

# INNOVATION

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SPRING ISSUE 1

**MONTANA**  
TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

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## DOB Faculty

**Tim Kober**  
Professor/Chair

**Doug Abbott**  
Professor

**Lance Revenaugh**  
Associate Professor

**Rita Spear**  
Associate Professor

**Charie Faught**  
Associate Professor

**Todd Tregidga**  
Assistant Professor

**John M. Garic**  
Visiting Professor

**Darlene Voss**  
Administrative Associate

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## DOB Chair Change: Kober Stepping Down Tregidga Stepping Up

After serving as Department Head of the Department of Business for 13 years, Dr. Tim Kober will be stepping away from that role effective at the end of the Spring, 2021 semester. Tim announced his decision at a recent departmental meeting. Karen VanDaveer, Dean of the College of Letters, Sciences and Professional Studies has named Todd Tregidga as the new Chair of the department.

"It has been my honor to serve as Chair of this department," said Tim. "I believe it is time for a fresh set of eyes and new leadership. It is appropriate that others be given the opportunity to experience this leadership post."

Tim became Chair when Doug Abbott became Montana Tech's Provost in 2007. Tim's tenure as DOB Department Head has enjoyed many successes. One of his greatest achievements was leading the effort to the successful accreditation of the department by the International Accreditation Council for Business Education.

The role of an academic department head is significant. Among "other duties as assigned" he/she must: strive for consensus among the departmental faculty to support the department's mission and goals; oversee recruiting, advising, retention and graduation rates; manage the departmental budget; and ensure continual assessment of student learning outcomes.

"I know I have big shoes to fill in taking over after Tim," said Todd Tregidga, the incoming DOB Department Head. "This is an exciting opportunity for me and so I will strive to meet the high standards he established."



# HOCKEY EXECUTIVE INSPIRES STUDENTS

It is arguably a dream job for many business students to be an executive with a professional sports team. Tech business students were treated recently to a guest speaker with just such a job in the person of Cole Cook, Vice-President - Strategy & Business Intelligence for the Arizona Coyotes, a professional hockey team based in the Phoenix metropolitan area.

Mr. Cook spoke to the BMIS 453 Business Intelligence & Big Data Analytics class on Feb. 11. The engaged student audience asked questions throughout the talk ranging from educational pathways to a new location for the Coyotes. As exciting as professional sports are, it is still a business – albeit a huge business.

Given the analytics nature of the class, one of the main areas of his talk focused on the business analytics tools he and his staff use on a daily basis including: Tableau, SQL, Salesforce, MS Dynamics CRM, R, Python, and others. The data warehouse utilized by the Coyotes organization receives data from multiple systems including: Ticketmaster, Google Analytics, Eloqua, Stellaralgo, Salesforce, and social media.

Cole and his staff analyze massive amounts of data to: create the ultimate fan experience, obtain and retain corporate partnerships/sponsors, and evaluate marketing efforts. The dashboards they produce enable the organization to maximize profits and provide key performance indicators for shareholders.



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## DOB Students Headed to Law School

Business majors, Tanna Campbell and Mikayla Stone, are headed to law school this fall at the University of Montana. Both students have been awarded scholarships for their three years of law school.

### Tanna Campbell

"I decided to look into law school after taking a business course called "Critical Thinking" taught by Rita Spear. We did a mock trial and she brought in attorneys and a judge to help make our trial more realistic. I traveled to UM and loved my tour of the law school. I talked a lot with our pre-law advisor, John Garic, about what I needed to be ready. First came my acceptance letter – so exciting. But THEN came the scholarship letter based on my academics and character. I am so thankful and grateful for all of the help and support I have received from my family, friends, and professors here at Montana Tech!"

### Mikayla Stone

"I first became interested in the possibility of law school after I took a business law class with John Garic. I started researching and thought that law school would be right for me. I worked through the application process: LSAT, personal statement, letters of recommendation, resume, transcripts. I applied to the UM law school in October and received a swift reply back; and then came the scholarship letter! I'm very excited to start my new journey in the fall knowing that the Alexander Blewett III School of Law wants me to be a part of their incoming class. I feel like I am on the right path to my career, and I can't wait to see where my journey takes me."



# Powering Into the Classroom: Microsoft's Power BI



In alignment with the Department of Business' vision "To create a business focused educational experience so rich to the customer and valuable to the marketplace it leads to exclusivity," the DOB has added another analytical tool into its curriculum – specifically Microsoft's Power BI (which stands for Business Intelligence). Professor Todd Tregidga has added this market leading analytical tool to the Bachelor of Science – Accounting Option curriculum. This tool now joins the DOB's significant SAP data analytical offerings.

"I think that Power BI is extremely useful, especially from the standpoint of a smaller company," said accounting major, Jocelynn Norman. "Having it added to the curriculum gives the current students a more competitive advantage upon entering the workforce. I'm very excited to learn more about the software and I am grateful for the opportunity provided to me through the class."

Microsoft's Power BI is an analytical tool designed to be able to attach to just about any type of raw data whether it is considered historical or is being updated real time. Once the data or link to the data is pulled into Power BI it can be modified and enhanced by a variety of functions to ultimately produce a data set that can be transformed into high value information for the decision maker. The information can be displayed to the user with just about any type of visualization. Dashboards can be created from raw data or reports created in the Power BI Desktop Application. The Dashboards can then be accessed by anyone at anytime from anywhere depending upon the security granted by the Dashboard publisher.

The inclusion of Power BI in the Accounting curriculum is also consistent with the direction of the profession as the National Association of State Boards of Accountants (NASBA) and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) have jointly proposed a new CPA licensing model that includes a section on data analytics.

"While looking for a job after graduation, I will be able to tell people that I learned how to use a powerful tool that can transform data into useful graphs and charts," said accounting major, Brian McGeehan. "Combining our previous knowledge from Excel and merging it with a software like Power BI, businesses should be impressed. Most students are expected to know how to use Excel; however, promising software like Power BI will greatly increase our potential of standing out when looking for employment in the future."

If you are interested in learning more about Microsoft's Power BI, the link below will help:

<https://powerbi.microsoft.com/en-us/what-is-power-bi/>

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## Landman Program Applies for AAPL Accreditation

The DOB's Professional Landman Certificate (PLC) Program has applied for accreditation with the American Association of Professional Landmen (AAPL). The PLC Program is part of the DOB's Bachelor of Science in Business & Information Technology — Natural Resources Option.

The PLC Program was created two and a half years ago as part of a re-thinking of the Natural Resources Option. Part of the rationale was to have programming that would allow business students to have more knowledge and skills and be able to meaningfully participate in the oil & gas industries. Interestingly, in addition to business students, the PLC Program courses have attracted petroleum engineering students as well.

Students in the PLC Program started informally meeting to discuss common interests and out of those meetings arose a new student club, the Student Association of Professional Landmen (SAPL). The students have already started fundraising in an effort to be able to travel to attend one of the various oil & gas conferences which are held every year.

The students are well-aware that the oil & gas industries are in contraction right now with low oil & gas prices. But, in the sure and certain reliance on the historic cyclical nature of oil & gas prices, students remain engaged. Recent graduates of the program are looking beyond formal landman jobs to other areas such as real estate title companies, land development companies and federal and state government land management positions.



# A Message from our DOB Chair: Dr. Tim Kober



Dear Alumni and Friends,

I hope all is well with you and your families as we have entered the new year. This semester is going well as we could hope under the circumstances. We are still meeting face to face with the students and again, I cannot emphasize how much I appreciate the efforts of our students and their continued patience and flexibility in this unique academic environment. I would also like to thank the business faculty for their instructional efforts this semester as we continue to deliver the course material to both to a face-to-face and a distance audience.

I would like to take this opportunity to state that I will be stepping down at the end of this semester after 13 years in the position of department head. I have very much enjoyed my time in the position but I believe it is time for a new mindset in the role going forward. That said, I have no intention of leaving Tech anytime soon. On the contrary, I plan to become more involved in the department's adoption of SAP in the curriculum and in the development of an SAP Next Gen lab.

Finally, I continue to hear from a number of you as a result of this newsletter. I would very much appreciate hearing from as many of you as possible with the hope of starting an alumni happenings section of this newsletter. Please contact me if you have anything you would like to share in a future newsletter, either personally or professionally.

Best wishes going forward,

Tim

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## DOB Gets New Academic Advisor

The DOB has a new academic advisor. Her name is Heather Lingle. Actually, she is the new academic advisor for the College of Letters, Sciences, and Professional Studies of which the DOB is a part. Heather will work with first-year students with 0-30 credits. Once students complete 30 credits, they will be assigned to a faculty advisor.

"I am delighted to have the opportunity to work one-on-one with students to help them discover and refine their academic and career goals, said Ms. Lingle. "As an educator, I am drawn to the educative, or learning-centered, approach, the central task of which is to help students understand the logic behind their curriculum and how their courses logically connect together."

Heather has worked for the Montana University System for almost a decade both at Montana Tech and at Montana State University. She earned a B.A. from St. Edward's University in Austin, TX and an M.A. from St. John's College in Santa Fe, NM. In her free time, she enjoys the performing arts and studying philosophy and theology.





# FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: Doug Abbott

Dr. Doug Abbott is a Professor in the Department of Business at Montana Technological University. While Doug is a well-known person at Montana Tech, there are those who ask: "What is Doug Abbott's story?" and "What's he REALLY like?" Well, let's attempt to answer those questions.

First the basics: Doug was born and raised in Helena and graduated from Helena Capital High School. He attended the Montana College of Mineral Science and Technology (that's Montana Tech) graduating in 1985 with a BS in Petroleum Engineering. He earned an MBA in 1988 from the University of Montana. He started teaching at Tech that year. He worked through the faculty ranks of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor and Professor, earning tenure in 1995. He earned an EdD in Educational Leadership in 2004 with a dissertation on the development of an Artificial Neural Network to predict college choice. Doug worked through academic administrative ranks from Department Head to Dean to Provost, a position he held for 13 years. He returned to the classroom in the Department of Business in 2020.

All of the above is interesting, of course, but here are some of the things that are lesser known but wonderfully interesting about Doug Abbott.

While a student at Tech, Doug was the quarterback of the Oredigger football team and was part of the team which won the Conference Championship in 1983. (A note about this: That year, Tech was invited to play in the Sunflower Bowl but the team voted not to go because they would miss too much school.)

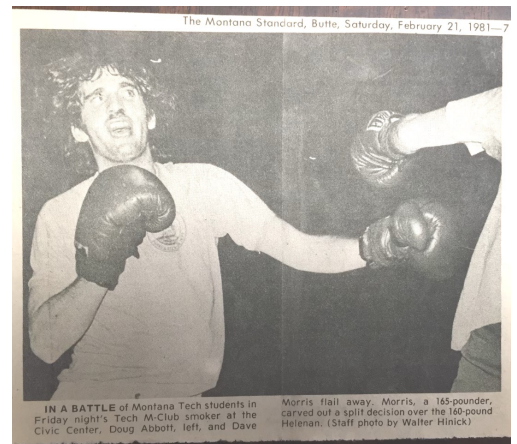
After graduating from Tech and unable to find work in his discipline, he became a bouncer at the Paradise Beach, a Houston nightclub (and, no, it was NOT one of THOSE kind of nightclubs). Taking advantage of his height and patrician good looks, Doug was cast on the CBS television show "Houston Knights." Instead of pursuing a career in acting, Doug's strong connection to Tech sent him in another direction.

Doug's being hired at Tech is one of the very interesting facets of his career. Doug's grandfather, W. Milton Brown, and grandmother, Gwendolyn Bertie Brown, met while students at Tech. His grandfather then served as Vice President/Registrar for 40 years at Tech. At his grandfather's funeral, longtime Tech faculty member Joe Kasperick (who was hired by Doug's grandfather) asked him if he would be interested in teaching in Tech's business department. It was Doug's intention to teach for a year and then become an investment banker. Instead, Doug remained at Tech for the next 33 years (the present day).

Doug has been very active within his discipline. He was the Principal Investigator/Commercialization Specialist for the National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT). He has served as a Mineral Economist for MSE Technology Applications. He has been a consultant for the US Department of Energy which has resulted in 23 publications and 8 presentations. And, something he has done throughout much of his career, Doug has been a Forensic Economist and has worked on over 200 legal cases.

He met his wife, Mary North Abbott, while a student at Tech. Doug and Mary have a daughter, Gwenn, who is a Physical Therapist and son, Dunk, who is a Petroleum Engineer and Tech graduate.

It is probably true that Doug "bleeds" green and copper.



IN A BATTLE of Montana Tech students in Friday night's Tech M-Club smoker at the Civic Center, Doug Abbott, left, and Dave Morris (fall away). Morris, a 165-pounder, carved out a split decision over the 160-pound Heleman. (Staff photo by Walter Hinick)

# Mock Trial Held in Rita Spear's Critical Thinking Class

State of Montana vs Alex Buckley  
Charges: Arson & Deliberate Homicide  
John M. Garic, Judge

Attorney Samm Cox  
Assisted the Prosecution

Attorney Charlie Smith  
Assisted the Defense



The Prosecution utilizes exhibits for witness testimony.



The trial was broadcast via Zoom technology.



The jury deliberated - Found Buckley Not Guilty.



The Defense gives its closing argument.

Photos by Carlie Spear