your favorite spots on campus and why?

Of all the places to hang out and study on campus, the Quad has to be my favorite spot. The community of students from all walks of life and with all sorts of perspectives that are always gathered in the Quad is something I think is very special. Also, the Quad is nice regardless of the season, which I find special. I also love the various study rooms scattered around the Romain College of Business, since they offer a laid back and quiet place to work on assignments and collaborate with peers.

What advice do you have for incoming freshmen? What do you wish you had known?

I wish I would have fully understood the value of getting involved on campus. As a nervous and shy freshman, I hesitated to put myself out there, and didn't do so until much later in my college career. But I find it to be super important to feel connected to USI and the people there to make sure you're getting connected where you're able.

Do you have a strategy for staying focused when the demands of school, work, etc. seem overwhelming?

For me, I find that it's easiest to stay focused amid all the obligations of life by setting goals. Whether that's aiming to make the Dean's List, to pass a class that's giving you trouble or to maintain a specific work-life balance. Setting goals and benchmarks throughout the semester has always helped me to stay focused and motivated to do my best.

Who is your mentor?

I would say that I have two mentors, really, within USI. One of my mentors is a member of faculty, and one is a peer. My faculty mentor must be without a doubt Mrs. Renee Rowland, Director of Advising for the College of Liberal Arts. She has always lifted me up and inspired me to do my best and to pursue my passions with my education and has been a calming force any time I've gotten to meet with her. As for my peer mentor, a friend I've known for many years (and the Vice Chair of the Student Advisory Board), Thomas Busche has been someone who has consistently challenged me to be a better student and encouraged me to be involved with the University.

As your organization's president/chair, what are some things you hope to achieve?

Like our previous chair, Reid Edwards, I hope to bring awareness and to continue to grow this relatively new organization. I want students of the Romain College to know they have access to a board dedicated to connecting them to the faculty and College itself. I also want students of the Romain College to feel that they too can take part in bridging that gap for other students by pursuing being on the board themselves.

What made you decide to pursue being an officer of your organization? How has it been different than you expected?

For me, I was encouraged by friends and peers to pursue

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becoming an officer within the Student Advisory Board. As mentioned previously, I love working with peers and managing projects, so getting to work closely with other members of the board and other officers is something I've always been passionate about. COVID-19 has thrown a wrench in everyone's plans, so the transitional period between Reid and I has been much different than we planned for originally, but it has produced a new challenge for me to learn from.

Tell us more about your student organization and why USI students should get involved with it!

The Student Advisory Board is here to help serve other students of the Romain College in representing them directly, including yourself, to faculty and the College as a whole. It's a wonderful leadership opportunity that can get you really involved in projects, efforts of improving the College, and in maximizing your college experience. It is also an organization that has a low time commitment element for general board members, since aside from initiatives, we only have four official meetings throughout the year!

Where do you see yourself in five years?

Truthfully, I don't know where I will be in five years. However, I'm confident that with time and effort, I will discover my passion within the field of management and will be able to pursue a large array of opportunities. I also hope to continue to grow Avalon Studios, a videography business that I own and run with a close friend.

Giving

The Romain College of Business is my home away from home. I may be biased in saying its physical building is the most attractive on campus. However, I have also come to realize it's what takes place on the inside that truly makes the Romain College of Business special.

The students, professors, and staff bring education to life and create limitless opportunities and experiences. From the dedicated students who I have the pleasure of collaborating with daily, to the passionate professors who devote themselves to ensuring I am prepared for my dream career, the Romain College of Business understands the difference in an exceptional education. I feel so fortunate to learn in an environment that pushes me every day to expand my knowledge, realizes my goals, and truly cares about me.

The past year has certainly been a very difficult one. These challenges have brought great hardship for students. The cost of higher education presents financial obstacles to me and many of my peers, and to some degree the last year has only created additional barriers. Helping to reduce costs associated with attaining a degree means students can remain enrolled in their studies and graduate on time.

The University and Romain College of Business have not skipped a beat in their support of students. And, you haven't either. One thing that has remained constant during this ever-changing time is the welcoming community and human connections found at USI. Your generosity, and that of many alumni and friends, has assisted USI students, including myself, to continue in our educational pursuits. I invite you to further invest in students so we can excel academically as we look ahead to making our mark in the workforce that awaits.



On behalf of the Romain College of Business student body, thank you for your dedication and commitment to our success!

Best regards,

Kennedy Williams '23

Make a Gift

Donate online at
USI.edu/business

Dean's Awards for Excellence

We are proud to announce the 2021 Dean's Awards for Excellence in Teaching, Research and Service. These awards are intended to recognize full-time faculty members who have made outstanding contributions to the mission and goals of the Romain College of Business. This was a particularly challenging year for performance in every category, but our faculty continue to rise to the challenge!



Dean's Award for Excellence in Teaching

Dr. Xue Han, Assistant Professor of Computer Science

"I am very honored to have received the 2021 Dean's Award for Excellence in Teaching among my outstanding fellow faculties. And I am grateful for the dean, my chair, and the CS colleague's support for the past two years. I am looking forward to devoting my inspiration and passion in teaching to my classes for the many exciting years to come."



Dean's Award for Excellence in Research

Dr. Brett Bueltel, Assistant Professor of Accounting

"I am honored to be selected as the recipient of the Dean's Award for Excellence in Research. When I joined USI four years ago, I had not published a research article before. I've been blessed to work with great colleagues and mentors at USI and around the country on research projects that have helped me develop into a confident researcher."



Dean's Award for Excellence in Teaching

Dr. Daria Sevastianova, Associate Professor of Economics

"I am deeply honored to be recognized with the Dean's Award for Excellence in Teaching during these unprecedented times. The pandemic challenged higher education while also providing many opportunities to rethink our jobs and how we can best serve the students. Their resilience and creativity are inspiring, and I look forward to seeing more students around our beautiful campus in the near future."



Dean's Award for Excellence in Service

Dr. Thomas Weber, Associate Professor of Management

"I am very grateful to have my actions to serve our USI community recognized. I know I am just one of many other deserving people working to make USI a better place."

Alumni Updates and Student Honors

Alumni Updates

Natalie Wojtowicz '13, management, promoted to operations officer at Itasca Bank & Trust

Tim Putnam M'00 named to White House COVID-19 Task Force

Chad Higgins '98 M'04 will be appointed as Logansport Financial Corp's new Chief Executive Officer

Old National's Kendra Vanzo M'09 promoted to Senior Executive Vice President

Mitzi Wasik M'20, receives service award from AMCP

Links to read the news releases for these updates are available on our website USI.edu/RCoBeNewsletter.



Once a Screaming Eagle, always a Screaming Eagle! Just because you've graduated or moved away doesn't mean you're not an essential part of the University. Contact Janet Johnson, Director, at 812-464-1924 with any questions about how to:

Become a Mentor | Become an Alumni Association Member | Help Find Future Screaming Eagles | Update Your Information

Commencement Honors

Congratulations to these business majors who have earned commencement honors. We recognize their outstanding academic achievements and leadership at the University of Southern Indiana and the Romain College of Business.

Summa Cum Laude

Elizabeth M. Blanford - accounting
Megan E. Brune - computer science
Thomas J. Busche - accounting
Noelle M. Grooms - BUAD
Joel M. Horner - marketing
Kendall A. Jewel - management

Magna Cum Laude

Kalyee D. Baker - finance
Jarrett K. Bastian - computer science
Colten Begle - computer science
Halle R. Bowman - finance
Zachary O. Daugherty - accounting
Hunter T. Davis - computer science
William D. Elfreich - finance
Elizabeth M. Happe - finance
Rockford J. Hipp - computer science
Elle Marx - finance
Lucas K. McNew - management
Chase A. Roberts - finance
Brittney A. Roos - accounting
Maximum L. Smock - CIS
Ali M. Spahn - accounting
Madison S. Steury - accounting

Cum Laude

Alhanouf S. Alqahtani - BUAD
Jose Ariza - finance
Rachel I. Camargo - accounting
Nathaniel D. Caudle - accounting
Alex T. Cobb - finance
Kaitlynn M. Coffman - marketing
Abdulkarim B. Dugheish - CIS
Nicole F. Edelen - BUAD
Noah C. Evans - accounting
Brooke L. Holtz - finance
Megan A. Jackson - marketing
Audra L. Kain - BUAD
Eric M. Leeds - finance
Nhatvy P. Mai - accounting
Amoy McCarthy - finance
Abigail L. McMonigle - accounting
Caleb J. Merrimon - BUAD
Laura Metaj - BUAD
Tailar R. Monti - accounting
Jacob M. Murphy - accounting
Tyrell D. Nickelson - finance
Nolan S. O'Brien - accounting
Landon T. Oestreich - BUAD
Dylan C. Pentell - accounting
Daltyn J. Schapker - marketing
Drew J. Seifert - computer science
Nicole Vidangos Pardo - BUAD
Lauren A. Friars - accounting
Mara M. Monterrosa Morales - BUAD

University Honors Scholars

Kalyee D. Baker - finance
Megan E. Brune - computer science
Sean P. Dodson - computer science
Elizabeth A. Nicola - CIS
Nicole Vidangos Pardo - BUAD

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Beta Gamma Sigma Honor Society

Congratulations to the students who have accepted membership into the USI chapter of Beta Gamma Sigma honor society. Beta Gamma Sigma is the honor society recognizing outstanding academic achievements of students in business programs accredited by AACSB International -- the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business.

Chapter Honorees

Teri Hollander Albin
Timothy J. Schibik, Ph. D.

Juniors

David Bradley
Kennedy Williams

Seniors

Ella Banks
Mackenzie Etienne
Brandon Granzow

MBA Graduate Students

Samuel Albrecht
Tim Armstrong
Kimberly Basinger
Annette Berger
Zachary Brettnacher
Lacey Briggs
Travis Brooks
John Cole
Jarred Cook
Israel Cruz
Jordan Davis
Deanna Dillender
Tochukwu Ezeaba

John Farless
Darby Fazekas
Aaron Frederick
Morgan Frederick
Lindsey Gibson
Tina Gonterman
Myranda Harris
Aleasha Hartley
Kyle Henderson
Michael Hilbrich
BriAnn Hill
Macy Holtz
Kylee Hunt
Kimberly Hurley
Lori James
Jennifer Jemison
Kayleigh Jordan
Kathryn Kaufman
Sara King
Sara Kniepmann*
Kubra Kocakulah
Ezra Koch
Brian Kunz
Jessica Kurrasch
Emily Ladd
Merilee Lentz
Kayla Logan
Kimberly Lyman
Tammy Maas
Joel Matherly
Nancy McKinney

Joshua Milbrath
Rachel Money
Jessica Monroe
Cynthia Parker*
Alex Porras
Michael Revelle
Regan Reynolds
Shermaine Rimpf
Therese Sahn
Alejandro Salah
Kendal Schmidt
Paige Shouse
Amanda Sims
Kimberly Smith
Trish Smithwick
Benjamin Smogolski
Mansoor Soma
Amy Spencer
James Stinogel
Kirk Stonerock
Sarah Tabor*
Aikaterini Tsahalou
Michael Tucker
Noel Vega
Christina Will
Sara Willis
Julie Zachary
Rhonda Zuber

*Congratulations
New Members*



USI.edu/2021BGS

Did you know?

The USI Chapter of Beta Gamma Sigma has added nearly 900 members since its charter in 1998.

Faculty Achievements

In recognition of faculty who have had publications, presentations, community engagements and awards this semester, Romain College celebrates their continuing to conduct innovative and impactful basic and pedagogical research in alignment with our mission and engaging the community from local to national levels.

Accounting

Research Publications

Dr. Mark McKnight
Bryan, T. G., McKnight, M. A., & Houmes, R. (2021). Unfaithful representation: Understanding accounts receivable in the name of conservatism. *Accountancy Business and the Public Interest*, 20, 52-72. <http://visar.csustan.edu/aaba/BryanMcKnightHoumes2021.pdf>
Accounting conservatism or earnings management: A study of the allowance for doubtful accounts. *Journal: Corporate Ownership & Control**

Bryan, T. G., & McKnight, M. A. (2021). Implementing the Pathways Commission: recommended first accounting course: A profile of early adopters. *International Journal of Accounting & Finance Review*, 6, 41-52. <https://doi.org/10.46281/ijaf.v6i1.998>

Awards

Dr. Brett Bueltel
Recipient of the 2021 Dean's Award for Excellence in Research.

Article Reviewer

Dr. Mark McKnight
Article Reviewer for Peer-Reviewed Academic/Research Journal: *Global Journal of Accounting and Finance*. Journal Publisher: Institute of Global Business Research

Article Reviewer for Peer Research Article Published/Reviewed Academic/Research Journal: *The Accounting Educator's Journal*. Journal Publisher: Academy of Accounting Educators

Article Reviewer for Peer Research Article Published/Reviewed Academic/Research Journal: *Global Journal of Accounting and Finance*. Journal Publisher: Institute for Global Business Research

Business Administration

Research Publications

Dr. Curt Gilstrap
Gilstrap, C., Teggart, A., Cabodi, K., Hills, J., & Price, S. (2021). Social music festival brandscapes: A lexical analysis of music festival social conversations. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 20. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2021.100567>

Conferences and Other Presentations

Dr. Ramadan Hemaïda
Conference: International Academy of Business Disciplines (IABD) Presentation 1: Effects of Anchoring Paradigm on Generation Z Consumers' Purchasing Decision-Making. Presentation 2: Zero-One Linear Programming Model for Determining an Optimal Health Insurance Plan. Date: March 26 & 27, 2021. Learn More: <https://iabdgroupp.org/programs-and-proceedings>

Article Reviewer

Dr. Cristina Gilstrap
Article Reviewer for Peer Research Article Published/Reviewed Academic/Research Journal: *Health Communication*. Journal Publisher: Taylor & Francis

Dr. Curt Gilstrap
Article Reviewer for Peer Research Article Published/Reviewed Academic/Research Journal: *International Journal of Strategic Communication*. Journal Publisher: Taylor & Francis

Computer Information Systems

Conferences and Other Presentations

Mr. Josh McWilliams
Community presentation delivered: Sparking Innovation. Community Event: Introduction into Lean Innovation Discovery Thru Customer Validation & Iterative Prototyping. Community Organization Delivered To: Make IT Evansville/Growth Alliance for Greater Evansville. Date: March 18, March 25, April 1, 2021

Community presentation delivered: Virtual Small Biz Basics: Using "Virtual Rooms" and Workplace. Community Event: Digital Solutions for Small Business. Community Organization Delivered To: Southwest Indiana Small Business Development Center. Date: February 24, 2021

Computer Science

Research Publications

Dr. Xue Han
Research article accepted: ConfProf: White-Box Performance Profiling of Configuration Options. The 12th ACM International Conference on Performance Engineering (ICPE)*

Awards

Dr. Xue Han
Recipient of the 2021 Dean's Award for Excellence in Teaching

Article Reviewer

Dr. Xue Han
Article Reviewer for Peer-Reviewed Academic/Research Journal: *ACM Transactions on Software Engineering and Methodology (TOSEM)*. Journal Publisher: Association for Computing Machinery (ACM)

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Dr. Srishti Srivastava

Article Reviewer for Peer Research Article
Published/Reviewed Academic/Research
Journal: Peer-Reviewed Academic/
Research Journal: IEEE Transactions on
Parallel and Distributed Systems. Journal
Publisher: Institute of Electrical and
Electronic Engineers (IEEE)

Economics

Conferences and Other Presentations

Dr. Daria Sevastianova
Research/Conference Presentation
Delivered: Conference: Women in
Economics Virtual Symposium 2021
(hosted by the Federal Reserve Bank of St.
Louis) – Making a Difference in the World.
Presentation: Making a Difference by
Starting a Women in Economics Club at
Your University. Date: February 17, 2021
Learn More: [https://www.stlouisfed.org/
education/women-in-economics/2021-
symposiumarchive](https://www.stlouisfed.org/education/women-in-economics/2021-symposiumarchive)

Awards

Dr. Daria Sevastianova
Recipient of the 2021 Dean's Award for
Excellence in Teaching

Finance

Article Reviewer

Dr. Khaled Elkhail
Article Reviewer for Peer-Reviewed
Academic/Research Journal: Middle East
Development Journal. Journal Publisher:
Taylor & Francis

Article Reviewer for Peer-Reviewed
Academic/Research Journal: Managerial
Finance. Journal Publisher: Emerald
Publishing.

Management

Research Publications

Dr. Jack Smothers
Smothers, J., Celuch, K., & Williams, M.
(2020). A Closer Look at Feedback, Self-
Efficacy, and Intrinsic Motivation. Journal
of Marketing Management.*

Celuch, K., Smothers, J., & Valadares,
K. (2021). Supervisor and employee
identity coalescence and normative unit
commitment. Journal of Theoretical
Social Psychology. [https://doi.
org/10.1002/jts5.94](https://doi.org/10.1002/jts5.94)

Awards

Dr. Thomas Weber
Recipient of the 2021 Dean's Award for
Excellence in Service

Marketing

Research Publications

Dr. Kevin Celuch
Smothers, J., Celuch, K., & Williams, M.
(2020). A Closer Look at Feedback, Self-
Efficacy, and Intrinsic Motivation. Journal
of Marketing Management.*

Celuch, K., Smothers, J., & Valadares,
K. (2021). Supervisor and employee
identity coalescence and normative unit
commitment. Journal of Theoretical
Social Psychology. [https://doi.
org/10.1002/jts5.94](https://doi.org/10.1002/jts5.94)
Conferences and Other Presentations

Conferences and Other Presentations

Dr. Sabinah Wanjugu
Research/conference presentation
delivered: Conference: 44th Southwest
Educational Research Association
Presentation: Faculty Women of Color in
Higher Education. Date: February 4, 2021
Learn More: [https://scholarworks.
utttyler.edu/sera2021/conference/
freeworkshops/10/](https://scholarworks.utttyler.edu/sera2021/conference/freeworkshops/10/)

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