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Strategic Alignment of Curriculum and Mission: A Study of Technology Integration in AACSB Business Schools

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Abstract

This study investigates whether AACSB-accredited business schools in the United States strategically align the integration of technology in their curricula with their institutional mission statements. Using qualitative content analysis of 200 randomly selected institutions, we analyze mission statements, general and business core curricula, and apply natural language processing (NLP) methods including lemmatization, topic modeling (LDA), and keyword-based sentiment classification. Findings reveal a significant disconnect: 58% of institutions make no mention of technology in their mission statements, yet 69% require at least one technology-related course in the business core curriculum. This discrepancy suggests that technology is often treated as a curricular or operational necessity rather than a core strategic value. Moreover, technology may be seen as a technical or departmental concern rather than a central element of institutional identity. These insights suggest opportunities to improve alignment between institutional priorities and curricular design, especially in light of AACSB's increasing emphasis on digital transformation.

Keywords: AACSB accreditation, curriculum alignment, technology integration, mission statements, business education, content analysis

Strategic Alignment of Curriculum and Mission: A Study of Technology Integration in AACSB Business

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1. INTRODUCTION

The integration of technology in business education is no longer an optional enhancement—it is a defining element of curricular relevance and institutional competitiveness. As business schools respond to the accelerating pace of digital transformation, accreditation bodies such as the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) have called for more deliberate alignment between institutional strategy and curriculum. AACSB's standards require that mission statements serve as both aspirational and operational guides for planning, resource allocation, and educational design. (AACSB 2025a, 2025c).

Yet despite this requirement, the degree to which business schools explicitly align their strategic communication with the technological demands of modern business education remains unclear. Do institutional mission statements reflect the digital commitments that are embedded in their curricula? Is technology integration portrayed as a strategic priority, or is it confined to course catalogs and program requirements without broader narrative support?

This study investigates these questions through the following research questions:

- **RQ1.** How is technology integrated into the business core curricula of AACSB-accredited schools?
- **RQ2.** How do mission statements of these schools reflect a strategic emphasis on technology?
- **RQ3.** Is there evidence of alignment between mission statements and curricular practices?

The significance of this research lies in its implications for strategic planning and curriculum development. Institutions aiming for AACSB accreditation—or maintaining it—must ensure that their educational activities reflect their strategic commitments, including the adoption of emerging technologies. Ensuring alignment between curricular practice and institutional messaging is critical not only for accreditation compliance but also for maintaining stakeholder trust and academic integrity.

By focusing on strategic alignment in a digital context, this research contributes to the growing body of literature on mission-driven planning, educational technology, and the practical challenges of translating rhetoric into practice.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of alignment between institutional mission and academic practices has gained increased attention in recent years, particularly as business schools respond to rapid technological change and evolving accreditation standards. For example, MacKenzie, Colazo, and Scherer (2025) demonstrate how alignment between mission statements and resource allocation in AACSB-accredited institutions is associated with stronger organizational performance, especially in the context of digital innovation. Prior research emphasizes the importance of coherence between what institutions publicly claim to value and how they design curricula, allocate resources, and assess outcomes (Hwang, Ma, & Wang, 2015; Latta, 2015). These findings are consistent with Weick's (1976) conceptualization of educational institutions as loosely coupled systems, where symbolic messaging and operational practices may diverge, leading to inconsistencies between rhetoric and implementation. In the context of AACSB-accredited business schools, strategic alignment is not only a marker of internal consistency but also a component of ongoing accreditation and quality assurance. This review surveys relevant literature on strategic alignment, technology integration in curriculum design, accreditation expectations, and the evolving role of mission statements as both aspirational and operational instruments.

Strategic Alignment in Higher Education

Strategic alignment refers to the degree to which an institution's actions and resource allocations reflect its stated mission, vision, and goals. This framing aligns with Henderson and Venkatraman's (1999) model of strategic alignment in information systems, which emphasizes how IT capabilities can transform organizational performance when tightly linked to institutional strategy. In higher education,

alignment has been studied in various contexts, including mission-driven budgeting (Bess & Dee, 2008), faculty performance evaluation (Kezar & Eckel, 2002), and curriculum reform (Morphew & Hartley, 2006). A well-aligned institution demonstrates coherence between what it claims to value and what it operationalizes in practice. This becomes increasingly critical when external stakeholders—such as accreditors, funding bodies, and students—evaluate institutional integrity.

AACSB Accreditation and Technology Expectations

AACSB accreditation standards explicitly require that curriculum and assessment practices be mission-aligned and responsive to the business environment. Technology is expected to be "infused through the curriculum and is vital to the production of scholarship and thought leadership" (AACSB, 2025b). Several studies have explored how AACSB influences the structure of business education, including program learning goals (Martell, 2007), assurance of learning systems (Miles et al., 2014), and administrative decision-making (Lowrie & Willmott, 2009). However, there is limited empirical research on whether technology initiatives—particularly those tied to digital transformation—are reflected in the language of institutional strategy.

Technology Integration in Curriculum Design

Technology integration has been examined across educational disciplines, particularly in K–12 and STEM fields, but its strategic framing in business education remains underexplored. Frameworks such as TPACK (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge; Mishra & Koehler, 2006) and SAMR (Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, Redefinition) offer insight into how educators adopt and adapt digital tools. While these models are widely used for instructional design, they also provide a lens through which to evaluate institutional readiness and systemic change. In business education, emerging research emphasizes the importance of embedding digital fluency into core curricula, ranging from data analytics and cybersecurity to platform strategy and AI ethics (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2014; Benavides et al., 2020). In a review of over 300 IS programs, Hwang, Ma, and Wang (2015) found considerable variation in how institutions implemented IS core curricula, highlighting the importance of curricular consistency in response to technological change.

Computing Curricula 2020 (CC2020) as a Field-Wide Guide

The CC2020 report, a joint effort by global computing associations, underscores the necessity for all undergraduates—not just computing majors—to attain baseline digital competencies. It explicitly recommends that computing be embedded within general education clusters to promote transferable, ethical, and context-aware understanding of technology (ACM et al., 2020). These recommendations align with AACSB expectations: that technology should be treated as a liberal learning outcome rather than merely a technical skill. However, few studies have examined how CC2020 principles are adopted outside computing departments, especially in mission statements or strategic planning documents.

Symbolic vs. Operational Use of Mission Statements

Research in higher education has long distinguished between the symbolic and operational uses of mission statements. Symbolically, these statements signal institutional values to external stakeholders, accrediting bodies, donors, and prospective students, often aspirationally. Operationally, however, they are expected to serve as planning tools, guiding internal decisions about curriculum, hiring, and budgeting (Morphew & Hartley, 2006). This tension can result in "mission drift," where institutional activities deviate from the values or priorities that are publicly articulated. This phenomenon is consistent with Weick's (1976) theory of educational institutions as loosely coupled systems, where symbolic rhetoric and operational practice often evolve independently, creating space for strategic disconnects, especially around technology adoption. In the context of digital transformation, such drift may be particularly consequential. Institutions may adopt technology at the classroom or departmental level without incorporating it into their strategic identity, leaving a misalignment between planning and practice.

Deepening the Frameworks: TPACK and SAMR

While models like TPACK and SAMR are traditionally used to evaluate classroom technology integration, they also offer conceptual value for institutional planning. The TPACK model emphasizes the interplay between content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and technological knowledge, reinforcing the need for coherent faculty development and resource alignment (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). The SAMR model, by distinguishing between substitution and transformation levels of technology use, provides a heuristic for determining whether

institutions are simply layering technology onto existing practices or fundamentally rethinking their pedagogical approaches. Both frameworks support the argument that technology adoption must be deliberate, context-sensitive, and institutionally scaffolded.

ISEDJ Perspectives on Curriculum Alignment

Studies published in the Information Systems Education Journal (ISEDJ) include multiple empirical investigations into curriculum reform and alignment in IS education. For example, Hwang, Ma & Wang (2015) examine how IS core curricula are up-to-date or not across US institutions; Hulshult and Woods (2020) illustrate how applying Agile methodologies across IT curriculum development reflects a strategic response to evolving technological and pedagogical priorities in business education. Its editorial mission and readership align closely with the goals of this study, which bridges curriculum design and institutional strategy in the context of AACSB accreditation.

Studies within ISEDJ further support the importance of aligning curriculum with institutional and industry expectations. Hwang, Ma, and Wang (2015) conducted a comprehensive analysis of information systems programs across nearly 400 institutions, revealing inconsistencies in how IS programs update and structure their curricula in accordance with model recommendations. Their work demonstrates the critical need for consistency between curricular content and stated academic goals. Additionally, Hulshult and Woods (2020) highlight how the intentional integration of Agile methodologies within IT curricula serves to align academic programming with broader strategic and technological imperatives. Their approach emphasizes methodological coherence across courses, reinforcing how curricular structure can operationalize institutional commitments to adaptability and digital transformation. These findings reinforce the value of examining not only curriculum content but also whether institutions use strategic documents, like mission statements, to signal and support such innovations.

Gaps and Research Need

Despite increased pressure for institutions to innovate, there is a lack of research on how technology integration is reflected in non-technical strategic documents like mission statements. This gap is significant because mission statements serve as both internal guideposts and external signals of institutional identity. Understanding how (or whether) they include technology offers insight into whether schools view digital transformation as a strategic priority or merely a curricular obligation. This study addresses this gap by analyzing the presence of technology-related themes in the mission statements of AACSB-accredited business schools and comparing them to actual curricular practices.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research is grounded in a multi-pronged theoretical framework. First, it draws from Strategic Alignment Theory, particularly the model proposed by Henderson and Venkatraman (Henderson & Venkatraman, 1999), which emphasizes coherence between organizational strategies, structures, and processes. Within higher education, this theory suggests that institutions should ensure consistency between their publicly stated missions and their curricular practices.

Second, the study is informed by models of curricular alignment, including backward design and constructive alignment. These approaches promote the idea that curricula should be developed by first identifying intended learning outcomes and then selecting content and assessments that directly support those outcomes.

Finally, qualitative content analysis serves as a methodological and conceptual lens. Building on the work of Krippendorff (2018) and Mayring (2014), this method enables researchers to systematically examine the language and themes embedded in institutional documents. In this study, mission statements and curricular descriptions are treated as data points reflecting institutional identity, values, and strategy.

This method has been frequently employed in higher education research to explore the alignment between mission statements, educational goals, and curriculum design (Morphew & Hartley, 2006; Yob et al., 2016; Makoe, 2022).

4. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative, descriptive comparative design that relies on document analysis and natural language processing (NLP) techniques to assess the strategic alignment between technology-related content in institutional mission statements and business curricula.

As of April 2025, there were 970 AACSB-accredited business schools worldwide offering undergraduate degrees (AACSB, n.d.). Due to the researchers' familiarity with the U.S. higher education system and the shared regulatory and curricular context across domestic institutions, the scope of this study was limited to the 591 AACSB-accredited schools located in the United States. To balance methodological rigor with practical feasibility, a random sample of 200 institutions was selected from this population, representing approximately 33.9% of U.S.-based AACSB schools. The full list was obtained from the official AACSB website and randomized using spreadsheet software. We selected the first 200 institutions from this randomized list, without stratifying by institutional type, region, or control. While the sample was not designed to be proportionally representative, a post-hoc review confirmed broad variation in institutional characteristics (e.g., size, region, control), supporting reasonable generalizability. The data collection and validation process was largely manual. Graduate Assistants (GAs) collected mission statements and curriculum information, after which one of the authors conducted a second-level review to ensure accuracy and completeness, especially in cases where GAs had only retrieved introductory paragraphs of longer mission texts. Given the labor-intensive nature of this process, limiting the sample to 200 institutions was a practical decision. The sample size provides broad coverage across institutional control (public vs. private), size, and geographic region. While AACSB is an international accrediting body, the decision to focus exclusively on U.S. institutions was made to enhance the internal validity and comparability of the findings. Including international schools would introduce variability in cultural, regulatory, and curricular frameworks that could confound the alignment analysis. Future research may extend this investigation to include international institutions for comparative purposes.

For each institution, the primary institutional website was used to locate three key documents: the general education curriculum, the business core curriculum, and the school's mission statement. If both institutional and business school-specific mission statements were available, the latter was used to ensure relevance to the business program.

Technology-related courses in both the general education and business core curricula were identified and classified as either *mandatory* or *optional*. Courses were coded as mandatory when they were required of all students, and optional when students could select from a group of alternatives to satisfy a requirement. This classification helped to determine the prominence of technology within the core curriculum and assess whether its inclusion reflected a strategic imperative or merely a peripheral offering.

Following curriculum coding, mission and vision statements were processed using the spaCy natural language processing library (Honnibal & Montani, 2017). Texts were lemmatized to normalize word forms. Stop-words were removed using a combination of the standard English list from the Natural Language Toolkit (NLTK) and a custom list of domain-specific frequent terms (e.g., "student," "university," "education," "learn") to reduce lexical noise and enhance thematic clarity.

To identify deeper patterns in institutional language, Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) topic modeling was applied using the Gensim library (Řehůřek & Sojka, 2011). Prior to training, all tokens were converted into a bag-of-words model, and an LDA model with five topics was trained over fifteen iterations to ensure interpretive coherence and topic stability. This allowed us to uncover clusters of conceptual themes embedded in mission statements, ranging from community service and learning outcomes to innovation and social responsibility.

In addition to topic modeling, a keyword-driven classification approach was developed to evaluate technology emphasis in institutional mission and vision statements. A curated list of 30+ positively associated technology terms, including technology, innovation, digital, cybersecurity, AI, robotics, programming, cloud computing, data science, blockchain, IoT, STEM, and analytics, was compiled through an extensive review of EdTech literature and glossaries from sources such as UNESCO, Education 5.0, McNulty, and the Proximate Change toolkit. This list with their resources is provided in the Appendix. Each statement was scanned for keyword presence to compute a technology relevance score. Statements with no mentions of these keywords were categorized as *Neutral/No Tech*. Those with minimal keyword presence were classified as *Tech-Neutral*, and statements with frequent keyword presence and positive sentiment were labeled *Tech-Positive*. Sentiment analysis using the TextBlob library (Loria, 2018) helped distinguish between merely neutral or administrative mentions of technology and those that carried strategic or forward-looking connotations.

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5. FINDINGS

Technology Integration in Curricula (RQ1)

To assess how technology is integrated into AACSB-accredited programs, we reviewed both general education and business core curricula. In the general core, just over half of the institutions included at least one technology-related course. Specifically, 18% of institutions mandated a technology course, while an additional 37% offered one or more technology courses as options within broader elective requirements.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of institutions with required and optional technology courses in the general education core.

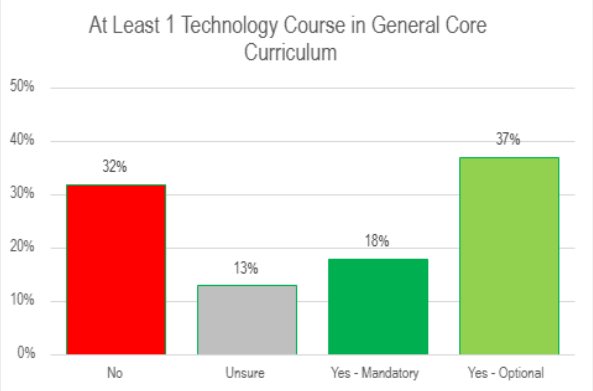

Figure 1: Technology Course In Gen Ed Curriculum

The business cores, taken as a whole, reflected a much stronger commitment to technology. A total of 69% of the schools in our sample required students to complete at least one technology-related course as part of the core business curriculum. These courses varied from introductory information systems and analytics to applied topics in cybersecurity and digital platforms. While it is usually accepted that technology should be integrated across all aspects of the business curriculum, many institutions still choose to highlight certain courses as explicitly "technology-related" for curricular planning and assessment purposes. For the purposes of this study, a "technology-related course" was defined as one that includes a primary focus on topics such as information systems, data analytics, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, programming, or other emerging technologies. This definition is grounded in both AACSB's expectations for digital preparedness and global curriculum standards such as Computing Curricula 2020 and Education 5.0.

Figure 2 illustrates the proportion of institutions

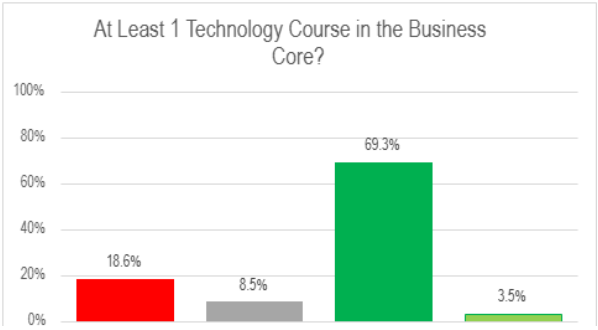

Figure 2: Technology Course in Business Core Curriculum

that include a required technology-related course in the business core curriculum. This indicates that while AACSB-accredited institutions are increasingly incorporating technology into their programs, the emphasis is more explicit in business curricula than in general education requirements.

Computing Curriculum 2020: Field Expectations

Beyond institutional practices, guidance from professional standards also reinforces the importance of embedding technology across the curriculum. The 2020 Computing Curriculum (Force, 2020) report, developed by leading academic and industry organizations, highlights the need for all undergraduates—not just computing majors—to attain foundational computing knowledge.

While much of the emphasis in CC2020 is directed at technology-specific programs, the report also explicitly encourages integrating computing concepts into general education. For example, the competency model notes that "computing graduates are normatively expected to skillfully apply computing disciplinary knowledge (relevant to their academic program), foundational knowledge consistent with baccalaureate education, and, lastly, professional knowledge relevant to how graduates operate as professionals" (Force, p. 130).

Moreover, the report advocates including computing content in "general education clusters," situating technology not only as a professional tool but as a liberal learning outcome (p. 189). These competencies encompass ethical, contextual, and communicative dimensions of computing—supporting its inclusion in both general education and business foundations (p. 125).

Taken together, these expectations align with our finding that technology-related courses are

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present across curricula, and they further strengthen the argument that such integration should be mirrored in strategic institutional narratives.

Strategic Language in Mission Statements (RQ2)

Mission and vision statements were analyzed using word frequency visualizations, keyword classification, and LDA topic modeling. Our initial word cloud (Figure 3), created after lemmatizing and removing stop-words, showed that institutional statements heavily emphasized values such as "community," "education," "diverse," "public," and "engagement." These reflect a broader institutional focus on public service, inclusion, and academic development.

Figure 1: Word Cloud of Mission and Vision Statements

To explore deeper themes, we excluded generic academic terms and regenerated the word cloud (Figure 4). The updated visualization highlighted terms such as "research," "state," "world," "innovative," and "excellence," revealing a common emphasis on advancement, external engagement, and leadership.

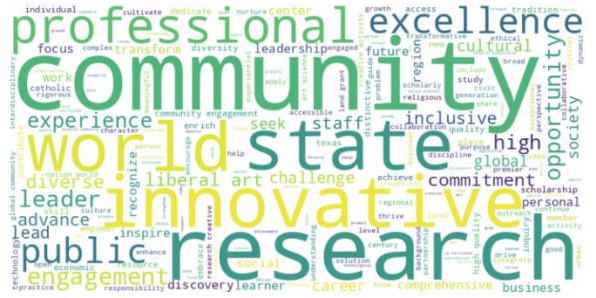

Figure 2: Most Common Lemmas (excluding specified words and verbs)

However, terms directly associated with technology (e.g., "technology," "digital," "AI," "innovation") were sparse (Figure 5).

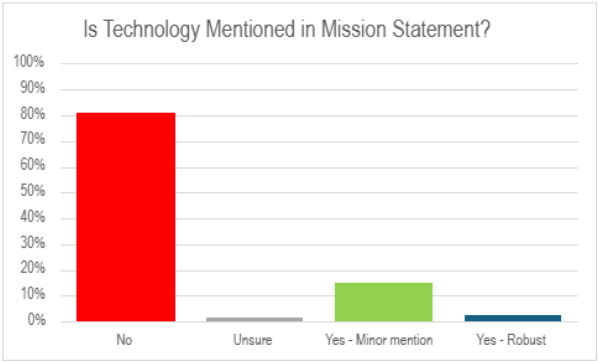

Figure 3: Is Technology Mentioned in Mission Statement?

A histogram of keyword frequency (Figure 6) confirmed that more than half of the mission statements did not include a single technology-related term. Among the 90 statements that included technology-related terms, more than 70% did so only once, and typically in tangential ways, such as referencing a commitment to 'innovation' or 'technology-enhanced learning,' without further elaboration. Very few mission statements made explicit references to emerging tools like AI, data analytics, or cybersecurity.

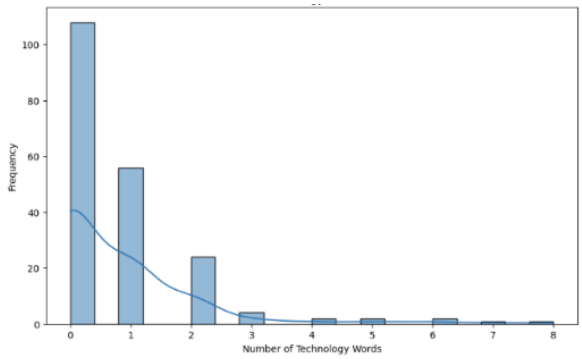

Figure 4: Number of Technology Related Words in Mission Statement

Using LDA topic modeling with five distinct topics, we uncovered the following themes:

- Topic 1: Community and Research Focus
- Topic 2: Innovation and Global Outlook
- Topic 3: Career and Personal Growth
- Topic 4: Public Service and Access
- Topic 5: Current and Emerging Technology

To better understand the semantic makeup of each theme, we created horizontal bar charts displaying the top keywords for each topic. These charts illustrate the relative frequency and weight of the most influential terms in the model's output.

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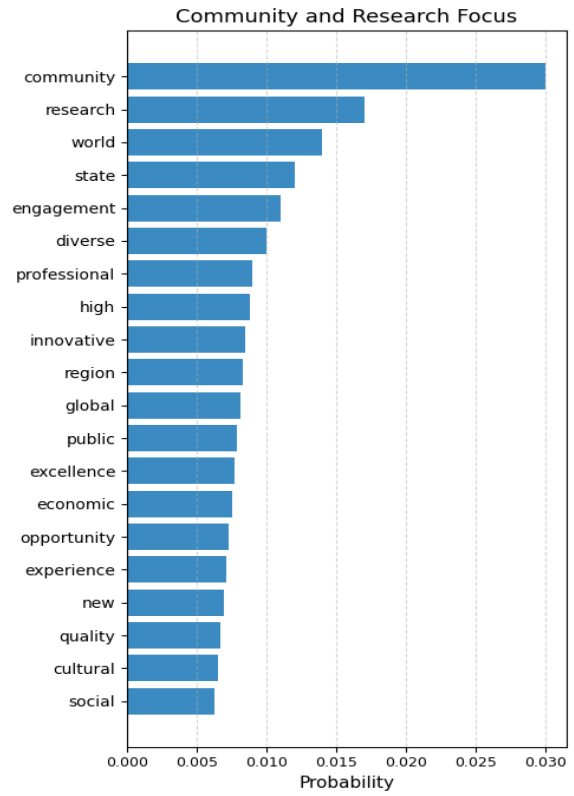

Figure 7: Topic 1 Keywords

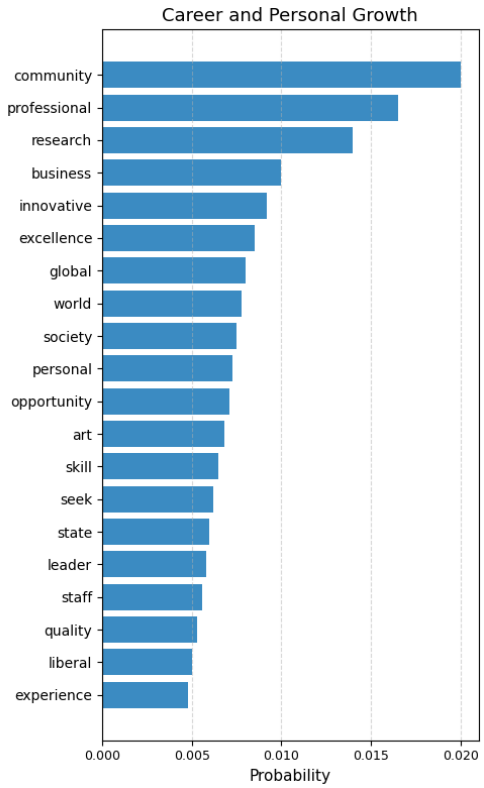

Figure 9: Topic 3 Keywords

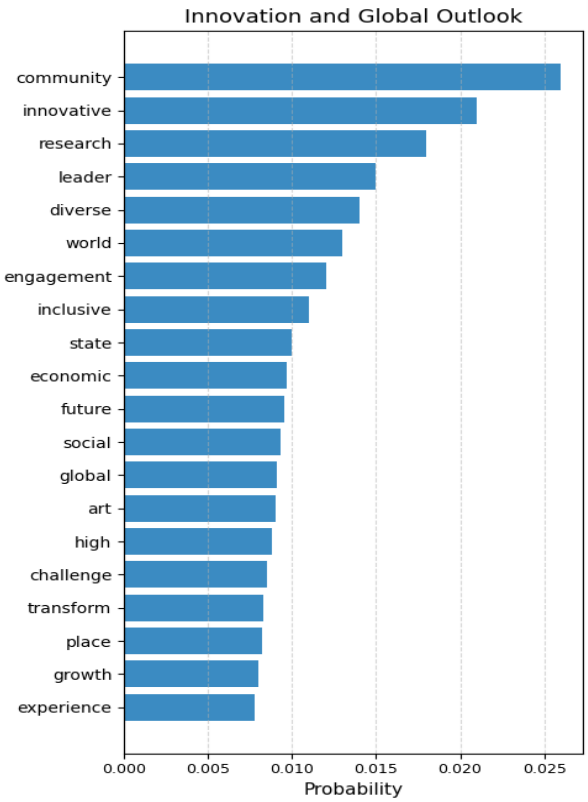

Figure 8: Topic 2 Keywords

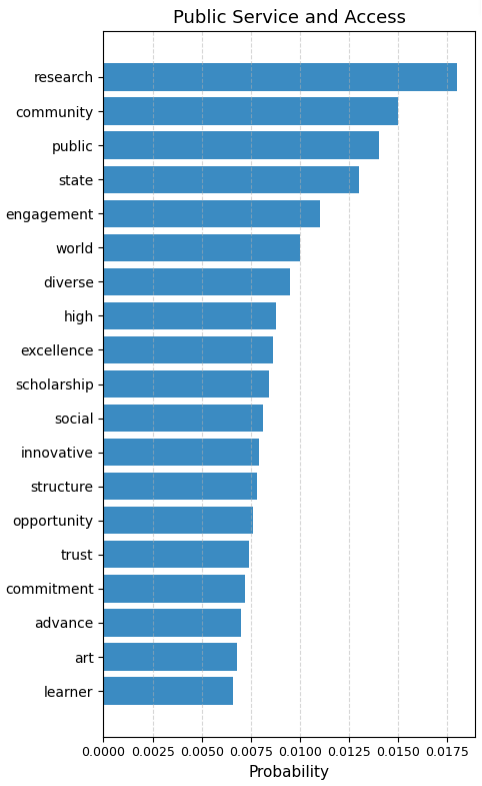

Figure 10: Topic 4 Keywords

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Topic 1: Community and Research Focus
This topic is the most prominent topic in the corpus, accounting for 29% of tokens, emphasizing terms such as "community", "research", "state", "world", "engagement", and "professional". The topic reflects both community service and research activities. Terms like "innovative" and "opportunity" also indicate a future-oriented vision.

Topic 2: Innovation and Global Outlook
This topic highlights institutions' inclusive and innovative strategies with key terms such as "community", "innovative", "research", "leader", "engagement", "diverse", and "global". Frequently used terms like "economic", "transform", and "advance" suggest worldwide social transformation.

Topic 3: Career and Personal Growth
This topic includes terms such as "community", "professional", "business", "research", "personal", "society", "skill", focusing on preparing students for their careers with personal growth. Although terms like "innovation", "global", and "opportunity" are also prominent, the main focus is on career readiness and experiential learning.

Topic 4: Public Service and Access
Terms like "research", "community", "public", "state", "engagement", and "scholarship" suggest a focus on institutions' civic duty. Moreover, terms like "leader", "economic", "urban", and "work" suggest that institutions foster regional progress, while terms like "diverse", "comprehensive", "cultural", and "inclusive" signal accessibility.

Topic 5: Current and Emerging Technology
This topic is the most semantically distinct, reflecting a mix of tradition and technology. Terms such as "research", "excellence", "community", "tradition", "scholarship", "Texas", and "Wisconsin" suggest institutional identity, whereas terms such as "technology", "innovation and "global" signal an emphasis on digital change.

Taken together, these five topics reflect a diverse range of institutional priorities, from community engagement to global innovation to traditional identity. While each theme offers insight into how schools frame their strategic missions, the relative prominence and distinctiveness of each topic also shed light on which narratives dominate

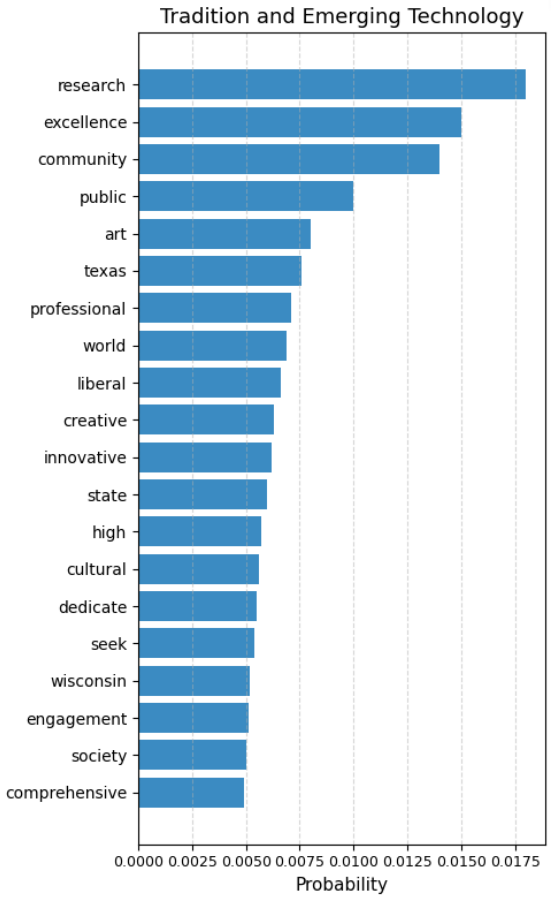

Figure 11: Topic 5 Keywords

the sector, and which are more peripheral. Notably, Topic 5 did not yield a high proportion of technical terms. While the initial modeling process grouped together terms such as innovation, global, and excellence with references to specific states or institutional names, these were not consistently tied to strong or explicit commitments to technological advancement. As a result, the majority of mission statements associated with this topic were classified as tech-neutral or non-tech-positive in subsequent sentiment analysis. This finding illustrates that forward-facing terms may be used in abstract or symbolic ways, without accompanying language that signals strategic emphasis on digital transformation. It also underscores the importance of evaluating not just the presence of thematic vocabulary, but the contextual framing of technology within institutional narratives.

Figure 12 shows the distribution of mission statements by topic. Topic 1 was the most dominant theme, emphasizing engagement, research, and professional development. Topic 5,

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which included references to tradition and technology, was the least common, reinforcing our earlier findings that technology is not widely presented as a strategic pillar.

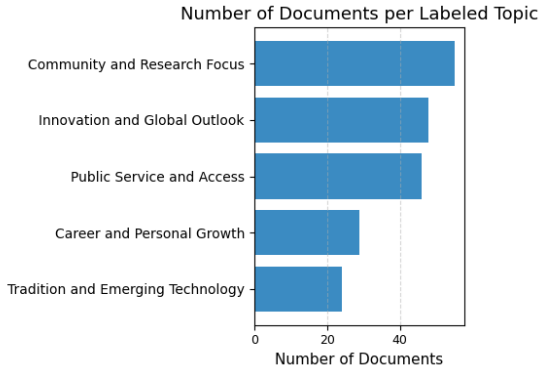

Figure 5: Mission Statements Distribution by Topic

An intertopic distance map (Figure 13) showed that Topics 1, 2, and 4 were thematically close, while Topics 3 and 5 were more isolated. The thematic isolation of Topic 5 supports the idea that technology is discussed only by a subset of institutions and is often tied to broader identity narratives rather than central goals.

Figure 13: Intertopic Distance Map

Technology Sentiment and Alignment Patterns (RQ3)

To further quantify alignment, we evaluated the sentiment and frequency of technology-related terms in mission statements. Institutions were classified into three categories: Tech-Positive, Tech-Neutral, and No-Tech.

Figure 14 illustrates the proportion of Tech-Positive mission statements across the five LDA topics. Technology appeared most frequently in Topic 2 (Innovation and Global Outlook) and Topic 1 (Community and Research Focus), reinforcing the association between innovation and digital commitment. By contrast, Topics 4 and 5 contained fewer Tech-Positive cases.

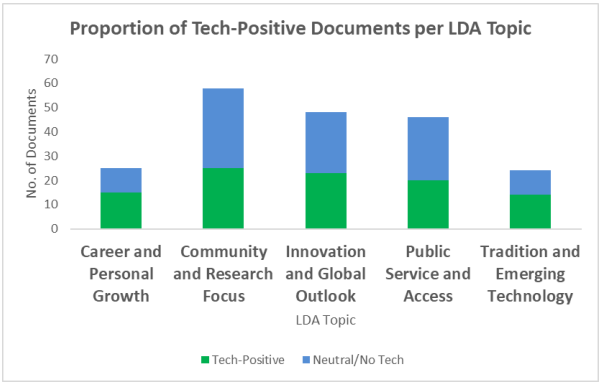

Figure 6: Proportion of Tech-Positive Documents per LDA Topic

6. DISCUSSION

The analysis highlights a discrepancy between curricular implementation and institutional strategy in AACSB-accredited business schools. While most institutions include technology in their business curricula, few treat it as a strategic priority in their mission statements. This finding suggests that technology may be seen as a technical or departmental concern rather than a central element of institutional identity.

This misalignment could be interpreted as a symptom of organizational inertia, where strategic documents lag actual instructional practice. Alternatively, it might indicate a cautious approach to adopting technology as a core value amid institutional efforts to maintain broader appeals related to tradition, access, or community identity. The thematic distance observed between innovation-oriented and tradition-oriented mission statement topics supports this interpretation.

Notably, the institutions that did incorporate technology into their mission statements were more likely to use forward-looking, progressive language, terms like "global leadership," "innovation," and "digital transformation". This suggests that technology is framed aspirationally when present, rather than operationally or pedagogically. As a result, students, faculty, and external stakeholders may find it difficult to discern whether a school's technological

capabilities are a core strategic commitment or simply a curricular feature.

Mission statements are public facing and influence a host of campus decisions. Institutions that include technology in their mission statements but not in their curriculum could be called into question for failing to execute on their mission. Conversely, those that include technology courses but make no mention of it in their mission may find that efforts to secure grants, create industry partnerships, or garner alumni support for innovation are undermined as a result.

Institutional planning committees, accreditation task forces, and academic leadership teams can benefit from explicitly auditing the language of their mission statements in comparison to their curricular investments. Incorporating references to technological competencies, digital ethics, or innovation capacity could help position the institution more effectively within AACSB expectations and the broader educational marketplace.

Finally, this study suggests a larger opportunity for systemic integration. Rather than viewing technology as a discrete element of business education, institutions could consider framing it as part of a holistic student learning journey, from mission and course selection to advising and career preparation. Aligning technology strategy with institutional identity supports efforts to meet digital transformation requirements and fulfill institutional strategy in AACSB-accredited business schools.

Institutions that did frame technology as part of their mission were more likely to use forward-looking language that emphasized innovation, global leadership, and/or research excellence. By contrast, schools whose mission statements focused on tradition, access, or civic duty rarely incorporated technology, despite often offering such content in their programs. This tension between what institutions say and what they do raises concerns about alignment, coherence, and transparency.

These results have clear implications for curriculum committees, accreditation teams, and senior leadership. Institutions should consider updating their mission statements to reflect evolving technological commitments. Doing so could help demonstrate the commitment AACSB expects while also demonstrating institutional readiness for a digitally transformed business landscape.

7. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE WORK

This study is subject to several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the analysis focused exclusively on AACSB-accredited business schools in the United States. While this scope allows for a concentrated investigation within a specific accreditation context, it limits the generalizability of results to institutions with different accreditations and/or those operating abroad. Future research could expand this scope to examine mission–curriculum alignment across global regions or among institutions aligned with other accrediting bodies.

Second, the data sources were restricted to publicly available mission statements and curriculum descriptions. These materials may not fully capture the nuanced ways institutions frame and execute their strategic priorities internally. Documents such as strategic plans, faculty meeting minutes, or program reviews could offer deeper insights into the alignment process. Additionally, mission statements may be outdated or in flux, especially as institutions adapt to evolving technological landscapes.

Third, the study used keyword frequency and topic modeling to identify thematic patterns. While these methods offer valuable insights at scale, they are inherently limited by their sensitivity to surface-level textual features. Some mission statements may reflect strong commitments to technology through idiomatic or metaphorical language not easily captured by keyword analysis. Future studies could supplement NLP techniques with qualitative approaches such as interviews, discourse analysis, or case studies.

Finally, alignment was evaluated categorically based on curricular presence and textual mentions. Future work might explore the *depth* or *quality* of alignment; for instance, whether technology is integrated across the curriculum or isolated in standalone courses, and whether mission statements frame technology as a core institutional value versus a peripheral tool.

8. CONCLUSION

This study addressed three research questions concerning the strategic alignment of technology within AACSB-accredited business schools. It found that while technology is commonly integrated into business curricula (RQ1), it is largely absent from institutional mission statements (RQ2), resulting in a pattern of partial alignment (RQ3). This disconnect points to a

missed opportunity for institutions to fully integrate digital transformation into their strategic vision.

By bridging curriculum analysis with content modeling of mission statements, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the symbolic and operational roles technology plays in higher education. As business education continues to evolve in response to technological change, institutions must ensure that their strategic language keeps pace with their educational practices.

These findings carry practical implications for institutions pursuing strategic renewal, particularly those responding to AACSB's evolving accreditation landscape. Aligning technology not only with curriculum but also with strategic messaging can enhance coherence, institutional reputation, and stakeholder engagement. As the pace of digital transformation accelerates, business schools must evolve not just in pedagogy but in purpose, embedding innovation not only in what they teach but in how they define themselves.

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APPENDIX A

Technology-Related Keywords

Keyword	Found in Literature Source	Included Based On
technology	UNESCO, Education 5.0	Source literature
innovation	UNESCO, Education 5.0	Source literature
digital	Education 5.0	Source literature
AI	Education 5.0	Source literature
artificial intelligence	Education 5.0	Source literature
machine learning	Education 5.0	Source literature
data science	Education 5.0	Source literature
cybersecurity	McNulty, Proximate Change Toolkit	Source literature
software	McNulty	Source literature
hardware	McNulty	Source literature
computer	McNulty, Education 5.0	Source literature
cloud	Education 5.0	Source literature
cloud computing	Education 5.0	Source literature
computing	Education 5.0	Source literature
internet	Education 5.0	Source literature
internet of things	Education 5.0, Proximate Change Toolkit	Source literature
IoT	Education 5.0	Source literature
robotics	Education 5.0	Source literature
automation	Education 5.0	Source literature
algorithm	McNulty	Source literature
programming	McNulty	Source literature
blockchain	Education 5.0	Source literature
virtual reality	Education 5.0	Source literature
augmented reality	Education 5.0	Source literature
big data	Education 5.0	Source literature
analytics	Education 5.0, Proximate Change Toolkit	Source literature
engineering	Common use in STEM frameworks	Source literature / inferred
science	UNESCO (STEM)	Source literature
STEM	UNESCO, Education 5.0	Source literature
STEAM	Common in education policy documents	Source literature / inferred
21st-century skills	Education 5.0	Source literature
platform economy	Not found in reviewed sources	Exploratory corpus review
digital transformation	Proximate Change Toolkit	Source literature
educational technology	UNESCO, McNulty	Source literature