



February 4, 2019

Center for Entrepreneurship & Business Innovation (*iCenter*) - WVIBMC

The Lewis College of Business launched its new Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Fall 2018. Named the Center for Entrepreneurship & Business Innovation (*iCenter*), this new center spearheads a critical emerging area of focus for the College of Business that will spread innovation and entrepreneurship throughout the college, campus, and community. Led by Professors Ben Eng and Olen York, inspired by Intuit, and themed around design thinking, our *iCenter* is affiliated to the academic major and minor in entrepreneurship offered by the Brad D. Smith Undergraduate School of Business. The *iCenter* will provide a variety of services to internal and external stakeholders, including workshops and consultation on creativity and innovation, business model development and auditing, business plan writing, pitch development, networking, and references to experienced professionals. The *iCenter* will provide its stakeholders design thinking space with associated assets, such as resource materials, technology, equipment, and mentoring. More information on the *iCenter* is available at: <https://www.marshall.edu/cob/icenter-home/>

The *iCenter* is launching our first intercollegiate student entrepreneurship and innovation competition – The West Virginia Innovation & Business Model Competition (WVIBMC), with the Finals slated for April 6, 2019 at the Joan C. Edwards Performing Arts Center's Francis-Booth Experimental Theater. This competition owes its origin to the Design for Delight event hosted by Marshall in collaboration with Intuit in 2017. The WVIBMC focuses on developing a business model as opposed to a business plan, uses a decentralized model of local competitions at each partner school leading to the final presentations, and involves faculty from across the state to spread the design thinking mantra. The idea is to develop a business model validated through customer feedback and field research. The contest rewards ventures for breaking down an idea into a key business model hypotheses; testing their assumptions with customers; applying Customer Development / Lean Startup principles to make sure they refine the model for improved success; and pivoting until they have a customer-validated business model. The result is to promote new business ventures among university students to encourage innovation and building of disruptive and scalable startups. I appreciate the support of fellow business school deans and heads of four-year colleges and universities in West Virginia for promoting this event among their faculty and students, and the hard work of entrepreneurship faculty members from institutions across the state who have imbibed and propagated the business model canvas to their students.

The WVIBMC website is: <https://www.wvinnovates.com/>



BBA in Accounting recognized for Superior Value in West Virginia



AccountingEdu.org has ranked our BBA in Accounting as the Most Affordable Bachelor's Degree in Accounting in West Virginia for 2018-19, with highly competitive cost per Credit Hour of \$352 (WV resident), \$605 (metro resident), \$797 (non-resident), and with CPA First-Time Exam Pass Rate of 60%. The website lists the following special features of our Accounting program:

- Opportunities to Reach 150 Credits/Complete Graduate Study Through the University's MSA and MBA Programs
- Boasts an Esteemed Faculty, Many of Whom are Practicing CPAs
- Program focused on strong Faculty-Student Interactions supported by a Dedicated Faculty-Student Mentoring Program
- Plentiful Opportunities for Practical Learning and Student Engagement Through Events like Student Night and Meet the Firms and Through Organizations like Beta Alpha Psi
- Outstanding Hands-On Learning Opportunities Include Internships, VITA—the Volunteer Tax Assistance Program, and Study Abroad Programs

The website also offers some helpful information for prospective students and external stakeholders:

"Marshall University's BBA in Accounting will prepare you to be an asset in any organization through classroom theory and practical experience designed to hone skills in research, technology, communications, critical thinking, and more. The program's comprehensive curriculum is overseen by the Accounting Advisory Board and taught by an award-winning faculty with diverse backgrounds and teaching interests. Many of the instructors here are CPAs, and all are committed to the highest level of student engagement, thanks to a dedicated faculty-student mentoring program. Outside the classroom you'll get a chance to network with industry professionals and connect with your peers at events like 'Student Night' and 'Visit the Firms,' and by participating with organizations like Beta Alpha Psi. You can also look forward to plenty of opportunities for hands-on learning experiences that include internships, a chance to study abroad, and the VITA tax preparation assistance outreach program. Study abroad opportunities are more available here than you'll find almost anywhere else—Marshall University partners with more than 250 sites in 50 countries!"