



ST. PETERSBURG COLLEGE
PARALEGAL STUDIES PROGRAM
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

October 26, 2017, Clearwater Campus Mock Courtroom, SS160 Clearwater, Florida
4:45-5:40pm

MEETING MINUTES

PRESENT: Dean Susan Demers, Christy Powers, Rachel Bennett, Kaila Glaros, Joseph Benavides, Joseph Boyd, Bob Shumaker, Darryl Henderson, Ian Banks, Audwin Scott, Erica Hartman, Rebecca Frank, Andrew Sasso, Candi James, Vitalia Shafer, and Vanessa Marin.

NOT PRESENT: Kandice Hyatt, Laura Marx, Anona Johnson, Nate Suedmeyer, Ellen Poole, Carol Hague, Lisa Brody, Heather Arbuckle, and Iryna Bandaryk

The meeting was called to order at 4:40 p.m. in Room SS 160 on the Clearwater Campus.

Following roll call and introductions,

Dean Demers discussed our new president of SPC College Dr. Tonjua Williams and described Ms. Williams achievements prior to becoming the president of St. Petersburg College.

Dean Demers discussed the college applying for the Carnegie foundation and explained the community engagement project and classification being a long process. She talked about SPC being committed to the community and the how this would take until 2019-2020 to file application for classification. She also talked about the new website and all diverse activities going on at SPC.

Christy Powers discussed the Paralegal Program updates and course offerings for Spring 2018. She also discussed that we need to promote Business Law in each campus and that registration for spring just opened up.

Christy Powers explained that the course offerings for Spring were printed out in color and placed around campus which help students when registering for classes.

Members of the Committee agreed that the idea is visually appealing.

Christy Powers discussed how unfortunately we cannot offer all classes every semester. She also talked about the current Course Management Detail, and the different business programs offered for upper division and lower division. She discussed about the elective course of Commercial Transactions.

Page 2

Paralegal Studies Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

October 26, 2017

Members of the Committee gave feedback and agreed that it would be a good idea for the students.

Christy Powers discussed it would be great to have practitioners and paralegals incorporated into the schedule as speakers. For example, "A day in the life of the paralegal."

Christy Powers talked about viability reports reviews that recently took place which documents the unduplicated headcount; success rates; graduates numbers; and employment rates.

Joseph Boyd explained that viability reports occur yearly for all workforce programs and he was impressed by our on-going course success rates at 90%.

Christy Powers discussed how to employ and recruit paralegals is a partnership within the community

Dean Demers expressed the bachelor's degree is trending down because we don't have all the necessary marketing. We should be looking for ways to create a handout that talks about the two-year degree programs. And the market is for paralegals to work in the law office and take the job to build it into a career.

Rachel Bennett said we should think about taking it to the high schools and talk about the program and to have a guest speaker to promote and reach the younger crowd.

Dean Demers asked Members of the Committee their thoughts about the subject.

Darryl Henderson said that offering to high schools options is a great idea and good filter.

Bob Shumaker said that big firms are only allowing paralegals that are graduates, but the senior people that do not have a degree are being replaced or retired. He said we should market to the big firms.

Rachel Bennet explained how to advise the students. Talked about the process that happen with the BAS program that do not happen for the AS program. How the student in the introductory program should get the same advice and individual help because we are losing students. She stated we should be improving through advising personnel to help with the students to keep them in the program.

Dean Demers explained the 4-year degree program. Talked about Kaila's progress in the program a few years ago.

Erica Hartman talked about her issues and personal experience while in the paralegal program as a graduate in 2015.

Christy Powers talked about the ideal AA seeker and how they think about where would he/she devote the 18 credit hours. The transition for the students that do not want to be a paralegal and go to another program.

Rachel Bennett said they still have the foundation for many of degrees available out there.

Dean Demers talked about the possibility of a person in a large company who's the liaison with paralegals.

Rachel Bennett said we should be advertising for the AS degree to have more exposure.

Candi James talked about the mothers with young kids that used to be a legal assistant or secretary and do not have the degree... but they have the experience and asked how to promote to them and help through Raymond James.

Rachel Bennett asked the idea of contacting graduates and sending communication to tell them to come back to take CLA credits and find a way to open the door for paralegals to advance.

Darryl Henderson said there are under trained and under educated paralegals. He suggested sending them back to SPC.

Joe Benavides talked about seeking employers to help solidify the connection between the communities.

Christy Powers talked about seeking the local homegrown efforts to look for attorneys and law firms to draw people into the program.

Dean Demers explained how before we would do this through ads in newspapers, we should ask for suggestions like Facebook ads, Instagram or Snapchat.

Joe Benavides suggested Pandora and Spotify to promote our program. He also suggested Instagram because there are sponsors in this application.

Dean Demers said it would be a big expensive way to promote.

Christy Powers discussed we are still awaiting on ABA site visitors and that we are expecting it may be a Spring visit. She talked about our new library facility and that we have a mini law library. She talked about Professors Ian Banks and Rachel Bennett taking trips to the library for their classes.

Rachel Bennett said she takes her class to the library. She also discussed on which books to keep and was comparing what is more useable and beneficial to keep because everything is online now.

Dean Demers explained the library is a joint facility with the City of Clearwater and has a huge collection of books.

Rachel Bennet explained how legal research is anticipated to change to a newer Lexis Nexis and that will happen during Christmas break and that it will require training.

Page 4

Paralegal Studies Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

October 26, 2017

Christy Powers asked the Committee Members that are attorneys what they were using for paid legal research in their firms or offices.

Bob Shumaker said his firm uses Lexis Nexis, but they use an office library too.

Andrew Sasso said he uses Google Scholar or Lexis Nexis, but he does not use WestLaw.

Dean Demers explained the importance to have a law library and online legal research options.

Christy Powers explained while interviewing students, employers find they can use Lexis Nexis and Internet but then don't know if they are capable to use other platforms such as WestLaw. She explains to these students to stress in an interview that although we no longer use it in school, they are capable of using other platforms. They are just a different interfaces. The students are concerned on what search engines are used in their future law office job.

Committee Members continued the discussion about what their offices use for legal research online.

Rachel Bennett talked about the administrative code being out of date and how we finally have a website for it.

Rachel Bennett discussed about Legal Studies Society and how is more active than ever. She explains that they are volunteering at the upcoming Legal Fair and the Clearwater Community Fair. She mentions they are having socials and meetings where student get involved. They have future plans to visit Tallahassee and Washington.

Ian Banks mentioned the meeting days and social days.

Dean Demers talked about the challenges of students who need shadowing opportunities and wants to see what is going on in a law office. She explains that Professor Duane Daiker has a day which he asks his office paralegals to stay late at the office, and he brings his students to talk to his working paralegals. She asked the Committee Members to host a day for paralegals to experience the work in a law firm. She addresses she always looking for full internships to place students and it could be done creating a performance contract to bind both the student and the law office. For the intern student for lower division it needs 100 hours. Upper division students need 3 coop credits at the business they are currently working, and discussed they should allow an intern in a single project or combination of community project or pro-bono project. She also suggests talking to colleagues to suggest paralegals in training.

Rachel Bennett said we have students looking for nontraditional hours like clerk office because they can't sit in a law office 9-5.

Dean Demers said we should look for ways to "hook up" paralegals with pro bono like a match program and to talk to Ken Rodgers who suggest big pro bono project for paralegals.

Page 5

Paralegal Studies Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

October 26, 2017

Christy Powers asked if there is anything else needed to be discussed or add to the meeting.

Rachel Bennett said to audit A.S. degree looking at the courses in the program and get everything corrected then bring to the Committee to see what should be approved.

Dean Demers introduced Kaila Glaros and her commitment to the organization through the Paralegal Association of Florida and NALA.

Kaila Glaros introduced herself working as paralegal for 10 years. She talked about her company is seeking to make law offices more efficient and to create an office ambience, and talked about her Pinellas chapter and that she is the student liaison for the state.

Dean Demers expressed about the Registered Paralegal Program and said we don't have anything organize through the state that paralegals could have an educational opportunity with in business.

Dean Demers talked about how before the paralegals were looked at and how everything has changed and the profession of attorney, paralegals, and business has changed; and how to facilitate to promote the paralegal.

Christy Powers thanked everyone for attending.

Meeting ended at 5:40 pm.