

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

The official publication of the UFV School of Business



Welcome to the latest edition of the UFV School of Business Newsletter!

In this issue, we reflect on our accomplishments from the first half of 2025 and share updates on ongoing projects and initiatives.

It's our way of keeping you connected with everything happening across our dynamic institution.

We hope it helps strengthen our ties and offers a glimpse into the exciting work shaping the future of business education at UFV.

Thank you for being a valued part of our community!

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Director's Message

Dear School of Business Family,

As winter settles in and the year draws to a close, I find myself pausing, really pausing, to take in everything we have lived through together. This year has not been simple, gentle, or predictable. Beginning Fall 2025, higher education across Canada felt tremors of change that were impossible to ignore. And we were no exception.

International student uncertainty tested every assumption we had. Budget pressures reminded us of how fragile planning can be. Trade tensions across the border loomed over our business programs. And the overall pessimism in the sector often felt louder than the optimism.

And yet... despite all of that, here we are, standing tall, standing together!

What makes me the proudest is not that we survived the volatility. It's how we showed up for our students, for each other, and for our mission. In a year that could have easily made us shrink, we chose to expand. In moments that felt unclear, we chose clarity of purpose. When the world felt heavy, we chose to bring light into our classrooms, our teams, and our community. And because of that, the pages of this Winter Newsletter are still filled with milestones worth celebrating, achievements that genuinely make us proud, partnerships that grew deeper, and stories that remind us why education will always matter.

I am proud of us. Not in a formal "Director" way, but in the deeply personal way one feels about a family that rises together.

As many of you know, I will be taking a year off beginning in 2026 to attend to some personal commitments. It is a bittersweet thing to step away, even temporarily, from a community I care about so much. I will be handing the baton to Gerry Palmer, who will serve as the Interim Director. To say the School is in good hands would be an understatement. Gerry brings wisdom, steadiness, empathy, and a kind of grounded leadership that our School will benefit from deeply in the year ahead.

I leave with gratitude. I leave with pride. And I leave knowing I will return, with new stories, new learnings, perhaps a deeper tan and absolutely the same love for this community.

Wishing you warmth, rest, reflection, and joy this winter season.

With all my heart.

Dr. Khyati Shetty
Director, UFV School of Business



Dr. Khyati Shetty

Research

At the School of Business, we understand that research is central to driving academic advancement and practical impact in the business world.

Our growing focus on research empowers both faculty and students to tackle real-world business challenges, generating insights that drive innovative strategies and inform evidence-based decisions. This commitment enhances our academic programs, deepens the classroom experience, and prepares our graduates to lead and innovate in an ever-changing global marketplace. The following highlights showcase the outstanding contributions of our faculty.

Please find below details on the latest contributions to research.

FACULTY MEMBERS

Chris Schinckus



Dr. Chris Schinckus

Dr. Chris Schinckus, Dean of the Faculty of Business and Computing, is one of the world's foremost experts in the fields of business and economics. See his latest publications below.

Journal Articles:

GBD 2021 Global Sepsis Collaborators (**Schinckus C.** is a member of the co-authors) (2025). "Global, regional, and national sepsis incidence and mortality, 1990–2021: a systematic analysis". *The Lancet Global Health* (Q1 - Impact factor 18), Volume 13, Issue 12. e2013-e2026. doi:10.1016/S2214-109X(25)00356-0

Bui H.Q., **Schinckus C.**, Ali-Ajaifi H., and Beong K. L. (2025). "Spontaneous Order in Cryptocurrency Markets: Crash dynamics and Complexity–Entropy Causality Plane". *Physica A: Statistical Mechanics and its Applications*, vol. 680, 131050 (Q2 - Impact factor: 2.8). Doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.physa.2025.131050>

GBD 2023 Disease and Injury and Risk Factor Collaborators (**Schinckus C.** is a member of the co-authors) (2025). "Burden of 375 diseases and injuries, risk-attributable burden of 88 risk factors, and healthy life expectancy in 204 countries and territories, including 660 subnational locations, 1990–2023: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2023". *The Lancet* (Q1 -Impact factor: 98.4), 12 October 2025. doi: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(25\)01637-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(25)01637-X)

GBD 2023 Causes of Death Collaborators (**Schinckus C.** is a member of the co-authors) (2025). "Global burden of 292 causes of death in 204 countries and territories and 660 subnational locations, 1990–2023: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2023". *The Lancet* (Q1 -Impact factor: 98.4), 12 October 2025. doi: 10.1016/S0140-6736(25)01917-8

GBD 2023 Demographics Collaborators (**Schinckus C.** is a member of the co-authors) (2025). "Global age-sex-specific all-cause mortality and life expectancy estimates for 204 countries and territories and 660 subnational locations, 1950–2023: a demographic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2023". *The Lancet* (Q1 -Impact factor: 98.4), 12 October 2025. doi: 10.1016/S0140-6736(25)01330-3

GBD Cancer Collaborators (**Schinckus C.** is a member of the co-authors) (2025) "The global, regional, and national burden of cancer, 1990–2023, with forecasts to 2050: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2023". *The Lancet* (Q1 -Impact factor: 98.4), Vol. 406 (10512), 1565 - 1586. doi: 10.1016/S0140-6736(25)01635-6

Global Burden of Cardiovascular Diseases and Risks 2023 Collaborators (**Schinckus C.** is a member of the co-authors) (2025) "Global, Regional, and National Burden of Cardiovascular Diseases and Risk Factors in 204 Countries and Territories, 1990-2023". *Journal of the American College of Cardiology* (Q1 -Impact factor: 22.3) Vol. 24 September 2025. doi: 10.1016/j.jacc.2025.08.015

Felicia Chong



Dr. Felicia Chong

Dr. Felicia Chong is the Chair of Research Coordination and one of the School's most accomplished researchers. See her latest publications below.

Journal Articles:

El-Sayad, I., **Chong, F.H.L.**, and Gopal, P. (2026). 'Risk assessment in mortgages: A comparative study of AI models'. *PeerJ Computer Science*. Forthcoming.

Editorial Activities:

Dr. Chong has recently been appointed as Associate Editor for the *Future Business Journal* (a Springer publication). Additionally, she is currently serving as a Guest Editor for the *World Journal* (MDPI) for a Special Issue titled "The Role of Green Finance in Economic Development." This special issue explores the critical intersection of sustainable investment and global economic growth.

Jelena Brcic

Dr. Jelena Brcic continues to push the boundaries of research on human adaptability in extreme environments while exemplifying research excellence at the UFV School of Business. Her latest work includes a \$1.15 million Canadian Space Agency grant to lead C-STARS, recent media appearances on CBC Radio's As It Happens and the Good Chat Podcast, participation in UFV's Science Café on women in high-risk careers, and a feature in a UBC Alumni Spotlight, all reflecting on her commitment to research.



Dr. Jelena Brcic

Canadian Space Agency - C-STARS Grant

Dr. Brcic has secured a remarkable **\$1.15 million grant** from the Canadian Space Agency (CSA) to lead C-STARS (Canadian Space Team Affect and Resilience Study) — a six-year project exploring the mental health of astronauts on long-duration missions aboard the International Space Station (ISS). The study will investigate how astronauts manage stress, experience meaningful work, and draw on self-transcendent emotions such as awe, gratitude, and compassion to thrive in extreme conditions. It will also examine how these coping strategies and personal resources shape stress perception, daily emotional experiences, performance, physical health, and long-term psychological growth. C-STARS will track up to eight astronauts before, during, and after their missions, using questionnaires, diary-style prompts, and physiological measures.

Dr. Brcic brings her expertise in teams and human behaviour in extreme environments – including space, Arctic research stations, and high-risk volunteer work – to lead a national team with collaborators from Brock, McGill, and the University of Toronto. In addition, UFV students will have opportunities to assist with this groundbreaking research, gaining direct, hands-on experience in STEM and human factors studies.



"We'll track both the challenges astronauts face and the positive emotions, such as gratitude, compassion, and awe, that help them thrive."

-Dr. Jelena Brcic



Dr. Brcic's work with C-STARS cements her role as a leading researcher in human adaptability, exploring how people thrive in the most extreme conditions. "It's inspiring that a UFV researcher will play such a key role in the future of space exploration," says UFV Associate Vice-President, Research and Graduate Studies Dr. Garry Fehr.

The research comes at a pivotal moment in space exploration, as upcoming missions to the Moon and Mars will place astronauts in small, isolated environments with delayed communication from Earth, relying heavily on their crewmates for support. The insights gained will not only inform future space missions but also have relevance for Earth-bound professions that operate under high stress or in remote settings, such as search and rescue teams, firefighters, military personnel, and healthcare workers.

Through C-STARS, Dr. Brcic and her team are not only advancing the future of space exploration but also generating knowledge that will help people thrive in high-stress environments on Earth, highlighting UFV's role in groundbreaking, globally relevant research.



CBC Radio - As It Happens

Dr. Brcic recently appeared on CBC Radio's As It Happens to discuss C-STARS and her research on how astronauts cope with stress during long-duration space missions. She explained how astronauts manage psychological and physiological challenges, problem-solve under pressure, and draw on meaning-making experiences such as awe, gratitude, and purpose. She also highlighted how these findings may inform mental health supports for professionals in high-stress, isolated, or high-risk environments on Earth, including search and rescue teams, wildfire crews, and northern healthcare workers.

UFV Science Cafe: Women Working in Extreme Environments

Dr. Brcic recently participated as a panelist in Women: Working in Extreme Environments, a UFV Science Café event celebrating women whose work takes place in some of the world's most challenging conditions. The panel highlighted careers that involve working in extreme and remote environments—such as emergency response, polar regions, and other high-risk settings—and explored the resilience, adaptability, and leadership required to succeed in these roles.

UFV Science Cafés are informal, interactive events that bring together scientists and the community for dynamic conversation in a relaxed setting. Open to everyone, the event encouraged meaningful dialogue while fostering curiosity and engagement beyond the classroom.

Good Chat podcast

Dr. Brcic was featured on the inaugural episode of the Good Chat Podcast, presented by BC AdventureSmart. The episode, Beyond the Call: Equity and Inclusion in SAR Volunteering, explored issues of inclusion, resilience, and the future of search and rescue in Canada, drawing on the experiences of women and gender-diverse SAR volunteers. Through the conversation, Dr. Brcic highlighted the importance of equity and representation in volunteer emergency services and outdoor safety initiatives.

UBC Alumni Spotlight

Dr. Brcic was recently featured in a UBC Alumni Spotlight highlighting her work as an expert on teams in extreme environments, from the International Space Station to the Canadian Arctic and BC wilderness. A UBC Psychology alumna (PhD '13) and now an associate professor at the UFV School of Business, Dr. Brcic reflected on how her graduate training shaped her commitment to research integrity, resilience, and ethical scholarship.

In the Q&A, she shared insights on building effective teams under pressure, the importance of flexibility and happiness in one's career, and how her research—including the Women in Search and Rescue Project—continues to inform her teaching and efforts to advance equity and inclusion in high-risk and volunteer environments.

<https://psych.ubc.ca/news/alumni-spotlight-jelena-brcic/>

Benny Davidson



Dr. Benny Davidson

Dr. Benny Davidson is one of the School's most prolific researchers, combining his role as an accomplished Associate Professor in Business Management with extensive experience as a management consultant. Explore his latest contributions below.

Journal Articles:

Muttungal, P. V., George, J., & **Davidson, B. G. J.** (Eds.). (2025). Enhancing learning and societal innovation with cyber-physical systems: Education and society. Smart innovation, systems and technologies: Proceedings of ICSCPS 2024. Springer.

Conference Proceedings:

Muttungal, P. V., George, J., & **Davidson, B. G. J.** (Eds.). (2025). Enhancing learning and societal innovation with cyber-physical systems: Education and society. Smart innovation, systems and technologies: Proceedings of ICSCPS 2024. Springer.

Book Chapters:

Muttungal, P. V., George, J., **Davidson, B. G. J.**, & Tur, A. (2025). Enhancing learning and societal innovation with cyber-physical systems: Education and society. In Enhancing learning and societal innovation with cyber-physical systems (pp. 191–202). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-96-2182-8_15

Davidson, B. G. J. (2025). Impact of neuroplasticity on organizational effectiveness and labor productivity. In Neuroplasticity, stress, and resilience in the modern workplace (Chapter 4). IGI Global.

Editorial Activities:

Dr. Davidson is also currently co-editing a new volume titled 'Gig Economy Decoded: Work, Rights, and Realities in a Changing World'. The book, set for a May 2026 release by Taylor & Francis, explores the shifting psychological and social landscapes of the modern gig workforce.

Peer Review:

Dr. Davidson is also acted a reviewer for 12 manuscripts for the International Journal of Ethics and Systems, the Journal of Health Organization and Management, the Journal of Asian Architecture and Building Engineering, Evidence-Based HRM, Heliyon, and Acta Psychologica.

Saeed Rahman



Dr. Saeed Rahman

SSHRC Grant

Dr. Rahman is a collaborator on the SSHRC Partnership Engage Grant awarded in October 2025. Valued at \$18,500, the grant, titled Beyond Emergency Food: Supporting Agency-Based Programming and Community Capacity Development at a Food Bank, is a partnership between Food and Agriculture Institute (FAI) and Archway Community Services' Food Security Department. Led by Principal Investigator Alex Glaros of the FAI, the grant will support initiatives that strengthen food sovereignty and food security for community members in and around Abbotsford, moving beyond emergency food provision toward long-term, community-driven solutions.

BSI World Championship

Dr. Rahman's student, Yash Pandey, representing his company D3ST1NY, won the Best-Strategy Invitational (BSI) World Championship in December 2025 with the highest overall score across all industries. His score is the highest recorded in the last three years of the BSI.

The December 2025 BSI invited 538 student teams worldwide, with 27 teams accepting the challenge. Teams competed in three different simulation industries, each vying for a BSI Grand Championship.

Yash's performance in operations, marketing, finance, and strategy reflects both his skill and the guidance of Dr. Rahman, marking a significant achievement for both student and instructor.



BSI Grand Champion Certificate

Chang Lu



Dr. Chang Lu

Journal Articles:

Zhang, R. R., **Lu, C.**, & Jolivet, J. Jolted to change: How do elites disrupt the institutional orders they inhabit? *Research in the Sociology of Organizations*. Forthcoming.

Safeer, S., Pulvento, C., Lemieux, V., **Lu, C.** BloT-DApp: A Prototype for Real-Time Traceability in Agricultural Supply Chains. *Emerging Science Journal*. Forthcoming.

Luciana Turchick Hakak



Dr. Luciana Turchick Hakak

Conference Presentations:

Turchick Hakak, L. (2025). When is stigma “sticky”? Influences on stigma transfer or deflection for dirty work newcomers. *Proceedings of the Academy of Management Annual Meeting*.

Jones, E., **Turchick Hakak, L.**, et al. (2025). The good, the unconscious, and the dynamic: Rethinking disidentification at work. Symposium presented at the *Academy of Management Annual Meeting*.

RESEARCH EVENTS

Learning Exchange

The **Learning Exchange** brings together the School of Business and the School of Computing to share innovative research, spark interdisciplinary dialogue, and build connections across the faculty in an informal, engaging setting. The December 5th session, moderated by Dr. Mariana Toniolo Barrios, Chair of the Learning Exchange Committee, took place during the Faculty Council meeting in a hybrid format.

From the **School of Business**, **Dr. Benny Davidson** presented Navigating Real Estate Purchase Decisions: An Interplay of Influential Factors. His research explores the economic, social, and psychological factors that shape how buyers make complex real estate decisions, offering insights relevant to both practitioners and researchers.

From the **School of Computing**, **Dr. Russell Campbell** discussed The Design of Microcredentials. Russell highlighted how thoughtful design—covering modularity, assessment, and digital delivery—can make microcredentials effective, flexible, and aligned with industry needs.

This session continued the tradition of showcasing current research, fostering collaboration, and inspiring new ideas across the two schools.

Research Workshop Series

Our research initiative, the Research Workshop Series was launched this fall. It is designed to support faculty scholarship, foster collaboration, and create structured time for research development and writing.

The inaugural session was held December 9, 2025 and focused on two very timely topics: Incubating Research, with an emphasis on refining research questions and identifying gaps in the literature, and AI and Machine Learning in Research, highlighting emerging methods and applications in faculty scholarship.

The session opened with a 40-minute research seminar, during which, we were pleased to have Dean Schinckus present on AI and Machine Learning in Research, and afterwards, take a short Q&A.

The workshop concluded with a flexible writing and networking period that gave faculty dedicated time to advance projects and connect with colleagues.

Looking ahead, the Research Workshop Series will continue in the 2026 academic year with planned sessions on:

- Translating PhDs into Publications
- Literature Review and Hypothesis Development
- Searching the Right Way: ProQuest Application

Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning are at the core of everything we do as a business school. This section is dedicated to showcasing the creativity, experimentation, and dedication that drive our academic mission forward. It's where theory meets practice – and where students and faculty collaborate to make learning truly transformative.

From immersive course experiences like student-produced podcasts and field-based learning, to the integration of guest speakers and global initiatives like Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL), our classrooms are more dynamic and diverse than ever. Highlighting these stories allows us to celebrate the rich educational experiences happening every day – and to inspire continued innovation in how we teach, learn, and grow together.

Collaborative Online International Learning

Throughout 2025, the School continued to pursue new and exciting Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) initiatives, aimed at enriching students' global perspectives and advancing our commitment to internationalization.

In our July 2025 edition, we shared that **Dr. Felicia Chong**, together with her international counterparts Dr. Lee Chee Loong (Taylor's University) and Dr. Tee Peck Ling and Ms. Ung Leng Yean (Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman), had successfully completed a series of five specialized COIL training workshops, paving the way for BUS 349 – Financial Management I to be offered as a COIL course.

We are pleased to report that the first offering of this COIL course was successfully conducted in Fall 2025 in partnership with Taylor's University, where BUS 349 – Financial Management I was paired with FIN61104 – International Finance, providing students with a meaningful international collaborative learning experience.

Building on this momentum, BUS 349 – Financial Management I is now being offered again as a COIL course in Winter 2026, this time in collaboration with Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR).

These COIL projects represent an ongoing commitment to internationalized education at the School of Business. Through sustained collaboration with global partners, the School is utilizing COIL to support accreditation goals, enhance teaching and learning capacity, and prepare our students to engage confidently and effectively in a globally interconnected business environment.

International Leadership Week

In Fall 2025, the UFV School of Business hosted International Leadership: Vancouver as the Asia-Pacific Gateway, a one-week immersive program delivered in partnership with the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts. The program brought together 12 graduate students from Lucerne and five UFV students for an intensive exploration of leadership and international business.

The week combined academic seminars, industry engagement, and experiential learning focused on Canada's role in the global economy and Vancouver's position as a key Asia-Pacific gateway. Sessions examined global leadership, cross-cultural negotiation, and international trade, complemented by guest speakers from academia, industry, and government. Participants also engaged with Indigenous perspectives on economic development and leadership, including sessions in Vancouver and the Fraser Valley, alongside site visits and applied learning activities. A visit to Garaventa Lift Canada provided insight into how an internationally operating firm manages leadership, innovation, and global operations in practice. The program concluded with student group presentations, a closing ceremony, and a reception hosted by the Swiss Consul General in Vancouver.

The International Leadership program reflects UFV Business's commitment to international partnerships, applied learning, and preparing students to lead in a global context.



Jason Campbell delivers lecture on Indigenous relations



Students visit Garaventa Lift



Dr. Zubair Raja answers questions about the Canadian Business landscape



Jillaine Farrar delivers presentation about intercultural teamwork

Applied Projects (BUS 499)

As part of a \$17,600 CEWIL grant secured by **Dr. Zubair Raja** to support experiential learning, students from the Applied Projects (BUS 499) course achieved outstanding success during the final project presentations held on December 10, 2025.

The initiative paired Business students with Planning, Geography, and Environmental Studies (PGES) students to develop strategic proposals for the Addition to Reserve (ATR) development for the Chiyaqtel (Tzeachten) First Nation in Chilliwack. This collaboration emphasized the real-world relevance of the work and highlighted the value of academic–community partnerships in advancing local economic development goals.

The event drew strong community engagement, with members of the Chiyaqtel council and their CEO attending the presentations and providing direct feedback. Of the eight competing teams — seven from PGES and one from Business — judges selected two winners based on the strength of their proposals. The Business team’s submission, a comprehensive Business Plan Strategy, earned them a win, showcasing its potential to support economic growth and sustainable development on the new reserve lands.



Dr. Raja’s team presents their plan



Dr. Raja poses with the winning team

Congratulations to the Business School’s winning team: Mr. Durgesh, Ms. Chifaa, Ms. Jhanvi, and Ms. Kiranpreet.

Their work demonstrated strong business analysis, market insight, and strategic thinking, reflecting the high calibre of applied learning within the Business School. This project marks another successful example of how experiential education connects students with meaningful opportunities to contribute to community-focused economic development.

International Marketing (BUS 421)

Work-Integrated Learning with Tourism Abbotsford

Students from **Dr. Shetty's** BUS 421 - International Marketing class completed an applied consulting project in collaboration with Tourism Abbotsford, working closely with Executive Director Clare Seeley and her team. Students developed a culturally informed social media strategy tailored to diverse global markets, helping to position Abbotsford as a destination for international travellers.



BUS 421 students, Dr. Shetty, and Clare Seeley

International Marketing Plan with Taves Estate Cider

Dr. Shetty's students also engaged in a hands-on strategic assignment with Taves Estate Cider. The class created a comprehensive international marketing plan, complete with market analysis, assessment of cultural fit, and proposed actionable strategies. Students also identified five high-potential markets to help Taves expand globally, especially in light of evolving US tariff challenges and market uncertainties.



BUS 421 students, Dr. Shetty, and Taves Estate

Professional Development Activities

Sha Scholtens - EFMD Career Services Conference

Sha Scholtens recently attended the EFMD Career Services Conference, which focused on how employer expectations are evolving in a global, AI-driven job market. A key theme was the growing need to better support graduates in areas such as intercultural awareness, adaptability, and soft skills. While technical skills remain important, speakers emphasized that soft skills such as communication, empathy, and critical thinking, are increasingly what set candidates apart as AI continues to reshape many roles. Sessions also underscored the importance of tailored support for students, stronger industry partnerships, and innovative engagement models such as mentorship programs, career passports, and employer-led masterclasses as effective ways to help students build confidence and prepare for the workforce.

Dr. Benny Davidson - Online Courses

Benny Davidson recently completed four professional development courses, including The Complete Digital Marketing Course – 12 Courses in 1 (Udemy), Certified Digital Marketing Associate (Digital Marketing Institute & American Marketing Association), Applied Machine Learning Without Coding using Orange 3 (Udemy), and the Google Colab Python Course (Great Learning). These programs strengthened his expertise in digital marketing, analytics, and machine learning, allowing him to integrate practical, industry-relevant tools and examples into the classroom. Benny's ongoing professional development ensures that his teaching reflects the latest trends and technologies, enriching students' learning experiences in marketing and data-driven decision-making.

Engagement

Engagement is about more than just participation – it’s about building meaningful connections, taking initiative, and making a difference.

Whether through collaborative projects, student leadership, alumni mentorship, or community partnerships, engagement brings our school’s mission to life. In this section, we spotlight the people and programs driving connection, purpose, and impact across our business school community.

UFV Open House 2025

On Saturday, October 18, 2025, UFV welcomed hundreds of prospective students, families, educators, and community members to its Abbotsford campus for a vibrant and informative Open House event.

The School of Business booth drew strong interest from attendees considering careers in accounting, finance, marketing, human resources, international business, supply chain management, and entrepreneurship, while the Aviation programs garnered particularly strong interest.

Faculty members and current students were on hand at the School of Business booth to answer program-specific questions, explain degree options, and highlight the attributes that set UFV’s business education apart.

Campus tours offered guests a look at learning spaces, on-campus living options, and the chance to explore support services such as academic advising, career development, and peer mentorship. Attendees could also win prizes such as UFV apparel, first-year starter packs, and more, creating a fun and engaging atmosphere.



Dr. Zubair Raja speaks with School of Business hopefuls



Dr. Saeed Rahman poses with Enactus UFV students

Dean's Conversation Series

The Dean's Conversation Series is a bi-monthly forum designed to spark meaningful dialogue around the evolving priorities and challenges in education today. Through presentations and open discussions, these events provide space for faculty and staff to share insights and experiences. By encouraging exchange of voices and perspectives, the conversations aim to inspire collaboration and foster a stronger, more connected academic community.

UFV President, Dr. James Mandigo

On October 15, 2025, Dean Schinckus welcomed Dr. James Mandigo, new President of the University of the Fraser Valley.

During his visit, Dr. Mandigo shared his vision for the university, while highlighting the opportunities and challenges facing higher education today.

He spoke candidly about the university's direction, addressing the new financial realities faced by our institution as a result of the recent decline in international enrolment throughout Canada. Dr. Mandigo underscored the importance of strategic budgeting and long-term planning to ensure the university's sustainability and growth, while emphasizing commitment to excellence, the strengthening of community partnerships, and an orientation toward student success as key pillars on our journey forward.

The session was an excellent opportunity for faculty and staff to engage directly with the university's new President, to ask questions, and hear firsthand about the priorities guiding our institution in the years ahead. We look forward to supporting President Mandigo as he leads the University of the Fraser Valley into a new chapter.



UFV President, Dr. James Mandigo

About Dr. James Mandigo:

Dr. James Mandigo became President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Fraser Valley on July 1, 2025, bringing 25 years of post-secondary experience focused on student-centred learning, international engagement, and community partnerships. Previously, Dr. Mandigo served as UFV's Provost and Vice-President, Academic, including a term as Acting President, and held senior leadership roles at Brock University. An internationally recognized researcher in physical literacy, life skills, and sport for social change, he has worked with global partners such as the International Olympic Committee and Right to Play. He is a highly published scholar and the recipient of multiple national awards for his contributions to physical and health education. His vision aligns closely with UFV's mission to support regional social and economic well-being through collaboration and meaningful educational experiences.

Sales Networking Breakfast

More than 125 students and employer partners gathered at the Rogers Forum on November 21st for the annual Sales Careers Networking Breakfast. The atmosphere was professional yet friendly, helping first-time networkers feel comfortable making new connections. Students shared that the combination of timed rotations and open networking created numerous opportunities to make connections and learn directly from employers. Participants left with practical insights about what companies value in candidates, including communication skills, reliability, customer focus, and a willingness to learn.

Many students collected business cards and followed up with personalized messages, reinforcing the importance of professional networking. And for some attendees, the event revealed unexpected career possibilities. As one accounting student noted, the event broadened their understanding of sales roles, discovering how sales can align with diverse academic backgrounds while blend analytical thinking with relationship building.



Mark Breedveld - Director, Sales Academy



Fastenal

Attendees enjoyed a delicious hot breakfast prepared by the Rogers Forum culinary team before moving into a dynamic mix of informal mingling and structured speed-networking rounds. Employers such as Fastenal, Lotus, PepsiCo, CIBC, MAG Solar, Leavitt, HUB Insurance, DeVry, and Univar hosted individual suites where students could engage in focused conversations, ask questions, and explore career paths in sales.

With \$450 in prizes generously donated by Cactus Club and the Abbotsford Canucks, the morning was both rewarding and enjoyable. Students left inspired, connected, and better prepared to explore sales careers, proving the event to be a valuable and memorable experience for all involved. Thank you to **Mark Breedveld**, Sales Academy Director, for putting the event together!



DeVry Greenhouses



Univar Solutions

External Program Advisory Committee

The UFV School of Business External Program Advisory Committee (EPAC) met October 15, 2025, to provide industry perspective and strategic insight in support of the School's mission. The Committee discussed strategic steps the School may take to ensure continued relevance in the rapidly evolving landscape of post-secondary education.

Dr. Khyati Shetty, Director of the School of Business, opened the session by acknowledging a challenging period for international enrolment. At the same time, she expressed strong optimism regarding UFV's future under the leadership of new President, Dr. James Mandigo.

The committee's "Round Table" provided vital feedback on the skills graduates need today. Jack Rozendaal of DeVry Greenhouses emphasized that Excel proficiency remains a non-negotiable requirement for the workforce. Furthermore, there was a strong consensus on the role of Artificial Intelligence. Rather than viewing AI as a threat, industry leaders urged the School to teach students AI literacy, focusing on how to prompt tools effectively and critically verify their outputs.

Additional highlights from the meeting include:

- **Financial Literacy Initiative:** Lead by Nik Venema, a new collaborative program is in development to teach students and the broader community essential life skills like budgeting, tax filing, and credit management.
- **Revitalizing Ag and Aviation:** Efforts are underway to update the BBA in Agriculture and Aviation to meet modern industry demands.
- **Agri-Tech Advancements:** In partnership with the Agricultural Institute, the School is exploring an MBA in Agri-Tech to support the Fraser Valley's increasingly automated corporate farming sector.

The School is pivoting toward diversified revenue streams and practical, market-driven programming. This student and community-centric focus is mirrored in the School's Strategic Plan, which was built on extensive feedback from faculty and industry partners.

External BBA Review Panel

This fall, Associate Professor **Mark Breedveld** completed a program review for the BBA at Trinity Western University. We thank Mark for his participation and contributions to both quality assurance and academic engagement. Faculty who participate in external reviews bring back valuable insights into emerging trends, innovative teaching approaches, and effective assessment practices. This knowledge helps us continuously improve our own programs and reinforces our commitment to delivering a high-quality business education for our students. In addition, these reviews play an important role in building relationships across institutions. Through collegial, peer-to-peer dialogue, schools create opportunities to share ideas, learn from one another's experiences, and develop professional connections that extend well beyond a single review cycle.

2025 PRME SIP Report

The PRME Working Group (led by **Kurt Siemens** and **Saeed Rahman**, with **Chang Lu**, **Donna Derksen**, **Jason Campbell**, and **Mariana Toniolo-Barrios**), has successfully completed the school's 2025 Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) Sharing Information on Progress Report. This year's report is particularly notable, as PRME introduced a new reporting format in 2024 — making this the school's first engagement with the updated framework.

The report outlines the school's ongoing efforts to integrate sustainability, ethics, and social responsibility into its curriculum, research, and community engagement. By aligning with PRME principles, the school continues to strengthen its commitment to developing responsible leaders who can navigate the complex challenges of today's global business environment. The full report is available for viewing on the school's website.



Politalk - The World in Turmoil

“Living next to you (America) is in some ways like sleeping with an elephant. No matter how friendly and even-tempered is the beast... one is affected by every twitch and grunt.” - Pierre Trudeau

This vivid analogy set the tone for UFV's recent panel, In Bed with an Elephant – Canadian Politics at a Crossroads, which examined how shifts in U.S. politics continue to ripple across Canada. From trade tensions and changing foreign policy to national security and cultural debates, panelists explored the challenges Canadian leaders face in navigating their influential neighbour.

Among the panellists was the School's own Associate Professor, **Dr. David Dobson**. Dr. Dobson presented an argument which emphasized that the era of “automatic” North American trade is over. He described a new reality of “transactional survival,” where Canada must carefully balance uncertainty and opportunity. Using a framework he calls the Balance Sheet of Uncertainty, Dr. Dobson highlighted:

- Liabilities: The “uncertainty premium” created by the weaponization of U.S. tariffs.
- Assets: The USMCA (CUSMA) trade agreement, which contains a Review Clause that can trap sectors like Canadian forestry in ongoing negotiation.
- Equity: A path forward built on “Indispensability,” where Canada leverages its secure supply of critical minerals and strong ESG credentials to become an essential partner for U.S. security and trade needs.

Overall, the panel provided a timely discussion for Canadian leaders and business communities seeking to adapt to the complexities of U.S. policy shifts. Thank you to Professor Dobson for his participation and to Dr. Edward Akuffo of the Political Sciences department. The value of collaborative effort during this difficult time cannot be overstated.

Panel on US Tariffs

On July 16, 2025, the Province of British Columbia hosted a community event in Abbotsford featuring Rick Glumac, Minister of State for Trade, to address the potential implications of new American tariffs on Canadian goods. **Dr. Khyati Shetty** was invited to facilitate the panel discussion alongside Minister Glumac and prominent local business leaders. The conversation centered on trade resilience, opportunities for B.C. exporters, and strategic pathways to support businesses through emerging economic pressures.



Dr. Khyati Shetty

Leadership Summit: Keynote Speech

Dr. Khyati Shetty was invited as the keynote speaker at Leadership Basecamp 2025, hosted by Summit Line Leadership. Her talk, "Preparing for Your Leadership Summit: From Blind Spots to Brilliance," explored the inner work of leadership, the courage required to self-reflect, and the practices that transform leaders from competent to truly compelling. The event brought together 300+ leaders, entrepreneurs, and change-makers from the Fraser Valley.



Dr. Khyati Shetty

Student Clubs

Aviation Alliance

This fall, the UFV Aviation Alliance offered aviation students a range of opportunities to connect, learn, and explore the aviation industry beyond the classroom. From networking with professional pilots to behind-the-scenes tours and casual social events, students had the chance to gain real-world insights, meet peers and industry professionals, and experience different aspects of aviation firsthand. These events reflect the Alliance's commitment to supporting student growth, career development, and community within the aviation program.

Airline Pilot's Association Presentation

The UFV Aviation Alliance hosted a special event with the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA) – the world's largest pilot union, representing 80,000 pilots across 43 U.S. and Canadian airlines – on Wednesday, November 19, in K Building. Three Air Canada pilots joined students to discuss the life of a professional pilot, including scheduling, day-to-day duties, and labour relations.

Students enjoyed free pizza and drinks while networking with the pilots in a relaxed, informal setting. The evening offered valuable insights into airline careers, the pathways pilots take to get there, and what it takes to succeed in the aviation industry.



Cascade Aerospace Hangar Tour

On November 26th, the Alliance took a tour of the Cascade Aerospace hangar, offering aviation students a closer look at a professional aviation facility. The tour provided an opportunity to see aircraft in a hangar setting and gain insight into the operational side of aviation beyond the classroom.

Students learned about hangar operations and the roles involved in supporting flight activities, helping connect academic studies with real-world aviation environments. The experience gave participants valuable exposure to industry operations and reinforced their understanding of potential career pathways in aviation.



CYXX Control Tower Visit

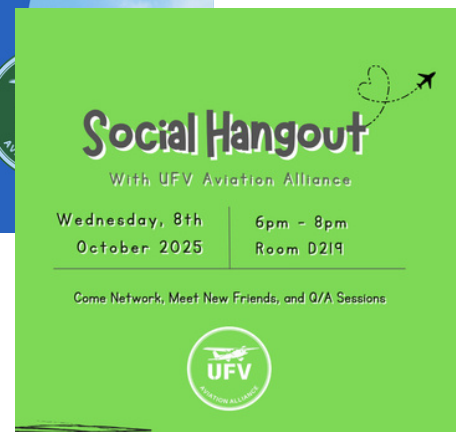
The UFV Aviation Alliance organized a visit to the Abbotsford Airport (CYXX) control tower this fall, giving aviation students a firsthand look at air traffic control operations. The visit allowed students to observe how aircraft movements are coordinated and managed within a controlled airport environment.

Students learned about the role of air traffic controllers, tower procedures, and the importance of communication and situational awareness in maintaining safe and efficient airport operations. The experience provided valuable insight into another key career path within the aviation industry and deepened students' understanding of how different sectors of aviation work together.

Aviation Alliance Social Hangouts

The Aviation Alliance hosted two social hangout events this fall, creating a relaxed space for aviation students to connect outside of the classroom. These informal gatherings gave students the chance to meet new people, build friendships, and strengthen the sense of community within the aviation program.

With free snacks and drinks provided, the hangouts encouraged conversation and peer connection among students with shared interests in aviation. The events supported a welcoming and inclusive environment for students at all stages of their academic journey.



Abbotsford International Airport

Human Resources Student Association

The Human Resources Student Associate (HRSA) program at UFV offers students a chance to build practical experience and connect with others interested in human resources. Throughout the Fall and Winter terms, the HRSA team organized a range of events, including networking sessions, guest speakers, and workshops. These activities created opportunities for students to learn, collaborate, and explore potential career paths in a supportive and engaging environment.

Click, Career, Connect

Earlier this fall, the HRSA hosted **Click, Connect, Career**, a networking-focused event designed to help students strengthen their professional presence and develop practical networking skills.

Held on October 15, 2025, in the B101 lecture hall, the event offered students the opportunity to receive professional LinkedIn headshots, gain insight into effective networking practices, and build meaningful connections with peers and alumni. A featured session by UFV alum Ashley Bolding, founder of the Association, provided students with guidance, informed by professional experience, on networking dos and don'ts. The event also encouraged informal interaction through food and refreshments, creating an accessible environment for students to engage and practice professional communication. Students benefited from increased confidence, visibility, and early career networks, reinforcing the role of student-led initiatives in career readiness and professional development within the School of Business.

Corporate Chaos

Also in the fall semester, the HRSA hosted **Corporate Chaos**, a light-hearted, yet purposeful, student engagement event that blended professional identity with community building.

Held on November 24, 2025, in the Student Experience Office (S1111), the event invited students to participate under a playful “professionally comfy” dress code—business casual on top, pajamas on the bottom—creating an informal and welcoming atmosphere. The evening featured a comedy skit by Dr. Chang Lu, along with interactive ice-breakers, board games, a photo booth, and light refreshments. Together, these activities encouraged connection among HR students while fostering a sense of belonging within the program.

By balancing professional themes with relaxed social interaction, the HRSA event provided students with an opportunity to engage with peers and faculty in a low-pressure setting, supporting both student well-being and cohort cohesion within the School of Business.



Dr. Chang Lu, performs stand-up comedy routine at *Corporate Chaos*

Student Accounting Association

The Student Accounting Association (SAA) at UFV provides students with opportunities to connect, learn, and grow within the field of accounting. Throughout the Fall term, the SAA hosted events that helped students gain insight into the profession, build connections, and explore future career paths in accounting.

Get To Know The Firms

Earlier this fall, the SAA hosted its signature networking event, **Get to Know the Firms**, bringing students together with professionals from leading accounting firms for an afternoon of learning and connection.

Held on October 8, 2025, at the UFV Abbotsford campus, the event welcomed representatives from Doane Grant Thornton, MNP, LLT LLP, Smythe, and Clearline CPAs. Students participated in a panel discussion focused on career pathways, industry expectations, and the CPA journey, followed by an interactive Q&A and networking session.

The event attracted students at various stages of their academic journey—from those newly exploring accounting to those preparing for professional designation—providing valuable exposure to the profession and opportunities to build early career networks. Informal conversation over food and refreshments helped foster meaningful engagement between students and firm representatives.

Business Career Connect

In November, the SAA, in partnership with UFV Co-op, hosted Business Career Connect, a professional networking event aimed at helping business students strengthen their career readiness and industry connections.

Held on November 14, 2025, at the UFV Abbotsford campus, the event brought together a wide range of accounting firms, professional associations, and campus career services. Participating organizations included KPMG, MNP, LLT LLP, Manning Elliott, Smythe LLP, Swint & Associates, CPABC, the UFV Jobs Centre, and the Fraser Valley Chartered Professional Accountants Association (FVCPAA), among others.

Students at all stages of their programs engaged with industry representatives to learn about career pathways in business and accounting, co-op and work-integrated learning opportunities, and expectations for post-graduation employment. In addition to networking, the event featured opportunities for resume feedback and informal career conversations, giving students practical insight into professional development and recruitment processes.

Business Career Connect reinforced the value of student-led and institution-supported engagement in preparing graduates for the workforce while strengthening relationships between the School of Business and the regional professional community.

Events

At the heart of any vibrant academic institution are the events that bring its people together.

These moments a vital role in shaping the culture of our business school – they foster connections, recognize achievements, share new knowledge, and strengthen the ties that bind students, faculty, staff, alumni, and partners. By sharing these moments in the newsletter, we invite our broader community to take part in the experiences that define who we are and where we're going.

Faculty and Staff Retreat

Over the course of two days in late August, the School of Business held the second of two annual retreats.

The retreat is an opportunity for faculty and staff to get reacquainted after the summer holidays, to learn new things, and set a strong course for the year ahead. This year the retreat took place on August 25th and 26th, 2025.

Day One: Updates, Insights, and Innovation

On day one, the School congregated in the main university boardroom, where we enjoyed presentations and discussions led by a variety of individuals.

In the morning, Director Shetty welcomed everyone back and provided an update. We then welcomed Vlad Dvoracek, AVP, Institutional Research and Planning for an illuminating look at enrolment projections. Finally, we meet several members of the Faculty and Staff Association for update on the latest union and bargaining issues.

After lunch, Tristan Taylor, founder of the Canadian AI Advancement Institute (CAIAI), led a presentation on the latest advancements in AI and how they relate to education. CAIAI supports learners and organizations in their journey towards AI adoption, helping them making intelligent and ethical choices along the way.

Day Two: Discovering Strengths and Building Collaboration

On day two, Faculty and staff took part in the Insights Discovery workshop, exploring our personal communication styles and strengths through an engaging four-colour model based on the work of Carl Jung. Through completing personal profiles participants gained insights into their own communication styles, strengths, and blind spots. The workshop included engaging activities and discussions that helped faculty and staff better understand each other's preferences, fostering shared language for collaboration, empathy, and stronger teamwork.

We finished the event with a team lunch at the Tasty Indian Bistro in downtown Abbotsford. In addition to offering faculty and staff an opportunity to connect, the School presented the Service Excellence Awards, which went to Mark Breedveld, Kevin DeWolde, and Felicia Chong.

Announcements

Interim Director, Gerry Palmer

The School of Business is pleased to welcome Gerry Palmer as our Interim Director for 2026. Gerry brings extensive experience to the role, having served as an Associate Professor with the School since 1983. He operated a private law practise for 43 years, and furthermore, is a governance specialist with leadership experience across a multitude of boards and governing bodies. We are excited to have Gerry's leadership and guidance as the School continues to thrive. Please join us in welcoming him to this important role.