Monfort College of Business Strategic Plan

2026 - 2030

Mission

The Monfort College of Business (MCB) prepares students for ethical, innovative leadership and successful careers through immersive learning, integrated professional preparation, and intellectual contributions that advance opportunity, community relevance, and regional impact.

Vision

MCB will be the regional leader in career-focused business education, recognized for its immersive learning model and measurable impact on student success and regional economic vitality through strategic partnerships.

Strategic Positioning Statement

The Monfort College of Business differentiates itself by providing its students with meaningful professional experience prior to graduation. As the leading immersive, career-focused business college in the Mountain West, MCB prepares every student to graduate with real-world professional experience, industry connections, and career readiness. MCB competes on measurable student outcomes, applied learning integration, and regional economic impact.

This positioning supports:

- Enrollment growth
- Student retention
- Employer preference
- AACSB societal impact standards
- Regional workforce development leadership

SWOT Analysis Summary

Strengths

- **Personalized Learning Environment:** Small class sizes and low student-faculty ratios that enable mentoring, advising, and direct career coaching, which is the most consistently cited strength in faculty/staff feedback.
- **Faculty Teaching Quality and Commitment:** A teaching-focused faculty, including newer hires bringing current industry experience and energy alongside experienced mentors deeply invested in student success.
- **Student-Centered, Applied Culture:** A student body composed largely of working learners, first-generation students, and students with real-world work experience, paired with hands-on programs (Kepner Café, Entrepreneurship Challenge, Innovation Talks) that connect coursework to lived experience.
- **Industry and Community Connections:** Established relationships with regional employers, community organizations, and professional networks that already supply experiential opportunities.
- **Strong Advising and Support Infrastructure:** A professional advising team consistently identified as a driver of retention and student persistence.
- **Established Graduate Portfolio:** A growing MBA program with in-demand concentrations and an online delivery option that already serves working professionals.

Weaknesses:

- **Brand Recognition:** Limited regional and statewide awareness of MCB's distinctive value with insufficient external marketing and storytelling.
- **Enrollment and Recruitment Capacity:** Underdeveloped recruitment infrastructure, including limited dedicated recruitment staffing, weak transfer pipelines from community colleges, and inconsistent K–12 outreach.
- **Modernization of Teaching and Research Resources:** Aging or insufficient access to the data tools, software, and platforms used in current business practice.
- **Narrow Target Audience:** Recruitment strategy and messaging are built primarily around traditional first-time freshmen, leaving distinct non-traditional segments (e.g., adult learners, part-time students, immigrants, professionals re-skilling, and non-degree credential seekers) without dedicated pathways or value propositions.
- **Staff Capacity Strain:** Recent staff reductions have required remaining team members to absorb additional functions, leaving administrative bandwidth thin and constraining the College's capacity to launch and sustain new initiatives at scale.

Opportunities:

- **Transfer and Adult-Learner Pipelines:** Build deeper articulation with Eastern Colorado, Northern Colorado, and adjoining-state community colleges (Sterling, Aims, FRCC); develop accelerated degree-completion paths for working adults and professionals re-skilling in response to AI.

- **AI and Data Integration in the Curriculum:** Embed AI, analytics, and emerging tools across core and electives as appropriate in ways that prepare students for evolving roles rather than competing with them.
- **HSI Mission as Differentiator:** Activate MCB's Hispanic-Serving and first-generation–focused identity as an explicit market positioning around social mobility and career outcomes.
- **Industry Co-Creation:** Expand co-designed internships, consulting projects, and curriculum partnerships with regional employers, nonprofits, SBDC, Startup Colorado, and regional accelerators.
- **Cross-UNC Collaboration:** Partner with other UNC disciplines (e.g., arts, sciences, education, health/medicine) on interdisciplinary programs to broaden enrollment reach and address employer demand for hybrid skill sets.
- **Executive and Continuing Education:** Offer in-person leadership programs, micro-credentials, and certificates for local organizations and incumbent workers.
- **Graduate and Online MBA Growth:** Expand the online MBA and graduate concentrations as a higher-margin, mission-aligned channel reaching working professionals, career-changers, and adult learners both within and beyond MCB's traditional regional draw.

Threats:

- **Intensifying Competition:** Aggressive marketing, pricing, and program flexibility from CSU, CU, online-first institutions, and adjoining-state public universities targeting the same student demographics.
- **Demographic and Enrollment Decline:** Shrinking traditional college-age population in MCB's primary region for recruitment.
- **Public Confidence in the Value of a Degree:** Rising skepticism about cost-to-value of four-year business education, compounded by textbook and tuition costs.
- **AI as a Dual Threat:** Pace of change outstripping curriculum updates *and* automation pressure on entry-level roles in marketing, management, consulting, and analysis that MCB graduates traditionally enter.
- **Higher-Education Policy and Funding Volatility:** State funding pressure, shifting federal policy (including potential changes affecting HSI designation), and broader budget uncertainty at UNC.

Monfort College of Business Strategic Goals

This strategic plan was developed through a collaborative process involving faculty, staff, students, and external stakeholders, ensuring alignment with institutional priorities and regional workforce needs. The following strategic goals represent Monfort College of Business's focused response to the opportunities and challenges identified in the preceding analysis. Together, they articulate a clear path forward for strengthening student outcomes, enhancing institutional effectiveness, and expanding our impact across the region.

Each goal is supported by targeted initiatives designed to advance our mission of preparing students for ethical, innovative, and career-ready leadership. These initiatives emphasize immersive learning, strong industry partnerships, and a commitment to continuous improvement.

To ensure accountability and measurable progress, each goal is paired with key performance indicators (KPIs). MCB recognizes that some metrics will evolve as initiatives are implemented and baseline data is refined. As such, the College is committed to strengthening alignment between initiatives and outcomes over time and using data-informed decision-making to guide ongoing improvement. Additional detail regarding alignment between MCB's strategic goals and UNC's *Rowing, Not Drifting 2030* vision is provided in Appendix A.

KPIs will be reviewed twice per year, with progress updates being provided at each semester's meeting of the faculty and staff. Two updates per year will also be provided to the Dean's Leadership Council. An annual MCB Impact Report will also offer a mechanism to report on strategic plan progress. The College will also conduct periodic risk assessments to identify potential barriers to achieving strategic priorities and will develop mitigation strategies to address significant risks.

Collectively, these goals position MCB to deliver on its strategic priorities while remaining responsive to the needs of students, employers, and the broader community.

Goal 1: Career Readiness & Professional Impact

Strategic Objective: Ensure every student is prepared for immediate career success and long-term adaptability by integrating cutting-edge practice and experiential learning.

Key Initiatives:

- **Curriculum Currency:** Continuously update coursework to integrate applied problem-solving, data-informed decision-making, and emerging technologies to ensure students are prepared for evolving workforce demands.
- **Credentialing:** Launch specialized concentrations, stackable micro-credentials co-designed with employer partners, and pathways to industry-recognized external certifications (e.g., Bloomberg, Microsoft, AWS, SHRM, PMP, CFA) embedded within or aligned to coursework.
- **Experiential Requirement:** Institutionalize the Professional Experience (PE) requirement, fulfilled through a portfolio of high-impact modes including co-sponsored apprenticeships, project-based courses, student competitions, employer-sponsored consulting projects, the "Introships" program, and experiential operations such as Kepner Café.
- **Tech Integration:** Integrate AI, data analytics, and VR tools into major concentrations as appropriate to prepare students for evolving industry practices.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- **Placement Rate** *(Priority: High; Financial Resources Required: N/A)*
    - *Target:* >90% employed or in graduate school within 6 months of graduation.
- **Employer Satisfaction** *(Priority: Medium; Financial Resources Required: N/A)*
    - *Target:* 97% of employers responding ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ to employer satisfaction surveys.
- **Micro-credential Usage** *(Priority: Medium; Financial Resources Required: Foundation Funds)*
    - *Target*: >90% license utilization for Coursera.
- **AI Proficiency** *(Priority: High; Financial Resources Required: N/A)*
    - *Target*: >60% of core and 30% of electives include at least one AI-augmented module or assessment.

Goal 2: Brand Distinction & Enrollment Growth

Strategic Objective: Position MCB as a leading provider of career-focused business education to achieve targeted growth in both enrollment quality and overall student demand.

Key Initiatives:

- **Transfer Optimization:** Overhaul the Transfer Evaluation System (TES) and implement accelerated lower-division transfer policies to maximize credit acceptance.
- **Awareness:** Coordinate paid, owned, and earned media to build MCB awareness among prospective students, employer partners, and the regional business community, with a primary platform mix of LinkedIn, Instagram (feed and stories), and Facebook. Increase engagement with university admissions and recruiting to expand contact with prospective students.
- **Faculty Thought Leadership:** Build earned-media presence by positioning faculty as expert voices through op-eds, trade-press commentary, podcast appearances, and LinkedIn content tied to faculty research and regional business issues. Coordinated with the Intellectual Portfolio initiative (Goal 4) to convert faculty scholarship into brand visibility.
- **Differentiation:** Anchor brand messaging around MCB’s “real audiences, real stakes” model, highlighting applied learning experiences such as pitch competitions, employer-sponsored projects, student consulting, sales competitions, investment challenges, and NASA Tech Transfer activities where students engage external evaluators, employers, and community partners.
- **Outcome-Based Messaging:** Align recruitment messaging around measurable student outcomes, including professional experience completion, placement rates, and employer satisfaction.
- **Pipeline Development:** Build employer engagement across three distinct segments: (1) local SMEs and nonprofits, (2) regionally-based, globally-trading firms in priority growth sectors (Agri-Food, AgTech, Aerospace, Computational Tech, Biotech), and (3) regional offices of nationally licensed firms (asset management, portfolio management, insurance,

financial services). Extend reach beyond Weld County into the broader Front Range and Western Slope, leveraging alumni networks to compete for internship and hiring slots currently captured by other regional schools.
- **Graduate Program Growth:** Strategically expand MBA and graduate program enrollment, with primary focus on the online MBA and high-demand concentrations (e.g., Project Management, Analytics). Build distinct recruitment funnels, employer partnerships, and corporate-sponsored cohort pathways for adult and working learners, recognizing that graduate programs typically yield higher contribution margins per FTE than undergraduate enrollment.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- **Enrollment Growth** *(Priority: High; Financial Resources Required: Foundation & State Funds)*
    - *Target:* +3% annual undergraduate headcount increase.
- **Enrollment Conversion** *(Priority: High; Financial Resources Required: Foundation & State Funds)*
    - *Target:* Increase admit-to-enrollment yield to 5%.
- **Transfer Enrollment Growth** *(Priority: High; Financial Resources Required: Foundation & State Funds)*
    - *Target:* Increase transfer student enrollment by 5% annually.
- **Social Media Engagement** *(Priority: Low; Financial Resources Required: Foundation Funds)*
    - *Target:* Increase engagement across college social media platforms, particularly LinkedIn and Instagram.
- **Graduate Enrollment Growth** *(Priority: High; Financial Resources Required: Foundation & State Funds)*
    - *Target:* +5% annual headcount growth in our MBA program toward a 350 student target.

Goal 3: Belonging, Equity, & Retention

Strategic Objective: Cultivate a climate of equity and belonging using data-informed strategies and targeted student support to reduce achievement gaps.

Key Initiatives:
- **Data-Informed Intervention:** Faculty/advisor collaboration utilizing "Bear Alerts" to provide timely support to students.
- **Climate Assessment:** Execute annual climate surveys for all constituents to identify opportunities for improvement and inform resource allocation.
- **Space & Community:** Renovate Kepner Hall (Garden Level) to foster collaboration and support student groups and clubs.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- **Retention Rate** *(Priority: High; Financial Resources Required: Foundation Funds)*
    - *Target:* Exceed university average by >2%.
- **Achievement Gap** *(Priority: High; Financial Resources Required: N/A)*
    - *Target:* Reduce Pell/Non-Pell graduation rate gap to <5%.
- **DFW Rates** *(Priority: Medium; Financial Resources Required: N/A)*
    - *Target:* Reduce DFW rates in gateway courses by 10% and achieve greater consistency across sections.

Goal 4: Faculty and Staff Success & Governance

Strategic Objective: Strengthen faculty and staff success by advancing equitable support, shared governance, transparent workload practices, and a culture of trust and recognition. Together, these initiatives support the recruitment, retention, development, deployment, and maintenance of qualified faculty and staff needed to advance MCB’s mission.

Key Initiatives:

- **Workload Equity:** Formalize and standardize the distribution of faculty effort (research releases, course preps, service loads).
- **Shared Governance:** Re-establish regular, transparent faculty/staff governance structures.
- **Intellectual Portfolio:** Secure competitive research/teaching grants to support faculty maintenance of qualifications (SA/PA/SP/IP).
- **Culture of Recognition:** Implement formal semester awards and peer-to-peer recognition to strengthen morale, engagement, and appreciation across the College.
- **Faculty Composition:** Advance inclusive hiring and retention practices to strengthen faculty diversity and broaden perspectives in the classroom.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- **Faculty Sufficiency** *(Priority: Medium; Financial Resources Required: State Funds)*
    - *Target:* >90% Participating Faculty (vs. Supporting).
- **Faculty Qualifications** *(Priority: Medium; Financial Resources Required: Foundation Funds)*
    - *Target:* >40% Scholarly Academic (SA) across all disciplines.
- **Climate Trust Score** *(Priority: High; Financial Resources Required: N/A)*
    - *Target:* Year-over-year improvement in "Trust in Leadership"

Goal 5: Societal Impact

Strategic Objective: Drive regional economic vitality and social mobility through experiential learning, research, and service in alignment with UN Sustainable Development Goals Four (Quality Education) and Eight (Decent Work and Economic Growth).

Key Initiatives:

- **SME Consulting:** Deploy student teams to solve operational challenges for local businesses and nonprofit organizations, strengthening the regional ecosystem and expanding student exposure to diverse organizational models.
- **Policy-Shaping Research:** Faculty scholarship targets public policy and workplace equity/resilience, contributing to regional problem-solving and informing practice.
- **Technology Access & Inclusion:** Integrate generative AI and VR into core courses to expand access to emerging technologies and reduce barriers for underrepresented students.
- **Workforce Development:** Utilize the NSF EPIIC grant as a foundation for assessing and closing the Weld County workforce skills gap.
- **Workforce Pathways:** Develop partnerships with regional employers to create upskilling and continuing education pathways for incumbent workers, including the expansion of paid internship opportunities with small businesses and nonprofit organizations.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- **Economic Impact** *(Priority: Medium; Financial Resources Required: Foundation Funds)*
  - *Target:* Track and increase the number of consulting hours delivered to SMEs and nonprofit organizations.
- **Research Relevance** *(Priority: Medium; Financial Resources Required: N/A)*
  - *Target:* 20% of peer-reviewed journal publications aligned with SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth).
- **Social Mobility** *(Priority: High; Financial Resources Required: Foundation Funds)*
  - *Target:* Reduce the gap between the percentage of all students and first-generation students completing paid internships, with the goal of achieving parity over time.
- **Workforce Impact through Student Internships** *(Priority: Medium; Financial Resources Required: Foundation Funds)*
  - *Target:* Provide at least 30 paid internship placements annually with local small businesses and nonprofit organizations.

Appendix A: Alignment of MCB Strategic Goals with UNC's Rowing, Not Drifting 2030 Vision		
This table demonstrates how MCB's 2026 – 2030 strategic goals support UNC's Rowing, Not Drifting 2030 vision elements and advance institutional alignment at the college level.		
MCB Strategic Goal	**UNC Vision Elements**	**MCB Contribution to UNC Vision**
1: Career Readiness & Professional Impact	1: Students First 4: Innovate & Create	UNC's Students First outcomes include being known for "excellence in career-readiness" through alumni achievements and adaptability. UNC's Innovate & Create outcomes also emphasize distinctive educational experiences that address workforce and societal opportunities and help students transition from college to career. MCB's placement, employer satisfaction, micro-credentialing, AI proficiency, and Professional Experience Requirement align directly.
2: Brand Distinction & Enrollment Growth	1: Students First 5: Connect & Celebrate	UNC's Connect & Celebrate element emphasizes being a first-choice institution because of program quality, faculty/staff, and strategic relationships, as well as alumni advocacy, career advice, and employment opportunities. MCB's brand distinction, outcome-based messaging, transfer optimization, employer pipelines, alumni networks, and graduate enrollment growth align directly.
3: Belonging, Equity, & Retention	1: Students First 2: Empower Inclusivity	UNC's Students First element focuses on meeting students where they are, nurturing growth, and eliminating institutional barriers to student progress. Empower Inclusivity emphasizes diverse backgrounds, historically marginalized communities, and respectful engagement across perspectives. MCB's focus on Bear Alerts,

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		climate assessment, retention, Pell/non-Pell graduation gaps, and DFW rates aligns directly.
4: Faculty and Staff Success & Governance	2: Empower Inclusivity 3: Enhance & Invest	UNC's Enhance & Invest element is about attracting and retaining talented faculty and staff, supporting professional development, recognizing contributions, valuing scholarship, and improving climate and belonging. MCB's workload equity, shared governance, faculty qualifications, intellectual portfolio, recognition, and attention to climate are a direct match.
5: Societal Impact	1: Students First 4: Innovate & Create 5: Connect & Celebrate	UNC's Innovate & Create element emphasizes addressing societal needs, leveraging technology, connecting with local and regional organizations, and preparing students for successful college-to-career transitions. Connect & Celebrate emphasizes reciprocal partnerships and community connections. MCB advances these priorities through business-school expertise in regional economic vitality, social mobility, workforce development, paid internships, policy-shaping research, and technology access, with its societal impact efforts aligned to UN Sustainable Development Goals Four (Quality Education) and Eight (Decent Work and Economic Growth).