

Teaching

# A Highly Intentional



Research

Faculty Interaction

Leadership Life Students

# Balance

The Hankamer School of  
Business Teaching Philosophy

by Eric Krell



Emily Hunter describes her decision to join Baylor University's Hankamer School of Business as an assistant professor in 2009 as intentional.

In doing so, she demonstrates fluency in Hankamer terminology that reflects the business school's purposeful commitment to balance.

"There are plenty of great business schools out there that are research-focused, but many of these schools tend to treat teaching as a lower priority," notes Hunter, an assistant professor of Management and Entrepreneurship with a PhD in Industrial/Organizational (I/O) Psychology. "When professors spend more time on research and less time on strengthening their classroom techniques, the students can suffer. I did not want to be in an environment where teaching was not rewarded, yet I am also passionate about research. Baylor and Hankamer have an excellent balance between teaching and research."

The business school's commitment to balance extends to other areas as well: scholarly exploration *and* active learning; practice *and* theory; value *and* values; and professional development *and* spiritual development. The Hankamer faculty's balanced approach thrives thanks to the school's foundational philosophy and values; ongoing strategic planning that compliments accreditation activities; and a commitment to continuous improvement in teaching and research.

"If you talk to professors about why they chose an academic career," notes Hankamer School of Business Dean Terry Maness, "most will say that they chose the profession because they want to have a positive impact on their students' lives. At Hankamer, I believe that this desire plays out in our professors' willingness to go the extra mile to help our students."

Professor of Finance and W.W. Caruth Chair of Entrepreneurship Bill Petty says he has enjoyed every step of the extra miles he logs for students. "My philosophy is that I want to teach the technical material, but I also want to teach core values and how to develop effective relationships," says Petty, who in 2004 received the Master Teacher designation, the highest honor granted to Baylor University faculty. The entrepreneurs Petty invites to the classroom to speak and mentor students continually emphasize a common theme in Petty's teaching: the importance of relationships.

"When students get to my age and they're looking back on their lives, they will likely ask themselves the extent to which they were effective in the most important relationships in their lives," he adds. "So, I also open up and share some of my successes and failures related to relationships." ●●●

## The Value of Values

This willingness that Maness and Petty describe stems from the Hankamer mission and values. The mission statement (see "The Hankamer School of Business' Mission") emphasizes the fostering of a culture guided by "Christian commitment" and championing "life-long learning, highly-regarded scholarship and service to others as its highest ideals." The purpose of this culture, according to the mission, is to groom business leaders who can thrive in the modern, global business environment.

The specific values on which the Hankamer faculty philosophy rests include the following:

- Excellence in its students, faculty, staff, teaching, scholarship and in its reputation as an institution of higher learning;
- Integrity, leadership, service, diversity, and teamwork in its faculty, staff, and the students it delivers to the world;
- Relevance and innovation in its subject matter, scholarship, and learning methods; and
- Christian principles in its faculty and staff.



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Faculty Interaction

As these values are manifested through policies, faculty-student relationships, collaboration among faculty, research efforts and other tangible behaviors, another output is produced, according to Van Gray, director of accreditation and planning for the Hankamer School of Business: caring.

A key component of Gray's role involves collecting input from a diverse collection of Hankamer constituents – current students, alumni, business leaders who hire alumni, and other stakeholders – as part of an ongoing strategic planning process. "One of the insights that immediately comes to the surface in these discussions," Gray notes, "is how caring and encouraging the learning community within Hankamer is."

This caring extends to relationships between students and professors, students and alumni, and professors and other professors as well.

"The most fulfilling aspects of my experience (at Baylor and in Hankamer) have been the personal relationships I have developed with my professors and through my extracurricular experiences," says Amy Wofford, who graduates this year with a double major in Entrepreneurship and Marketing. "Through these experiences, I have become a better student and person. I have also found a large business network full of opportunities and active alumni in the business world and across the globe who are ready to help us."

For her part, Hunter appreciates the care her veteran colleagues respond with when she seeks their counsel on teaching matters. "If I have an issue in the classroom or want some advice, I know I can go to any of my colleagues and talk about that," she explains. "All of them are excellent teachers, and I feel confident in approaching them because I know that they will offer good advice."

As Hankamer's mission statement and values indicate, the guidance, advice and instruction faculty impart to students extends beyond business instruction. "Many people struggle with serious life questions while they are students in the business school, or in any other university program," Gray adds. "I believe that our faculty and staff really are committed to this mission of preparing, within a Christian context, men and women for global leadership positions."

Others share the same belief. "My professors have helped me to fulfill my aspirations by supporting me and teaching me long-lasting principles," Wofford notes. "All of these resources [that Hankamer offers] have prepared me to step into the business world with confidence and eagerness to be a leader and make a difference."

## Accreditation: Beyond Compliance

In addition to strategic planning, Gray is also responsible for reporting measurements for maintaining accreditation. While it is noteworthy that Hankamer recently celebrated its 50th anniversary of maintaining accreditation from the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), Hankamer's approach to accreditation seems more compelling.

The AACSB is an international association of educational institutions, businesses, and other organizations devoted to the advancement of management education; the organization also functions as the premier global accrediting agency of collegiate business schools and accounting programs (Hankamer's Accounting and Business Law program also maintains AACSB accreditation). Less than 5 percent of business schools worldwide have earned AACSB accreditation.

In accordance with the accreditation process, Hankamer submits a new application for approval every five years. The accreditation exercise involves a self-evaluation process, on-site visits from other AACSB deans and additional documentation reviews as well as interviews with Hankamer faculty and staff.

"It is not just a compliance exercise," asserts Gray. Instead, Hankamer faculty and staff use the accreditation requirements as an opportunity to conduct self-assessments and collect feedback from key constituents that address a broad question: *Are we intentional in working toward our mission?* "It really is about whether we are intentional about serving all of our constituents," Gray continues. "This functions as a research effort to determine how effective we are and whether or not we are achieving our stated mission."

This helps explain why accreditation integrates into Hankamer's strategic planning effort. Although the formal strategic planning process occurs on a two- to three-year cycle, the collection of input from constituents takes place on an ongoing basis. This input includes assessments from students, alumni, external stakeholders, faculty and staff as well as reports on activities and accomplishments that reflect Hankamer's performance in executing its mission.

"We strive to be very deliberate in capturing all the great activities that are going on in communicating these accomplishments on a fairly frequent basis," Gray adds.



# Continuous Improvement

This approach helps enable a culture of continuous improvement throughout Baylor University and within Hankamer. The emphasis on continuous improvement is supported by other offerings as well.

Baylor University's Academy for Teaching and Learning (ATL), launched in 2008, is a "school within a school" designed to advance shared inquiry and transformative conversations. ATL was named an "academy" intentionally, notes ATL founding director Gardner Campbell. This title, Campbell explains, describes a place within the university from which individuals can "think, at a strategic level, about the primary mission of the university, which is teaching and learning. One of the things that I've tried to emphasize here is the way that research itself is an activity that involves teaching and learning."

To that end, Campbell has collaborated with Accounting and Business Law department chair Charles Davis to explore the impact of Web 2.0 technology on teaching and learning as well as with associate professor Blaine McCormick on practical ways to leverage social media in the classroom.

As Hankamer's associate dean of Research and Faculty Development, Jeff Tanner's responsibility is to identify opportunities and resources that will support high-quality faculty research while maintaining the faculty's commitment to teaching. "I think it's rare to find a university that excels in both of these areas," says Tanner, who stresses that the two endeavors can be complimentary.

*"One of the best opportunities to achieve both of these objectives," Tanner continues, "arises when a faculty member tackling real business problems while engaged in research with a company or organization involves students in the effort."*

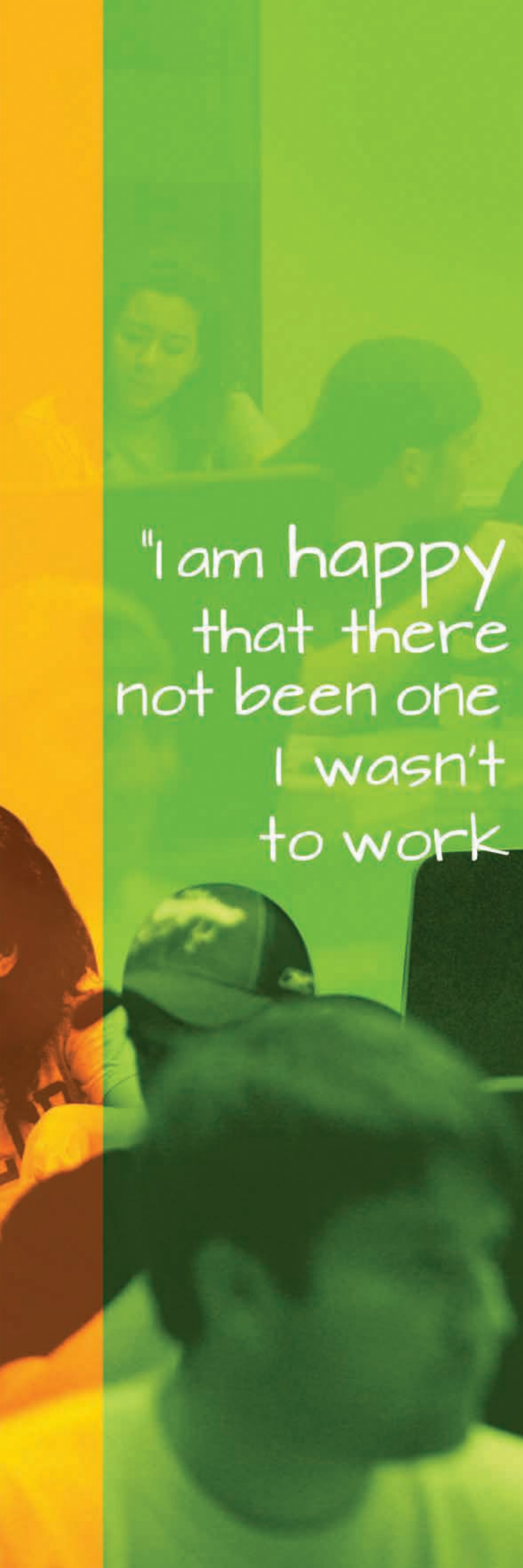
In this situation, students may be directly involved in the research or the professor may be teaching a subject related to the research and can bring the research into the classroom. "Research can be a teaching tool when faculty involve their students in the process. We are seeing more faculty engaging their students in this way," Tanner notes.

This type of engagement with students – and between teaching and research – occurs in large part because of the way in which Hankamer leadership engages, and deploys, its resources. While many business schools assign an associate dean the responsibility for faculty development, these duties typically focus more on promotion, tenure and sabbatical policies and decisions, but less on practical development opportunities related to teaching and research. Tanner's role, like Hankamer's underlying teaching philosophy, is much more balanced.

As is Maness' recruiting strategy when hiring professors. "Here," he says, "is the ideal response I want to hear when I'm talking to faculty recruits: *I am looking for the kind of academic environment that places a priority on the classroom and student learning while also allowing me the time to do research. I'm looking for the environment that rewards good teaching, and also allows me to contribute to my field.*"

That balanced and intentional approach enables Hankamer to attract new teaching talent, like Hunter, and to retain more seasoned teaching talent like Petty, who in 2009 was named the National Entrepreneurship Teacher of the Year by Acton Foundation for Entrepreneurial Enterprise.

"I am happy to report," says Petty, "that there has not been one day in 20 years I wasn't excited about coming to work at Hankamer."




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"Dr. Mark Dunn is one of my favorite professors because he is great at teaching marketing. He applied ideals not only in the classroom, but also in the real world. I was in Dr. Dunn's class while studying abroad in Great Britain. I got to see marketing applied to a different culture with a different dynamic. In my opinion, a great professor has to have a passion for what they are teaching and they must **care about their students**. Dr. Dunn does all of these."

Andrew Brenneman, Senior, Accounting

"Betsy Willis is really passionate about teaching. She talks to students and is available to answer questions. A good professor is there for his or her students and is **passionate about his or her profession**."

Lauren Kepple, Sophomore, Accounting

## According to Students...

Compiled by Kelsey L. McCarty

"Dr. Gilbreath is my favorite professor. He **teaches you to understand** the meaning behind why you're learning about business. He is someone who understands what we are doing impacts the world around us, inside and outside the classroom."

Thad Warren, Sophomore, Entrepreneurship and Real Estate

"Tim Thomasson is my favorite professor. He had the most impact because he was my first Accounting professor. At that time I wasn't sure what I wanted to do, and he really loves his profession. He was **always available**, encouraging and honest about accounting. He told us it was never easy but always rewarding."

Britanny Bay, Senior, Accounting

"Dr. James Roberts teaches Advertising Procedures. He taught me about the workforce and helped me with my résumé. He's in sports, and I am too, so he **helped me with schedule conflicts**. I related to him well and was even able to use his teaching as an example in my recent interview."

Joe Farley, Senior, Marketing and Management

"Dr. Lehnus teaches Professional Selling for Sports. He was incredibly encouraging and **pushed us to reach our fullest potential**. He also taught life skills and imparted wisdom that will benefit my future. A great professor is one that focuses on the success of his or her students. They are challenging yet immensely passionate about what they teach."

Aarika Rosa, Senior, Entrepreneurship

"Dr. Stegemoller's Finance class was one of my favorites. I always looked forward to going and wanted to be prepared because I enjoyed the lectures. Dr. Stegemoller was very approachable, and he made it clear that he **respected and valued everyone**, no matter how they performed academically. While my other professors often exemplified the same principle, Dr. Stegemoller was the first to point out that Baylor's mission statement claims 'truth has its ultimate source in God.' That statement is worthy of consideration in every classroom."

Danielle Grootemaat, Senior, Economics

"A good professor is someone who has **real-world experience**, and at the same time is relatable to students and relaxed enough. A good professor is someone who is like a friend."

Kyle Mills, Senior, Finance, Entrepreneurship and Economics



Teaching

Research

# Conditions for Continuous Improvement

One of the key objectives identified in the Hankamer School of Business' mission statements relates to being a leader among business schools that engage participants in active learning and scholarly exploration. This objective requires faculty to strike a balance between business theory and business practice. It also requires a careful balance between teaching and research. Achieving this balancing act requires several conditions, according to Hankamer School of Business associate dean of Research and Faculty Development Jeff Tanner, including the following:

**Class Size:** Small class sizes – the vast majority of courses at Hankamer consist of 30 or fewer students – facilitate high-intensity and highly-engaged learning because faculty can provide hands-on coaching. "By not having many classes with 300 or more students," explains Hankamer professor of Finance and W.W. Caruth Chair of Entrepreneurship Bill Petty, "I can follow more of a Socratic approach, where I'm calling on students a lot. Once the students start digging into discussions, I will often go to the back of the room and get out of the line of sight so that the dialogue can flow among the students."

**Collaboration:** "I think our faculty also knows that they don't own a patent on creative processes," Tanner points out. "Our students are quite creative." By providing students with opportunities to push the envelope in how they address business issues and challenges, professors are in turn inspired to explore unexpected areas of inquiry. The collaboration also thrives among faculty, notes Emily Hunter, assistant professor of Management and Entrepreneurship. "We are surrounded by colleagues who are focused on teaching, passionate about teaching and eager to compare notes," she says.

**Continuing Education:** Hankamer faculty actively seek opportunities to create new ways to engage participants in active learning. "At our academic conferences and teaching workshops there are always opportunities to learn from others, including from professors at other universities," Tanner notes. "Our faculty are committed to seeking out new learning opportunities."



## The Hankamer School of Business' Mission

The culture of the Hankamer School of Business at Baylor University is guided by Christian commitment and champions life-long learning, highly-regarded scholarship and service to others as its highest ideals. The School seeks to produce business leaders with recognized integrity, superior theoretical knowledge and practical skills of modern global business developed through an experiential learning environment. We engage a diverse group of undergraduate, graduate, and executive students and alumni in a curriculum that produces graduates of value to business organizations and to their communities.

