Preamble

The J. Mack Robinson College of Business (RCB) will mark its 100th anniversary in 2013. As we prepare to celebrate this important milestone we are mindful of our distinguished past, proud of our stature today, and looking ahead to how we will build on this outstanding legacy in the future.

Our history is in many ways the history of Georgia State University, which traces its roots to the 1913 establishment of the Georgia Tech Evening School of Commerce. The first commercially focused graduate school in Atlanta, it was created to counteract early 20th century “brain drain.” At the time, most local college graduates moved north to build their careers, unaware of business and industrial opportunities within the state.

In the century since Robinson was founded the college has continued to deliver on its original mission to prepare Georgia business leaders. According to Standard & Poor’s data, the Robinson College and Georgia State have produced more of Georgia’s top executives with graduate degrees than any other school in the Southeast.

While we remain committed to our roots, Robinson’s footprint and impact have greatly expanded. With 200 faculty, 8,000 students and 75,000 alumni, the Robinson College is one of the largest business schools in the nation. We have six locations throughout the Atlanta metro area and programs on five continents. As of Fall 2011, students from 88 countries are enrolled at the college here in Atlanta. Our student body is diverse not only in nationality, but also in business experience, educational background, and ethnicity, and, as such, is representative of the United States and the world at large. Our alumni hold leadership positions not only in Georgia, but also throughout the United States and around the globe. We truly are world-class and world-wide.

Robinson’s prominence is reflected by the standing of our programs in business school rankings.

- Our part-time MBA is ranked among the best by the Aspen Institute, *Bloomberg Businessweek* and *U.S. News & World Report*
- Our Executive MBA is on the *Financial Times* list of the world’s premier programs
- Our BBA is ranked among the nation’s best by *U.S News & World Report*
- Our departments of risk management and insurance, computer information systems, real estate, and health administration are nationally ranked by *U.S. News & World Report*

Our faculty is a particular point of pride. Among our number are some of the world’s most prolific scholars and respected practitioners, whose quality as instructors is reflected by a well-earned “A” for teaching excellence bestowed by *Bloomberg Businessweek*. An analysis conducted by the University of Texas at Dallas places the Robinson College among the world’s top business schools for research productivity. Also telling is the caliber of schools that hire graduates of our PhD program. In recent years, they have taken positions at institutions including Florida State University, Tulane University, University of British Columbia, University of Iowa, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, University of Tennessee and University of Virginia.
At the beginning of the 21st century, the College committed itself to five strategic accelerators designed to increase the quality and reputation of its programs. The plan called for the college to increase research quality and reputation; increase student quality/recruiting; dramatically increase external funding; significantly improve facilities and technology; and dramatically increase executive education. These activities have provided a valuable focus for College decisions and allocation of resources, yielded strong results despite the challenging circumstances for higher education in recent years, and will continue to serve as the foundation upon which the College embarks on its next phase of growth.

Strategic Plan 2011-2020

The strategic plan for 2011-2020 identifies three goals and a number of supporting initiatives formulated to strengthen RCB’s reputation as a globally recognized leader in business education: 1) Enhance RCB’s international reputation for business education that graduates students who are ready to execute and who have the interdisciplinary expertise required to address the most vexing problems facing business and society, 2) Achieve distinction for research conducted within and across the boundaries of the Robinson College of Business that addresses the most challenging issues facing business in the 21st Century and 3) Increase our engagement as a member of business communities at the local, regional, national, and global levels.

Our strategic plan for 2011-2020 is predicated on the following mission and vision statements and core beliefs.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Robinson College of Business is to ensure a diverse set of students emerges with the business skills required to create value in a wide variety of organizations. We strive to do this by employing scholars charged to increase our understanding of how individuals, organizations, governments and markets effectively interact to enhance social well-being. This knowledge will be imparted to our peers and to the current and next generation of business leaders that maximizes their potential to positively impact their lives, families, communities and global society.

Vision Statement

RCB will be the destination choice for highly qualified undergraduate and graduate students who want to become business and academic leaders in a global society, faculty who want to achieve international recognition for research and teaching, and businesses who want to support and partner with a business school that has students and faculty who have the requisite skills to add value to organizations in fast changing, complex, and inter-connected business environments.

Core Beliefs

Our mission is guided by the following beliefs:

The power of markets. A market-oriented system best promotes and supports the growth of individual dignity, freedom, and personal responsibility and is the most efficient means to enrich people’s lives. To create long run shareholder value business leaders must engage both the market and societal context in which their firms operate.

Crossing boundaries. The interesting problems and the tools necessary to gain an appreciation and understanding of complex phenomena often occur across and in-between the boundaries of
established disciplines. Environments that promote scholarly engagement across disciplines will have greater impact on wider audiences.

**The global economic context, technology and culture will profoundly drive innovation.** Technology is profoundly impacting the boundaries of organizations, the nature of information, the fluidity of labor markets, and the ability to contract. Students must be prepared to work in a world where the global economic context is vast and diverse in cultures, innovative in technologies, and complex in the boundaries that organizations span to create value.

**Value is created by empowered individuals and teams.** Value is created by individuals with natural talents who have unique insights regarding the future needs of consumers, firms and societies. Organizations develop resources and have capabilities that enable individuals or teams of individuals to pursue and achieve their personal and professional goals. Thus, individuals can most effectively leverage their creative visions through organizations once they have the business acumen and analytical skills necessary to determine and influence outcomes. An understanding of how individuals interact and work together and how they can best contribute to the development of new ideas is essential for progress and success.

**We will lead.** Our reputation for excellence will be determined by our strategic choices and by our ability to execute on those choices. Execution by a strong community of faculty, staff, students, alumni, and business professionals will greatly contribute to our effectiveness and success.

**Goal 1: Enhance RCB’s international reputation for business education that graduates students who are ready to execute and who have the interdisciplinary expertise required to address the most vexing problems facing business and society.**

RCB has long been the destination of choice for achievement-minded individuals seeking a business education that captures the complexity and changing demands of business and that prepares them for leadership positions. Our students prepare for careers in an atmosphere that mirrors the complexity, diversity, and global focus of today’s organizational environments. Our goal is to build upon and extend RCB’s reputation for providing cutting edge business education that reflects contemporary global business and societal context.

**Initiative 1: Develop networked graduate and undergraduate curricula.** Successful business leaders must have an appreciation of the complexity of business problems in an increasingly global business environment, the ability to apply tools and techniques that span disciplinary boundaries and the ability to effectively communicate with a diverse set of domestic and international stakeholders. This requires business curricula that depart from traditional designs in which students are exposed to individual disciplines and skills in relative isolation and integration across those disciplines occurs only at the end of their degree programs. In order to provide our students with the skills demanded by an increasingly complex business environment, RCB will develop curricula at the graduate and undergraduate levels that: incorporate materials and experiences that illustrate the integrated nature of business problems and business operations and the impact of globalization on those problems and operations; build the analytical and conceptual capabilities required to develop a complex understanding of business issues
and generate effective business decisions; incorporate experiences that develop and hone effective written and oral communication skills.

**Initiative 2: Initiate programs and activities that encourage, challenge and recognize top RCB students.** Top business schools pro-actively identify top student talent and provide programs and activities that challenge and develop those individuals in order to build their leadership competencies and strategically position them to successfully compete for the most competitive and challenging internships and employment opportunities available in the global marketplace. RCB will establish a Leadership Fellows Program for outstanding graduate and undergraduate students with demonstrated leadership potential. Students will be selected for this program on the basis of academic credentials, leadership potential, and recommendations from RCB faculty and staff and/or external parties. Students selected for participation in this program will develop and hone their leadership skills through intensive training and through participation in unique co-curricular leadership activities. Upon completion of the semester-long program, these individuals will become Robinson Leadership Fellows. Fellows will put their leadership skills into practice through the remainder of their degree program by helping to develop the leadership capabilities of other RCB students in their assigned learning team cohorts through teaching and modeling the use of practical leadership tools and tactics. RCB will also support the development and positioning of our high achievement-oriented students by leveraging current and developing new competitions and co-curricular activities that provide opportunities for skill-building outside of the classroom and showcase RCB student ingenuity and analytical and communication skills. In addition, the College will establish new awards at the undergraduate and graduate levels that recognize RCB students who best represent the values and goals of the college.

**Initiative 3: Develop elite programs that meet the needs of current and future societal leaders to develop cross-professional competencies.** Societal leaders increasing play multiple roles in complex organizations that require them to possess skills and knowledge that cross traditional professional boundaries. To meet the emerging needs of these individuals, RCB will, independently and in partnership with other colleges and schools in the University, create new undergraduate and graduate degree programs and non-degree programs that build cross-professional competencies. An example of the type of program these efforts can include is a degree program on global sustainability that integrates coursework in RCB, the Andrew Young School, and the Department of Geosciences. Societal leaders also often transition between different types of organizational contexts (e.g., business to nonprofit) over the course of their careers. Another example is a proposal for a new program in risk analytics which combines higher level modeling tools with risk assessment and is potentially joined with another major so graduates would have both a strong analytical and subject matter expertise in an area related to the study of risk. RCB will develop new non-credit executive education programs designed to provide these individuals with the knowledge and competencies they require for a successful transition.

**Initiative 4: Create new opportunities for students to gain international experience by leveraging existing programs and relationships and developing new ones.** Developing the international acumen required to succeed in today’s global business environment requires a familiarity with other international contexts that can only be gained through direct experience. RCB will expand the opportunities available to students to gain international experience by leveraging its current course-based study abroad program to increase student participation in a greater variety of high-quality
options. The College will also promote semester-long study abroad programs for RCB students with select partner universities able to provide a high-quality, rigorous foreign educational experience. In order to provide RCB students with the opportunity to gain international work experience, the College will leverage existing relationships with multinational corporations to provide student internship and other short-term employment opportunities in global settings.

**Initiative 5: Establish a Center for Excellence in Communication.** Success in business depends on having the appropriate interpersonal skills and the ability to critically evaluate information and present ideas in a manner that is clear, precise and compelling. To ensure that our students graduate with these skills and capabilities, RCB will establish a Center for Excellence in Communication, which will initiate an assessment program required of all students at RCB entry. Individualized communication development plans that include specific development goals will be provided for each student. The Center will serve as a central location for resources, expertise and advisement on enhancing the oral and written communication skills and the interpersonal skills of RCB students. The center will also serve as the coordination point for activities related to incorporating communication development into the various RCB curricula. It will offer an array of pedagogical tools and techniques that faculty can incorporate into their courses to achieve communication-oriented learning outcomes, aid in the development of rubrics for assessing those learning outcomes, and serve as the coordination point for Critical Thinking through Writing activities and courses.

**Goal 2: Achieve global distinction for research conducted within and across the boundaries of the Robinson College of Business that addresses the most challenging issues facing business in the 21st Century.**

The complex nature of global business in the 21st Century increasingly generates issues best addressed in a research environment that includes scholarship which operates across business school disciplines and beyond traditional business disciplines. As one of the largest business schools in the world, RCB has a number of well-developed Centers, programs, and research capacities and has excelled in generating research within established disciplinary areas. To achieve distinction in research that addresses 21st century challenges, we must leverage and enhance these capabilities to create the capacity to address issues that lie at the intersection of traditional disciplinary or college boundaries.

**Initiative 1: Develop and support Strategic Research Initiatives that promote research across traditional boundaries.** RCB will selectively identify and support Strategic Research Initiatives that will lead the college to distinction in research addressing issues of concern to businesses and that require research that crosses traditional disciplinary or college boundaries. Support may include, but is not be limited to, the provision of seed funding and support for existing centers. It will also include assistance in obtaining external funding through the newly established RCB Office of Research Development. The research generated by these initiatives should be publishable in the highest level journals, whether discipline-specific or cross-boundary outlets. Suitability for top discipline-based outlets will follow from institutional and disciplinary specific insights gained from the initiative that would not have occurred without significant information spillovers from cross-boundary interactions. Some of the projects designated as Strategic Research Initiatives may be short term in duration, ending when the specific
research project is concluded. Others may generate a larger program of cross-boundary research that requires longer-term commitment. These initiatives could lead to the development of a new Center and may be supported by RCB with cluster hires. Such new Centers will reside at the college level in order to encourage cross-boundary interaction. Where appropriate, existing RCB centers may be used to oversee Strategic Research Initiatives and/or provide guidance for the development of future initiatives.

**Initiative 2: Institute an RCB Undergraduate Research Fellows Program.** RCB will establish an Undergraduate Research Fellows Program to provide undergraduate students with opportunities to participate in academic (discipline-specific or cross-disciplinary) or applied research projects that can assist them in obtaining practical skills or foster interest in an academic career. Students will apply to the program and those selected will be actively engaged in research projects being led by members of the RCB faculty. Undergraduate Research Fellows would also be eligible to work in the RCB Innovation Laboratory, in a Center, or as part of an RCB Strategic Research Initiative. How these positions would be designated will depend on the source(s) of funding and the structure of the unit that houses the project. In addition to self-selection as a source of applicants, faculty would be encouraged to nominate individual students, and students could be actively recruited from the RCB Honors program or the University Honors College.

**Initiative 3: Increase Research Support.** To support the goal of achieving distinction in research that addresses the needs of business in the 21st century, RCB will strive to increase its support for research. These efforts will include, but not necessarily be limited to, increased support for the Ph.D. program and faculty. While the RCB has consistently increased support for the Ph.D. program over the years, additional support is necessary to provide stipends, office space, data access, and computing and software capabilities commensurate with a leading research institution. For faculty, this increased support would be in the form of summer research support opportunities, increased support for grant writing, preparation and administration, as well as support for obtaining other sponsored funding opportunities. Finally, RCB is committed to providing support for research at a level commensurate with leading research institutions and will address future opportunities for enhancing support as they are identified by RCB faculty.

**Goal 3: RCB will be a fully-engaged member of business communities at the local, regional, national, and global levels.**

The power of a business school lies in its ability to enhance the effectiveness of organizations. This can only be accomplished through sustained active engagement with organizations and the people within them. In order to develop a worldwide reputation as a provider of cutting-edge business education, RCB will need to be engaged with the business community both nationally and internationally. This engagement will need to be more than just as a provider of business educational programs for these communities. It will also require RCB faculty and students to be actively involved with business communities to solve the vexing business problems facing these communities. In turn, this engagement will generate educational experiences and opportunities for RCB students that will provide them with the requisite skill set to succeed in an increasingly complex interconnected business environment, and a rich laboratory for RCB faculty to generate innovative research ideas and conduct their research.
Initiative 1: Create Embedded Relationships with Industry Partners. Deep and sustained relationships with businesses afford the opportunity for RCB to gain insight into the ever evolving needs of organizations that, in turn, provide opportunities to develop/enhance educational programs, identify problems/issues that can be addressed through academic research and student field projects and competitions, and opportunities to aid organizations with the commercialization of discovery and innovation. To develop these relationships, RCB will launch a RCB Innovation Laboratory that will seek, form, and manage applied and commercial research engagements that connect faculty, students, and industry. It will also launch RCB Connection that will connect students and alumni with employers through student internship opportunities, team-based field projects, and alumni post-graduate placement opportunities.

Initiative 2: Empower the Alumni Base. RCB has a large alumni base with a wealth of business leadership experience in the U.S. and across the world. Their willingness to share this experience is critical to the continued development of our educational programs and faculty research. The depth of the connectedness of RCB with its alumni base will yield multiple mutually beneficial relationships including placement opportunities for current and former students as well as lifelong education for the alumni themselves. Further, their advice and support will bring vitality to the institution, help secure RCB’s reputation as a preferred destination for business education, and enhance the value of alumni degrees. RCB will establish dedicated organizational structures and processes to engage this large alumni base and to develop and implement programs and events that generate mutually beneficial relationships between RCB and this alumni base. It will also support initiatives undertaken by individual faculty and academic units to form enduring relationships with alumni.

Initiative 3: Develop Sustained International Relationships. For RCB to further extend its influence as a provider of cutting-edge business education, it will need to develop close and long-lasting relations with the international business and academic communities. Towards this end, RCB will initiate innovative programs to expand RCB contacts and interactions with foreign/multinational corporations such as the US-Latin America Trade Program (USLAT) which provides non-classroom, active-learning educational opportunities for foreign executives as well as for involved faculty and students. It will initiate additional traditional executive development programs sponsored or co-sponsored by RCB with foreign partners, to be held outside the USA. RCB will also actively engage with international Chambers of Commerce, trade missions, and similar international business organizations to offer joint programs with them. It will initiate customized, corporate executive education with international subject matter/content held at RCB, corporate campuses, and international venues for executives of foreign and/or multinational firms. RCB will leverage its large international faculty and alumni base to build linkages with international educational institutions at the high school, undergraduate, and graduate levels, think tanks, governmental and non-governmental organizations, and businesses. RCB will also develop sustained relationships with various funding agencies to promote these international relationships.

Approved by RCB Faculty at the February 23, 2012 RCB Faculty Meeting