California State University
SAN MARCOS

College of Business Administration

AACSB Continuous Improvement Review Report 2026

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT REVIEW VISIT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The College of Business Administration (CoBA) at California State University San Marcos (CSUSM) is a mission-driven institution committed to transforming lives through high-quality business education, applied learning, community engagement, and impactful scholarship. During the current review cycle, CoBA has strengthened its strategic management systems, expanded student success initiatives, enhanced career readiness programming, increased regional engagement, and deepened its commitment to societal impact. These efforts have been guided by AACSB's principles-based accreditation framework and the College's mission to provide a transformative business education that prepares a diverse student body for success in an evolving economy and society.

The College's societal impact focus is to advance student success and regional vitality by integrating education, engagement, and innovation to create lasting societal impact. This focus serves as the organizing framework that connects curriculum, scholarship, and external engagement activities and provides the foundation for strategic planning, resource allocation, and continuous improvement.

Alignment with AACSB Guiding Principles

CoBA demonstrates strong alignment with AACSB's Guiding Principles through a mission-driven strategy that embeds student success, societal impact, continuous improvement, and stakeholder engagement across all aspects of its operations. The College's mission, vision, and strategic initiatives provide a clear framework for decision-making, resource allocation, curriculum development, faculty engagement, and community partnerships, ensuring that activities remain closely aligned with institutional priorities and measurable outcomes.

Ethics, integrity, and professional responsibility are embedded throughout the curriculum and co-curricular experiences. Students develop ethical decision-making competencies through coursework, Business Professional Development (BUS 300), senior experience projects, mentoring relationships, and interactions with industry professionals. Governance processes among faculty and staff emphasize transparency, accountability, and shared responsibility, fostering a culture grounded in trust and professionalism.

Societal impact is a central organizing principle of the College's strategic plan. Rather than treating it as a standalone initiative, CoBA integrates societal impact throughout its curriculum, scholarship, and engagement activities. The College's focus on societal impact, advancing student success and regional vitality through education, engagement, and innovation, guides initiatives to expand social mobility, strengthen workforce development, support entrepreneurship, and contribute to regional economic growth. These efforts are reinforced by extensive partnerships with employers, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and community stakeholders.

CoBA embraces AACSB's principles of collegiality and peer review through a robust shared governance structure that engages faculty, staff, students, alumni, and external stakeholders in strategic planning and continuous improvement. The Strategy Team, curriculum committees, Assurance of Learning Team, AACSB Team, advisory councils, and other governance bodies provide structured opportunities for participation, collaboration, and evidence-based decision-making. Progress toward strategic objectives is regularly monitored using established key performance indicators and communicated transparently to stakeholders.

The College also demonstrates a strong commitment to agility and innovation. During the current review cycle, CoBA introduced new graduate programs in Sustainability, Supply Chain Analytics, and Business Analytics, expanded the use of industry-recognized professional certifications via Coursera Career Academy, initiated curriculum development in artificial intelligence, redesigned undergraduate and graduate programs to improve student outcomes, and launched the Resilient Entrepreneur Program to support regional entrepreneurs. These initiatives reflect a forward-looking approach to evolving workforce needs and emerging business challenges.

A global mindset and a commitment to diversity and inclusion further support the College's mission. Serving one of the most diverse student populations in the California State University system, CoBA intentionally develops programs and support structures that promote access, retention, graduation, and career success for first-generation, underrepresented, transfer, veteran, and nontraditional students. Diversity is viewed as a source of educational excellence and innovation, while inclusion is advanced through mentoring programs, scholarships, student success initiatives, community engagement, and curricular experiences that prepare graduates to operate effectively in diverse, interconnected environments.

Finally, CoBA's long-standing commitment to AACSB accreditation reflects a culture of continuous improvement and ongoing adherence to AACSB standards and guiding principles. Strategic planning, Assurance of Learning, faculty qualification processes, stakeholder engagement, and societal impact assessment have been institutionalized across the College, ensuring that quality assurance, innovation, and mission fulfillment remain ongoing priorities. Through these integrated efforts, CoBA exemplifies AACSB's expectations for engagement, innovation, and impact while advancing its mission to transform lives and strengthen regional economic vitality.

Mission and Strategic Initiatives

CoBA's mission is to provide a transformative business education that prepares its diverse student body for success in an evolving economy and society. CoBA faculty deliver a relevant, innovative curriculum that integrates theory and practice and is guided by scholarship and collaboration with industry experts and community leaders. This mission reflects the College's commitment to student success, workforce development, regional engagement, and societal impact.

Following the current dean's appointment in 2022, CoBA launched a comprehensive strategic planning process that culminated in the adoption of the 2023–2028 Strategic Plan. Developed through extensive consultation with internal and external stakeholders, the plan serves as the College's primary framework for decision-making, resource allocation, assessment, and continuous improvement.

The strategic plan is organized around six strategic initiatives to advance student success, faculty excellence, stakeholder engagement, organizational sustainability, and societal impact. Each initiative is supported by clearly defined goals, objectives, tactics, and key performance indicators, which the Strategy Team and faculty governance bodies review regularly. This approach directly addresses recommendations from the previous AACSB review on the need for measurable outcomes and systematic performance monitoring.

Since the last review, CoBA has strengthened strategic planning and assessment processes by implementing a formal KPI framework, assigning ownership of strategic initiatives, establishing regular reporting mechanisms, and integrating strategic performance discussions into governance processes. These improvements have enhanced organizational accountability and strengthened the College's capacity to demonstrate mission achievement and continuous improvement.

Enrollment growth further underscores the College's relevance and responsiveness to regional demand. Between Fall 2021 and Fall 2025, undergraduate enrollment rose by about 29 percent, and graduate enrollment by about 12 percent. This growth demonstrates strong demand for CoBA programs and reinforces the College's role in supporting workforce development and economic growth throughout the region.

Engagement, Innovation, and Impact Across the AACSB Standards

CoBA's activities during the review period align with the spirit and intent of the three major areas of the AACSB standards: Strategic Management and Innovation, Learner Success, and Thought Leadership, Engagement, and Societal Impact.

Strategic Management and Innovation

CoBA demonstrates strong alignment with AACSB Standards 1–3 through a mission-driven strategic planning process that is supported by measurable goals, KPIs, stakeholder engagement, and continuous review. The Strategy Team serves as the central mechanism for strategic oversight, ensuring alignment among the mission, societal impact objectives, and operational decisions.

The College exemplifies AACSB's innovation expectations through:

- Development of new graduate programs in Sustainability, Supply Chain Analytics, and Business Analytics.
- Integration of artificial intelligence and analytics content into academic programs.
- Expansion of Coursera Career Academy professional certifications.
- Redesign of undergraduate and graduate curricula to improve student outcomes and workforce relevance.
- Creation of innovative entrepreneurship and community engagement initiatives such as the Resilient Entrepreneur Program.

The College also improved faculty resource management through enhanced faculty qualification and engagement processes. Clear participation criteria, annual review procedures, expanded documentation, and the creation of a Faculty Handbook have strengthened transparency, consistency, and compliance with AACSB expectations.

Learner Success

Student success remains the College's highest priority. During the review period, CoBA implemented multiple initiatives designed to improve retention, progression, graduation rates, and career readiness.

Examples include:

- Launch of Introduction to Business (BUS 101) to support first-year pre-business students.

- Expansion of peer mentoring and learning community programs.
- Significant reductions in DFW rates through curriculum redesign.
- Redesigned gateway courses and curricular pathways.
- Strengthened Business Professional Development (BPD) program.
- Expanded engagement with Executives-in-Residence and industry mentors.

These initiatives reinforce the College's commitment to providing a transformative educational experience while improving academic and professional outcomes for students.

Experiential learning remains a defining characteristic of CoBA programs. Signature programs such as Senior Experience, Master's Experience, In the Executive's Chair, Meet the Leaders, and Business Professional Development connect classroom learning with real-world application and strengthen student preparedness for professional careers.

Thought Leadership, Engagement, and Societal Impact

CoBA demonstrates strong alignment with AACSB Standards 8 and 9 through scholarly research, applied scholarship, extensive community engagement, and measurable regional impact. Faculty scholarship addresses issues related to social mobility, financial inclusion, entrepreneurship, workforce development, ethical business practice, technology, and regional competitiveness.

Faculty engagement extends beyond scholarship through leadership roles in professional organizations, editorial boards, community organizations, advisory boards, and practitioner-oriented initiatives. These activities strengthen the connection between scholarship and practice while expanding the College's regional influence.

Engagement with external stakeholders continues to be a distinguishing strength of the College. Advisory councils, business leaders, alumni, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and community partners contribute to curriculum development, experiential learning opportunities, student mentoring, and strategic planning activities.

These partnerships create mutual value while strengthening the College's visibility, reputation, and impact throughout the region.

Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

Diversity and inclusion are central to CoBA's mission and societal impact framework. As a Hispanic-Serving Institution in one of California's most diverse regions, CSUSM serves a student population that includes substantial numbers of first-generation, Pell-eligible, transfer, military-affiliated, adult learners, and historically underrepresented students. CoBA's strategic response focuses on creating equitable pathways to academic achievement and career success.

Key diversity and inclusion strategies include:

- Expansion of First-Year Business Learning Communities.
- Peer mentoring programs.
- Career mentoring and Executive-in-Residence programs.
- Scholarships based on merit, need, leadership, and community engagement.
- Outreach through Summer High School Workshops and Discover CSUSM.
- Curriculum redesigns that reduce barriers to progression and degree completion.

- Inclusive entrepreneurship programming through the Resilient Entrepreneur Program.

The College views diversity not only as a strategic driver of innovation, student success, workforce development, and societal impact, we see diversity as reflective of who we are as a community.

Societal Impact: Curriculum, Thought Leadership, and Engagement

CoBA's societal impact framework is organized around three interconnected dimensions: curriculum, scholarship, and engagement. Together, they advance the College's focus on social mobility and regional economic vitality.

Curriculum Impact

Curricular initiatives improve educational access, retention, graduation rates, career readiness, and workforce preparedness. Examples include:

- First-Year Business Learning Community.
- BUS 101 and Business Professional Development (BUS 300).
- Coursera Career Academy certifications.
- Senior Experience and Master's Experience.
- AI-related curricular innovations.
- New graduate programs in Business Analytics and Supply Chain Analytics.

These initiatives connect learning directly to employer needs and contribute to upward career mobility for graduates.

Thought Leadership Impact

Faculty scholarship addresses significant societal and economic challenges, including:

- Financial inclusion and inequality.
- Corporate social responsibility.
- Gender equity and career mobility.
- Workforce development.
- Entrepreneurship and innovation.
- Emerging technologies and digital trust.
- Organizational effectiveness and employee well-being.

Faculty also contribute through editorial boards, professional organizations, community leadership roles, and practitioner engagement, extending the reach of CoBA's intellectual contributions beyond academia.

Engagement Impact

CoBA has established a highly scalable engagement model connecting students, employers, alumni, nonprofits, government agencies, and community organizations. Examples include:

- 696 Senior Experience projects completed during the review cycle with 506 unique sponsors.
- Nearly half of the projects serve nonprofit, government, or educational organizations.
- Significant growth in mentoring, networking, and employer engagement activities.
- 15,900 volunteer hours contributed by Executives in Residence.
- The Resilient Entrepreneur Program supports entrepreneurial development throughout the region.

The broader impact of these activities is reflected in measurable regional outcomes, including workforce development, community capacity building, economic output, and enhanced social mobility. CoBA's 2025 Economic Impact Report estimated $50.85 million in economic output, support for 376 regional jobs, and strong graduate retention within the San Diego region.

Conclusion

CoBA's progress during the current review cycle demonstrates a mature and integrated approach to AACSB accreditation. Through mission-driven strategy, innovative curriculum design, engaged scholarship, meaningful community partnerships, and measurable societal impact, the College exemplifies AACSB's core themes of Engagement, Innovation, and Impact. The College enters its next accreditation cycle with a strong foundation, a clear strategic direction, and a demonstrated commitment to continuous improvement, student success, social mobility, and regional economic vitality.

Section 2

Update & Information Related to the Last Review and Progress Toward Continuous Improvement

Part I – Overview

Situational Analysis

Organizational Structure

The College of Business Administration (CoBA) operates within the broader context of the California State University (CSU) system and California State University San Marcos (CSUSM), both of which shape its mission, resource environment, and strategic priorities. The CSU system is the largest four-year public university system in the U.S., focusing on undergraduate and master's degree programs, and serving a diverse student population. It emphasizes access, affordability, and workforce development. CSUSM, founded in 1989, is a relatively young public university in northern San Diego County with a mission centered on student success, community engagement, and regional impact. Within this institutional context, CoBA plays a central role in advancing regional economic development and social mobility through business education, applied learning, and community partnerships.

CoBA uses a shared governance model that combines administrative leadership, faculty involvement, and staff support to guide strategic decision-making and operational efficiency. The organizational setup is centered on the Dean and supported by the Associate Dean, the Director of Graduate Programs and Accreditation, the Faculty Chair, department chairs, and college-level committees (See Appendix 1.1 for the Organizational Chart). A key element of CoBA's governance is the Strategy Team, which includes the Dean, Associate Dean, Faculty Chair, elected faculty representatives, and staff members. This team is responsible for:

- Leading strategic planning and tracking progress toward strategic goals
- Conducting environmental analysis and setting priorities
- Distributing resources in line with the mission and strategy

Other standing committees include the Operations Team, Undergraduate and Graduate Curriculum Committees, R&D Committee, AACSB Accreditation Team, and Assurance of Learning (AoL) Team. This framework promotes collegiality and stakeholder involvement, aligned with AACSB principles, while supporting coordinated actions across strategic, curricular, and operational areas.

Internal, Environmental, and Competitive Forces

CoBA has seen significant enrollment growth, especially at the undergraduate level, with total enrollment rising by about 29% from Fall 2021 to Fall 2025. This increase reflects strong regional demand but also exerts pressure on:

- Course availability and scheduling
- Advising capacity and student support services
- Faculty workload and resource allocation

At the same time, CoBA continues to develop its teacher-scholar model, balancing scholarly productivity with high levels of engagement in teaching, curriculum development, and community partnerships.

The College has also expanded and further institutionalized initiatives aimed at student success, including the Business Professional Development (BPD) and Executive-in-Residence (EIR) programs, reinforcing its focus on applied learning and career readiness.

CoBA operates within a rapidly changing higher education landscape, marked by:

- Increased competition from online and alternative credential providers
- Rising expectations for career-ready graduates
- Technological disruptions affecting business practices and teaching methods
- Public funding constraints within the California State University system

Regionally, North County San Diego continues to experience economic growth, with high demand for business graduates with practical skills who can contribute to small businesses, startups, and community organizations.

CoBA competes with both local and national institutions, including well-known universities. Historically, CSUSM has faced challenges in visibility compared to neighboring schools; however, CoBA has strengthened its position through:

- Signature experiential learning and professional development programs (e.g., Senior Experience, BUS300)
- Strong community engagement and industry partnerships
- Expansion of self-support and specialized graduate programs

These differentiators align with the College's mission and support ongoing growth and impact.

Leadership Transition and Strategic Planning Update

Since the last AACSB Review, CoBA has undergone a leadership transition that informed the development and implementation of its current strategic framework. The former Dean retired on June 30, 2021, and an Interim Dean was appointed from July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022, ensuring continuity of operations and governance during the transition. The current Dean, Ron Ramirez, assumed leadership on July 1, 2022.

The appointment of new leadership provided an opportunity to reflect, renew, and recalibrate the College's strategic priorities. Under Dean Ramirez's direction, CoBA launched a comprehensive, inclusive strategic planning process that engaged faculty, staff, students, alumni, and external stakeholders. This process led to the development and implementation of the 2023–2028 Strategic Plan, which aligns institutional resources, curricular innovation, faculty development, and engagement activities with the College's mission and societal impact focus.

The updated strategic plan reflects lessons learned from prior cycles, incorporates data from enrollment trends, and responds proactively to changes in the higher education and business environments. The plan emphasizes student success, career readiness, applied learning, community engagement, and financial resilience, and it serves as the primary framework guiding decision-making, resource allocation, and continuous improvement efforts across the College.

This leadership transition and resulting strategic update demonstrate CoBA's capacity for adaptive governance and its commitment to intentional, mission-driven innovation consistent with AACSB expectations under Standard 1.

Progress Update (Since Prior Review)

As part of the strategic planning process, the college should develop a set of specific, measurable metrics that tie back to the mission and strategic goals. The implementation of a systematic process that elucidates how results are measured and reported, and how results are discussed for the purposes of continuous improvement, is necessary. (Standard 1).

In response to the concern noted in the previous review about the need for specific, measurable metrics linked to mission and strategic goals, CoBA greatly enhanced its strategic planning infrastructure during this review cycle. After the leadership transition, the College initiated a comprehensive strategic planning process that culminated in the 2023–2028 Strategic Plan, developed with input from faculty, staff, students, alumni, and advisory boards. The Strategy Team led this effort, and faculty and staff jointly established the plan's goals, objectives, tactics, and KPIs.

Additionally, CoBA has established a systematic monitoring process. Specifically, progress is tracked using predetermined KPIs, reviewed by the Strategy Team and faculty during scheduled reporting sessions, and communicated through regular reports to faculty and external advisory councils. The CIR report provides evidence that this metric-focused planning process produces actionable results.

The process for tracking participation status is largely manual and heavily dependent on the Associate Dean. Going forward, attention should be paid to a more streamlined processes that would also be consistent with the bargaining agreement. Improved documentation of the record-keeping processes and the determination of participating versus supporting status is desirable. Further refinement of the categories and activities is suggested. For example, should there should be two separate approved categories and included activities for lecturers and tenured/tenure-track faculty? (Standard 5)

CoBA has made significant progress in formalizing and documenting the faculty sufficiency and participation process. It now outlines an annual review process based on surveys for all faculty members, including tenure-line faculty, lecturers, and Executives in Residence. Faculty self-report their contributions beyond classroom teaching, and the AACSB Team reviews and confirms the data and determines whether they are participating or supporting, based on the nature, extent, and continuity of their engagement. Faculty sufficiency is validated annually by the AACSB Team and recorded in SEDONA.

Importantly, we have separately refined activity categories for lecturers and tenure-line faculty, outlined in Appendix 2.10, and published them in the Faculty Handbook. This directly addresses the earlier request for clearer documentation and distinct categories by appointment type.

The college should create a faculty handbook, expanding on the faculty governance document, that clearly defines and outlines all policies and procedures. The handbook should be readily accessible to all faculty in the college. (Standards 2, 6, 12, 15)

CoBA developed a Faculty Handbook that can be found at: https://www.csusm.edu/coba/for-faculty-staff/index.html.

In the college's next submission, please report on concrete efforts to increase student progress toward graduation and graduation rates. (Standards 4, 7, 11)

The CIR documents a multi-year, data-informed set of curricular updates designed to improve progression, retention, time-to-degree, and placement outcomes. These include the pre-business curriculum redesign, the introduction of BUS 101, the expansion of the First-Year Business Learning Community, the resequencing of BUS 202, the replacement of the ACCT 201/202 sequence with ACCT 203, and peer mentoring. We considered adding mandatory advising, but the current number of business advisors did not permit it.

The report also documents outcomes associated with these actions. For example, first-year retention increased from 67.4 percent for the Fall 2021 cohort to 77.6 percent for the Fall 2024–2025 cohort; the DFW rate for BUS 202 fell from a five-year average of 22.3 percent to 17.1 percent; and the prior accounting sequence's historical DFW rate of 41.9 percent fell to 20.9 percent with the addition of ACCT 203. Other examples are included in the report. In addition, the report shows that CoBA's 4-year graduation rates for full-time, first-time undergraduate students have increased from 17.5% (Fall 2019-2023 cohort) to

23.0% (Fall 2021-2025 cohort), reflecting measurable progress toward improved time-to-degree outcomes.

Consultative Guidance

CoBA seeks targeted feedback in the following areas as it advances its mission and societal impact focus on regional economic growth and social mobility:

- Scaling Student Success: As enrollment increases, CoBA seeks guidance on maintaining high-impact programs like business professional development, senior experience, career mentoring, and others, while ensuring quality and faculty engagement.
- Data-Driven Strategic Management: CoBA has established KPIs and an annual review process and is seeking best practices for integrating strategic metrics, AoL results, and operational data into a unified and sustainable continuous improvement system.
- Faculty Engagement Model: Given its mixed faculty model, CoBA seeks guidance on optimizing faculty sufficiency and engagement, particularly effective ways to support lecturer participation while aligning with AACSB expectations.
- Graduate Program Positioning: Graduate program growth is an area of opportunity as CoBA evolves into its next stage of development. As we develop strategies around program development, we seek input on how to differentiate and strengthen graduate program offerings to meet employer demand and ensure long-term sustainability.
- Measuring Societal Impact: CoBA seeks guidance on moving beyond activity-based reporting to a more comprehensive approach to measuring and communicating societal impact that aligns with its priorities in Scholarship.

New Degree Programs

During this review period, CoBA has created a master's degree in supply chain analytics (MSSCA), launched in Fall 2025, and is planning a general BSBA degree at Southwestern College in Chula Vista, as well as a master's degree in business analytics (MSBA), both scheduled to start in Fall 2026.

The MSSCA program was developed to meet the growing regional and national demand for professionals skilled in supply chain management, data analytics, and operations optimization. The MSBA was designed to provide students with the technical tools, analytical methods, and practical skills necessary for data-driven decision-making in business and public administration.

The proposed BSBA at Southwestern College is designed to expand access to high-quality business education in southern San Diego, a region with a large population of first-generation college students. By offering an upper-division degree completion pathway in partnership with Southwestern College, the program reduces geographic, financial, and structural barriers that often limit bachelor's degree attainment.

Descriptions of the new MSSCA and MSBA, including employer needs, student market demand, faculty and technology requirements, and program learning outcomes, are in Appendices 1.2, 1.3, and 1.4.

Part II - Three Areas of the Standards

Area 1 — Strategic Management & Innovation (Standards 1–3)

The College has established a forward-looking, mission-driven, and outcomes-oriented strategic management process that aligns with AACSB Standards 1–3. This section summarizes the College's strategic planning process, financial strategies, faculty resources, and commitment to societal impact, diversity, and inclusion, with emphasis on measurable outcomes for our societal impact focus area.

Strategic Management Planning Process & How It Informs Decision-Making

CoBA's strategic management planning is overseen by the Strategy Team, which serves as the central body guiding the development, implementation, and monitoring of the college's strategic direction. The Strategy Team includes the Dean, Associate Dean, Faculty Chair, four at-large faculty members elected to three-year terms, one voting staff member, and one non-voting staff member who serves as a note-taker. Additionally, members select a faculty co-chair who, along with the Dean, manages agendas and facilitates the team's processes.

The Strategy Team conducts environmental and internal analyses, identifies priorities, and develops strategic goals and initiatives to support the College's mission. It oversees the implementation of these initiatives, either directly or through ad hoc committees, and provides a structured platform for engaging faculty, staff, and other stakeholders in the strategic planning process. The team also promotes transparency by reporting progress during college-wide faculty meetings and other forums. Meeting at least once a month during the faculty contract period, the Strategy Team maintains a continuous cycle of review, refinement, and oversight of the College's strategic direction.

Through this governance structure, the Strategy Team ensures that strategic initiatives are mission-focused and aligned with the institution's priorities of student success, regional economic growth, and social mobility. Its recommendations provide evidence-based guidance to the Dean and Operations Team, informing decisions on resource allocation and program development. In this way, the Strategy Team fosters shared governance and ensures that strategic planning is integrated into both academic and operational decision-making across the College.

Mission Statement and Summary of Strategic Plan or Framework

The strategy of CoBA is rooted in a clear mission, a forward-looking vision, and a strategic plan designed to advance both student success and societal impact.

CoBA's Mission

CoBA provides a transformative business education that prepares our diverse student body for success in an evolving economy and society. Our faculty delivers a relevant and innovative curriculum, upholding high academic standards. We integrate theory and practice, guided by scholarship and collaborations with industry experts and community leaders.

CoBA's Vision

CoBA aspires to be a leader in innovative and excellent business education that advances student success, strengthens the economic vitality of Southern California, and facilitates social mobility for all.

Strategic Planning Outcomes

The strategic framework for 2023–2028 focuses on six interconnected initiatives that work together to promote

Figure 2.1.1: CoBA's Strategic Initiatives and Societal Impact

societal impact in the key area: advancing student success and regional vitality by integrating education, engagement, and innovation to create lasting societal outcomes.

These initiatives, illustrated in Figure 2.1.1, demonstrate CoBA's dedication to social mobility by making higher education more accessible, helping more students complete their degrees, and preparing them for careers. They also support the local economy by aligning courses with labor market needs, encouraging innovation, and forming partnerships that benefit Southern California.

	Academic Year			
1st Year Retention	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
FYBLC		73.7%	80.2%	78.7%
No FYBLC		65.4%	64.5%	64.8%
Average	69.8%	70.4%	77.0%	78.0%

Figure 2.1.2 First Year Retention Rate

This mission-driven framework ensures that CoBA's planning is both aspirational and practical, directly aligning with AACSB Standard 1. By focusing on societal impact, the College shows how its mission and strategy influence decisions, resource use, and continuous improvement.

Below is a list of these initiatives, along with a summary of the goals, objectives, actionable tactics, and KPIs that CoBA focused on in this cycle. The detailed structure of our strategic plan is provided in Appendix 2.1, and in Appendix 2.2 as a table.

1. Advance Academic Achievement – Enhance student academic achievement, persistence, and graduation.
    a. CoBA enhanced student persistence and retention

CoBA achieved the goal to enhance student persistence and retention by clustering new pre-business students across the first year coursework: First Year Business Learning Community (FYBLC) was expanded in Fall 2022, pairing Business Law (BUS 202) with GEL 101 (The Student, The University, The Community) in Semester 1 of the first year for 137 students. FYBLC focuses on helping students build group cohesion during the first semester. The results demonstrated improvements in student engagement and early persistence. Figure 2.1.2 illustrates that the first-year retention rate increased after the expansion of the FYBLC.

In addition, we partnered with campus colleagues to align GE course content with the needs of pre-business students. The FYBLC model was further expanded to include GEO 102, with 258 students in the Fall 2023 cohort.

We developed and launched a new course, Introduction to Business (BUS 101), for pre-business first-year students, implementing it in the learning community in Fall 2024 to replace BUS 202.

Figure 2.1.3 shows that CoBA reduced failure rates (DFW rates) in Business Law (BUS 202) after repositioning the course from the first year to the second year. Prior to this change, BUS 202 had a five-year average DFW rate of 22.3%. Following the sequencing change in Fall 2025, the DFW rate declined to 17.1%, reflecting improved student readiness in reading, writing, and critical thinking. This outcome confirms that aligning course timing with academic preparation can improve success without reducing rigor.

DFW rates	past 5-year avg*	Fall 2025
BUS 202	22.3%	17.1%
ACCT 203	41.9%	20.9%

Figure 2.1.3: DFW Rates for BUS 202 and ACCT 203

*ACCT 203 is being compared with the 5-year average of ACCT 201

Furthermore, we replaced the traditional 6-unit accounting sequence with a 4-unit ACCT 203: Accounting for Managers. The prior ACCT 201/202 sequence had a five-year average DFW rate of 41.9%. Following the implementation of ACCT 203 in Fall 2024, the DFW rate fell to 20.9%, nearly half the historical rate. This redesign better aligns accounting content with the needs of non-accounting students, accelerates progression, and advances equitable student success. To ensure disciplinary depth for Accounting students, students in the Accounting option now complete a 2-unit Cost Accounting course, thereby offsetting the 2 units lost through this substitution while maintaining the integrity and rigor of the Accounting curriculum. We provide further details on these curricular changes in the sections that follow.

b. Build student resilience and adaptability

Over the past six years, CoBA has made measurable progress in building student resilience and adaptability, as reflected in the data presented in Figure 2.1.4.

The data show a steady increase in student participation in structured support mechanisms—particularly peer mentoring and early engagement initiatives—alongside corresponding improvements in persistence-related indicators. As participation in mentoring and documented mentor–mentee interactions expanded year over year, CoBA observed consistent gains in students' ability to meet academic expectations, remain engaged, and persist through key transition points. These trends indicate that CoBA's intentional, scalable approach to early connection and peer-supported guidance has strengthened students' capacity to adapt to academic challenges and progress toward degree completion, thereby advancing the College's goal of fostering resilience as a foundation for long-term student success and social mobility.

Figure 2.1.5 (next page) summarizes participation in CoBA student society events from AY 2020–21 through AY 2025–26. These organizations, including discipline-specific groups such as the Accounting Society, Finance Society, Global Business Society, and the Supply Chain Management Society, serve as co-curricular platforms that strengthen students' professional identity, adaptability, and career readiness. Participation in these organizations provides students with opportunities to engage with industry professionals, practice leadership, and develop networking and problem-solving skills that support resilience in a dynamic labor market.

During the reporting period, student societies hosted 738 events, with 226 scheduled for AY 2025–26. Activity increased significantly after the pandemic, peaking at 70 events in AY 2023–24, then leveling off in the following years. The ongoing presence of multiple active societies and consistent programming indicates sustained student involvement and institutional backing for co-curricular growth. These activities contribute directly to Initiative 1 by creating structured opportunities for students to build professional networks, practice leadership, and engage with rapidly evolving business disciplines

Event (annually)	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Orientation Sessions (fall & Spring)	1250	1300	1350	1400	1450	980
Student Org Retreat x 2 per year	70	80	100	100	120	100
Family & New Student Convocation	220	240	260	280	300	300
Student Org Meet & Greet x 2	0	150	130	315	400	393
Dean's Student Advisory Meetings x 6	210	210	230	250	260	265
Peer Mentor overall participants	n/a	n/a	n/a	211	275	394
Peer Mentees	n/a	n/a	n/a	151	212	270
Peer Mentors	n/a	n/a	n/a	60	63	124

Figure 2.1.4: CoBA Student Success Events by Type

2. Bolster Career Readiness – Bolster student career readiness and promote sustained professional growth.

   a. Increase student skillsets and competencies for employability

CoBA advances its strategic goal of enhancing students' employability through a portfolio of coordinated objectives and tactics that align academic programs with evolving workforce needs. Central to this effort is the College's commitment to curricular innovation informed by external stakeholder input, particularly through active engagement with the Operations and Supply Chain Analytics advisory board. Feedback from board members has directly informed program design, curriculum updates, and the identification of emerging skill gaps, leading to the development and launch of new master's degrees in Supply Chain Analytics and Business Analytics that emphasize applied learning, data-driven decision-making, and industry-relevant competencies.

Building on this foundation, the MIS Department is developing an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Option to meet growing employer demand for graduates with AI literacy, data interpretation, and technology-enabled decision-making skills. This initiative reflects CoBA's

Student Org	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	Faculty Advisors
Global Supply Chain Management Society	19	15	20	16	20	27	Hedayat Alibeiki
Management Information Systems Society	13	6	7	26	17	16	Fang Fang
Management Society	11	11	9	11	8	15	Kim McCarthy
Accounting Society	5	13	34	28	31	32	Ben Hubbard
Global Business Cougars Society		4	5	12	9	4	Eric Rhodes
Business Organization for Student Success	1	4	2	21	39	4	Maritza Baida
Finance Society	12	11	18	13	15	28	Dongnyoung Kim
Pre-Business Society					1	11	Joshua Galaea'i
Real Estate Society		4	4	3	3	0	Travis Blunt
Asian Business Student Association						40	Dongnyoung Kim
Latino Business Student Association			5	2		15	Paola Ometto
Marketing Society					18	19	Meegan Feori Payne
Society for Human Resource Management	10	9	8	9	10	15	Carla Nesbitt-Stokes

Figure 2.1.5 CoBA Student Society Events by Society

proactive approach to anticipating market trends and integrating emerging technologies into the curriculum in a mission-aligned manner.

In addition, we provide all CoBA students with free access to the Coursera Career Academy, which currently offers 52 industry-recognized professional certificates from companies such as Google, Meta, IBM, and Salesforce. This resource allows students to earn stackable, workforce-relevant credentials at no cost, significantly expanding their technical, analytical, and digital competencies.

Figure 2.1.6 illustrates the skills developed by the domain in the past 365 days, reflecting a total of 9,274 hours of coursework with an average of 13.9 hours per learner and an average monthly learning hours of 713. A comprehensive report on learner enrollment, course completion, and skill breakdown can be found in Appendices 2.3 and 2.4.

b. Increase post-graduation student career placement

Business Professional Development—BPD is a key course (BUS 300) that follows a structured 16-week curriculum covering modules on teamwork and collaboration, interpersonal and written communication, networking, career exploration, occupational research, resume and cover letter writing, LinkedIn profile creation, job search strategies, mock interviews, professional ethics, and emotional intelligence. Students complete multiple high-impact assignments, including informational interviews, Individual Development Plans, mock interviews, networking events, and resume/cover letter refinement using platforms such as VMock and Handshake, ensuring every student engages in intentional, scaffolded professional skill-building. This course is supported by more than 50 Executives-in-Residence, Student Success staff, peer learning, and practical exercises that mirror real-world expectations. Through BUS 300, career readiness is integrated directly into the curriculum, resulting in graduates who demonstrate competencies in communication, professionalism, and career navigation.

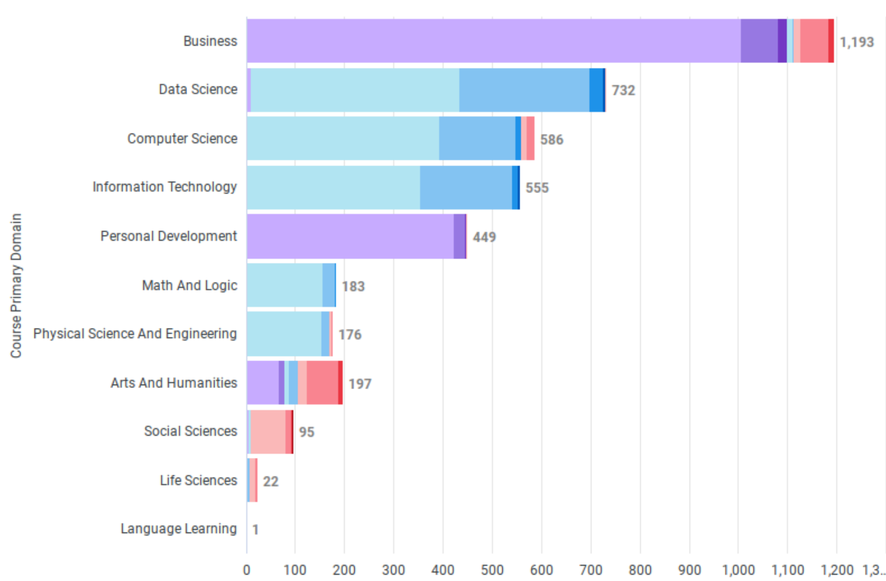

Figure 2.1.6 Coursera Usage on Skills Development

Figure 2.1.7 illustrates the career readiness attendance in the BPD program during this review cycle.

CoBA has made sustained, measurable progress in improving post-graduation student career placement by intentionally scaling employer engagement, career readiness programming, and structured mentoring. As reflected in the multi-year data, student participation in career-focused events and experiential preparation activities has grown steadily since AY 2020–21, with particularly strong acceleration in the past two academic years.

Participation in Networking Nights increased from approximately 600 students annually in AY 2020–22 to 1,200 participants in AY 2024–25, while mock interview participation more than doubled, rising from 500 to 1,100 students over the same period. These increases demonstrate expanded student access to employer-facing preparation opportunities and greater engagement with career readiness activities designed to improve placement outcomes.

Event (annually)	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Networking Nights x 4 per calendar year	600	600	700	800	1200	1141
Mock Interviews (virtual & in person)	500	500	600	700	1100	1034
EIR Onboarding & training x2	40	50	70	65	75	55
EIR Kickoff Event	42	45	48	100	125	95
EIR end of year Event	60	60	60	87	125	90
Career Mentor overall participants	n/a	n/a	n/a	93	237	284
Career Mentor student participants	n/a	n/a	n/a	58	154	189
Career Mentors	n/a	n/a	n/a	35	83	95

Figure 2.1.7: Business Professional Development Events Attendance

CoBA also significantly strengthened its Executive-in-Residence (EIR) and mentoring infrastructure. Attendance at EIR onboarding, kickoff, and end-of-year events increased consistently, reflecting growth in both the number of participating executives and the depth of their engagement with students. Most notably, the Career Mentor Program expanded rapidly following the implementation of the Mentor Collective platform, growing from 93 total participants in AY 2023–24 to 238 in AY 2024–25, including 154 student mentees and 84 professional mentors. Participation levels indicate continued momentum in AY 2025–26.

Collectively, these trends indicate that CoBA's strategic investments in networking, interview preparation, executive engagement, and structured mentoring have substantially expanded the scale and reach of career placement support. By increasing both the volume and consistency of student–employer interactions, the College has strengthened the ecosystem that supports successful post-graduation employment outcomes. These initiatives align with CoBA's broader strategic commitment to career readiness, social mobility, and regional workforce development, and they provide a strong foundation for continued improvement in placement outcomes.

Figure 2.1.8 compares the career confidence of sophomore and junior students before and after BUS 300, a comprehensive, practice-oriented course that equips students with essential professional skills. Based on these statistics, 74% of students consider themselves very or extremely confident after BUS 300. This percentage is 29% before BUS 300.

Figure 2.1.9 displays CoBA's post-graduation student career placement data for this cycle. While the response rate at the exit point is relatively high, we have not yet developed a method to achieve sufficient response rates for 3-month or 6-month surveys.

Career Mentorship program: CoBA's Career Mentorship Program is offered as a co-curricular, opt-in program to any student who has completed BUS 300. Students and professionals are matched and connected by the Mentor Collective platform. Relationships evolve organically over the one-year program and pairs can continue outside of the program if they so choose.

Careers are the foundation of mentorship discussion, with specific topics identified by the mentee given their short and long-term goals. Beyond providing career advice and guidance, mentors often provide students with

Career Confidence Level	Extremely	Very	Confident	Slightly	Not Confident	Total Surveyed
Post BUS 300	25%	49%	19%	7%	0%	1671
Pre BUS 300	8%	21%	32%	32%	6%	2048

Figure 2.1.8: Career Confidence Pre/Post BUS 300 Academic Years 2021 – 2026

connection to their professional networks. The Mentor Collective platform provides the capability to raise a flag if mentors feel the mentee is undergoing a challenge, whether professional or personal. Flags are monitored by the Student Success team and the mentee is connected

Sem/Yr	Students Surveyed	Exit				3 Month				6 Month			
		Employed Rate	Start own Business	Grad School	Response Rate	Employed Rate	Start own Business	Grad School	Response Rate	Employed Rate	Start own Business	Grad School	Response Rate
Fall 2021	233	23%	3%	4%	100%	65%	3%	2%	16%				
Spring 2022	308	36%	1%	3%	58%	60%	1%	3%	33%				
Fall 2022	176	55%	3%	1%	61%					50%	0%	1%	5%
Spring 2023	272	32%	1%	2%	71%	60%			11%	92%		1%	9%
Fall 2023	230	38%	3%	0%	49%	92%			17%	64%			6%
Spring 2024	336	35%	1%	1%	69%	76%	0%	1%	10%	65%	0%	0%	5%
Fall 2024	212	33%	1%	2%	85%					77%	0%	15%	6%
Spring 2025	387	29%	4%	2%	87%					62%	0%	10%	5%
Fall 2025	247	32%	5%	8%	86%	50%	25%	0%	2%				
Spring 2026	396	34%	6%	9%	90%								

Figure 2.1.9: Post-graduation Student Career Placement

with the appropriate department related to the challenge (e.g. food pantry, wellness, etc.). Launched in 2023-2024, the program has grown from 58 matched pairs to 189 in 2025-2026.

3. Create Student Pipeline – Broaden the pipeline of incoming students to provide equity and access to business education.
   a. Strategically optimize enrollment of undergraduate students in the College of Business

Undergraduate							
						Growth	
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	1-Year	5-Year
Pre-Business	1208	1222	1376	1575	1740	10%	44%
Minor	61	69	69	72	69	-4%	13%

Figure 2.1.10: Undergraduate Enrollment Trend

Figure 2.1.10 shows enrollment growth in the undergraduate program this cycle. CoBA has adopted a proactive, mission-driven enrollment optimization strategy focused on early outreach, equitable access, and structured exposure to business education. Rather than relying solely on traditional recruitment channels, the College intentionally invests in pipeline initiatives that introduce prospective students—particularly first-generation and historically underrepresented students—to business disciplines before they matriculate.

In 2023, CoBA launched the Summer High School Workshops, a series of immersive, discipline-specific programs hosted on campus and led by CoBA faculty. These 25-hour workshops offer hands-on exposure to AI and cybersecurity, entrepreneurship, finance, and supply chain management. Students participate in interactive activities, applied problem-solving exercises, and discussions with faculty and student ambassadors. The workshops are designed not only to spark interest in business careers but also to build confidence, clarify college expectations, and foster early affiliation with the College.

By offering academically grounded yet accessible programming, CoBA strengthens early awareness of business pathways aligned with regional workforce needs. Figure 2.1.11 shows the attendance at these workshops in the past four years.

In addition, Discover CSUSM serves as a structured campus preview event that introduces prospective students and their families to CoBA's academic programs, student support resources, and career development model. During these events, faculty and student representatives present program information, highlight applied learning opportunities such as the Senior Experience and Business Professional Development course, and outline career trajectories across business disciplines. These sessions emphasize CoBA's commitment to student success, career readiness, and social mobility, reinforcing the College's value proposition early in the decision-making process.

Together, these initiatives reflect a deliberate enrollment strategy that broadens access, strengthens early student engagement, and aligns recruitment efforts with mission and market demand. By building structured

	2023	2024	2025	2026
AI & Cybersecurity		43	61	60
Entrepreneurship	28	39	68	60
Finance	109	64	73	60
Supply Chain Mgmt		13	12	37

Figure 2.1.11: Summer High School Workshop Attendance

entry points into business education, CoBA enhances enrollment stability while advancing its societal impact aspiration of expanding opportunity and regional economic vitality.

b. Strategically optimize enrollment of graduate students in the College of Business

To strategically optimize graduate enrollment while maintaining academic quality and alignment with regional workforce needs, CoBA has implemented a coordinated set of recruitment, curriculum, and student support initiatives across its graduate portfolio.

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Accounting		9	12	7
Finance		11	12	8
Management		18	25	14
MIS		7	5	2
Marketing		40	30	20
OSCM			7	3
CoBA Presentation	70	90	120	90

Figure 2.1.12: Discover CSUSM Attendance

CoBA has actively strengthened relationships with local businesses, professional organizations, and alumni networks to promote its graduate programs, particularly FEMBA and SMBA. The MBA Office regularly engages with regional employers through advisory boards, Master's Projects, employer information sessions, and networking events. Alumni play a growing role as ambassadors by referring prospective students and participating in outreach events, contributing to sustained interest and application growth, especially following the SMBA redesign.

c. Simplifying the Application Process:

To reduce procedural barriers, CoBA streamlined the graduate application process by providing clear instructions, application workshops, 1:1 advising sessions, and online guidance tailored to each program. Application guidance and timelines, along with direct staff support, have improved transparency and reduced applicant friction, contributing to more consistent application-to-admit conversion rates across recent cohorts.

d. Expand financial aid and scholarship opportunities for students

CoBA implemented a comprehensive scholarship structure beginning Fall 2022. The CoBA-MBA Scholarship, including the Community and Connectedness Scholarship, supports both entering and continuing students through a combination of merit-based and need-based criteria. Scholarship decisions consider academic achievement, professional experience, leadership, and contributions to community and societal well-being, with financial need verified through Financial Aid. This multi-tiered approach enables the College to attract high-quality applicants, support student persistence, and reinforce its commitment to access and opportunity while maintaining academic rigor and program excellence.

FEMBA Admission Data						
Entry Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Applications Started	196	339	457	608	612	743
Applications Completed	64	51	39	71	75	70
Students Admitted	51	46	27	49	64	53
Students Enrollment	41	31	22	39	48	41

Figure 2.1.13: FEMBA Admission Data

Meanwhile, CoBA redesigned the SMBA curriculum in 2023 to reduce entry barriers by integrating foundational content directly into the program. This removed the need for an intensive pre-program summer foundation course and enabled all students to start in the fall. As a result, the SMBA became more accessible to working professionals and saw a significant rise in applications and enrollment after the redesign. Importantly, subsequent Assurance of Learning and course-level assessment results showed no decline in student performance following the curriculum change, indicating that the integrated foundation model successfully broadened access while

Entry Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Applications Started	392	294	834	688	437	274
Applications Completed	71	50	69	62	176	159
Students Admitted	71	40	55	27	156	102
Students Enrollment	37	23	37	18	63	50

Figure 2.1.14: SMBA Admission Data

preserving academic rigor and learning outcomes.

4. Develop Collaborations

Elevate CoBA's brand recognition through our partnerships with businesses, educational institutions, government agencies, and community organizations.

a. Strengthen community and employer engagement to enhance student success and regional vitality

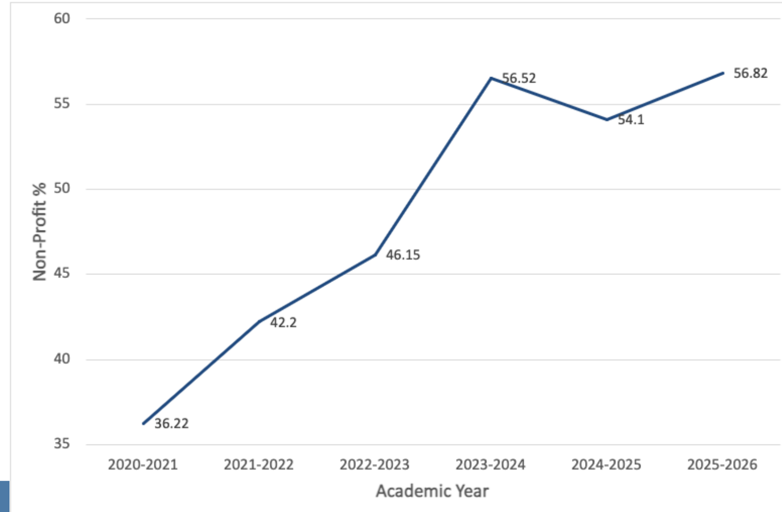

Figure 2.1.15: Nonprofit Project Percentage by Academic Year

From Fall 2020 through Spring 2026, CoBA completed 696 Senior Experience projects in collaboration with 506 unique sponsor organizations. This volume demonstrates sustained employer participation and broad regional reach.

Nearly 49% of all projects were conducted with nonprofit, governmental, or educational organizations, reflecting deep engagement across community-serving sectors (Figure 2.1.15). Importantly, nonprofit participation increased over the review period—from 36% in AY 2020–21 to 57% in AY 2025–26—indicating intentional expansion of community-based partnerships.

Repeat engagement further signals brand credibility. Across the six-year period, Figure 2.1.16 shows that 295 projects (42%) were completed for returning sponsors, demonstrating sustained satisfaction and ongoing collaboration rather than one-time transactional relationships.

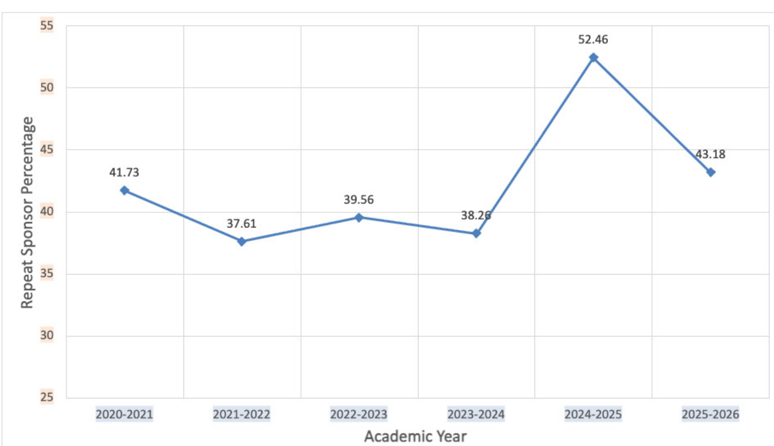

Figure 2.1.16: Repeat Sponsor Project Percentage by Academic Year

Figure 2.1.17 illustrates the project percentage of the top 15 industries. Industry representation spans nonprofit organizations (24% of total projects), education (17%), technology/computer-related sectors (7%), management, renewables, healthcare, financial services, engineering, hospitality, government, and other regional industries. This distribution reflects alignment with the regional economic ecosystem and broad stakeholder representation.

A comprehensive analysis and report of Senior Experience/Master's Experience can be found in Appendix 2.5.

b. Position CoBA as a community hub for educational and professional knowledge development and sharing in the region

Beyond sponsorship, participation in CoBA programs—networking nights, mentoring initiatives, and EIR events—has grown steadily. Engagement is measured through RSVP volume, sponsor renewals, and advisory council involvement, reflecting both reach and depth. CoBA tracks advisory council membership and active employer participation as key indicators of alignment (see Appendix 2.6). Advisory members contribute to curriculum design, provide feedback on the internship pipeline, and offer strategic guidance.

Partnerships with Chambers of Commerce in northern San Diego County have strengthened

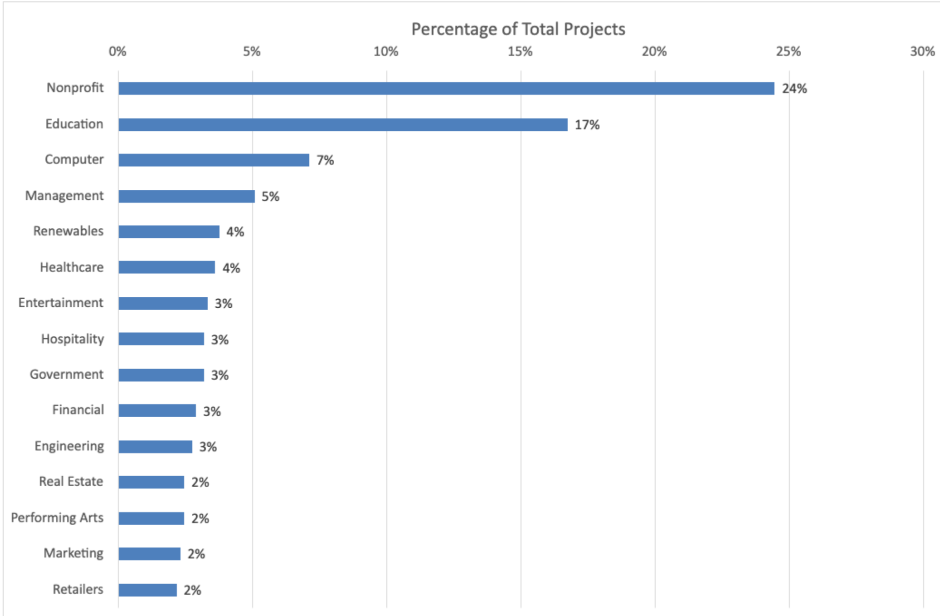

Figure 2.1.17: Top 15 Industries by Project Percentage

through reciprocal engagement. Chamber leaders serve as Executives-in-Residence (EIRs), directly connecting regional economic leadership with student programs and enhancing CoBA's visibility. Ongoing participation in chamber meetings and professional associations further reinforces employer engagement and institutional credibility.

Figure 2.1.18 shows the attendance at other CoBA events that engage the community, including the Senior Experience Tradeshow, CLIMB, Women in Business, In the Executive Chair (ITEC), Meet the Leaders (MTL), and EIR participation. Over the past six years, CoBA has hosted 12 trade shows, 12 CLIMB speaker series, and 6 Women in Business events, reaching more than 350 participants. Additionally, EIRs have contributed 15,900 volunteer hours over six years, while ITEC and MTL speakers have provided 496 hours. Classroom engagement averages 24 EIR coaches per semester, peaking at 54 in Fall 2025. Furthermore, CoBA has hosted 22 ITEC and 6 MTL guests annually.

The Resilient Entrepreneur Program (REP), launched in 2024, is a university-wide initiative delivered in partnership between the Innovation Hub and CoBA. REP serves as a key mechanism through which CoBA advances its role as a regional hub for knowledge development, entrepreneurial support, and community engagement. As reflected in Figure 2.1.19, the program demonstrates consistent demand, strong participation, and sustained engagement across cohorts. REP's structured bootcamp model integrates faculty expertise, practitioner involvement, and layered mentoring—both collective and one-on-one—while connecting participants to CoBA's experiential learning ecosystem through Senior Experience projects, thereby reinforcing the alignment between academic programming and community impact.

REP also advances CoBA's commitment to inclusive regional economic development and stakeholder engagement. Participant demographics indicate strong representation of Latino/a and women entrepreneurs, while the consistent involvement of guest speakers, community organizations, and professional partners positions CoBA as a regional convener of knowledge and resources. As a faculty-led university program, REP exemplifies a scalable model of community-engaged education that extends CoBA's impact beyond the classroom and reinforces its role as a central hub for educational and professional knowledge development in the region.

5. Empower Excellent People – Attract, develop, and retain forward-thinking and diverse faculty and staff who are committed to excellence and inclusiveness.
   a. Improve retention of faculty and staff

To support faculty retention, CoBA implemented a coordinated set of incentives and professional support mechanisms aligned with its strategic priorities and resource capacity. The College expanded summer research and professional development grants, providing meaningful financial support for scholarly productivity, confer-

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Tradeshow	158	186	209	221	255	260
CLIMB	109	115	127	131	70*	72*
Women in Business					149	158

Figure 2.1.18: Community Engagement Events

*We moved to one CLIMB event per year starting 2024-25

	2024	2025	2026
Interviewees who started the program	16	9	14
N bootcamp classes	6	7	6
N events shared of partners	2	2	1
One on One mentoring (delegate started)	0	6	10
Total Collective Mentoring meetings	17	12	12
Attendance bootcamp average	81%	84%	80%
Attendance events average	56%	63%	60%
Attendance collective mentoring	41%	50%	50%
Delegates who worked w Senior Exp	50%	50%	50%
N of businesses	16	9	14
N of delegates	20	10	14
N of Latino delegates	9	3	9
N of Black delegates	5	2	2
N Mixed race delegates	1	1	1
N of Women delegates	12	5	10
N of guest speakers	9	8	10
N of guest speakers entrepreneurs	4	6	6
N of guest speakers support org/professsional	5	2	4
N of instructors from CSUSM	1	2	2
N of orgs in the community event	11	8	6

Figure 2.1.19: Resilient Entrepreneur Program

ence participation, and pedagogical innovation. Later in this document, we provide the details of the financial incentives for this purpose. These grants have been strategically tiered to reward research quality and sustained engagement. In parallel, CoBA developed a research assistant program to support faculty research agendas, enabling faculty to advance scholarship while mentoring students in applied research activities. Figure 2.1.20 shows the faculty and staff retention rates in this cycle.

Recognizing the importance of workload flexibility and financial incentives, CoBA expanded opportunities for faculty to teach on overload, particularly in summer and high-demand programs, enabling faculty to increase compensation while meeting enrollment needs. We have an overload teaching policy (Appendix 2.7) to ensure that overload teaching doesn't negatively affect faculty

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Faculty	100.00%	87.80%	93.02%	92.86%	93.02%	97.73%
Staff	88.24%	70.59%	93.75%	81.25%	75.00%	100.00%

Figure 2.1.20: Faculty and Staff Retention Rates

*Attrition includes retirement, resignation, and contract termination.

teaching, scholarship, and service activities. In addition, the College institutionalized regular brown-bag events for teaching and research, including AI-focused luncheons and technology workshops (e.g., Tech Tuesdays), which foster community, peer learning, and continuous professional development.

CoBA improves staff retention through a coordinated approach that emphasizes professional development, flexibility, and equitable workload management. The College provides staff with ongoing professional development opportunities, including support to attend relevant conferences, workshops, and training programs that enhance technical skills, leadership capacity, and career advancement. These investments ensure that staff remain current in their roles and are well-positioned to support evolving academic and administrative needs.

To further support retention and well-being, CoBA has adopted flexible work arrangements, allowing staff to work remotely one day per week during the academic year and two days per week during the summer. In addition, College leadership conducts regular reviews of staff workload distribution and adjusts responsibilities as needed to ensure they remain aligned with position expectations and operational priorities. CoBA also conducts periodic reviews of staff classifications and works with University Human Resources to reclassify positions when duties expand or change. Exceptional performance and contributions are recognized through bonuses and in-range progression (IRPs), reinforcing a culture of appreciation and fairness.

Together, these practices have contributed to strong staff stability and continuity, supported employee morale and engagement, and reduced the risk of turnover during periods of increased operational demand. By proactively addressing workload equity, professional growth, and work–life balance, CoBA sustains a high-performing staff team that supports the College's mission and long-term strategic objectives.

b. Create an inclusive, warm, and supportive culture

CoBA fosters an inclusive and supportive culture through community-building activities, cultural sensitivity and responsiveness training, flexible and equitable meeting practices, and regular recognition of faculty and staff achievements. Progress is monitored using key performance indicators, including the number of employees who complete interpersonal communication and cultural diversity training (Figure 2.1.21) and the number of awards and formal recognitions conferred annually (Figure 2.1.22).

Academic Year	# Faculty Attended	# Staff Attended	Total Attendees
2020/2021	3	0	3
2021/2022	3	1	4
2022/2023	4	5	9
2023/2024	3	22	25
2024/2025	7	17	24
2025/2026		18	18

Figure 2.1.21: Number of Employees Completed DiSC

6. Foster Financial Resiliency – Increase the college's financial resilience
    a. Diversify sources of funding

CoBA employs a diversified and strategically managed funding model to support academic quality, innovation, and long-term financial sustainability. In addition to state general funds, the College relies on a complementary portfolio of philanthropic resources, self-support program revenues, professional fees, and program-specific trust funds, each governed by clear purpose and stewardship practices.

Award	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
FEMBA Outstanding Teaching	Raj Pillai, Nima Zaerpour	Marcus Wardley	Catalin Ratiu	Kimberly McCarthy	David DeBoskey	Paul Barton	
SMBA Outstanding Teaching	David Grooms, Majid Karimi	Glen Brodowsky, Majid Karimi	Catalin Ratiu	Rebeca Perren	William Byun	Emily Tarr	
Oustanding Scholarship			Jolynn Zhou, Nima Zaerpour, Kristin Stewart			Serhan Kotiloglu	Majid Karimi
Outstanding Service			Whitney Steffler, Rebeca Perren	Jennifer Martin, Emily Tarr, Glen Brodowsky, Kritin Stewart		Kristina Brady	Mohammad Oskoorouchi, Chandler Williams
Outstanding Teaching				Abigail Nappier Cherup		Katherin Yan, Minoo Ashoori	Aaron McDonald, Benjamin Hubbard

Figure 2.1.22: Staff and Faculty Award Recipients

Year-end balances of philanthropic accounts (Figure 2.1.23), have remained stable over time at approximately $2.0 million. These current funds are built and maintained through coordinated outreach at the department, College, and University levels, and are governed by formal donation agreements that align donor intent with strategic priorities, including student success initiatives, experiential learning, and College-wide events.

2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
$1,882,960	$2,024,053	$1,940,249	$1,883,749	$1,907,771	$2,040,582

Figure 2.1.23: Year-End Balance of Current Philanthropic Funds

Self-support programs, including the BSBA program in Temecula and the Specialized MBA (SMBA), further diversify revenue sources and expand access to professionally oriented business education. Year-end balances for self-support programs in Figure 2.1.24 demonstrate sustained financial viability, with reserves intentionally managed to support instructional costs, program enhancements, and enrollment-driven fluctuations. This approach reflects responsible reinvestment rather than passive accumulation of funds.

2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
$ 1,342,884	$ 1,621,893	$ 1,690,321	$ 1,346,106	$ 1,256,322	$ 978,801

Figure 2.1.24: Year-End Balance – Combined Self-Support Accounts

MBA professional fees, authorized by CSU policy to support AACSB-accredited programs, provide a dedicated and mission-aligned funding stream. Over the review period, MBA professional fee balances have consistently exceeded $900,000, supporting faculty research and development, instructional quality, and graduate student support while remaining sensitive to enrollment trends (Figure 2.1.25).

2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
$ 917,957	$ 1,123,015	$ 1,114,596	$ 1,083,207	$ 1,000,736	$ 932,461

Figure 2.1.25: Year-End Balance – Fully-Employed MBA

CoBA also maintains program-specific trust funds to ensure the sustainability of its applied learning model. Figure 2.1.26 shows the year-end balances of the combined trust funds. The Senior Experience Trust (49640) has maintained balances of approximately $600,000 annually, covering the undergraduate capstone program's operating costs without relying on state funds. Similarly, the Master's Experience Trust (49657) has grown steadily, exceeding $200,000 in recent years, reflecting the expansion and maturation of graduate applied learning experiences.

Together, these diversified funding sources reduce reliance on any single revenue stream and provide CoBA with the flexibility needed to support student success, faculty engagement, and innovation. The consistency of year-end balances across multiple accounts demonstrates sound financial stewardship and positions the College to sustain its mission, strategic priorities, and societal impact commitments over the long term.

Monitoring Progress Toward Planned Initiatives

CoBA formulated its 2023–2028 Strategic Plan through a transparent process involving faculty, staff, students, and community members.

The Strategy Team spearheaded the initiative, convening weekly meetings and providing monthly updates to the faculty. The process began with a strategic retreat, where faculty and staff collaboratively established the plan's goals, objectives, tactics, and KPIs.

Feedback was solicited from students and external stakeholders, including Executives in Residence, advisory boards, alumni, and regional business leaders. Draft versions of the plan were shared with these groups, and their input helped refine initiatives, clarify objectives, and align with workforce development and student success priorities. This collaborative effort reinforced CoBA's mission and enhanced the plan's potential societal impact.

Upon approval, the Strategy Team assumed responsibility for ongoing monitoring and evaluation. Progress is measured using predetermined key performance indicators, and results are reviewed by both the Strategy Team and faculty during scheduled reporting sessions. This oversight ensures the plan remains adaptable to changing circumstances and maintains accountability for fulfilling CoBA's mission and societal impact objectives.

	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
Senior Experience Trust	$ 515,466.48	$ 553,674.77	$ 599,927.24	$ 590,136.44	$ 582,395.78	$593,733.27
Master Experience Trust	$ 89,264.38	$ 112,084.38	$ 161,334.38	$ 195,980.27	$ 188,747.17	$202,197.17

Figure 2.1.26: Year-End Balance – Combined Trust Funds

Process of Updating the Plan and Keeping Stakeholders Engaged

An updating of the strategic plan is triggered by two instances in CoBA: a five-year gap since the last review or the start of a new Dean. The process for updating the plan involves all stakeholder groups to ensure its relevance and adaptability, and to align with CoBA's mission and societal impact objectives. The Strategy Team oversees this continuous process through systematic reviews, consultations, and open communication channels.

The Strategy Team continuously monitors the strategic plan and its implementation by assessing key initiatives and analyzing factors such as enrollment, funding, and employment market trends. The findings are communicated to faculty via regular reports.

Student input is gathered through exit surveys, the Dean's Student Advisory Council, and departmental advisory councils to evaluate efforts related to career readiness, curriculum development, and the overall student experience. External stakeholders, including Executives in Residence, advisory board members, alumni, and business partners, are also engaged to ensure that initiatives effectively support workforce development and bolster the regional economy. All feedback received is incorporated into plan updates, demonstrating our commitment to student success and regional development.

To promote transparency and accountability, the Dean distributes progress reports and updates to faculty and external-facing advisory councils. These reports detail progress toward strategic goals and highlight the positive impacts of our programs on students and the community.

Through sustained collaboration, CoBA keeps its strategic plan current and responsive to stakeholder input. This approach fosters inclusive decision-making, shared responsibility for our mission, and alignment with AACSB's core values of engagement, innovation, and impact.

Risk Analysis, Including a Remediation Plan

CoBA systematically identifies, monitors, and mitigates risks that may affect its ability to achieve strategic objectives, deliver on its mission, and sustain continuous improvement. Risk analysis is integrated into the College's strategic management and planning cycle, led by the Strategy Team. Risks are evaluated across four key dimensions—financial sustainability, faculty resources, enrollment and program demand, and operational continuity—each with defined mitigation strategies and accountability structures.

Financial Sustainability

Risk: Continued reductions in state funding, coupled with inflationary pressures and limited flexibility in tuition revenue, present a challenge to maintaining high-quality programs and faculty support.

Remediation Plan: CoBA maintains diversified revenue streams through Extended Learning self-support programs, MBA professional fees, Senior Experience Sponsorships, and philanthropic accounts. The College also sustains a healthy reserve in its trust and foundation funds, which are used strategically to support faculty professional development, instructional innovation, and student success initiatives. Ongoing fundraising efforts through the University's Blueprint and Giving Day campaigns and corporate partnerships further buffer the impact of potential state budget reductions.

Faculty Recruitment, Retention, and Qualification

Risk: Budget constraints and a competitive market, particularly in Accounting, Finance, and Business Analytics, may affect CoBA's ability to recruit and retain academically and professionally qualified faculty.

Remediation Plan: CoBA continues to prioritize hiring in mission-critical areas and supports retention through a structured summer research grant program, professional development funding, and flexible workload models. Faculty mentoring, annual performance reviews, and periodic post-tenure evaluations ensure continued qualification under AACSB standards. The College is also developing pipeline strategies through lecturers and industry partnerships to expand qualified teaching capacity.

Enrollment and Program Demand

Risk: Demographic changes in the region and increased competition from online programs may affect undergraduate and graduate enrollment growth.

Remediation Plan: CoBA actively monitors enrollment trends through the Strategy Team and implements responsive program innovations such as the MBA redesign, AI curriculum task force, expansion of self-support BSBA programs, new MS degrees, and high school summer workshops to attract diverse learner populations. The College has partnered with university enrollment management to increase outreach to community colleges and high schools to establish new recruiting pipelines and inform curriculum, and has partnered with regional employers to enhance recruitment and internship opportunities.

Operational Continuity and Technology

The campus has a Risk Analysis and Disaster Recovery Plan. See Appendix 2.8.

Strategies for Making a Positive Societal Impact

CoBA has embedded societal impact as a core element of its Strategic Plan, rather than treating it as a standalone or parallel initiative. As a result, the College's societal impact focus areas are intentionally integrated into its strategic priorities, goals, and action plans, which creates purposeful overlap with the strategic management and planning processes described in the previous section.

The College adopted a unified societal impact framework to guide decision-making across curriculum, scholarship, and engagement:

Focus Area: Advance student success and regional vitality by integrating education, engagement, and innovation to create lasting societal impact.

Impact Statement: Through a commitment to applied, career-focused business education, CoBA promotes social mobility for a diverse student body while strengthening regional economic vitality. Graduates experience upward career mobility—particularly first-generation and underrepresented students—while the Senior Experience, Master's Experience, and faculty scholarship generate measurable value for regional organizations, supporting innovation, growth, and community resilience.

This integrated approach reflects CoBA's belief that student success and regional prosperity are mutually reinforcing. Accordingly, the societal impact plan operationalizes the strategic plan by aligning initiatives across Curriculum, Scholarship, and Engagement, and by specifying clear goals, objectives, tactics, success measures, and annual outcomes. The overlap between strategic planning and societal impact is intentional, demonstrating how CoBA advances its mission through coordinated, evidence-based actions that produce meaningful, sustained impact.

Curriculum: Advancing Regional Vitality Through Student Academic and Professional Success

Curriculum represents a central component of the College's strategy for generating positive societal impact and is guided by four strategic goals in the College's strategic plan that focus on:

- Initiative 1 – Goal 1: Enhancing student persistence and retention,
- Initiative 1 – Goal 2: Building student resilience and adaptability,
- Initiative 2 – Goal 1: Increasing student skillsets and competencies for employability, and
- Initiative 2 – Goal 2: Increasing post-graduation career placement.

Through intentional curriculum design, co-curricular skill development, and structured career-preparation initiatives, the College advances its societal impact priorities of social mobility and regional economic growth by expanding educational opportunities, supporting student progression, and preparing graduates to meet employers' evolving needs.

As shown in Areas 2 and 3 and demonstrated in Table 9-1, these efforts include course redesigns that improve student success, early engagement and mentoring programs that increase persistence, the integration of industry-recognized professional credentials and emerging skills like data analytics and AI, discipline-specific internships, and a comprehensive system of career preparation activities that promote greater employer interaction and student confidence in their career readiness. Together, these initiatives demonstrate a well-planned, systematically executed curriculum strategy that connects academic learning to workforce preparation and regional economic needs. The specific initiatives, metrics, and outcomes related to these efforts are detailed in Areas 2 and 3 and summarized in Table 9-1.

Scholarship: Producing Applied Scholarship with Regional Impact and Social Mobility

As outlined in Area 3 and shown in Table 9-1, the College's current portfolio of faculty scholarship demonstrates strong, authentic alignment with its societal impact priorities—social mobility and regional economic growth—even though this alignment has not yet been guided by a formally articulated, school-wide strategic plan for impact-oriented research. Faculty are already producing applied, practice-relevant work in areas such as financial inclusion and inequality reduction, ethical and transparent business practices, small and medium-sized enterprise competitiveness, innovation spillovers and local economic development, workforce well-being, and the business implications of emerging digital technologies. These efforts yield peer-reviewed publications, practitioner frameworks, policy-relevant analytical tools, and student co-authored research that inform teaching, influence organizational practice, and contribute to regional decision-making.

From a strategic viewpoint, these outcomes demonstrate that the intellectual capacity, disciplinary breadth, and external relevance required to position scholarship as a core driver of societal impact are firmly in place. However, unlike curriculum and engagement—which are already supported by well-designed and effectively implemented strategic plans—the scholarship portfolio has evolved in a decentralized and faculty-driven manner.

A key strategic priority for the next cycle is to develop and implement a coordinated research strategy that defines thematic priorities tied to the societal impact focus, strengthens interdisciplinary collaboration and external research partnerships, aligns internal support and recognition systems, and establishes systematic processes for documenting impact. This intentional approach will enable the College to scale and more visibly integrate its scholarly strengths into the broader societal impact model described in Area 3 and to leverage the outcomes already documented in Table 9-1.

Engagement: Strengthening Student Success and Regional Vitality through Partnerships

Engagement represents a central pillar of the College's strategy for making a positive societal impact and is guided by two strategic goals in the College's strategic plan:

- Initiative 4 – Goal 1: strengthening community and employer engagement to enhance student success and regional vitality, and
- Initiative 4 – Goal 2: positioning CoBA as a community hub for educational and professional knowledge development and sharing in the region.

As described in Area 3 and shown in Table 9-1, the College has established a coordinated and well-organized engagement model that leverages faculty expertise, student experiential learning, and regional partnerships to meet economic and community needs. These activities include applied student consulting projects, regional economic intelligence initiatives, analytics competitions, workshops focused on socio-environmental challenges, and collaborations with nonprofit organizations and partnerships with industry and civic leaders.

Together, these initiatives provide actionable insights for organizations, strengthen nonprofit capacity, support regional decision-making, and improve workforce preparedness while also enriching student learning experiences. Strategically, this engagement portfolio shows a mature, intentionally designed framework that promotes both social mobility and regional economic growth by linking academic knowledge with real-world applications. The specific initiatives, outputs, and documented results of these efforts are outlined in Area 3 and summarized in Table 9-1.

Strategies for Advancing Diversity and Inclusion

CoBA promotes community and connectedness through a set of integrated strategies involving curriculum design, faculty involvement, admissions procedures, and student organizations.

During the current review cycle, CoBA has emphasized the development and delivery of courses certified in community and connectedness. At the undergraduate level, BUS 305: Diversity in the Global Business Context was developed as a 3-unit course to satisfy the Diversity and Equity in Global Contexts (DEg) university-wide graduation requirement. MGMT 461: Management in Different Cultures, a required course for Management and Global Business students, examines how culture influences managerial decisions, behaviors, and strategies in a global environment.

SMBA students in the International Business Track take courses such as GBM 612: International Culture & Negotiation, GBM 614: Doing Business in Selected Countries, MGMT 612: International Comparative Leadership, and GBM 685: International Business Experience, all of which involve global connectedness as a key element. GBM 685 requires completion of a master's thesis based on an international internship or a specialized master's project involving a global element.

Faculty engagement in national initiatives further reinforces CoBA's commitment to community and connectedness. Faculty members Kristin Stewart and Rebeca Perren are actively involved with The PhD Project, an organization focused on broadening participation in doctoral education.

Faculty scholarship during this review cycle also demonstrates meaningful community engagement, including "The Activist Company: Examining a Company's Public Commitment to Social Activism," published in the Journal of Public Policy & Marketing (2020; ABDC A; 321 Google Scholar citations); "The Non-White Standard: Racial Bias in Perceptions of Leadership Potential," published in the Journal of Applied Psychology (2024; ABDC A*); and "Does Masstige Offer the Prestige of Luxury Without the Social Costs?" published in the Journal of Business Research (2023; ABDC A).

CoBA also promotes community and connectedness through globally oriented, collaborative learning experiences. CoBA's Global Business Option students are required to either study abroad for one semester or complete a substantial overseas internship (GBM 495: Global Business Experience) of at least 190 hours. Our undergraduate students may take CoBA classes offered by our faculty in Europe (GBM 440C, OM 305) and Latin America (GBM 440B) during the summer session. Associate Professor of Management and Director of the Global Business Program, Paola Ometto, has participated in the X-Culture Program, a large-scale global experiential learning initiative that connects university students from different countries into virtual teams to solve real-world business challenges, and is also developing a Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) initiative with a partner institution in Mexico.

At the graduate level, CoBA has adopted admissions practices designed to promote broader access and participation. One such strategy has been the removal of the GMAT requirement for MBA admissions, motivated in part by the goal of reducing barriers that may limit access for capable candidates from a range of educational and professional backgrounds.

Organizations such as the Latino Business Student Association and Global Business Cougars have a strong history of leadership and membership drawn from varied backgrounds. These organizations regularly host speakers, networking events, and professional development activities that emphasize shared experiences, cross-cultural learning, and engagement with the broader business community.

Financial Resourses

CSUSM is a financially stable institution with a demonstrated commitment to sustaining both the University and the regional economy it serves. As an increasingly high-demand campus within the CSU system, CSUSM is projected to continue receiving enrollment growth targets, ensuring stable baseline funding for Academic Affairs and CoBA. In FY 2025–26, CSUSM's total general fund budget was approximately $156.60 million, of which Academic Affairs received 53%. CoBA's base budget allocation from this fund was $9.84 million.

While the General Fund (48500) covers faculty and staff salaries and basic operating expenses, the College has developed diversified financial strategies through trust funds, MBA professional fees, and philanthropic contributions to ensure sustainability, flexibility, and capacity for innovation.

Trust Funds:

The Extended Learning (EL) Trust Fund 44112 supports revenue-generating self-support programs such as the Specialized MBA, BSBA Temecula, and interdisciplinary offerings. A reserve of approximately $1 million ensures program sustainability and serves as the primary source of funding for faculty and staff professional development.

Senior Experience Trust Fund 49640 finances the signature Senior Experience program. Revenues from project sponsorships fund trade shows, business receptions, support staff, and marketing, maintaining program self-sufficiency. Balance: $600,000.

MBA Project Trust Fund 49657 supports the graduate-level Master's Experience program, covering awards banquets, staffing, and marketing. Balance: $200,000

MBA Professional Fees (1280):

CoBA collects $282 per unit in professional fees for state-supported MBA programs, as outlined in CSU Executive Order 1054. These funds are used to cover program operations, student scholarships, and financial aid, with the majority directed toward guaranteed summer research grants and travel support for tenure-line faculty. This investment ensures faculty remain competitive in a region with multiple AACSB-accredited institutions. Balance: $0.9 million.

Foundation Funds:

Philanthropic accounts and endowments provide critical support for student success and societal impact initiatives. These funds support the Business Professional Development (BPD) program, scholarships, mentorship, and student placements. CoBA has $2.02 million in current use "Foundation" funds and endowed funds of $4.97 million.

Together, these funding streams ensure that CoBA has flexibility beyond state appropriations to support faculty development, research productivity, teaching innovation, technology upgrades, and student success initiatives. This diversified financial base also underwrites key programs aligned with AACSB accreditation and CoBA's societal impact focus, including the Senior Experience program, BPD, mentoring, job placements, and applied learning initiatives.

Appendix 2.8 shows the six-year financial history of the College. CoBA's ability to maintain healthy reserves across multiple trust and Foundation accounts provides a strong buffer against state budget fluctuations and positions the College to invest strategically in areas that advance both its mission and accreditation priorities. Given these resources and reserves, CoBA is confident in its ability to support ongoing AACSB accreditation efforts and to continue delivering measurable impact to students and the regional economy.

Future of State Funding and Resource Development

CoBA acknowledges that the long-term trajectory of state support for public higher education in California poses ongoing challenges to the financial sustainability of public higher education. At the system level, the state General Fund support now accounts for approximately 60% of CSU's core operating budget, with tuition and mandatory fees covering the remainder. See California State University. Over time, the share of public universities' operating budgets covered by state appropriations has declined, increasing reliance on tuition and other revenue sources.

In 2025-26, a proposed 3% cut ($143.8 million) to CSU's base funding was initially advanced, and a scheduled 5% base funding increase (the "Compact" increment) was deferred. The Legislature ultimately chose to avoid the immediate cut and instead deferred the funding to subsequent years, using zero-interest loans to bridge the shortfall.

At the campus level, CSUSM is anticipating the effects of this constrained environment. With a planned 6% tuition increase, the campus still anticipates a 3.0% reduction in state funding, which will continue to put pressure on the budget. See California State University San Marcos.

Given these conditions, CoBA must continue executing its financial resilience strategy—emphasizing diversified revenue, foundation trust and reserve management, and strategic planning—to maintain mission alignment, support student success, and mitigate volatility.

Several factors inform our financial outlook:

- Many states, including California, are moving toward performance-based funding models that tie appropriations to graduation rates, student debt levels, and other metrics.

- Tuition revenue is projected to increase nationally, offsetting declines in per-student state and local appropriations.
- Operating costs in higher education have risen steadily over the past decade, with the Higher Education Price Index (HEPI) showing average annual increases of approximately 3–5%.
- Some institutions have shifted toward recruiting higher-income students to offset declining public funding; however, this approach is inconsistent with CSUSM's mission of access and equity.
- The lingering fiscal effects of recession risks and additional budget cuts across states, including California.

In response, CoBA has adopted a forward-looking financial strategy to broaden its resource base, reduce its dependence on state allocations, and ensure long-term viability while maintaining alignment with its mission. This strategy is operationalized through a 10-year resource development plan with five key elements:

1. Capital Campaign Engagement: Active participation in the University's Blueprint for the Future fundraising campaign to secure philanthropic investments aligned with CoBA's mission and societal impact focus.
2. Targeted Philanthropy: In partnership with University Advancement, the cultivation of the top regional philanthropic leaders with demonstrated capacity and interest in supporting higher education. CoBA's internal goal is to secure $5 million in philanthropic support over the next 10 years.
3. Naming the College: Pursuing a substantial philanthropic gift to secure a named endowment for the College, building on the recognition of Markstein Hall's benefactors.
4. National Giving Day Participation: Sustaining and expanding CoBA's involvement in CSUSM's Giving Day, supported by matching funds from key donors. The goal is to generate $100,000 in annual revenue by the end of the plan period.
5. Self-Support Programs: Offering market-driven self-support programs to generate sustainable revenue and reserves, including specialized MBA programs and Master's programs, business undergraduate programs at community colleges, online degrees, DBA, and interdisciplinary programs. These initiatives not only ensure financial resilience but also strengthen CoBA's regional impact by addressing unmet educational and professional development demands. Appendix 2.19 shows a 5-year projection and year-end balances of such programs. These projections assume that the University does not sweep the surplus generated by such programs.

Through this strategy, CoBA demonstrates a clear plan for financial resilience and growth. By expanding philanthropy, corporate partnerships, and self-support revenues, the College positions itself to mitigate the risks associated with declining state support while continuing to advance its mission of student success, access, and regional vitality.

Faculty Resources

Overview of Faculty Management and Support Policies

CoBA maintains a comprehensive and transparent framework for faculty management and professional support to promote academic excellence, foster faculty development, and align faculty performance with the College's mission to provide a transformative business education that integrates theory and practice through scholarship, innovation, and engagement.

Faculty management policies are grounded in both University-wide procedures and CoBA-specific governance processes, including the Faculty Governance Document and the Retention, Tenure, and Promotion (RTP) guidelines. These policies promote consistency, fairness, and ongoing feedback for all faculty members.

To support ongoing faculty development and ensure mission alignment:

- Tenure-track faculty undergo annual performance reviews that provide structured feedback on teaching, research, and service. These reviews are developmental in nature, helping probationary faculty make steady progress toward tenure and meet CoBA's expectations for scholarly engagement and teaching excellence.
- Tenured faculty participate in a five-year post-tenure review cycle that assesses continued effectiveness in teaching, scholarship, and service. This review process ensures that senior faculty remain academically current, contribute to CoBA's evolving strategic priorities, and

- maintain engagement with students, colleagues, and the business community.
- The college AACSB Team oversees annual faculty activity reports using Sedona, the College's electronic portfolio and AACSB accreditation management platform. These reviews confirm faculty qualifications and sufficiency statuses and inform deployment decisions.

CoBA also provides robust support mechanisms for faculty growth and professional engagement, including summer research grants, travel grants, professional development resources, annual teaching awards, research awards, service awards, brown-bag research seminars, and teaching innovation workshops. These are funded by the MBA Professional Fees Trust, the Extended Learning Trust Fund, and Foundation accounts.

Through these systematic policies and supports, CoBA ensures that all faculty—whether early-career or senior—receive the guidance, resources, and feedback necessary to maintain academic excellence, professional relevance, and alignment with the mission.

Forward-Looking Challenges Related to Faculty

CoBA anticipates several forward-looking challenges related to faculty resources, reflective of both system-wide trends in higher education and regional workforce dynamics:

Recruitment and Retention:

Recruiting and retaining highly qualified faculty remains one of CoBA's most significant strategic challenges, particularly in the current fiscal environment and within the competitive Southern California academic and professional market. The regional market for business faculty, especially in the disciplines of technology, analytics, and finance, remains intensely competitive due to high industry demand, limited academic supply, and private-sector and R-1 schools' salary differentials that exceed CSU pay scales by substantial margins.

Compounding these challenges, the cost of living in Southern California has increased considerably in recent years, affecting both new hires and existing faculty. Rising housing costs, inflation, and limited relocation support make it difficult to attract qualified candidates from outside the region. Declining state appropriations for higher education further impact the situation. Over the past several budget cycles, CoBA has faced reductions in its state-funded allocations, limiting its ability to offer competitive salary adjustments, counteroffers, and start-up research funds for new faculty. These financial constraints also restrict flexibility in workload management and research assigned time—key factors in faculty retention and satisfaction. The College anticipates that these fiscal pressures will persist in the coming years, requiring continued innovation in resource management and faculty support strategies.

Despite these challenges, CoBA has implemented several proactive measures to sustain faculty quality and engagement:

- Strategic Resource Diversification: The College continues to leverage self-support programs, Foundation accounts, and MBA Professional Fees to fund summer research grants, conference travel support, professional development, and overload teaching opportunities. These initiatives help compensate for limited state resources and support faculty scholarly productivity.
- Recognition and Engagement: CoBA maintains a strong culture of collegiality and engagement through faculty recognition awards, inclusion in strategic planning processes, and opportunities for leadership in new program development.
- Overload Teaching: CoBA provides compensated overload teaching opportunities, particularly in self-support graduate programs and summer sessions, as an additional means of supporting faculty income given regional cost-of-living pressures. College policy requires that faculty remain in good standing with respect to their research and scholarly obligations before accepting overload assignments, ensuring that teaching flexibility does not come at the expense of scholarly productivity.

Evolving Skill Demands:

The accelerating pace of technological change and digital transformation presents both opportunities and challenges for faculty currency and curriculum relevance. The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI), data analytics, automation, and digital business models has fundamentally reshaped the skills required of graduates and, by extension, the competencies expected of faculty.

In response, CoBA has prioritized faculty development and curricular innovation in emerging technologies to ensure that its programs remain current, rigorous, and responsive to market needs.

Recognizing that AI literacy is now essential across all business disciplines, CoBA established the Generative AI Task Force.

Innovation Thinking Group in Spring 2025. The group—composed of faculty representatives from every academic department—was charged with:

- Assessing current course content to identify opportunities for embedding AI and digital literacy skills across the curriculum;
- Recommending strategies for faculty development to strengthen AI competency, confidence, and integration into teaching and scholarship;
- Exploring innovative and interdisciplinary applications of generative AI that move beyond basic awareness toward future-oriented practices; and
- Developing actionable recommendations aligned with CoBA's strategic plan to support sustainable innovation in curriculum and faculty development.

The faculty chair convened this group to engage faculty who have demonstrated expertise or a strong interest in generative AI. In collaboration with the Associate Dean, the group's scope was to explore forward-thinking strategies that move beyond introductory discussions toward actionable ideas that advance CoBA's teaching and research mission.

The group produced a series of recommendations, several of which were implemented in AY 2024-25 in line with bullets 2 and 4 of the charge, including AI Faculty Resources, Tech Tuesdays, and the AI Faculty Tools Database, along with an AI workshop focused on faculty innovation and the applied use of emerging tools. In AY 2025-26, the group has focused on bullets 1 and 3 above.

By proactively updating faculty skills and modernizing the curriculum, CoBA ensures its educational offerings remain aligned with business and societal needs. This effort directly supports the College's goal to deliver a transformative business education that prepares students to lead in an AI-driven, data-focused economy, while also giving faculty the knowledge and confidence to provide innovative instruction.

Faculty Support

To encourage and maintain high-quality scholarly work, CoBA runs a tiered Summer Research Grant Program that recognizes research excellence and aligns faculty scholarship with the College's mission of providing a transformative, relevant, and research-driven business education.

The **Research and Development Committee (R&D)** manages the grant process and has created a clear, measurable algorithm to rank applications based on research quality and impact. This method guarantees fairness, promotes ongoing scholarly involvement, and aligns with the College's focus on enhancing both academic excellence and societal contributions through faculty research.

Faculty research productivity is quantified using a point-based algorithm that accounts for the relative quality of publication outlets based on established academic journal ranking systems. Under this model:

- Articles published in the Financial Times 50 list receive 150 points.
- Articles published in ABDC A or A* journals or ABS 3, 4, or 4* journals receive 100 points.
- Articles published in ABDC B journals or ABS 1 or 2 journals receive 75 points.
- Articles listed in Cabell's Journalytics Academic receive 55 points.
- Articles not listed in any of the above indices but approved by the department and AACSB Team receive 30 points.

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Mean	$ 7,106	$ 7,645	$ 8,853	$ 9,361	$ 9,296	$ 10,923
Median	$ 7,500	$ 8,000	$ 9,500	$ 9,000	$ 9,000	$ 11,000
Mode	$ 7,500	$ 6,500	$ 9,500	$ 11,000	$ 10,000	$ 12,000
Std Dev	$ 2,361	$ 1,892	$ 1,690	$ 2,045	$ 2,451	$ 3,853
Range	$ 8,500	$ 9,000	$ 7,500	$ 8,000	$ 12,000	$ 17,500
Min	$ 3,500	$ 3,500	$ 6,500	$ 6,000	$ 3,000	$ 2,500
Max	$ 12,000	$ 12,500	$ 14,000	$ 14,000	$ 15,000	$ 20,000
Sum	$ 234,500	$ 290,500	$ 301,000	$ 337,000	$ 353,250	$ 426,000
Count	33	38	34	36	38	39

Figure 2.1.27: Summer Research Grant Statistics 2020 – 2025

This system provides an objective measure of scholarly impact while allowing flexibility for emerging and interdisciplinary research areas. Faculty proposals are rank-ordered by their calculated scores, and summer research grants are awarded based on the rankings and available funding.

The **Summer Research Grant Program** has been instrumental in enhancing the quality and quantity of peer-reviewed publications produced by CoBA faculty.

Over the past two years, the College awarded $779,250 in summer research grants to faculty members, including SA-qualified lecturers, underscoring CoBA's commitment to supporting scholarship across all appointment types. Figure 2.1.27 presents a summary of the program's funding distribution over the past six years, demonstrating sustained institutional investment in faculty research and development.

Beyond monetary support, the program has strengthened CoBA's research culture and collaborative scholarship. Faculty recipients frequently collaborate on interdisciplinary projects, co-author manuscripts, and mentor junior colleagues pursuing SA qualification. These outcomes reinforce the College's commitment to maintaining a scholarly, engaged, and innovative faculty whose work contributes to student learning, regional vitality, and societal impact.

Faculty Rank	AY 2020-21	AY 2021-22	AY 2022-23	AY 2023-24	AY 2024-25	AY 2025-26
Professor	15	14	15	14	15	14
Associate Professor	11	12	14	15	13	13
Assistant Professor	14	15	14	13	15	17
Lecturers (FTE)	15.8	16.4	16.6	19.4	22.1	26.8
Total TT Faculty	40	41	43	42	43	44
Total All Faculty	55.8	57.4	59.6	61.4	65.1	70.8

Figure 2.1.28: Composition of CoBA Faculty

	AY 2020-21	AY 2021-22	AY 2022-23	AY 2023-24	AY 2024-25	AY 2025-26
Tenure-Track Hires	3	2	4	3	4	3

Figure 2.1.29: CoBA Tenure-Track Hires

In addition to summer research grants, the College provides each faculty member with $5,000 in professional development funds annually. These funds may be used for travel and other research-related expenses.

To complement these incentives, the College of Business Administration (CoBA) has also implemented accountability measures for faculty who do not maintain Scholarly Academic (SA) status. Under the College's self-support teaching policy, priority for overload teaching (including summer and self-support courses) is given to tenured and tenure-track faculty who:

- Meet teaching expectations;
- Have demonstrated sustained engagement over the past six years that aligns with CoBA's standards for SA or PA status; and
- Fulfill service expectations to the College, the University, or the CSU system that enhance CoBA's reputation.
- To support AACSB accreditation standards and ensure fairness, SA and PA faculty may teach up to 12 units of self-support (overload) courses during any July 1 – June 30 period.

Looking ahead, CoBA's current Strategic Plan identifies faculty recruitment and retention as critical success factors for sustaining its mission of transformative, practice-integrated business education. By investing in faculty development, workload equity, and innovative funding models, the College aims to maintain a vibrant academic community that continues to advance student success, regional vitality, and scholarly impact despite ongoing fiscal challenges. Figures 2.1.28 and 2.1.29 show the numbers of faculty and TT hires in this review cycle.

Faculty Qualifications

CoBA's faculty qualifications framework ensures that the intellectual expertise and professional engagement of its faculty directly support the College's mission to deliver a transformative business education that prepares a diverse student body for success in a changing economy and society. Faculty are classified as Scholarly Academic (SA), Practice Academic (PA), Scholarly Practitioner (SP), or Instructional Practitioner (IP), each playing a unique role in CoBA's dedication to offering a relevant, innovative, and practice-focused curriculum.

Scholarly Academic:

SA faculty uphold CoBA's commitment to academic excellence and scholarship. They hold doctoral degrees and maintain qualifications through sustained scholarly engagement, including peer-reviewed research, academic publications, and intellectual contributions that inform curriculum development. Their work ensures that CoBA's teaching remains grounded in theory, empirical evidence, and evolving business knowledge, reinforcing the high academic standards central to the College's mission.

Practice Academic:

PA faculty exemplify CoBA's mission to integrate theory and practice. Holding doctoral degrees and maintaining active engagement with industry, they connect academic rigor to real-world application through consulting, executive education, and industry collaboration. PA faculty strengthen CoBA's relevance and innovation by bringing current business challenges and professional practices into the classroom. Their contributions ensure that students are prepared to succeed in an evolving economy and that the curriculum reflects emerging industry trends and professional expectations.

Scholarly Practitioner:

SP faculty advance CoBA's mission by linking professional experience with scholarly engagement, holding master's degrees, and possessing significant industry expertise. They maintain their qualifications through scholarly contributions, including case studies, applied research, and pedagogical development. SP faculty directly support CoBA's goal of providing a transformative learning experience by integrating practical insights and evidence-based approaches into the curriculum. Their work fosters innovation in teaching and contributes to CoBA's collaborative partnerships with the business community.

Instructional Practitioner:

IP faculty embody CoBA's mission to prepare students for professional success through practical, experience-based instruction. With relevant graduate degrees and substantial ongoing professional experience, IP faculty bring current industry perspectives into the classroom. Their engagement in consulting, professional practice, or leadership roles ensures that students gain exposure to contemporary business realities and develop competencies valued by employers. IP faculty directly contribute to CoBA's integration of education, engagement, and application, preparing students to thrive in a dynamic workforce and contribute to their communities.

Maintaining qualifications involves ongoing, sustained, and substantive intellectual contributions or professional engagements as specified in Appendix 2.9.

Appendix 2.9 outlines the criteria and maintenance requirements for each faculty qualification category as defined in CoBA's Faculty Qualifications Grid.

> CoBA expects all tenured and tenure-track faculty to maintain academic engagement through sustained intellectual contributions, and all lecturer faculty to maintain professional engagement in their teaching fields. These expectations ensure that faculty remain current in scholarship and practice, consistent with CoBA's mission to provide a transformative business education that integrates theory and practice through scholarship and collaboration with industry and community partners.

A representative list of **Academic Engagement Activities (AEAs)** appears in the approved grid; however, it is not exhaustive. Faculty may propose additional qualifying activities, provided they demonstrate that the activities are substantial in merit, mission-relevant, and aligned with CoBA's strategic goals. The AACSB Team (AA Team) reviews proposed activities not listed in the grid and approves them on a case-by-case basis to ensure consistency and rigor.

Faculty who have completed and defended their Doctoral dissertations within the past six years are considered SA. ABD faculty are considered SA-qualified if their doctoral program enrollment is active and their dissertation proposal has been successfully defended; this status is reviewed annually. Maintaining SA status requires ongoing, sustained, and substantive intellectual contributions, as outlined in Appendix 2.9.

Acceptable scholarly outputs include peer-reviewed journal (PRJ) articles indexed in ABDC, ABS, or Cabell's Journalytics. If a journal is not listed in these sources but is not identified on Cabell's Predatory Journal List, a faculty member may petition to have the journal added to SEDONA, CoBA's faculty reporting and AACSB accreditation management platform. Petitions are first reviewed by the department faculty and then by the AA Team for final approval.

These criteria are fully aligned with CoBA's Retention, Tenure, and Promotion (RTP) guidelines and clearly communicate expectations for the quality and impact of intellectual contributions. The AACSB qualification process has been instrumental in refining and standardizing the College's definition of scholarly quality, ensuring that SA faculty are fully aware of the expectations for maintaining qualification at the time of appointment and throughout their careers.

Do we meet minimums? Table 3-1 Summary (SEDONA)			
Discipline	SA	SA+PA+SP+IP	Participate
ACCT	75%	100%	73%
FIN	64%	86%	83%
MGMT	59%	100%	88%
MIS	78%	100%	76%
MKTG	63%	98%	79%
OM	52%	100%	93%
BS	45%	98%	N/A
Temecula	85%	100%	N/A
MBA	66%	100%	N/A
MSSCM	84%	100%	N/A
CoBA	48%	99%	85%

Figure 2.1.30: Faculty Sufficiency and Qualifications AY 2025-26

PA status applies to two classifications of faculty members:

- Former SA faculty who have transitioned from primarily scholarly activities to professional engagement, maintaining strong linkages to industry practice.
- Doctoral-qualified lecturers who were not classified as SA upon appointment and who focus on professional engagement.

All PA faculty are expected to engage consistently with business and industry through consulting, applied research, or other professional activities related to their teaching disciplines. To retain PA status, faculty must complete at least one professional engagement (PE) activity each year, as shown in Appendix 2.9.

Significant administrative service to the College or University may also serve as evidence of professional engagement. Positions such as Dean, Associate Dean, and Director of self-support programs are integral to the College's strategic plan and financial sustainability. In alignment with CoBA's strategic priorities, these administrative roles are expected to help generate discretionary resources that support student success initiatives, faculty development, and mission-aligned programming.

Faculty directors overseeing defined self-support programs—including recruitment, marketing, international outreach, program administration, student advising, faculty evaluation, and scheduling—are classified as PA-qualified. These activities directly support CoBA's mission and strategic goals, ensuring the sustainability of programs that enhance student success and regional vitality. When faculty in administrative PA roles return to their instructional appointments, they retain PA qualification for a period equal to the length of their administrative service, up to 3 years. At the end of this period, faculty are expected to meet the criteria to requalify as SA.

IP faculty maintain qualifications through ongoing professional engagement within their respective industries, ensuring that CoBA's curriculum remains relevant, applied, and aligned with the evolving needs of employers and the regional economy. In special circumstances approved by the AA Team, an active Certified Public Accountant (CPA) license may substitute for a graduate degree when the faculty member demonstrates significant professional expertise and instructional relevance in the discipline.

Figure 2.1.30 is a summary of Tables 3-1 and 3-2 and presents CoBA's faculty sufficiency and qualifications by discipline for the 2025–26 academic year. These calculations include undergraduate courses in fall and spring semesters and graduate courses across fall, spring, and summer terms. Graduate summer courses are included because they are required for the MBA curriculum, and all MBA students must complete them during the summer term. Excluding them would yield an incomplete representation of the program's instructional coverage.

CoBA excludes graduate courses in the Professional Science Master's (PSM) programs in Biotechnology and Cybersecurity because the College delivers less than 20% of the curriculum in these interdisciplinary programs. At the undergraduate level, we exclude Business Communication (BUS 203) as a non-discipline-specific course.

Summary of Faculty Qualification Ratios

As shown in Table 3-1, CoBA meets or exceeds all required faculty qualification ratios for participating faculty, SA faculty, and SA/PA/SP/IP combined coverage across nearly all disciplines in AY 2025–26.

Finance Department

During the 2025–26 academic year, the Finance Department had 7.10 full-time equivalent faculty (FTEF):

- 4.53 SA tenure-track faculty,
- 1.57 PA/IP full-time equivalent lecturer (FTEL), and
- 1.0 tenure-track faculty member who is currently in the "Additional" category.

The department achieved the following instructional coverage ratios:

- 64% of SCH taught by SA faculty,
- 86% of SCH taught by SA, PA, and IP faculty combined.

One tenure-track faculty member is not meeting SA qualification standards. To support the reacquisition of SA status, CoBA implemented a targeted faculty development plan pairing each faculty member with an SA-qualified colleague who shares similar research interests. The College also offered financial incentives for collaboration and committed to funding a summer research grant upon acceptance of a joint publication. This mentoring and support model has been effective in the past, and CoBA is confident this approach will promptly restore the faculty member's SA qualification.

Faculty Sufficiency

CoBA ensures that its faculty resources are sufficient in number, qualifications, and engagement to fulfill its mission to provide a transformative business education that integrates theory, practice, and community engagement. Faculty sufficiency is defined not only by teaching contributions but also by the extent and depth of participation in the College's intellectual and operational life, consistent with AACSB Standard 3.

Each academic year, CoBA conducts a systematic faculty sufficiency review to ensure that all programs are staffed by faculty who are appropriately participating in and supporting the programs. This process begins with an annual survey distributed to all faculty members, including tenure-line, lecturer, and executive-in-residence faculty, requesting documentation of their contributions beyond classroom teaching.

The survey captures engagement in activities such as:

- Curriculum development and program review;
- Assurance of Learning (AoL) assessment and data analysis;
- Faculty governance, committee service, and leadership roles;
- Career advising and student mentoring;
- Community outreach, consulting, and industry partnerships; and
- Participation in research collaborations, recruitment, and professional events.

Survey responses are reviewed and verified by the AACSB Team, which determines each faculty member's participating or supporting status based on the nature, extent, and continuity of their engagement. This classification is validated annually by the Director of AACSB Accreditation and reported as part of CoBA's AACSB documentation process.

Appendix 2.10 outlines the qualifying activities for tenure-line and lecturer participation status. Participating faculty represent the foundation of CoBA's academic community and play a central role in curriculum quality, student learning, and mission fulfillment. They are deeply involved in the College's shared governance structure, serving on key committees, including the Strategic team, AACSB team, AoL team, and college standing committees. Participating faculty also lead initiatives in societal impact, including the Senior Experience program, Business Professional Development (BPD), and other applied learning partnerships with the regional business community.

Supporting faculty contribute primarily to instruction and provide essential flexibility in staffing, particularly for high-enrollment and specialized courses. They ensure continuity of high-quality instruction while enabling

CoBA to manage resources effectively and respond to dynamic enrollment patterns.

Across both undergraduate and graduate programs, participating faculty consistently deliver the majority of student credit hours, thereby exceeding AACSB sufficiency expectations. This distribution ensures that the design, delivery, and assessment of academic programs are led by faculty who are actively engaged in the College's mission, strategy, and continuous improvement.

The sufficiency framework also promotes fairness and transparency for lecturers and non-tenure-line faculty. Lecturers who demonstrate sustained engagement in activities such as AoL, advising, or program coordination are recognized as participating faculty, ensuring that contributions across all appointment types are valued and aligned with CoBA's mission.

Faculty sufficiency is intentionally managed to support CoBA's strategic plan and its societal impact focus of advancing student success and regional vitality. By maintaining an academically and professionally engaged faculty body that exceeds sufficiency expectations, CoBA ensures that its programs remain rigorous, relevant, and mission-consistent, and that students are served by faculty who embody the College's commitment to education, engagement, and innovation.

Faculty Deployment

CoBA's faculty deployment strategy is intentionally designed to ensure that each academic program is staffed by a sufficient number of qualified faculty whose scholarly and professional expertise directly supports the College's mission of providing a transformative, practice-integrated business education. Faculty assignments are made to maintain compliance with AACSB Standard 3 and to sustain academic quality, relevance, and engagement across undergraduate and graduate programs.

Figure 2.1.30 summarizes faculty deployment by qualification status for all CoBA programs. The ratios demonstrate that CoBA meets or exceeds AACSB's recommended thresholds for faculty qualifications across its degree offerings, ensuring that teaching and learning are informed by current research, professional practice, and industry collaboration.

At the undergraduate level, CoBA deploys a balanced mix of SA and IP faculty, ensuring strong alignment between curriculum content, current scholarship, and applied practice.

At the MBA level, most courses are taught by SA faculty to ensure academic rigor. Many of these faculty members have strong research backgrounds. Over a third of the courses are taught by faculty with industry experience. This enables the program to combine analytical rigor, leadership development, and practical classroom application.

CoBA's faculty deployment is reviewed annually as part of the AACSB qualification and sufficiency process, led by the Director of Graduate Programs and Accreditation. This review ensures that:

- Each program maintains the required ratios of SA, PA, SP, and IP faculty.
- Faculty assignments align with their qualification category and expertise.
- Curricular leadership and AoL activities remain under the direction of SA and PA faculty.
- Applied learning and industry engagement courses are further supported by qualified IP faculty.

Through this systematic deployment model, CoBA maintains academic excellence and mission alignment while ensuring that its programs are delivered by faculty who embody the College's commitment to education, engagement, and innovation.

Area 2 – Learner Success (Standards 4–7)

Curriculum Relevance, Review, and Global Orientation

CoBA maintains a dynamic and rigorous process to ensure that its curriculum remains current, relevant, forward-looking, and globally oriented. Guided by the mission to provide a transformative business education that integrates theory and practice, curricular oversight is managed through the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UGCC), operating under the direction of the Associate Dean, and the Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC), and the Assurance of Learning (AoL) Team, operating under the direction of the Director of Graduate Programs and Accreditation.

Undergraduate Curriculum Structure

CoBA's undergraduate curriculum is designed to progressively build student knowledge, skills, and professional readiness. Students complete 60 units of lower-division coursework, including 24 units of pre-business courses that establish quantitative, analytical, and communication foundations essential for success in upper-division study. The pre-business curriculum includes Introduction to Business (2 units), Business Law (3 units), Business Writing (3 units), Business Statistics (3 units), Accounting for Managers (4 units), Business Calculus (3 units), and Principles of Microeconomics and Macroeconomics (3 units each). Students who intend to pursue the Accounting option complete a 2-unit Cost Accounting course as part of their pre-business coursework.

Because CoBA is an impacted major, students must apply for admission to the College after completing all pre-business courses with grades of C or better and maintaining a minimum GPA of 2.65. This selective process ensures that students entering the upper-division program are academically prepared for the rigor of professional business study.

Upon admission to the major, students select one of the nine options: Accounting, Finance, Marketing, Management, Management Information Systems, Business Analytics, Global Supply Chain Management, Global Business, or Entrepreneurship.

Each option begins with a set of foundation courses that lay the foundation for business knowledge and professional competencies. These courses include Business Professional Development (2 units), Business Environment (2 units), Introduction to Data Analytics (2 or 4 units), and foundational courses in Marketing, Management, Finance, MIS, and Operations Management (each offered in either 2- or 4-unit versions). CoBA's model is distinctive in that students pursuing a concentration in a particular field complete the 4-unit version of the relevant foundation courses and the 2-unit version of the others. For example, Finance students complete the 4-unit Foundations of Finance and Introduction to Data Analytics courses while taking the 2-unit versions of Marketing, Management, MIS, and Operations Management.

This modular structure enables students to gain broad exposure across all business disciplines while developing deeper expertise in their selected area. It also ensures flexibility within each option, allowing students to pursue advanced electives and applied learning opportunities that align with their professional and societal impact goals.

Each option has its own set of core courses that deepen the discipline-specific knowledge, followed by option-designated electives that allow students to tailor their preparation to their career goals.

In addition to option cores and electives, all students must complete 9 units of Upper-Division General Education (UDGE). To support mission-centered breadth and ethical, global awareness, CoBA offers two UDGE courses specifically designed for business learners: "Diversity in Global Business Context" and "Beyond the Bottom Line: Ethical Decision-Making in Business." These courses complement disciplinary studies by enhancing intercultural competence, ethical reasoning, and civic responsibility.

A 2- or 4-unit Business Strategy course is required for all students, reflecting CoBA's emphasis on strategic thinking and decision-making across the business landscape. This course serves as an integrative experience, bringing together knowledge from functional areas of business and enabling students to apply that knowledge to real-world challenges.

In addition to the nine concentrated Options, CoBA offers a self-support BSBA degree completion program at the Temecula campus. This program is structured as a General Business Option designed for working professionals and transfer students seeking a broad, integrative business education. The Temecula curriculum mirrors the main campus program in rigor and Assurance of Learning outcomes but differs in structure: students complete the 4-unit versions of all foundation business courses and select electives across multiple disciplines. This design ensures balanced exposure to finance, marketing, management, operations, and information systems, equipping graduates with a well-rounded understanding of business functions and cross-disciplinary problem-solving skills.

The Senior Experience (BUS 495) serves as the capstone for all CoBA undergraduates, where students collaborate in teams to work on consulting projects for regional businesses, nonprofits, or public agencies. These projects address strategic challenges across growth, process optimization, and market expansion. Through this real-world learning experience, students apply their academic knowledge to create value for the region while developing critical professional competencies, including project management, client engagement, and presentation skills. The roadmaps of all options are available in Appendix 2.11.

This structure—combining specialized core courses, broad-based electives, general education, and applied learning experiences—ensures that students graduate with deep expertise in their field of study as well as the ability to work across disciplines, solve complex business problems, and contribute meaningfully to regional and global societal challenges.

Curriculum development is informed by faculty scholarship, alumni and industry consultation, and advisory board input, ensuring alignment with market and societal needs. The College employs Curriculog, a digital curriculum management system, to track proposals from the department to the University Curriculum Committee (UCC) and to the Senate for approval, providing transparency and consistency.

Global perspectives are purposefully integrated throughout CoBA's undergraduate and graduate programs. Faculty embed global case studies, multinational supply chain analysis, and sustainability-focused enterprises into core and capstone courses, ensuring that students critically examine cross-border strategy, cultural intelligence, and global market dynamics. Students may pursue the Global Business Option, which requires either a semester-long study abroad experience or completion of a substantial overseas internship (GBM 495: Global Business Experience) totaling at least 190 hours.

During this review cycle, the CoBA Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UGCC) developed formal guidelines for the review and approval of the Study Abroad Program Policy (Appendix 2.12). Under these guidelines, OM 305 was approved as an Italy-based course taught by our faculty, strengthening academic oversight and ensuring alignment with program learning outcomes. Students also have access to faculty-led international coursework in Europe (GBM 440C) and Latin America (GBM 440B), providing structured academic engagement in diverse business environments.

At the graduate level, the SMBA program offers an International Business specialization through which students may complete an international internship (GBM 685) or participate in globally focused applied projects within the Master's Project (BA 685). Faculty scholarship and professional engagement further reinforce global perspectives through presentations and collaborations at international conferences during the current review cycle. Collectively, these initiatives demonstrate a sustained commitment to preparing students for leadership in an interconnected global economy.

Student Success Pathway – Signature Programs

CoBA's Student Success Pathway supports students from entry to graduation and career readiness by combining academic preparation, professional development, mentoring, and experiential learning, aligning with the college's mission to provide a rigorous, relevant business education. It promotes regional economic growth and social mobility by improving retention, career prep, and success for a diverse student body.

As Figure 2.2.1 illustrates, BUS 101 is an introductory course for first-year and pre-business students that introduces them to business disciplines, degree options, advising, academic expectations, and campus resources. Designed to boost retention, engagement, and informed major choices, the course aligns with the College's strategic goals while also promoting students' professional identity and fostering a sense of early belonging in the College.

Beyond the classroom, CoBA launched a Peer Mentorship Program in Fall 2024, connecting new pre-business students with trained upper-division mentors to foster a sense of belonging, academic success, and resource navigation, thereby supporting student retention.

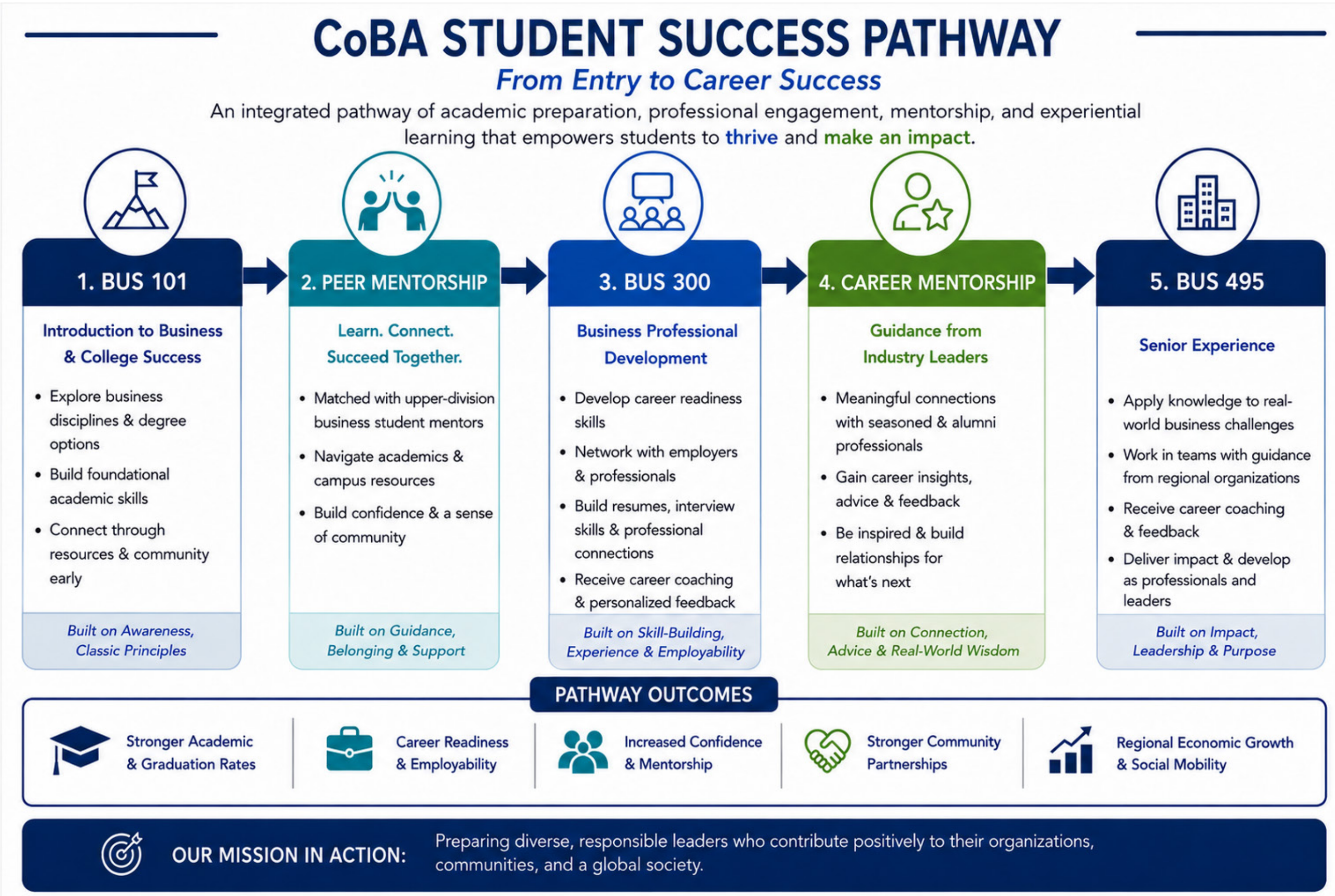

Figure 2.2.1: Student Success Pathway

Students advance to BUS 300, CoBA's Business Professional Development course, a core part of the College's career readiness model. Developed with industry experts and Executives in Residence (EIRs), the curriculum aligns with workforce-ready skills, including networking, career exploration, resume writing, interviewing, communication, career coaching, and employer engagement.

Students also gain career mentorship from CoBA's Career Mentorship program and industry events. Professionals, alumni, and community partners offer mentoring, networking, mock interviews, and coaching, further boosting our students' confidence, social capital, and career placement, especially for first-generation and underserved students.

The pathway ends with BUS 495 Senior Experience, CoBA's capstone. Students work on consulting projects with regional organizations, applying their knowledge to real-world problems, fostering teamwork, problem-solving, communication, and ethics, while delivering community value. This high-impact practice supports learning outcomes and demonstrates CoBA's commitment to engagement, innovation, and societal impact.

Overall, the Student Success Pathway connects academic learning, professional development, mentorship, and experiential learning throughout students' journeys, by enhancing their success, readiness, community involvement, and continuous improvement aligned with AACSB Standards 1, 4, 6, and 9.

Integration of Current and Emerging Technologies

Technological innovation is central to CoBA's mission of preparing students for an evolving economy. The College integrates current and emerging technologies into the curriculum and pedagogy. Courses incorporate tools such as Tableau, R, Power BI, VBA, SQL, Python, GitHub, Jira, SAP, SPSS, Excel analytics, Crystal Ball, Country Navigator, and more; Appendix 2.13 lists the technologies used and the student credit hours.

In 2024, CoBA formed an AI Curriculum Task Force to integrate AI, data analytics, and automation across programs. The faculty assesses current digital and AI skills, identifies opportunities to add these in courses, and develops AI learning outcomes aligned with the College's Assurance of Learning. Initiatives include creating an AI Option and piloting modules on AI ethics, decision-making, and analytics for undergrad and MBA programs. Faculty are supported through professional development and industry partnerships to enhance digital teaching skills. These efforts ensure that students graduate with the technological and analytical skills employers need, while faculty stay current with digital business trends.

Recent and Planned Curriculum Revisions

Since the self-evaluation review, CoBA has implemented several significant curriculum revisions aimed at improving student success, program coherence, and applied learning:

Pre-Business Redesign

As part of CoBA's continuous improvement process and commitment to enhancing student success and retention, the pre-business curriculum was significantly redesigned to better align with program learning outcomes and reduce early-course attrition.

Under the previous model, all incoming business students were required to complete ACCT 201 (Financial Accounting) and ACCT 202 (Managerial Accounting), each a three-unit course. These courses historically had high DFW rates, particularly among first-year students who were still developing quantitative and analytical readiness. In Fall 2024, CoBA implemented a new model that replaced ACCT 201 and ACCT 202 with two courses:

- ACCT 203 – Accounting for Managers (4 units), and
- BUS 101 – Introduction to Business (2 units) or ACCT 204 – Cost Accounting (2 units)

All first-year pre-business students, except those pursuing the Accounting option, now complete BUS 101 and ACCT 203. Students who plan to pursue the Accounting option take ACCT 204 in place of BUS 101, but they are strongly encouraged to enroll in BUS 101 as an elective to strengthen their foundational understanding of business disciplines and professional skills. This redesign offers several advantages:

- BUS 101 provides an early introduction to the functional areas of business, professional expectations, career development, and success strategies. By integrating students into the College's learning community from their first semester, the course fosters a sense of belonging and significantly reduces attrition among pre-business students.

Consolidating accounting content into ACCT 203 streamlines instruction and emphasizes managerial relevance, better supporting non-accounting option students who may struggle with debit-credit details.

The historically high DFW-rate course BUS 202 (Business Law) was shifted to the sophomore year, aligning course sequencing with student preparedness and improving performance outcomes.

Overall, this curriculum redesign has improved the student transition to the major, enhanced conceptual integration across lower-division courses, and strengthened our ability to support diverse learners through structured, early engagement. Figure 2.1.3 shows the effectiveness of this initiative.

Learning Community Initiative

To boost first-year engagement and retention, as mentioned earlier, CoBA piloted a Learning Community in Fall 2025 that combined four courses: BUS 101, GEL 101, GEO 102, and GEW. This initiative fosters a sense of belonging, confidence, and foundational skills while encouraging active learning through shared assignments and interdisciplinary projects. CoBA supported instructors financially, enabling faculty to meet regularly to align objectives and assessments, boosting student engagement and retention. Figure 2.1.2 shows its effectiveness.

Business Communication (BUS 203) Redesign:

As part of the AoL cycle, the AoL Team identified a deficiency in oral communication skills among undergraduate students. In response, CoBA revised BUS 203 (Business Writing) to Business Communication to incorporate explicit outcomes in oral communication. These revisions emphasize delivery, content, and visual aids—competencies that are introduced in this course. The integration of these outcomes demonstrates how AoL findings directly inform curricular improvement and support CoBA's mission to prepare students for professional success in a dynamic business environment.

Specialized MBA (SMBA) Program Redesign

In 2023, CoBA redesigned the SMBA program to improve accessibility, curriculum integration, and alignment with the needs of working professionals. The revision, based on AoL indirect results, employer feedback, and enrollment data, aimed to address demand for flexible graduate business education. Previously, non-business applicants completed foundation courses in a ten-week summer term, creating scheduling challenges and limiting enrollment. The 2023 redesign incorporated foundation content into the core curriculum, allowing all students to start in the Fall, with flexible formats of 12 months full-time or 24 months part-time. This integrated model offers several benefits:

- Accessibility and Flexibility: Students can transition seamlessly without a summer intensive.
- Appeal to Professionals: Cohort and evening classes fit work schedules.
- Better Student Experience: Integrated content enhances engagement.
- Enrollment Growth: Enrollment doubled post-redesign, attracting diverse professionals.

The redesign expands access to graduate business education, supporting workforce development and economic mobility, aligning with CoBA's mission to promote student success and regional vitality. It also advances regional vitality by increasing access to graduate education for working professionals in San Diego.

New Program Launch:

UG Entrepreneurship Option: CoBA launched the Entrepreneurship Option in Fall 2023, evolving from an earlier management track to a more cohesive, modern curriculum aligned with entrepreneurial ecosystems. It expands experiential learning, incorporates current venture frameworks, and deepens regional partnerships, notably with CSUSM's Innovation Hub. This reflects CoBA's dedication to ongoing development, stakeholder responsiveness, and AACSB standards for innovation and impact.

Master of Science in Supply Chain Analytics (MSSCA): CoBA launched the MSSCA in Fall 2025 to address regional workforce demand in analytics and operations management. Data for this program will be reported beginning with the first graduating cohort.

Planned programs over the next three years include the Master of Science in Business Analytics, the MBA Specialization in Strategic Sustainability, the General BSBA in Chula Vista, the Artificial Intelligence option, additional AI-integrated coursework, and expanded experiential learning opportunities through industry partnerships.

Enrollment Trends and Program Growth

CoBA's enrollment patterns from AY 2021to AY 2025 reflect both the stability and adaptability of its programs in response to shifting regional and national trends in higher education. Despite statewide enrollment fluctuations within the California State University system, CoBA has maintained steady overall enrollment while achieving targeted growth in several undergraduate options and graduate programs aligned with workforce demand.

In 2021, CoBA raised the pre-business GPA requirement from 2.5 to 2.65 to strengthen academic preparation and support student success in upper-division coursework. Despite this higher admission threshold, under-

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Growth 1-Year	Growth 5-Year	Share of Enrollment
Pre-Business	1208	1222	1376	1575	1740	10%	44%	-
Business Minor	61	69	69	72	69	-4%	13%	-
ACCT	216	179	166	172	194	13%	-10%	12%
BA	3	5	18	39	66	69%	-	4%
GSCM	104	88	72	78	92	18%	-12%	6%
ENTR			10	23	48	109%	-	3%
MGMT	301	291	298	305	283	-7%	-6%	18%
GB	59	46	54	62	55	-11%	-7%	3%
General	76	59	39	41	60	46%	-21%	4%
FIN	209	199	242	254	287	13%	37%	18%
MIS	111	93	122	140	128	-9%	15%	8%
MKTG	292	312	358	377	379	1%	30%	24%
Total	**2640**	**2563**	**2824**	**3138**	**3401**	**8%**	**29%**	**100%**

Figure 2.2.2: Undergraduate Enrollment by Option

graduate enrollment remained stable, with strong growth in Finance, Business Analytics, and Marketing, reflecting student demand for data-driven and leadership-oriented career paths (Figure 2.2.2).

The data in Figure 2.2.2 indicate that overall undergraduate enrollment increased by approximately 30% over the five-year period, with growth concentrated in disciplines that emphasize analytics, finance, and marketing skills. These outcomes correspond directly with CoBA's 2023–2028 Strategic Plan, which prioritizes advancing student success and regional vitality through programs aligned with emerging business needs in Southern California.

At the graduate level, CoBA implemented strategic adjustments to its admissions policy to enhance program accessibility while maintaining academic and professional rigor. In 2021, the Fully Employed MBA program waived the GMAT requirement and increased the minimum work experience requirement to five years, reflecting a shift toward valuing professional achievement and managerial readiness. FEMBA students currently average 14 years of professional experience, supporting a highly engaged, practice-oriented classroom environment. Figure 2.2.3 shows that FEMBA enrollment has remained strong, with a modest recovery from the temporary dip during the 2022 and 2023 pandemic period. The FEMBA's continued strength demonstrates sustained demand among working professionals seeking applied, evening-format business education.

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Growth 1-Year	Growth 5-Year	Share of Enrollment
FEMBA	87	62	58	78	79	1%	-9%	51%
SMBA	43	68	34	69	66	-4%	53%	42%
MSSCA					11	-	-	7%
Total	**130**	**130**	**92**	**147**	**156**	**6%**	20%	**100%**

Figure 2.2.3: Graduate Enrollment

The Share of Enrollment column confirms that, by 2025, Finance, Management, and Marketing will collectively account for the largest share of undergraduate enrollment, highlighting the College's effective responsiveness to market trends while maintaining diversity across academic offerings.

In 2023, the Specialized MBA (SMBA) program also eliminated the GMAT requirement and introduced a conditional admission policy that requires students to earn a grade of B or better in their first block to continue in the program. This policy balances accessibility with academic accountability and supports CoBA's mission of providing transformative education for diverse learners. The average SMBA student now brings three years of professional experience, enhancing classroom diversity and peer learning.

Specialized MBA enrollment has doubled since the 2023 redesign (Figure 2.2.3), which embedded foundation courses into the main curriculum and eliminated the intensive summer prerequisite structure. The redesign increased accessibility for non-business majors and working professionals, significantly improving program attractiveness and enrollment stability.

Together, these graduate programs underscore CoBA's commitment to offering flexible, high-quality, and practice-oriented graduate business education that meets the needs of regional employers.

Curricular Impact on Societal Engagement and Student Learning

The College advances its societal impact focus, "advancing student success and regional vitality by integrating education, engagement, and innovation to create lasting societal impact," through a curriculum structured around four strategic goals. These goals guide curricular design, course sequencing, co-curricular skill development, and career preparation initiatives that collectively connect student learning with regional workforce needs and long-term economic vitality. The initiatives, outcomes, and evidence supporting these efforts are summarized in Table 9-1 and discussed in detail in Area 3 of the report.

Goal 1: Enhance Student Persistence and Retention

Curricular redesign has led to noticeable improvements in student persistence and academic success. See Figures 2.1.2 and 2.1.3. These changes reflect a systemic approach to retention, in which curriculum sequencing, course structure, and early cohort-based engagement serve as resilience-building mechanisms rather than isolated interventions.

Goal 2: Build Student Resilience and Adaptability

The College also supports student resilience through structured mentoring and early engagement initiatives that are integrated into the curriculum. Since the establishment of peer mentoring programs in 2023, participation in mentoring relationships and early engagement activities has steadily increased. These programs provide guidance and academic support during key transition points in the student journey, helping students navigate academic challenges and build confidence. Evidence of these efforts is evident in improved transfer student retention, which increased from 82 percent to 85 percent despite growth in cohort size. Expanded participation in mentoring has also been associated with stronger academic engagement and persistence during critical stages of the business curriculum.

By strengthening students' ability to navigate academic and professional challenges, these initiatives reinforce the College's broader societal impact mission to expand educational opportunity and enable students to succeed both academically and professionally.

Goal 3: Increase Student Skillsets and Competencies for Employability

All CoBA students now have access to the Coursera Career Academy, which provides more than 40 industry-recognized professional certificates. Over a 12-month period, students completed 1,398 courses, generating 9,274 learning hours and documenting 3,206 discrete skills. This level of engagement represents a large-scale, embedded model of co-curricular skill development aligned with employer demand.

Advisory board input has been systematically incorporated into new degree development (MS in Supply Chain Management and MS in Business Analytics), the redesign of the Specialized MBA, and the creation of emerging program options, including the AI concentration in the BSBA. This closed feedback loop ensures that curricular content evolves in response to identified skill gaps such as AI literacy, data interpretation, and technology-enabled decision-making.

Goal 4: Increase Post-Graduation Student Career Placement

Career readiness initiatives have expanded in scale and depth. Participation in Networking Nights doubled from approximately 600 to 1200 students, and mock interview participation increased from 500 to 1100 students. The Executive-in-Residence program has deepened the quality of student–executive interaction, while the Career Mentor Program grew from 93 to more than 2030 total participants supported by the new Mentor Collective platform. BUS 300 has produced a substantial increase in career confidence, with the proportion of students reporting high confidence rising from 34 percent to 74 percent. Collectively, these initiatives have created a comprehensive career ecosystem that supports placement, enhances social mobility, and strengthens the regional talent pipeline.

Recruitment and Retention of Diverse Learners

CoBA serves one of the most diverse student bodies in the CSU system. More than half are first-generation college students, and a significant proportion identify as Hispanic/Latinx. The College's Strategic Plan emphasizes student access, equity, and persistence as foundational to its mission.

Key initiatives to recruit and retain diverse learners include:

- Pre-Business Pathways and Learning Communities that integrate advising, mentoring, and foundational coursework.
- Peer-to-Peer Mentoring and Business Professional Development programs that promote academic and professional integration.
- Targeted outreach and articulation partnerships with local community colleges to ensure seamless transfer pathways.
- Tutoring, writing support, and academic success coaching are available through the campus's First Year Program.

These initiatives have contributed to steady improvements in retention, time-to-degree, and academic performance, demonstrating the impact of early intervention and community-based engagement.

Assurance of Learning (AoL) Processes and Outcomes

CoBA maintains a structured, faculty-driven AoL system that ensures graduates achieve program-level learning outcomes aligned with the College's mission and strategic priorities. The AoL Team, comprised of eight faculty members, two staff members, and one administrator, meets four to six times annually to review assessment results, analyze trends, identify performance gaps, and recommend curricular or process improvements. When benchmarks are not met, the Team documents the loop-opening decision, recommends specific interventions (e.g., rubric revisions, course redesign, sequencing adjustments, etc.), and schedules reassessment. When performance targets are achieved or exceeded, faculty may refine benchmarks or improve instruments to sustain rigor.

Consistent with AACSB Standard 5, CoBA maintains a systematic, faculty-driven AoL process that evaluates the extent to which students achieve program learning outcomes and uses assessment results to drive continuous curricular improvement. The AoL process is overseen by the AoL Team, which includes faculty representatives, assessment staff, and academic leadership. The team meets regularly throughout the academic year to review assessment findings, identify performance gaps, recommend corrective actions, and monitor the effectiveness of implemented improvements.

All degree programs, including the BSBA, Fully Employed MBA (FEMBA), Specialized MBA (SMBA), and the recently launched MS in Supply Chain Analytics (MSSCA), maintain curriculum maps that align PSLOs with specific courses and assessment points. Each PSLO is assessed on a two-year cycle, allowing sufficient time for analysis, implementation of improvements, and reassessment. Assessment results, faculty analyses, curriculum maps, and closing-the-loop documentation are maintained in annual AoL reports (Appendix 2.14) and summarized in Tables 5-1 for each degree program. Below is a representative of the assessment results.BSBA Program Outcomes

BSBA Program Outcomes

Assessment results in the BSBA demonstrate an established cycle of measurement, intervention, and improvement. Several learning outcomes show substantial gains following faculty-led curricular and process changes.

Communication Skills (Oral). Assessment results identified concerns in oral communication performance, with 71 percent of students meeting expectations in Fall 2020 and 66 percent in Fall 2022. Faculty responded by revising Business Communication (BUS 203) to include oral communication. Reassessment in Fall 2024 showed that students met expectations, allowing the assessment loop to be closed and prompting faculty to consider more rigorous future benchmarks.

Communication Skills (Written). Written communication performance declined in Fall 2023. Faculty reviewed assignment design, increased scaffolding within BUS 442/444, and strengthened writing support throughout the curriculum. Reassessment in Fall 2025 showed that performance targets were again achieved, demonstrating the effectiveness of the interventions.

Information Technology Competency. Assessment results revealed a significant decline in Spring 2023, when only 29 percent of students met the benchmark after faculty implemented a more rigorous assessment instrument. In response, faculty enhanced coverage of key technology concepts and revised instructional materials. Reassessment in Spring 2025 improved performance to 80.6 percent, meeting expectations. Although improvement was substantial, faculty elected to continue monitoring this outcome and maintain the assessment loop as open to ensure sustained achievement.

Global Perspective. The global competency assessment is one of CoBA's strongest examples of successful loop closure. Performance improved from 45.3 percent in Spring 2019 to 71 percent in Spring 2021 following curricular revisions and increased emphasis on global business concepts. After benchmarks were raised, performance reached 85 percent in Spring 2025, allowing faculty to close the loop and confirm sustained improvement.

Business Integration and Functional Knowledge. Assessment of students' ability to integrate business concepts across disciplines has remained an area of ongoing attention. Results improved from 57.4 percent in 2018 to 71.7 percent in 2020, declined to 59.2 percent in 2022, and improved again to 69.3 percent in 2025 following revisions to the Senior Experience assessment process and enhanced emphasis on cross-functional integration. Faculty continue to monitor this learning outcome as part of an ongoing improvement cycle.

FEMBA Program Outcomes

Assessment results for the Fully Employed MBA indicate consistently strong student achievement across most learning outcomes, with evidence of continuous improvement where performance gaps were identified.

Written Communication. The 2021 assessment revealed weaknesses in several dimensions of written communication, particularly document format and professional presentation. Faculty responded by revising written communication workshops, enhancing writing guidance, and incorporating additional feedback opportunities. Reassessment demonstrated substantial improvement in message content and language quality, although format-related performance remains below benchmark. Accordingly, additional interventions have been implemented.

Ethics. Ethics assessment identified weaknesses in one rubric dimension during the 2022 assessment cycle. Faculty responded by strengthening ethics coverage and revising assessment instruments. While subsequent results improved, performance remained below the benchmark in some areas, and the assessment loop remains open pending additional reassessment.

SMBA Program Outcomes

Assessment results for the Specialized MBA demonstrate a similar pattern of assessment-driven improvement.

Written Communication. The 2022 assessment results fell substantially below expectations, with only 56–68 percent of students meeting rubric standards. Faculty introduced structured writing requirements, additional feedback opportunities, and revised assignment scaffolding. Subsequent assessments showed meaningful improvement, particularly in language and formatting dimensions, and eventually, the expectations were met in 2025.

Tools, Theories, Methodologies, and Models. Assessment results improved from 79.5 percent in 2023 to 89 percent in 2025 following curricular adjustments that increased coverage and application of analytical frameworks. This improvement enabled faculty to close the assessment loop.

Ethics. Ethics assessment revealed significant performance deficiencies in 2022, with only 34 percent of students meeting expectations. Faculty revised assessment rubrics, enhanced ethics instruction, and strengthened coverage throughout the curriculum. Reassessment in 2023 showed improvement to 80.2 percent meeting expectations, allowing the loop to be closed.

MSSCA Assessment Planning

The Master of Science in Supply Chain Analytics (MSSCA) program was launched in Fall 2025. Prior to implementation, faculty developed a comprehensive curriculum map, assessment schedule, and learning outcome framework aligned with the College's AoL system. Because the program is in its initial implementation phase, assessment data are not yet available. Direct assessment activities will begin in accordance with the approved AoL cycle, with results reviewed by the AoL Team and incorporated into future continuous improvement efforts.

Overall Assessment of the AoL System

Across all programs, AoL results demonstrate a mature and effective continuous improvement process. Faculty routinely use assessment evidence to identify areas requiring attention, implement targeted curricular and pedagogical interventions, and reassess outcomes to determine effectiveness. The documented improvements in communication skills, global competency, analytical capabilities, ethics, and technology-related outcomes illustrate that assessment results are actively used to improve student learning rather than merely reported for compliance purposes.

The College's AoL process, therefore, serves as a central mechanism for maintaining curriculum quality, advancing student success, and ensuring alignment with CoBA's mission of providing a transformative business education that promotes regional economic growth and social mobility.

Indirect Assessment Measures

CoBA has exit surveys in place to capture required information for reporting in both undergraduate and graduate programs (see Appendix 2.15). These surveys are administered at graduation, at 3- and 6-month intervals after graduation, and at 3- to 5-year intervals. Indirect assessment results reinforce the findings from direct assessment measures across the BSBA, FEMBA, and SMBA programs (see Table 5-1). Exit surveys consistently indicate that approximately 80 percent or more of responding students believe the program effectively prepared them to achieve its intended learning outcomes, while alumni feedback similarly reflects strong perceptions of learning achievement and career readiness.

CoBA recognizes that response rates for some alumni surveys remain below desired levels. Accordingly, indirect measures are used primarily as a complementary source of evidence alongside direct assessment results rather than as standalone indicators of learning achievement. The College continues to evaluate strategies to improve participation, including increasing communication about the importance of feedback and exploring appropriate incentives.

In addition, during the next AACSB review cycle, CoBA plans to expand its indirect assessment processes by systematically collecting feedback from Senior Experience and Master's Experience project sponsors on the extent to which students demonstrate program learning outcomes in real-world consulting and applied learning environments. This external stakeholder perspective will provide additional validation of student learning achievement and strengthen the College's assurance of learning system. CoBA welcomes insights and best practices from AACSB peer review team members regarding effective approaches to increasing response rates while maintaining the integrity and usefulness of indirect assessment data.

Additional implementation of indirect measures:

- Industry-wide survey conducted with the support of the Operations and Supply Chain Business Analytics (OSBA) Department Advisory Council
- Direct feedback from the OSBA Department Advisory Council
- Benchmark studies for potential MS degrees in analytics were conducted with the support of the OSBA Department Advisory Council

Enrollment Goals and Strategies

CoBA's enrollment strategy is guided by a commitment to maintaining educational quality, supporting student success, and sustaining alignment with faculty capacity. While demand for CoBA programs consistently exceeds available resources, the College's focus is not on indiscriminate growth but on ensuring that every admitted student receives the support and academic experience necessary to succeed.

To preserve this balance, CoBA raised the pre-business GPA requirement from 2.50 to 2.65 in 2020 and plans to increase it to 2.75, effective Fall 2026. This adjustment serves as an enrollment management measure to keep class sizes manageable, protect instructional quality, and maintain access to high-impact learning experiences like Senior Experience, Business Professional Development, and applied learning pedagogy.

Importantly, this approach does not diminish CoBA's longstanding mission of advancing social mobility. Instead, it ensures that students admitted into the program have demonstrated readiness for the academic rigor of the business major—thereby increasing persistence, graduation rates, and post-graduate outcomes. To support social mobility and equity, CoBA complements this measure with early-intervention strategies in the Pre-Business Pathway, including BUS 101, designed to help first-year students transition successfully to college-level business studies, Learning Communities, integrating academic and communication courses that foster belonging and academic resilience, and Peer Mentoring and BPD, providing structured academic and professional guidance to improve retention and confidence.

Through these initiatives, CoBA balances access and excellence: expanding pathways for student success while managing capacity to ensure program quality and student achievement remain strong.

Encouraging and Supporting High-Quality Teaching

CoBA fosters a culture of teaching excellence that aligns with its mission to provide a transformative business education through innovation, engagement, and continuous improvement. The College supports high-quality teaching through structured faculty development programs, learning communities, course innovation initiatives, and recognition systems that reinforce pedagogical excellence.

Faculty Development and the Faculty Center

CoBA faculty receive extensive support through the Faculty Center, a university-wide hub dedicated to promoting teaching and learning excellence. The Center offers regular workshops, learning communities, and peer-mentoring opportunities focused on evidence-based teaching strategies, inclusive pedagogy, and the effective integration of technology into the classroom. New faculty members participate in a New Faculty Institute that introduces them to high-impact teaching practices and the university's student-centered learning philosophy.

Course Innovation and Continuous Improvement

CoBA actively encourages course innovation initiatives that promote applied, experiential, and technology-enhanced learning. Through the Coursera Career Academy, students are provided access to a wide range of industry-recognized professional certificates that build practical skills in areas such as data analytics, cybersecurity, cloud computing, digital marketing, project management, and human resources, via industry partners including Google, IBM, Microsoft, Meta, AWS, and Salesforce.

In 2020–2021, CoBA piloted an Entrepreneurship immersion program designed to provide students with intensive, hands-on exposure to venture creation and entrepreneurial problem solving. Insights from this pilot informed subsequent curricular changes, including the transition of entrepreneurship from a management track to a standalone Entrepreneurship Option, and the incorporation of several elements of the immersion model to enhance experiential learning within the program.

In 2022, the college established a Virtual Instruction Task Force that developed formal criteria and an approval process for faculty qualifications to teach online courses, helping ensure that technology-enhanced instruction maintains high pedagogical standards while expanding access and flexibility for students. A Study Abroad Course Policy Task Force was formed in 2024 to develop guidelines governing faculty-led international courses, resulting in the adoption of a formalized Faculty-Led Study Abroad Course Policy.

Recognition and Reward Structures

Excellence in teaching is formally acknowledged through annual awards for outstanding teaching and innovation. These awards honor faculty members who demonstrate pedagogical excellence and enhance CoBA's reputation for high-impact teaching. Additionally, promotion and tenure processes explicitly assess teaching effectiveness, student engagement, and evidence of ongoing improvement in instructional practices.

Collaborative Learning and Professional Growth

To sustain teaching excellence across the faculty, CoBA promotes learning communities such as Tech Tuesday, which connect instructors across disciplines to share best practices, discuss the use of technology in the classroom, and collaborate on course redesigns. These communities foster collegial exchange, support mentoring relationships, and promote experimentation with innovative teaching methods that advance student success.

Together, these programs ensure that teaching quality remains a central pillar of CoBA's mission. Through structured development, recognition, and innovation, the College empowers faculty to create transformative learning experiences that prepare students for success in a rapidly evolving business environment.

Learner Progression: Retention, time-to-degree, advising/bottleneck interventions, and placements

CoBA's commitment to learner success is grounded in its mission to deliver a transformative business education that advances social mobility and regional vitality. The College employs a data-informed, student-centered approach to monitor and improve retention, time-to-degree, advising quality, and career outcomes across all programs.

Student Demographics

The ethnic composition of CoBA's Fall 2025 student body reflects the university's strong commitment to diversity, inclusion, and social mobility. As shown in Appendix 2.16, Hispanic/Latino students represent the largest group at 41%, underscoring CoBA's alignment with the university's regional mission to serve a predominantly Hispanic and first-generation student population. This distribution demonstrates that CoBA continues to serve as an access point for historically underrepresented groups in business education. The high proportion of Hispanic/Latino students—well above national averages for business schools—reinforces the College's societal impact focus on advancing student success and regional vitality through inclusive education and equitable opportunity.

Retention and Early Student Success

Student retention and progression are central to CoBA's mission of advancing social mobility through high-quality, applied business education. CoBA implemented a multi-year Pre-Business Curriculum Redesign to strengthen the first-year experience, reduce bottlenecks, and build a clearer, more supportive pathway into the business major. Figures 2.1.2 and 2.1.3, and the analyses thereafter, show that early academic engagement and a sense of belonging strongly influence persistence. These results affirm that CoBA's multi-phase redesign has strengthened academic engagement and improved students' ability to persist beyond the critical first year.

Time-to-Degree and Bottleneck Interventions

The College continuously reviews time-to-degree metrics to identify structural barriers and high-DFW "bottleneck" courses. Two key interventions have significantly improved course progression:

- Re-sequencing of High-DFW Courses: BUS 202 (Business Law) was moved from the freshman to the sophomore year, allowing students to complete foundational courses in writing and oral communication first.
- Accounting Pathway Reform: Replacing the former six-unit accounting sequence with ACCT 203 (Accounting for Managers) has reduced redundancy, lowered DFW rates, and streamlined progression to the upper-division core.

Advising data indicate that the majority of students who complete lower-division requirements on time now progress into upper-division courses within five semesters. The College monitors average time-to-degree (currently ≈ 4.3 years) and aims to reach 4.0 years by 2028 through improved advising and scheduling efficiency.

Advising and Student Support

Academic advising is jointly delivered by the University's Academic Programs and CoBA's Professional Academic Advisors, who provide both developmental and transactional support. Advising interventions include collaboration between advisors and faculty teaching in learning communities for holistic early intervention.

The Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Program further supplements advising by connecting upper-division students with pre-business students to build academic confidence and provide near-peer guidance on course sequencing and professional readiness.

Graduation Rate

Figure 2.2.4 shows that CoBA's 4-year graduation rates for full-time, first-time undergraduate students have increased from 17.5% (Fall 2019-2023 cohort) to 23.0% (Fall 2021-2025 cohort), reflecting measurable progress toward improved time-to-degree outcomes. Although still below the CSU Graduation Initiative 2025 target of 30%, this improvement demonstrates the impact of coordinated, mission-aligned interventions focused on student engagement, advising, and career readiness.

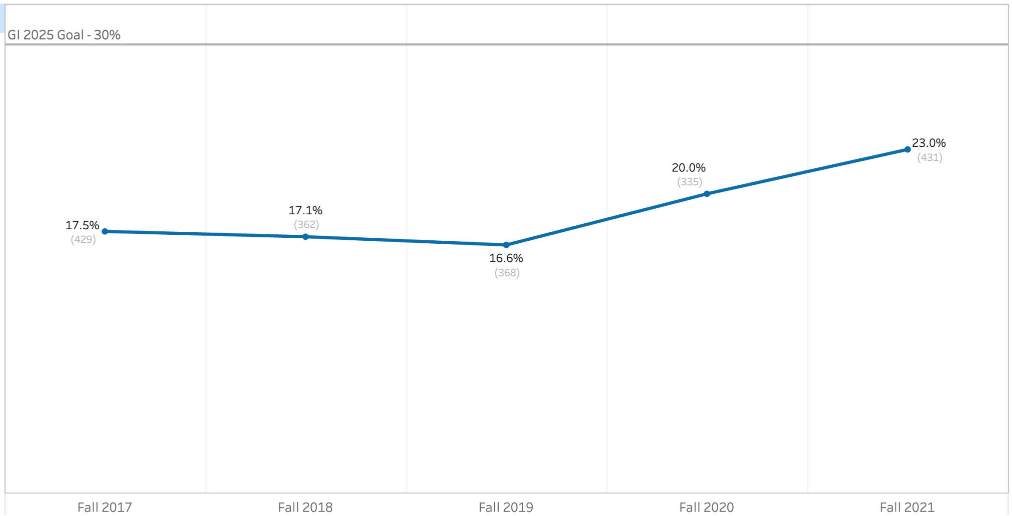

Figure 2.2.4: 4-Year Graduation Rates for All Full-Time, First-Time Students in CoBA

These gains are supported by several integrated strategies. CoBA has strengthened student engagement through expanded co-curricular programming, networking events in BUS 300, and the creation of the Dean's Student Advisory Council and a student e-newsletter. In parallel, the College has scaled peer and career mentoring programs, enhanced recruitment to improve student-program fit, and expanded the Executive-in-Residence model to increase individualized coaching and industry interaction. Faculty also contribute through mission-driven pedagogical design that aligns with diverse student learning needs, helping reduce DFW rates and support smoother academic progression.

Looking ahead, CoBA is extending its continuous improvement efforts by introducing additional individualized coaching in BUS 495, bringing the total to 3 hours of one-on-one coaching per student beginning Spring 2026. The College is also addressing a recognized gap in career outcomes through expanded employer engagement, new career programming, a centralized student resource platform, and the planned Corporate Affiliates Program. Collectively, these initiatives reinforce a systematic, data-informed approach to learner progression that aligns with AACSB standards and supports student success, career readiness, and social mobility.

Career Readiness and Placement Outcomes

Career placement is a defining measure of CoBA's impact. Through Business Professional Development (BPD), Career Mentoring, and Senior Experience (SE), students engage in progressively structured professional development throughout their degree. The integration of these programs has resulted in strong outcomes:

Figure 2.1.9 shows that, on average, 40 percent of graduates report either full-time employment, starting their own business, or graduate school enrollment at the time of graduation. This proportion rises to approximately 70 percent within six months. However, as the figure illustrates, the response rate for the initial period is over 70%, whereas the response rate for the six-month period is substantially lower.

Employer surveys and post-project feedback from Senior Experience sponsors consistently rate student performance as "above expectations."

The Mentor Collective platform (launched 2024–25) facilitates hundreds of mentor–mentee interactions each semester, boosting student confidence and expanding networks.

Together, these initiatives ensure that learner progression is intentional, equitable, and evidence-based. CoBA's ongoing review of student success indicators, including retention, time-to-degree, and placement, demonstrates a systematic commitment to improving educational outcomes and advancing the College's mission to foster upward mobility and regional vitality through business education.

Teaching Effectiveness & Impact: Peer review; recognition; pedagogical support; evidence of impact

CoBA maintains a systematic, mission-aligned approach to teaching effectiveness through peer review, annual evaluations, retention, tenure, promotion (RTP) processes, and five-year post-tenure reviews. Faculty also receive developmental feedback aligned with program learning goals and Assurance of Learning (AoL) results, which are regularly used to inform pedagogical improvements and strengthen student learning outcomes.

Faculty development is supported through Faculty Center workshops, new faculty orientation, faculty learning communities, professional development grants, and CSU systemwide teaching resources. Faculty teaching online or hybrid courses complete Quality Learning and Teaching (QLT) training to ensure effective course design, student engagement, accessibility, and assessment practices.

CoBA emphasizes experiential and applied learning as a core dimension of teaching effectiveness. Examples include the Cougar Catalyst marketing agency, the Cougar Fund student-managed investment portfolio, Analytics for Good projects, and extensive engagement with industry advisory councils. These initiatives provide students with opportunities to apply classroom concepts to real-world business and societal challenges while strengthening career readiness and professional competencies.

Evidence of teaching impact is reflected in student success stories, career outcomes, leadership development, and sustained community partnerships. Students have translated classroom experiences into internships, professional employment, leadership roles, and community engagement opportunities. Faculty innovation has also led to curricular improvements, including the redesign of independent study courses to support more rigorous, research-oriented learning experiences. For standout vignettes and student examples, see Appendix 2.20.

The College reinforces teaching excellence through formal awards, recognition programs, and RTP evaluation processes in which teaching effectiveness remains a central criterion. Collectively, these practices demonstrate CoBA's commitment to continuous improvement, high-quality instruction, and the delivery of relevant business education that advances student success and societal impact.

Area 3 – Thought Leadership, Engagement, & Societal Impact (Standards 8–9)

Intellectual Contributions: Alignment, Quality, and Impact

Quality and Impact of Intellectual Contributions

CoBA's 217 peer-reviewed journal articles during this cycle include 134 ranked in the 2025 ABDC Journal Quality List and 122 in the 2024 ABS/AJG framework, generating 3,308 Google Scholar citations (averaging 15.2 per article) in the aggregate. Collectively, these metrics demonstrate the consistent quality and impact of faculty scholarship. See Figures 3.1.1, 3.1.2, and 3.1.3. Appendix 2.17 provides additional analysis based on Google Scholar citations and the journal quality and impact matrix.

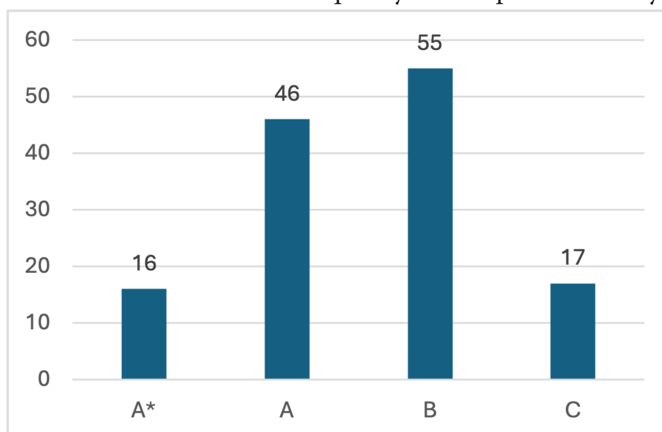

Figure 3.1.1: ABDC (2025) Journal Rankings

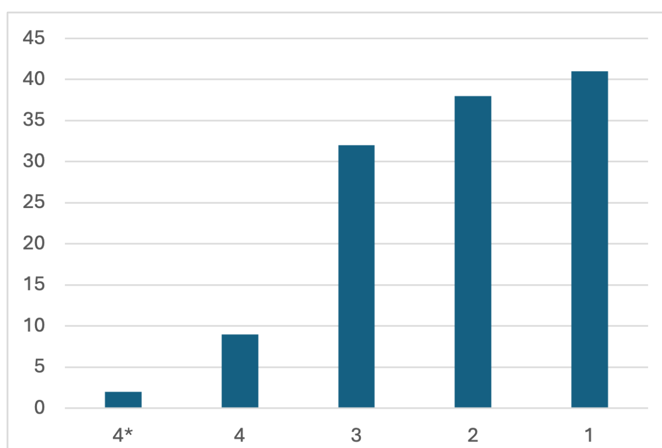

Figure 3.1.2: ABS/AJG (2024) Journal Rankings

Our faculty's scholarship this cycle advances CoBA's mission through innovative research that engages industry and societal challenges, including work on:

- Corporate activism and societal impact (e.g., Dr. Nappier Cherup, "The Activist Company: Examining a Company's Pursuit of Societal Change Through Corporate Activism Using an Institutional Theory Lens"),
- Organizational performance and decision-making (e.g., Dr. Kotiloglu, "Organizational Responses to Performance Feedback: A Meta-Analytic Review"),
- Supply chain and warehouse optimization (e.g., Dr. Zaerpour, "Robot Scheduling for Pod Retrieval in a Robotic Mobile Fulfillment System"),
- Emerging issues in digital trust and financial communication (e.g., Dr. Stewart, "Are They Humans or Are They Robots? The Effect of Virtual Influencer Disclosure on Brand Trust"), and
- Research examining financial inclusion across broader international settings (e.g., Dr. Park, "Does Disproportionate Financial Inclusion Reduce Inequality in Financial Access").

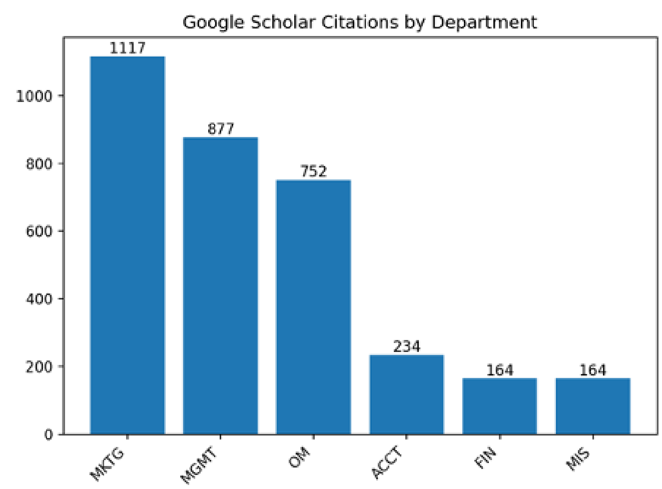

Figure 3.1.3: Google Scholar Citation by Department

This work supports CoBA's strategic emphasis on applied, experiential learning and global engagement, while reinforcing student learning outcomes by strengthening students' analytical capabilities, ethical reasoning, and ability to address complex business challenges in diverse and global contexts.

Note: 134 articles in the dataset are published in journals ranked in the 2025 ABDC Journal Quality List (83 articles appear in journals not ranked by ABDC).

College-wide Google Scholar citations: 3308 across 217 articles (average 15.24 citations per article), as of March 5, 2026.

Note: 122 articles in the dataset are published in journals ranked in the 2024 ABS/AJG list (95 articles appear in journals not ranked by ABS/AJG).

Faculty Engagement

CoBA faculty demonstrate active engagement with academic, professional, and community stakeholders through leadership roles in editorial boards, professional associations, and advisory organizations. These activities extend the College's thought leadership, strengthen connections to practice, and inform both research and teaching, contributing to CoBA's mission of delivering applied, impactful business education.

- Dr. Robert Aboolian serves on the Editorial Boards of the International Journal of Information Systems and Supply Chain Management and the International Journal of Applied Management Science.
- Dr. Bennett Cherry serves on the NCAA's Board of Governors while chairing the NCAA's Division II Management Council and is a Board Member for the PLNU Foundation. Dr. Cherry also serves on the Editorial Review Board for the International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research and is a CTE Advisor for the Business & Entrepreneurship Pathway at the Temecula Valley Unified School District.
- Dr. Fang Fang serves as an Editorial Review Board member for Journal of Supply Chain and Operations Management.
- Dr. Dongyoung Kim serves on the Editorial Board for the Journal of Finance Issues.
- Dr. Rebeca Perren serves on the Editorial Review Boards of the Journal of Marketing Education and the Journal of Business Research, is a member of the Board of Advisors for the American Marketing Association Foundation, and serves on the PhD Project Advisory Council.
- Dr. Rajnandini Pillai is Executive Director and a founding member of the Center for Leadership Innovation and

Mentorship Building (CLIMB), which was established to address regional leadership development needs through research, education, and collaboration with internal and external stakeholders.

- Dr. Mohammad Oskoorouchi serves on the Editorial Board for Mathematics and Society and the International Journal of Operations Research and Information Systems.
- Dr. Catalin Ratiu serves on the Editorial Boards of the Journal of Comparative International Management and the World Journal of Science, Technology, and Sustainable Development, and is a Board Member of the local environmental nonprofit I Love a Clean San Diego.
- Dr. Bruce Rich serves on the Advisory Board for the Journal of Law and Public Policy.
- Dr. Kristin Stewart serves on the Editorial Board of the Journal of Consumer Marketing, Journal of Marketing Education, and Journal of Promotion Management.
- Dr. Alan Styles serves on the Advisory Board for the Palomar College Water Technology Advisory Board and is an officer on the American Accounting Association Government and Nonprofit Section.
- Dr. Emily Tarr serves as President of the Management & Organizational Behavior Teaching Society and as an Editorial Board member for Management Teaching Review.

Collectively, these roles reflect faculty engagement that contributes to scholarly discourse, supports practitioner-oriented initiatives, and strengthens CoBA's connections to professional and community stakeholders.

Creating Positive Societal Impact and Mission Alignment

(Curriculum impacts are addressed in earlier sections; this narrative concentrates on Standards 8 and 9 and draws on the outcomes summarized in Table 9-1.)

During the current review cycle, CoBA has operated with a well-developed and effectively implemented strategic plan for both curriculum and engagement, resulting in measurable gains in student success, career readiness, external partnerships, and regional economic contribution. These areas reflect intentional goal setting, aligned resource allocation, defined metrics, and systematic assessment processes.

In contrast, while the College has produced a substantial body of high-quality, mission-consistent applied scholarship with clear societal relevance, it has not yet operated under a comparably formal, school-wide strategic framework specifically designed to guide, coordinate, and scale scholarly activity around the societal impact focus area. The alignment between faculty research and the College's societal impact priorities has therefore occurred largely through the existing strengths, interests, and professional networks of individual faculty rather than through an explicitly structured strategy.

This distinction is not a gap in productivity or relevance—faculty are already producing impactful work in areas central to regional vitality, social mobility, ethical business practice, technological change, and workforce development—but rather an opportunity to move from an organically aligned model to a more intentionally coordinated and measured approach in the next continuous improvement cycle.

Accordingly, the College's next phase of development will focus on creating and implementing a strategic plan for scholarship that parallels the already mature plans for curriculum and engagement. This plan will identify priority themes, strengthen collaboration structures, align incentives and support mechanisms, and enhance impact measurement.

Applied Scholarship with Societal and Regional Relevance

Our faculty demonstrate a strong and growing commitment to applied scholarship that advances the College's mission and its identified societal impact area. Faculty intellectual contributions reflect meaningful engagement with real-world challenges and generate outcomes that inform practice, policy, and pedagogy. This alignment reinforces the College's longstanding role as a regional engine of innovation and community engagement. Even in the absence of a formal strategic framework for impact-oriented research during part of the review period, faculty scholarship demonstrates clear, consistent alignment with mission-driven priorities and stakeholder needs.

- **Advancing Social Mobility, Inclusion, and Ethical Business Practice** - Multiple research streams address the structural drivers of equitable economic participation. Work on corporate social responsibility disclosure provides organizations with evidence-based guidance on transparency and stakeholder trust. A cross-national analysis of financial inclusion led to the development of the Abnormal Financial Inclusion Index and demonstrated measurable reductions in gender and income inequality associated with inclusive financial systems. Research on gender bias in career mobility and on the link between access to education and well-being further reinforces the role of business education and organizational practice in advancing social mobility.
- **Supporting Regional Economic Development and Competitiveness** - Faculty research on knowledge sharing and outsourced marketing strategies for small and medium-sized enterprises offers practical, cluster-based approaches to enhance firm performance and employment growth. Complementary work on innovation spillovers associated with high-skilled labor provides empirical evidence relevant to regional economic development policy and talent attraction strategies.
- **Enhancing Workplace Effectiveness and Quality of Work Life** - Empirical studies connecting mindfulness practices to productivity, retention, and inclusive organizational cultures provide actionable insights for employers seeking to improve workforce stability and advancement opportunities.
- **Thought Leadership in Emerging Technologies and the Digital Economy** - Research on technology dependence and consumer vulnerability, together with ongoing work on virtual influencers and consumer trust, positions the College as a source of expertise for industries that are central to the Southern California economy. These projects inform teaching, guide business practice, and contribute to the professional advancement of students, including through co-authored publications.
- **Direct Student and Community Benefits** - Scholarly activity has also produced publicly accessible professional development resources, including a digital career and networking platform that expands access to mentoring and clarifies career pathways for first-generation and underrepresented students.

A Strategically Guided and Scaled Engagement Model

Engagement is central to CoBA's societal impact strategy. Through partnerships with alumni, employers, advisory boards, and community organizations, the College builds bridges between education and practice. These joint relationships expand opportunities for students while directly fueling workforce and economic development across the San Diego region. Key initiatives include:

- Alumni and Executive-in-Residence (EIR) Mentoring: Alumni and industry executives offer structured mentoring, including career coaching, professional networking, and guidance that particularly benefit first-generation and underrepresented students.
- Employer Engagement: Regional employers host site visits, sponsor events, and offer internships and project opportunities, directly connecting students to professional settings and career pathways.
- Advisory Boards: Program-specific and college-wide advisory boards ensure curriculum relevance, shape applied projects, and expand student networking and career opportunities.
- Career-Placement Pipelines: Collaborations with employers create structured recruitment pathways, internships, and job placement pipelines, ensuring graduates transition smoothly into the workforce.

Based on the 2025 Economic Impact Report

- Economic Output: CoBA generated $50.85 million in total economic output in 2023–2024, with a return of $1.78 for every $1 invested in College operations.
- Workforce Development: CoBA's operations and partnerships supported 376 regional jobs and contributed $34.6 million in value-added GDP.
- Graduate Retention: 86% of CoBA graduates remain in the San Diego region, strengthening the local workforce and contributing to long-term regional vitality.
- Graduate Earnings: Alumni earn a median of $93,990 within 10 years of graduation, exceeding CSU system-wide averages and demonstrating strong career readiness.

- National Social Mobility Recognition: CSUSM, driven by CoBA's contributions, ranked #1 nationally in the 2025 Social Mobility Index, underscoring the College's ability to elevate students from underrepresented and low-income backgrounds.
- Community Partnerships: CoBA has completed over 2,500 Senior Experience projects, with approximately 40% serving nonprofits, generating both student learning and community benefit.

Through these engagement strategies, CoBA demonstrates measurable impact on student success (mentorship, career outcomes, upward mobility) and regional vitality (economic output, job creation, nonprofit capacity-building). This alignment ensures that CoBA's engagement is not only strategic but also outcome-driven, fulfilling AACSB's expectations for evidence of mission-linked societal impact.

Year	Number of Projects SE/ME	Average Sponsor-Estimated Value	Total Consulting Value	Percent of Nonprofit Clients	Percent of Repeat Projects
2025-26	132	$9,000	$2,970,000	57%	43%
2024-25	122	$3,300	$2,745,000	54%	52%
2023-24	115	$8,500	$2,587,500	57%	38%
2022-23	91	$6,500	$2,047,500	46%	40%
2021-22	109	$6,000	$2,452,500	42%	38%
2020-21	127	$3,200	$2,857,500	36%	42%

Figure 3.1.4: Senior Experience Project Values

Below is a sample of specific activities within the societal impact focus area. A more comprehensive list can be found in Table 9-1.

- Applied Analytics for Regional and Socio-Environmental Challenges - The Analytics for Good Institute provides a structured platform for integrating faculty expertise, student learning, and external stakeholder needs. Forecasting competitions addressing regional environmental issues and a sustained technical workshop series have strengthened workforce-relevant analytical skills while contributing to data-informed problem solving. The Business Analytics Student Society extends this model by creating a high-frequency professional development and networking hub that reaches a majority of students in the discipline.
- Regional Economic Intelligence and Organizational Decision Support - Senior Experience and Master's Experience projects have generated widely disseminated economic intelligence for business and civic leaders. The Business Confidence Survey and related applied consulting engagements support regional planning and strengthen the innovation ecosystem. The College's economic impact study, documenting more than $50 million in output and hundreds of supported jobs, has provided a clear and compelling articulation of public value.
- Senior Experience Applied Consulting Impact - The Senior Experience program is one of CoBA's most significant engagement mechanisms, connecting student learning to regional organizations. As shown in the accompanying data, the program consistently delivers a high volume of applied consulting projects for businesses, nonprofits, and public organizations. In this cycle, students completed 696 projects, generating an estimated $8.7 million in consulting value for partner organizations on average. The average value per project, estimated from a sample of sponsors, increased from $3,200 in 2020–21 to $9,000 in 2025–26, reflecting both increasing project complexity and stronger faculty and sponsor engagement. Importantly, a significant portion of these projects directly support the nonprofit sector, with an average of 49% of projects serving nonprofit organizations, thereby strengthening community capacity and regional social services. In addition, on average, 42% of projects are repeat engagements, demonstrating sustained partnerships and continued value creation for sponsors. This applied consulting model simultaneously advances student learning through real-world problem solving while generating measurable economic and community impact across the San Diego region.

The sponsor-estimated value is based on retrospective data collected in Spring 2026. For Spring 2026, the reported average sponsor-estimated value is based on a sample of 31 project sponsors. For prior years, average estimates are derived from smaller samples and then multiplied by the total number of projects. All estimates are rounded to the nearest hundred. Beginning in AY

2026–27, the College has implemented a formalized, ongoing data-collection process to capture sponsor value for all projects, thereby improving data completeness, reliability, and longitudinal comparability, in line with continuous-improvement expectations. The consulting value is calculated at $7,500 per project, based on 150 hours at a $150/hour consulting fee.

Measurable Community Outcomes

Multi-year partnerships with nonprofit organizations demonstrate direct, quantifiable societal impact. Collaboration with the Boys & Girls Club of Vista expanded youth participation, increased digital reach, and delivered significant in-kind professional services. Strategic analysis for The Ridge Project strengthened fundraising capacity and long-term organizational sustainability.

Long-Term Regional Development

The feasibility analysis for the Del Mar Fairgrounds redevelopment illustrates the extended time horizon of engagement impact, contributing to a major regional infrastructure investment and associated economic activity.

Expanding Educational Access and Institutional Visibility

Outreach to foster youth through ACE Scholars strengthens the higher-education pipeline for underserved populations, while national professional leadership initiatives elevate the College's visibility and expand its network of collaborators and partners.

Developing a Strategic Plan for Scholarship: The Next Phase of Continuous Improvement

- To parallel the already mature strategic frameworks for curriculum and engagement, the College will develop and implement a comprehensive strategic plan for scholarship in the next cycle. This plan will:
- Identify a focused set of research priority areas directly tied to the societal impact focus.
- Create structures that promote interdisciplinary collaboration and thematic research clusters.
- Align internal support mechanisms and recognition systems with impact-oriented scholarship.
- Strengthen partnerships with regional organizations as co-producers of knowledge.
- Establish clear metrics and longitudinal processes for documenting scholarly impact.

This intentional approach will enable the College to scale existing strengths, increase the visibility and cumulative effect of faculty work, and move from post hoc alignment to strategy-driven impact.