

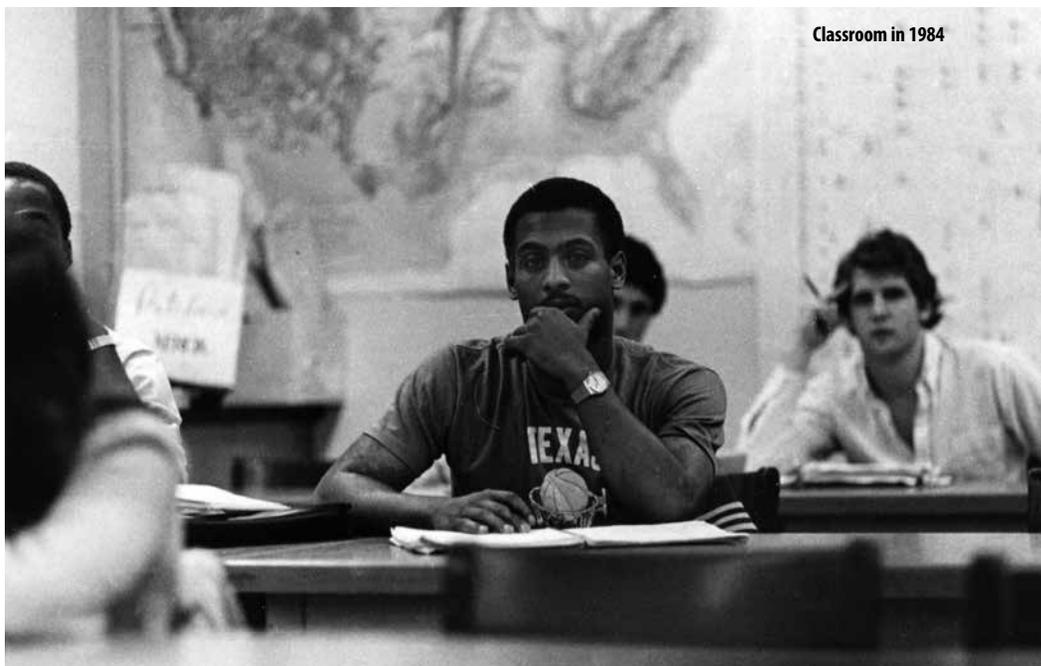
HISTORY AND HERITAGE

150 YEARS

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND PUBLIC MANAGEMENT:
HIGH-IMPACT EDUCATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY.



Geography & Planning Department



Classroom in 1984



Dottie Ives Dewey, chair of Geography and Planning, and students with virtual reality equipment in the GIS lab.

150 YEARS

Since 2008, enrollment at the College of Business and Public Management (CBPM) has nearly doubled. As of last fall, 3,876 undergraduate students were pursuing 10 undergraduate degrees and 16 minors; another 980 students were pursuing seven different graduate programs. According to the *Philadelphia Business Journal*, the college is the third largest undergraduate business school in the region, behind only Temple University and the University of Delaware.

Dean Evan Leach credits the strong growth to program and faculty quality (85 tenured or tenure track professors, as well as 78 adjunct faculty); competitive cost value vs. larger Philadelphia area universities; multiple campuses and online options; and a rather unique interdisciplinary mindset.

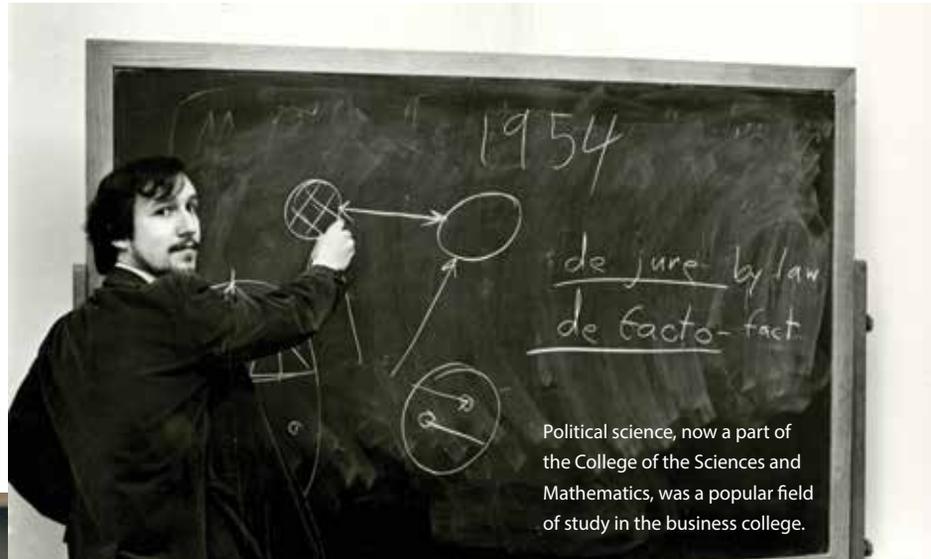
That's what happens when traditional business departments such as accounting, economics and finance, management, and marketing are joined together with departments of criminal justice and geography and planning, as well as the graduate-level department of public policy and administration.

Since 2017, all the departments have also been situated in the same building, the Business and Public Management Center.

"It's enabled our faculty and students to interact in ways that were never before possible," said Leach. "As a result, our growth in minors has been significant and we are able to offer a greater array of degree options for our students."



Business and Public Management Center construction.



Political science, now a part of the College of the Sciences and Mathematics, was a popular field of study in the business college.



◀ Leah Ndanga, assistant professor of management, uses the flexible classroom seating arrangements in the CBPM building to encourage collaborative work.

For example, the white-collar crime minor, which was jointly designed by the accounting and criminal justice departments, focuses on forensic accounting. The minor in business Geographic Information Systems (GIS) provides students with the spatial analysis skills applied to business-oriented data and questions, for example, to determine how to optimize supply chain efficiencies or where to locate an office to attract a region's best workers. Business majors can minor in business law and/or human resources management. In addition, The college has also recently launched minors in entrepreneurship and supply chain management.

"These unusual academic configurations allow our students to tailor their degree to their particular interests," said Leach, a management professor. "We believe these specialization options give our students a strong edge in the job market versus someone with just a generalist business education."

"When you start creating synergies between diverse departments that wouldn't usually be linked, great things happen," adds University President Christopher Fiorentino, who witnessed some of the same phenomena when he served as the college's dean from 1993 to 2013.

Besides the main campus, CBPM offers its bachelor in business management and master of public administration degrees at the Philadelphia Center City Campus and the bachelor in management degree for Delaware County Community College graduates at their Marple campus.

While the highly rated MBA program is delivered online now, a significant chapter in the program's growth began in 2001 when Fiorentino, then the dean, convinced the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education to allow him, in an unprecedented move, to buy and operate an off-campus building 20 minutes north of the main campus that was more convenient for working professionals. The WCU Graduate Center still houses other University programs and tenants. "It's been wildly successful," said Fiorentino.

CLYDE GALBRAITH:

PREPARING YOUNG ACCOUNTANTS FOR SUCCESS

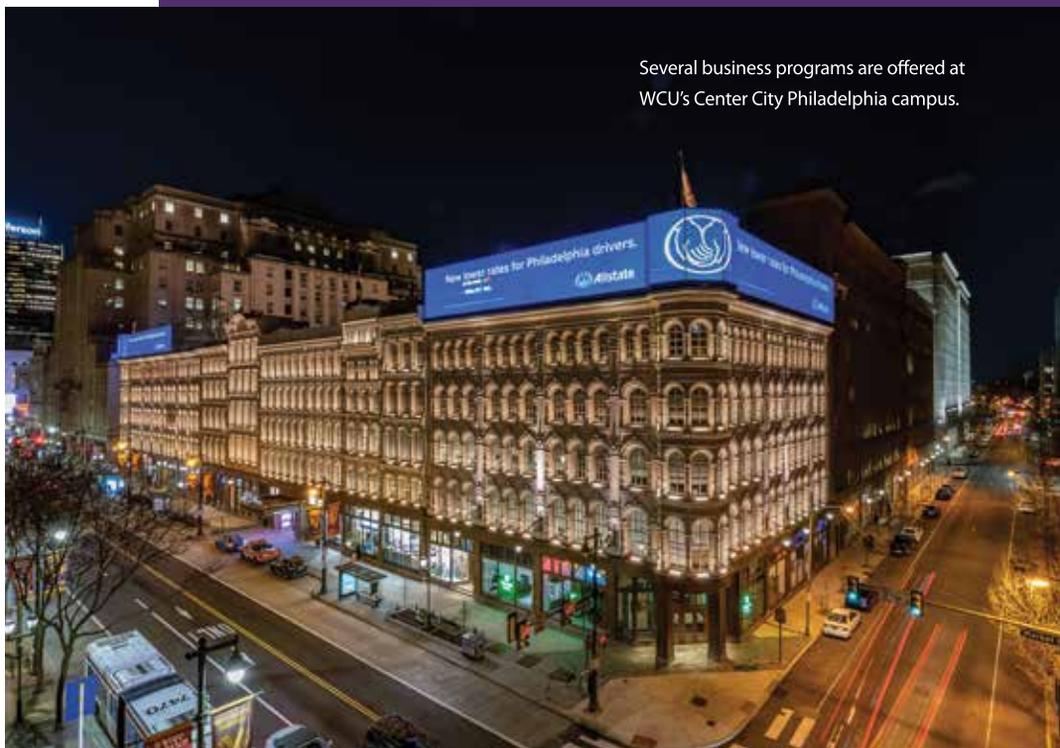
Clyde Galbraith, professor emeritus of accounting, established the rigorous standards and stellar reputation that continue to be the hallmarks of the Accounting Department.

"We had a lot of first-generation students willing to work hard, and we worked them hard to prepare them," said Galbraith, a 2011 retiree who chaired the department for 27 of the 37 years he taught. "I hated how hard your classes were," a successful alum recently told him, "but I later realized in grad school that I knew more than students from larger schools."

The 2005 Pennsylvania Institute of Certified Public Accountants Outstanding Accounting Educator also tirelessly networked with the 30 firms that he annually brought on campus to recruit. In addition, he arranged for his students to intern with them during the busy January-April audit and tax season, when they would learn the most.

The result: Scores of graduates working at firms who each year hire even more WCU graduates. Little wonder that some of his former students recently endowed the Clyde Galbraith Excellence in Financial Accounting Scholarship and also donated to name a classroom in his honor.

Several business programs are offered at WCU's Center City Philadelphia campus.



Business Administration Department 1979 >



^ Chris Przemieniecki, associate professor of criminal justice, with students.

The CBPM is also a signatory of the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME), a United Nations-supported initiative. In addition, since 2007 the School of Business within the college has been accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), the worldwide benchmark of quality business education. Only approximately 900 business schools worldwide, and just over 525 U.S. business schools, have AACSB accreditation.

“The culture of the School of Business changed most dramatically and the quality and reputation of the business program improved when we achieved AACSB accreditation,” said Tom Tolin, an associate professor of economics who retired last June. Because research is an AACSB priority, Fiorentino, as dean, worked hard to provide faculty with the resources they need to conduct research.

“Even though we had always embraced the teacher-scholar model, the increases in research activity and in the percentage of faculty actually invested in it rose significantly,” said Tolin. That’s spilled over to students, whose senior capstone research seminars often result in presentations of their

own research papers at annual conferences, such as the Eastern Economic Association (EEA) conference.

Among them are students of Simon Condliffe, professor of economics and finance, who focuses on health care economics. “For students to be able to interact with professional economists and academics is a great payoff,” he said. “Many have told me these conferences were the highlight of their academic careers at West Chester and that discussing these research endeavors during job interviews really helped differentiate them.”

The CBPM’s diverse research portfolio currently includes a three-year, \$400,000 grant from the Clean Slate Initiative to Condliffe; Matt Saboe, associate professor of economics and finance; and Mia Ocean, associate professor of graduate social work. Their goal: to assess the employment, housing, and educational impacts of Pennsylvania’s Clean Slate Act, which shields minor criminal records of non-repeat offenders from the public. “It’s a great example of the kind of interdisciplinary research we’re trying to foster that looks at a significant societal issue to see how we can move the needle,” says Leach.

CBPM faculty also actively mentor students, such as Summer Undergraduate Research Institute participants, and advise student groups, including the student Investment Group of WCU. Since it was launched with \$34,000 in donations in fall 2016, the club's funds have grown to \$64,000. Student members analyze industries and specific stocks and then pitch their recommendations to club members, who jointly make investment decisions. "It's a great opportunity to put into practice what they have been learning in the classroom," said Condliffe, one of the group's advisors.

The college also emphasizes significant community involvement by both faculty and students. Matt Shea, associate professor of business and public management, serves as the chair of the Greater West Chester Chamber of Commerce (GWCC), while the chamber's president, Katie L. Walker, is a member of the business school's Advisory Council. "We view the chamber as one of our key strategic partners," said Leach. "It's a way for us to connect to the business community and for our students to connect with their member businesses." One example: marketing majors develop marketing and media plans for the businesses or intern with them.

In addition, CBPM hosts several centers that connect students with local businesses and/or nonprofits; connect businesses with helpful resources, including faculty and students; and conduct relevant research. These include the Dr. Edwin Cottrell Entrepreneurial Leadership Center, the Supply Chain Management Center, the Center for Newcomer Onboarding (CNO), and the GIS and Spatial Analysis Center.

Two years ago, Johnna Capitano, associate professor of management, founded the CNO. It brings together faculty, staff, and students from disciplines throughout the University to conduct research and practice projects, focusing on how newcomers are successfully integrated into various types of organizations. As the former senior director of training and organizational

development at Aramark in Philadelphia, Capitano halved first-year turnover of frontline employees by revamping the firm's frontline manager onboarding program.

The center's recent projects have included analyzing the University's First Year Experience for students; publishing a resource guide for onboarding volunteers; and researching best practices for onboarding independent contractors and consultants. Said Capitano, "We view the center as a community of people dedicated to learning about and improving newcomer outcomes in all contexts."

Like Capitano, Associate Professor of Criminal Justice Cassandra L. Reyes brings a wealth of professional experience to her classes. Before joining WCU in 2009, she worked for more than 13 years, including 10 years as a New Jersey State bilingual probation and parole officer, then as an Indiana University of Pennsylvania Police Department dispatcher, and as an Indiana County (PA) Jail correctional officer.

A course Reyes created 12 years ago — the nation's first known animal cruelty criminal justice elective course — continues to attract more than just criminal justice majors. The nearly 1,000 students Reyes has taught have included anthropology, biology, business, health sciences, and psychology majors.

"There are strong links between animal cruelty and human violence, including spousal and child abuse," said Reyes who co-edited, with Mary P. Brewster, professor and criminal justice chair, the book *Animal Cruelty: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Understanding*; its third edition will be published this year. "Whether students are considering law enforcement or mental health careers, it's a



red flag worth understanding."

Another example can be found in the Geography and Planning Department. The Department has a national reputation for its work and alumni network related to geospatial technology. It is also home of the Center for GIS and Spatial Analysis, which performs research, provides support for the University, and engages in collaborative projects with community partners. This includes Planning and Design Studio projects, unmanned aerial vehicle operations and image analysis, business-location analytics, spatial analysis, and field data collection and monitoring projects.

Meanwhile, the digital marketing minor, the college's fastest growing minor, follows a similar playbook. Valerie Wang, associate professor of marketing, created the minor to train students in using digital technology and media, including social media, to strategically reach target audiences — an absolutely essential business skill today. Once again, internships allow students to utilize such skill sets to contribute to the success of local businesses.

"I knew it would be a hot minor when I launched it," said Wang, who is also the assistant director of the First Year Experience. "But I didn't realize majors outside of business, even music and history majors, would want to incorporate digital marketing into their fields. I love my students' motivations, their work ethic, their desire to succeed in their classes and, most importantly, to get a good job.

"I really love helping them put all those pieces together." WCU

