BRAND STUDY: CURRENT STUDENTS
The research objectives, target and methodology used to conduct the research are as follows:

a) Research Objectives
   • To understand the strengths of the college and opportunities for improvement
   • To identify the unique and defining aspects of Davis College
   • To understand the perceived value of a Davis College education

b) Target Audience
   • Current Davis College students

c) Methodology
   • Approximately 1,700 Davis College students were sent a 10-minute online survey via their MIX account
   • Approximately 370 students completed the survey
Executive Summary
Executive Summary

DEMOGRAPHICS
- Current students who completed the survey live in twenty-five states, with most residing in West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Maryland. A few live outside the continental United States.
- The majority of students applied to at least one other college/university. In total, they named over one hundred schools they applied to. More than half indicated that their parents/guardians influenced the major they chose at West Virginia University. Other top influencers include friends, high school teacher and/or a Davis College representative(s). Very few relied on high school guidance counselors when deciding on their major.

VALUE PROPOSITION
- Similar to alumni, students were asked to select from a pre-determined list the words/phrases they most closely associate with Davis College. They were also asked to select those features they value most about the college. Their responses closely reflect what alumni said:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributes</th>
<th>Most Valued</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accomplished professors</td>
<td>Supportive environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical knowledge &amp; skills</td>
<td>Smaller class sizes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family-type atmosphere</td>
<td>Hands-on experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td>Smaller college with the resources of a large college</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The college is not seen as being a leading edge school or having state-of-the-art resources.
Executive Summary

VALUE PROPOSITION

• Students praise Davis College’s supportive, student-centered environment, the quality of its professors, the practical knowledge and skills it imparts and its diversity. Some were surprised at how close-knit the college actually is, as well as how easy it is to forge strong, supportive relationship with their professors.

SATISFACTION

• Most students are satisfied with the education they are currently receiving at Davis College, and the vast majority would recommend the college to others.

• Some are discontent, and this can be attributed to having to use out-of-date equipment and facilities, having to take classes they deem repetitive, the college not offering some classes they consider critical to their major, and not being given proper guidance and direction from their career counselor(s). There are also a handful who argue they will not graduate on time for one of two reasons: a) course(s) they were required to take was unavailable; b) they were ill-advised on the classes they needed to take. Those in Wildlife and Fisheries, Fashion and Nutrition appear to cite these transgressions more than students in other majors.

• Academic advisors receive mixed reviews. As noted previously, some students do not feel their advisors properly support them. However, most students maintain that their advisor has positively impacted their academic success. The latter maintain their advisor is knowledgeable (provides information, encouraging (provides support) and helpful (helps with class selection).
Executive Summary

CONCEPT EXPLORATION
• Students were asked about their interest in the ability to utilize a career center that was tailored for Davis College students, as well as the ability to combine a traditional major with an online minor. The vast majority believe they would take advantage of a Davis College career center, and about half expressed strong interest in the latter concept.

MESSAGING
• Students were asked to evaluate how effective four messages might be in convincing someone thinking about attending Davis College. Two messages scored much higher than the others (and are within the margin of error). These two messages speak to the fact that the provides a supportive environment and practical hands-on experience that enable students to achieve success in the work-world.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most effective messages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Davis College is committed to providing challenging opportunities for learning, asking and innovating.</em> Students gain practical knowledge and hands-on skills in a smaller, supportive environment that transforms them into well-rounded, forward-thinking managers, leaders or teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Our nearly two-dozen academic programs run the gamut, but they have one thing in common: the ability to help you succeed on your terms. Whether your passion is for agriculture and food, natural resources, or design and community development, the Davis College has the hands-on experiences and dedicated mentors who can help you define and achieve your goals</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Detailed Findings
Students from twenty-five states and three outside the continental U.S. responded to the survey. The states noted below are home to at least 1% of those students.

Q1. In which state is your primary residence located?
Most students are seniors (41%) or juniors (25%). Less than two in ten (16%) are sophomores or freshmen (18%).

Q2. What year do you expect to graduate?
Current students represent 22 majors, with the top five being Wildlife & Fisheries Resources (23%), Human Nutrition and Foods (10%), Interior Design (7%) and Agribusiness Management & Rural Development (6%).
Half of the students (50%) acknowledged not having a specific job in mind when choosing a major. However, the remainder chose their major with a specific job in mind.

Which of these two statements is true of you?

- I chose my major without having a specific job in mind when I graduate. 50%
- I had a specific job in mind and that dictated the major I chose. 50%
Parents/guardians were the number one influence (52%) as to the major a student declared. Friends (29%) and Davis College representatives (22%) round out the top three types of people who influenced the student’s choice of a major.

Q4. Who/what influenced the major you chose? (check all that apply)
Other Schools Applied To

- NC State University: 2%
- Rutgers University: 3%
- SUNY State University: 3%
- Shepherd University: 4%
- West Virginia Wesleyan College: 4%
- University of Cincinnati: 4%
- University of Maryland: 4%
- University of Pittsburgh: 5%
- Virginia Tech: 6%
- Ohio University: 8%
- Marshall University: 8%
- Penn State University: 10%
- Ohio State University: 11%
- Not applicable: 26%
- Other: 44%
Students named 109 institutions that they applied to in addition to Davis College.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OTHERS</th>
<th>Akron</th>
<th>Central Michigan University</th>
<th>Fairmont State University (6)</th>
<th>GMU</th>
<th>Mississippi State</th>
<th>Rio Grand University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Akron</td>
<td>Central Virginia University College</td>
<td>FIT (Fashion Institute of Technology (3)</td>
<td>High Point University (2)</td>
<td>ODU</td>
<td>Saint Vincent College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alderson Broadus University (2)</td>
<td>Clemson (5)</td>
<td>Flagler College</td>
<td>Hocking College (2)</td>
<td>Ohio Northern University</td>
<td>Savannah College of Art and Design</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allegany College of Maryland</td>
<td>Coastal Carolina (3)</td>
<td>Florida State</td>
<td>JMU</td>
<td>Ohio University</td>
<td>Seton Hill (2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appalachian State University</td>
<td>Concord University (2)</td>
<td>Fresno State University</td>
<td>Kansas State</td>
<td>Oklahoma State University</td>
<td>Shenandoah University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arcadia University (2)</td>
<td>Cornell University (2)</td>
<td>Frostburg State (3)</td>
<td>Keene State</td>
<td>Ole Miss (2)</td>
<td>Slippery Rock</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUS</td>
<td>Iowa State University</td>
<td>FSU (2)</td>
<td>Kent State University (3)</td>
<td>Paul Smith’s College</td>
<td>Stevenson University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethany College</td>
<td>University of Washington</td>
<td>Gannon University</td>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>Potomac State College of SUNY Buffalo</td>
<td>WVU (9)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bloomsburg university</td>
<td>Davis and Elkins</td>
<td>Garrett College</td>
<td>Liberty University (5)</td>
<td>Purdue University (3)</td>
<td>Syracuse (2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bluefield State College</td>
<td>Delaware Valley College</td>
<td>Georgetown University</td>
<td>Mansfield University of Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Radford University</td>
<td>Tampa University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston College</td>
<td>Duquesne</td>
<td>Georgia Southern</td>
<td>Messiah College (2)</td>
<td>Randolph-Macon</td>
<td>Temple University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridgewater College</td>
<td>East Carolina (4)</td>
<td>Glenville University (2)</td>
<td>Miami University</td>
<td>Richard Stockton University</td>
<td>Texas A&amp;M University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: A number in parentheses indicates the number of times that institution was named.
### OTHERS (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>University of Findlay</th>
<th>UVM</th>
<th>Youngstown State University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Towson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U Mass Amherst</td>
<td>University of Florida</td>
<td>VCU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UC Boulder</td>
<td>University of Idaho</td>
<td>Virginia Commonwealth (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCONN</td>
<td>University of Kentucky (8)</td>
<td>VMI</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMBC</td>
<td>University of Louisiana</td>
<td>West Liberty University (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unity College</td>
<td>University of Maryland</td>
<td></td>
<td>Western Carolina University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Akron (2)</td>
<td>University of Miami</td>
<td></td>
<td>Western Michigan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Alabama</td>
<td>University of New Haven (2)</td>
<td>Wilkes University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Charleston</td>
<td>University of North Carolina (4)</td>
<td>Wilmington College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Colorado Boulder (2)</td>
<td>University of South Carolina (2)</td>
<td>Winthrop University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Connecticut</td>
<td>University of Toledo</td>
<td>WVSU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Delaware (5)</td>
<td>UVA</td>
<td></td>
<td>WVUP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which other colleges/universities, if any, did you also apply to for your undergraduate education? (Please check all that apply.)
Davis College is said to stand out from other colleges/institutions primarily because of its…

- Family-friendly environment
- Diverse programs
- Field-based experience
- Supportive, knowledgeable faculty

Everyone is so friendly. The Davis College doesn’t make WVU seem liked it’s as bag of a school as it is and that, as a student, you get lost in the shuttle. The Davis College give the “small-town” feel and friendliness while in a “big city” atmosphere of the University.”

“Some of the faculty are outstanding. Aside from my interest in the research topic, my impression of my advisor was one of the deciding factors in my decision to come to WVU.”

“I think the quality and diversity of the programs help Davis College stand out. People can major in something they know they enjoy from high school (like economics or business) but also add on the environmental standpoint of the classes, which is growing in popularity.”

“I think that the Davis College is very personable and allows students to have a lot of hands on experience. This is why I chose to go to WVU instead of Pitt. What other schools let you hand out with cows for credits?”
Davis College is consistently described with the terms “friendly,” “close knit family,” “supportive,” “great atmosphere,” and “diverse.”

“Amazing, I could not have accomplished an incredible GPA, and be graduating with multiple job offers without the support of my teachers, advisors, and fellow students. Its impossible not to succeed with all of the encouragement and resources that the Davis College offers. Many of my friends in other schools complain about how they have to jump through hoops and feel like they are just another student but the Davis College makes me feel like I am an important person.”

“The Davis College is filled with students and staff that are both knowledgeable and passionate about agriculture and natural resource management. Although the researchers do a lot of great things, they are humble. All the professors care about their students' success and are available to help as much as they are able.”

“Davis college is a close knit community that makes me feel at home and unafraid to ask questions and for help. All of the professors are very welcoming and care about your learning experience.”

“I would have to say that all the staff and upper class-men are very welcoming and supportive. I feel extremely comfortable whenever I'm at Davis College itself or talking to some through email, phone etc. It's a wonderful environment in which all the teachers are willing to help but are very eager to learn as well.”

“A great atmosphere to pursue my degree.”

“A diverse college that allows students to truly become the best versions of themselves.”
Students most closely associate the terms “accomplished professors” (mean = 8.46), practical knowledge & skills (mean = 8.31) and “family-type atmosphere (mean = 8.07) with Davis College. Those least equated with the college are “cutting edge” (mean = 5.27), “state of the art resources” (5.30) and “sustainability” (6.22).
Current students were asked how closely they associate the twelve words or phrases listed below with the Davis College. They were asked to use a 0-10 scale to indicate how strong their association was with each.

Q15. Please indicate how closely you associate each work or phrase with the Davis College? Use a 0-10 scale, where 10 means you associate it very closely with Davis College and 0 means you don’t associate it at all with Davis College.
Students most closely associate the terms “accomplished professors” (8.53), “practical knowledge & skills” (8.35), “family-type atmosphere” (8.13) and “supportive” (8.03) as the words they most closely associate with Davis College.
Supportive environment (66%), smaller class sizes (61%) ability to gain hands-on experience in labs (57%), small college feel in a mid-sized university (51%) and easily accessible faculty (49%) are the aspects of Davis College most valued.
Nearly half (47%) are very satisfied with the education they are receiving from Davis College; another 41% are somewhat satisfied. Just 11% indicated they are dissatisfied to some extent.
Nearly half the students are very satisfied (45%) or somewhat satisfied (42%) with the education they are receiving at Davis College. One in ten are dissatisfied to some extent.
When asked what unexpectedly surprised them about their experience at Davis College, they cited the following:

- Friendliness
- Scholarships
- Small classes
- Brilliant professors
- Career opportunities
- Hands-on experience/available opportunities
- Supportive environment/professors
- Diversity of students within the college
- Ability to forge close relationships with professors
- Willingness of professors to help outside of classroom

Just a few provided negative feedback:

- Unable to reach my advisor
- Don’t feel supported by advisor
- Disappointed with design program (faculty, resources)
- Unable to get involved with research Freshman year
Is there anything about your experience at Davis College that makes you feel the college has failed to meet your expectations?

Slightly over seven in ten (72%) feel that Davis College has been able to meet their expectations.

Failed Expectations

- Yes, 28%
- No, 72%

Resources
- Out-of-date equipment/technology; old facilities (9)
- Lack of knowledgeable advisers and direction (8)
- Lack of qualified professors (4)

Academics
- Classes in some majors are repetitive or missing (6)
- Some classes are taught by graduate students
- Some students do not feel challenged
- Required classes are not always available; students can't graduate on time
- Limited hands-on learning

Administration
- Some majors are ignored or mismanaged (e.g. fashion, tourism, nutrition)
- Study abroad is a difficult process (3)
- “Star” students are given more opportunity than others (3)
Just a handful of graduate students expressed concerns regarding…

Graduate level courses

“Lack of qualified professor in the Human Nutrition department and lack of classes for graduates. Also, the teachers in the department do not get a long or openly communicate or partner together. Very disorganized.”

“I am a graduate student and there are limited graduate courses within my department and other departments.”

“I feel like major focus has been given to undergrad curriculum in comparison to graduate. Its not prepared well. I would rather say that the graduate syllabus for landscape architecture is more like a "trial and error " syllabus.”

Favoritism

“After deciding that Veterinary school was not the path I wanted to take I felt like my academic advisor started to distance himself and become less helpful in deicing what graduate school programs I could attend or the kinds of jobs I could get after graduation. I also feel like opportunities to participate in "out of classroom activities" are only communicated regularly to the Davis College Honors Scholars which was very disappointing. After taking a class at Marshall University and seeing how devoted the teachers were to making sure that everyone understood the material I feel that WVU is doing a disservice to their student and a majority of the professors are only there to get kids through the program.”

“Limited mentoring opportunities and little direction in terms of graduate school preparation.”
The vast majority of students have an advisor who is a Davis College faculty member. Three in ten (30%) are extremely satisfied or (29%) very satisfied. Just over one-fourth (27%) are just slightly satisfied. Another 15% are dissatisfied to some extent.
Most students believe their academic advisor has been very helpful to their academic success thus far. Others attribute their not being able to graduate on time to ill-equipped advisors. Some gave mixed reviews - their undergraduate advising experience did not coincide with their experience as a graduate student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Impact</th>
<th>Negative Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supportive</strong></td>
<td><strong>Lack of Knowledge</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-knowledgeable</td>
<td>-advised to take classes students didn’t need/wrong classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-available</td>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-provided</td>
<td>-lack of availability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opportunities</td>
<td>-ineffective communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Motivator</strong></td>
<td>****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-encouraged</td>
<td><strong>“My first advisor never met with me, she just opened up my registration. I tried asking her questions, to which she always replied she didn’t know and to ask someone else. Why is she an advisor, then? The next few I had to meet with because my assigned advisor wouldn’t help me all gave me incorrect information that kept me from scholarships, financial aid, and graduating when I expected. Very disappointing, because I love this college and the classes I take, but I still want a degree in a reasonable time!”</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>students to set goals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-encouraged/enabled students to be more active on campus</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Focus</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-helped students choose classes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-helped students graduate on time</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-helped students discern required from nice-to-have classes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Transition</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-helped students switch majors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-assisted transfer students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“**My advisor truly cares about how I am doing in classes as well as for my general welfare. He knew I had bounced around from different advisors who were doing things to keep me in school and paying more and more money for things I didn’t need. The first thing he said when we had our first advising appointment was "so do you want to graduate in August or December. We need to get you out of here, stop spending money here!!" I will never forget that.”**

Please advise if and how the academic advising you received from Davis College thus far has impacted your academic success.
Below are some additional students quotes regarding the experience they had with their advisor(s).

Positive Impact

“One of my advisors has put me in a position to start my own business and has completely changed my direction in college. I have also had an advisor who has offered me career path advice and contacts. Both of these people have gone above and beyond what was necessary and saw potential in me.”

“My advisor has opened up my options for a career. He has supported me with decisions about my future career and has pushed me out of my comfort zone to excel and allow me to see my full potential.”

Negative Impact

“I usually did my own counseling because our advisor consistently advised to take the wrong classes or didn't even tell them to take mandatory ones and it put a few of my classmates behind a year.”

“It made me have to stay longer because I had to take classes I didn't need.”

Mixed Impact

“Undergraduate: I was able to graduate on time with putting classes in the appropriate time slots, which was especially important to me as a transfer who wanted to graduate on time. However, I was not told about a big scholarship that I could have received, so I was a little disappointed after I found out about it later. This teacher no longer works here though. Graduate: I have struggled with my graduate adviser quite a bit.”
As you know, WVU has a Career Services Center. If Davis College were to have its own Career Services Center that would focus on the specific needs and careers of Davis College students, how likely would you be to utilize that center instead?

Just over three-fourths (77%) of students are extremely likely (46%) or very likely (31%) to utilize a career center that focuses on the specific needs of Davis College students.
More than half the students are extremely likely (27%) or somewhat likely (28%) to consider combining a traditional major and online minor, if that were possible.

If it were possible to combine a traditional course major with an online course minor, how likely would you be to combine the two?
Nearly eight in ten are extremely likely (38%) or very (43%) likely to recommend Davis College to friends, family or prospective students.
Those aspects student are most likely to mention about the college when speaking to prospective students are its friendly, family-feel, caring and supportive professors/staff, smaller classes and variety of majors. Other favorable, miscellaneous comments about Davis College include such terms as “great atmosphere,” “won’t be disappointed,” “fun,” “good value,” and “great environment in which to learn.”

**Friendly/family (18)**

“It’s a warm, friendly environment. Your professors are accomplished in their field but they’re not arrogant. They genuinely want you to succeed and are always there for you. I have so many professor’s cell phone numbers because they want to be accessible to students 24/7. The college here is a family.

**Caring/supportive environment (13)**

“I would say that Davis College is one of the best decisions you could make. Between the vast amount of different majors, to the small feeling of classes, and professors actually caring to learn your name I believe it is a great choice.”

**Small college classes with resources of a large university (12)**

“Davis is a tight-knit community within a large university. Small classes, hands-on lab and field work, personal attention, and unlimited student resources are what makes this college great.”

**Hands-on experience (10)**

“If you are looking for a college that is hands on and pushes you to your higher potential, check out Davis College at WVU.”

**Variety of majors (6)**

“It’s a small-feeling college with a variety of course, many of which ‘interlock’ and help you to not only better understand your major, but those similar to it.”
Lastly, I'd like you to read four messages regarding the Davis College. For each statement, please indicate how convincing you think it would be to someone thinking about attending the Davis College? Here is the first message...

**Davis College is committed to providing challenging opportunities for learning, asking and innovating. Students gain practical knowledge and hands-on skills in a smaller, supportive environment that transforms them into well-rounded, forward-thinking managers, leaders or teachers.**

About two in ten (21%) believe the statement is extremely convincing; nearly half (48%) find it a very convincing statement for prospective students.
With a focus on food, fiber, the systems and landscapes that produce them, and the communities that rely on them, the Davis College plays a unique role in educating leaders and innovators who will make these industries safer, stronger, and more sustainable.

Less than two in ten (14%) believe the statement is extremely convincing; three in ten (30%) find it a very convincing statement for prospective students.
Our nearly two-dozen academic programs run the gamut, but they have one thing in common: the ability to help you succeed on your terms. Whether your passion is for agriculture and food, natural resources, or design and community development, the Davis College has the hands-on experiences and dedicated mentors who can help you define and achieve your goals.

One-fourth (25%) believe the statement is extremely convincing; four in ten (42%) find it a very convincing statement for prospective students.
The food we eat. The water we drink. The spaces where we live and work. Ancient landscapes. New fuels. Health. Wealth. Innovation. An education at the Davis College can connect you to careers that engage our most basic needs – essential careers that address some of our biggest challenges.

Just over two in ten (22%) and nearly four in ten (37%) find this message extremely or very convincing, respectively.
Please rank order the way(s) you prefer to learn about Davis College news/information/events. (1=most preferred)

Current students prefer to learn about Davis College news, information and events via email or their MIX account.

Note: Respondents could select more than one response.