

# Robert R. Brandon, Ph.D.



## PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

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- An expert communicator with over fifteen years of diverse leadership experience and accomplishments.
- A proven strategic and transformational leader in the areas of teaching and learning who has a track record of innovative projects that led to exceptional student outcomes and a more vibrant campus environment, including an honors college, an intercollegiate athletic program, a college operated food service operation, stand-alone workforce development unit, a community college student housing project, a community arts initiative, a greater emphasis on shared governance for both faculty and staff, and a redesigned appreciative advising program.
- Success in academic and workforce program development, including the creation of programs in traditional, online, high-flex, non-credit, and early college models. As the workforce development leader, my college has seen short-term credentials grow by over 300% in the past six years and has developed partnerships with local employers that have helped students earn while they learn.
- A proven track record for success in enrollment management, including recruitment, retention, and completion. As the leader of student success projects, my institution has seen enrollment gains in five of the last six years (despite a falling local population and declines in enrollment across the state) and a retention-plus-graduation rate that is among the highest in the state.
- A high commitment to student success with demonstrated results in implementing mandatory college success courses, advising and orientation processes, and other high impact practices. Invited to speak nationally about my experiences with Guided Pathways to Success, Co-Requisite Learning Support, and Credit for Prior Learning.
- Extensive involvement in assessment and accreditation, including the development of a Quality Enhancement Plan, the creation of a system for assuring the quality of online courses, the implementation of a process for assessing program and course learning outcomes, the development and implementation of a college-wide quality assurance plan, the completion of a SACSOC fifth-year review, the development of a SACSCOC decennial report, leadership roles during three SACSCOC reaffirmation visits, and service as a member on six SACSCOC review teams.
- Experience with fund raising and grant development, both in academic and athletic contexts.
- Experience in strategic planning and budget management, both in the higher education and non-profit spheres.
- Demonstrated commitment to community leadership, outreach, and service.

- Proven expertise as an instructor in both online and traditional formats with teaching experience at the elementary, secondary, undergraduate, and graduate levels. Have been awarded teaching awards by colleagues and students at three different institutions.
- Experience in scholarly activities, including both conference and invited presentations.

## **EDUCATION**

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**Doctor of Philosophy, English** 2010  
 University of North Carolina at Greensboro in Greensboro, NC  
 Major Areas of Study: Medieval Literature, Renaissance Literature, Rhetoric and Composition  
 Dissertation: “Space, Politics, and Paradise: The Narrative Function of Three Medieval Visions of Heaven”

**Master of Arts, English** 2003  
 East Tennessee State University in Johnson City, TN  
 Thesis: “And Gladly Wolde He Teche:” Chaucer’s Use of Source Materials in the “Clerk’s Tale”

**Bachelor of Arts, English** 1997  
 Virginia Intermont College in Bristol, VA

## **OTHER EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES**

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**Future Presidents Institute** 2023  
 American Association of Community Colleges

## **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

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**Southwest Virginia Community College** 2018-Current  
 Richlands, VA

Southwest Virginia Community College (SWCC) is a part of the Virginia Community College System and has an average student body of around 3,500 students. It serves its region through four off-site locations in addition to its main campus. The college’s major programs focus on workforce development, technology, health care, and transfer preparation.

- **Vice President of Academic and Student Services**  
 Reports to the College President. Manages a \$10 million-dollar budget. Chief academic officer. Chief student support officer. Chief workforce development office. SACSCOC executive committee chairperson. Supervises three academic deans, the dean of student services, the dean of workforce development, the associate dean of the Honors College, the athletic director, the distance learning coordinator, the off-site coordinator, the director of institutional research and effectiveness, the diversity office, campus food service director, the library director, and the dual enrollment coordinator.

## **Accomplishments at Southwest Virginia CC**

- Established new recruitment and retention strategies that have allowed SWCC to see positive enrollment growth in our regular student population in five of the last six years. Before my arrival, the College had seen negative regular enrollment for several consecutive years
- Revised the existing budget process to provide greater voice for faculty. Participated in the implementation of monthly unit reports to provide for greater accountability and awareness.
- Engaged in the planning for the first ever student housing project by a community college in the state of Virginia. Served as the College's chief liaison to the system office for the project.
- Supervised the creation of a brand-new athletics program that includes 13 intercollegiate sports and 5 club activities, which brings approximately 160 new students to campus each year, including at least eight from outside of our state and at least ten from international locations.
- Oversaw the creation of an independent workforce development division, which included the establishment of a new dean position. Worked with the unit to create nearly a dozen new programs including the establishment of the Transportation and Logistics Center in Grundy, Virginia. Enjoyed double digit enrollment increases annually through the first three years of this unit's existence.
- Reinvigorated the College's off-campus offerings. Revived a flagging center in Lebanon, Virginia by moving two programs and establishing two new programs of interest to the community. These programs have tripled the number of students attending classes at this location. Established a new off-site location in Bluefield, which will bring important opportunities for training in health care technologies to an area that previously lacked such options.
- Participated in statewide policy workgroups that implemented new approaches to faculty workload, direct placement of developmental students, transfer pathways with universities, and performance funding for institutions.
- Served as chair of the state system's Student Services Committee, a group responsible for drafting and reviewing state policies governing student affairs. Also served as a member of the system's Academic Council's Executive Committee.
- Implemented a new assessment process focused which established a peer review of every academic and student services units' assessment plan.
- Successfully led the College's SACSCOC 5<sup>th</sup> year review, which included organizing committees and leading the writing process. Successfully completed two prospectuses, one for the new off-site and one for a new culinary arts program. Responsible for completing all SACSCOC reporting and documentation.
- Created a new department of Distance Learning. Established a process for evaluating the quality of online course design and instruction that made a positive impact on course success rates. Implemented a professional development program designed to improve instruction and outcomes in online courses and to bring the College into compliance with the new Department of Education requirements.
- Wrote and/or supervised grants that brought in an average of \$400,000 of revenue per academic year. This work included federal grants including Title III and Perkins.

- Implemented a new advising process which met the goal of assigning a success coach to each student. To support this activity, implemented a new early alert process and the Navigate software to ensure greater student care. As part of this work, established new onboarding procedures with a goal of getting students enrolled earlier and of cutting down the time from application to enrollment.
- Established new enrollment management processes, including “College Road Shows,” which take our advisors into the high schools to register students early.
- Served as a member of the fund-raising campaign dedicated to bringing in ten million dollars of donations to the College. Led the on-going athletic department campaign which is moving toward its goal for cementing one-hundred thousand dollars in annual giving.
- Worked with community arts organizations and College faculty to establish a comprehensive arts initiative. This includes the development of programs in visual arts, music, and dance and club activities in theatre and creative writing as well as community focused events.

**Cleveland State Community College**  
Cleveland, TN

2014-2018

Cleveland State is one of thirteen community colleges within the Tennessee Board of Regents system and serves approximately 3,200 students each year. It comprises two off-site locations in addition to the main campus. The institution serves a five-county service area that includes both urban and rural communities and maintains strong connections to partners in industry, education, and the community.

- **Dean, Division of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Education** 2014-2018  
Reported to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Managed a \$2 million-dollar budget. Supervised 26 full-time faculty (including 3 department chairs and 3 program coordinators), 5 full-time academic support staff (including 2 directors), and over 100 adjunct faculty and part-time staff. Provided oversight for the largest instructional unit on campus including the following academic programs: Art, English, Music, Economics, Criminal Justice, Philosophy, History, Political Science, Psychology, Education, Social Work, Sociology, Early Childhood Education, Speech, and Theatre. Supervised the POST-Certified Law Enforcement Training Academy. Provided leadership for a mandatory First Year Experience program, a comprehensive tutoring and learning Center, and the library.

#### **Accomplishments at Cleveland State CC**

- Directed accreditation activities through the development of annual quality assurance reports, state academic audits, program accreditation documents, a student support services program prioritization project, and the SACSCOC fifth year report. Participated in assessment activities through the planning of the QEP assessment, membership on the college-wide Academic Outcomes and Assessment Committee, and an academic program prioritization project.
- Worked with faculty in the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Education to create new program assessment plans that gave the college the opportunity to do comparative

analysis of results. Served as an advisor during the development of assessment plans for first year seminar courses, the Honors College, the library, and tutoring services.

- Wrote and managed grants that brought in over half a million dollars in revenue over the course of four years.
- Participated in the development of several new and innovative programs that have become vibrant parts of the college community. This work included working with my team to establish an accelerated law enforcement degree, a weekend cohort for the education program, a redesign of the Honors College, and a transition from stand-alone learning support courses to a co-requisite model.
- Redesigned our curriculum maps, advising processes, and course offerings to support the Guided Pathways to Success model.
- Led the development of several new online courses and the implementation of the College's first completely online programs in education, history, and psychology. Created new tools for and implemented a process for evaluating the success of online course design and instruction.
- Facilitated the design and implementation of high impact instructional practices including the expansion of the college's study abroad program, the grant-funded development of nine new learning communities, the implementation of a mandatory first year seminar course, and capstone courses.
- Served as a member of the College's Strategic Planning Committee and worked with them to create and implement the "Cleveland State 2020 Community First Plan." Developed yearly goal plans for three academic units and two student support units. Assessed the success of the plans and used data to establish the following year's goals.
- Continued to participate in instructional activities and averaged over six credit hours of teaching per year. IDEA evaluations were "much greater than average," the highest possible level, three of my four years. Taught first year seminar, leadership, literature, learning support, and composition courses.
- In concert with the Dean of Business and Technologies, established the first two Early College high school programs at Cleveland State. These programs offered students in Bradley County and Cleveland City Schools the opportunity to complete associate degrees while in high school.
- Partnered with local businesses and nearby colleges and university to create pathways for student success. Established professional development and for-credit programs for local law enforcement departments, collaborated with Cleveland City Schools to develop an early college program, received statewide recognition for civic engagement project with Middle Tennessee State University and Jackson State Community College, and established and maintained articulations in early childhood education, secondary education, social work, and recording industry management.
- Employed a relational model of leadership designed at fostering cooperation and teamwork within the unit and across the campus. Enjoyed much higher than average responses from direct reports during the annual review process. Averaged the following scores on a 3-point scale: fosters excellent performance in his/her area of responsibility (2.91), provides employees with support and understanding (2.82), promotes positive relationships within and outside his/her area of responsibility (2.86). displays courtesy and respect with students and employees (2.95), demonstrates integrity and honesty (2.95), interested in my professional development (2.7), promotes excellent in planning

and assessment (2.95), is organized and ensures work is completed in a timely manner (2.91), builds trust and encourages teamwork (2.82), and I have confidence in this person's leadership ability (2.95).

**Rockingham Community College**  
Wentworth, NC

2005-2013

Comprehensive community college located in north-central North Carolina serving over 2,000 students. Reported to Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences. Rockingham Community College featured numerous technical programs in addition to college-transfer options. Assisted in the development of and served as divisional liaison to a thriving early college program as part of a Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation grant.

- **Department Chair of English** 2010-2013  
Reported to the Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences. Supervised 4 full-time faculty and over fifteen adjunct faculty each term. Responsible for quality assurance, assessment, faculty development, and curriculum development and design.
- **Director, Quality Enhancement Plan** 2010-2013  
Led a team comprised of faculty, student support staff, and administrators in the development of a Quality Enhancement Plan focused on student intake, advising, and a mandatory first year seminar course as part of the College's SACSCOC accreditation process.
- **Department Chair of Student Success** 2011-2013  
Developed a new mandatory college success course and was named the department chair, becoming the only employee to hold two chairs at one time. Supervised ten full-time faculty and over twenty adjunct faculty each term. Responsible for quality assurance, assessment, faculty development, and curriculum development and design.
- **Associate Professor of English** 2005-2013  
Responsible for teaching and assessing learning in a wide variety of traditional and online courses. Provided leadership for student engagement activities including Sigma Kappa Delta, poetry readings, and student clubs. Developed curriculum for and designed three online courses, mentored adjunct faculty, and provided intrusive advising. Courses taught include the following:
  - Developmental Writing
  - English Composition I and II (online)
  - Professional Writing (online)
  - American Literature I
  - World Literature II
  - College Transfer Success

#### **Accomplishments at Rockingham CC**

- Designed and implemented a mandatory college success program. Developed the curriculum, trained and recruited faculty, designed and conducted program learning assessment, and reported results both internally and externally.

- Established a college-wide plan for assessing writing that allowed comparative analysis. Trained faculty, created assessment instruments, and worked with colleagues to use results for improvement.
- Sponsored the College’s Sigma Kappa Delta chapter. Supervised students as they conducted at least one service project each year.
- Designed, taught, and assessed three new online courses in literature and composition.
- Led a committee tasked with redesigning advising and orientation. Worked collaboratively with multiple academic areas, student support units, and community groups to implement the plan.
- Established new guidelines for mentoring and evaluating departmental faculty.
- Directed the departmental redesign of developmental courses as we transitioned from a stand-alone model to an emporium model.

**University of North Carolina at Greensboro**  
Greensboro, NC

2003-2006

- **Graduate Assistant**

Provided instruction for three courses per year of undergraduate composition courses, participated in the teaching of one graduate course, tutored students in the college's writing center, and assisted a faculty mentor with research projects.

**Bristol City Schools and Hawkins County Schools**  
Bristol, TN and Bulls Gap, TN

1997-2003

- **Secondary School Teacher**

Taught seventh, eighth, and ninth grade classes. Designed and implemented a writing program for advanced writers. Managed several academic and athletic extracurricular activities.

**Other Teaching Experience**

2011- Current

Served as an adjunct instructor in undergraduate and graduate online courses in the public and private sector. Responsible for planning, designing, and teaching course material. Implemented high impact practices including work-based learning, synchronous learning, service learning, and learning communities. Developed an understanding of the wide variety of student success and business models in the modern American higher education system. Courses taught include Writing in the Healthcare Professions, Professional Writing and Research, Teaching Literature in the Secondary Schools, Teaching Composition in the Secondary Schools, Composition Theory, Grant Writing, and Classical Rhetoric.

**AWARDS AND RECOGNITION**

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Professor of the Year Award, Colorado Technical University	2021
Distinguished Staff Member of the Year, Cleveland State Community College	2017
Vice President of Faculty Senate, Rockingham Community College	2011-2013
“Star” Teaching Award, Rockingham Community College	2012

### **GRANT WRITING AND MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE**

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TBR Summer Bridge Program Grants	\$40,000	2014-2017
National Endowment for Humanities Bridging Cultures	\$200,000	2014
THEC Tennessee Promise Forward	\$70,000	2015
THEC Tennessee Promise Forward II	\$150,000	2016-2017
Student Engagement and Retention Grant	\$36,000	2017-2018
G3 Pathways Grant	\$245,000	2019
Title III Improving Institutions	\$3,000,000	2019
Tobacco Foundation Grant	\$268,000	2021

### **INVITED PRESENTATIONS**

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“Fusing Credit for Prior Learning into Virginia’s Community Colleges.” 2018 Hire Education Conference. Hot Springs, VA, December 7-9, 2018.

“Co-Requisite Learning Support: Lessons Learned at Cleveland State Community College.” 2018 Disruption in Higher Education Conference. Virginia Beach, VA, October 10-11, 2018.

“Commencement Keynote Address: The Value of Helping Others.” 2017 Cleveland State Community College Fall Commencement. Cleveland, TN, December 9, 2017.

“Answering the Call: Bridging Cultures at Cleveland State Community College.” Tennessee Board of Regents Civic Engagement Summit. Nashville, TN, August 5, 2016.

“Mapping the Pathway.” American Association of Community College’s Guided Pathways Institute #1: Leadership for Transformational Change: Implementing Pathways at Scale. San Antonio, Texas, February 4-6, 2016.

“Keeping Students on the Pathway.” 2016 Washington State Board for Technical and Community College’s Guided Pathways Initiative Kick-Off Event. Tacoma, Washington, January 19-20, 2016.

### **CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

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“Best Practices in Implementing a Prior Learning Assessment Process.” Hire Education Conference, Virginia, December 5-8, 2018.

“Co-Requisite Remediation: Lessons Learned from Tennessee.” Disruption: Virginia Higher Education Conference. Virginia Beach, Virginia, October 10-11, 2018.

“Building a High Impact Honors Program.” High Impact Practices in the State Conference. Los Angeles, California, February 17-20, 2018.



“From Connection to Completion: Cleveland State Community College’s Experiences with Developing a Successful First Year Experience Course.” 2015 Community Colleges of Appalachia Annual Meeting and Conference. Asheville, North Carolina, June 15, 2015.

“Designing Effective Writing Assignments.” Adapting, Aspiring, Achieving. Wentworth, North Carolina, May 8, 2013.

“Warof beb 3e adrad?: Monsters as Spiritual Tests in the *South English Legendary’s* ‘Voyage of Saint Brendan.’” 46<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, Michigan, May 12-15, 2011.

“Social Spaces and Heavenly Places: The Social Dimensions of *Pearl’s* Heavenly Vision.” 44<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, Michigan, May 7-10, 2009.

“The Land Beyond the Margins: Brendan’s Voyage to Paradise in the *South England Legendary*.” 2009 North Carolina Colloquium in Medieval and Early Modern Studies, Durham, North Carolina, February 19-20, 2009.

“Thomas Wimbeldon and *Pearl’s* Parable of the Vineyard.” 2008 UVA-Wise Medieval and Renaissance Conference, Wise, Virginia, September 18-20, 2008.

“Rewriting Heaven in the Medieval *Pearl*.” 2005 Conference of the Philological Association of the Carolinas, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, March 10-12, 2005.

“Petrarch’s Griselda: An Exemplum of Christian Life.” Southeastern Conference on Christianity and Literature, Black Mountain, North Carolina, April 15-17, 2004.

“Boccaccio’s Griselda: A Social Exemplum.” Virginia Tech Graduate Conference, Blacksburg, Virginia, March 19-20, 2004.

“Sownynge in Moral Vertu Was His Speche: Social Rhetoric in Chaucer’s Clerk’s Tale.” Southern Humanities Council Conference, Chattanooga, Tennessee, February 5-8, 2004.

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