



ST. PETERSBURG COLLEGE
PARALEGAL STUDIES PROGRAM
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

April 27, 2017, Clearwater Campus Mock Courtroom, SS160 Clearwater, Florida
5:30-6:45pm

MEETING MINUTES

PRESENT: Dean Susan Demers, Christy Powers, Deborah Eldridge, Rachel Bennett, Karen McLead, Anona Johnson, Nathan Suedmeyer, Kaila Glaros, Joseph Benavides, Joseph Boyd, Laura Marx, Darryl Henderson, Heather Arbuckle, Iryna Bandaryk, Ian Banks, and Ellen Poole.

EXCUSED: Lisa Brody, Rebecca Frank, Carol Hague, Candi James, Heather Oswald, Andy Sasso, Vitalia Shafer, and Robert Schumaker.

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m. in Room SS 160 on the Clearwater Campus.

Following roll call and introductions,

Dean Demers discussed the College's Presidential search including the desire for it to be a national search. She explained that the candidate pool was largely local because of Florida's Sunshine law; however, the candidates who are local and in-house are excellent and the committee will work towards hiring out of the 5 remaining candidates.

Dean Demers discussed the addition of Katherine Cole and Bridget Bello as BOT members to the College. Cole was added for a short-term appointment.

Deborah Eldridge discussed the Ben's Bell project and Golden Key International Honor Society's project at SPC. It is a kindness initiative that encourages random acts of kindness. Golden Key has received funding to promote the initiative and the end goal is to get the organization to bring a studio to St. Petersburg and engage local communities.

Deborah Eldridge discussed the programs' internship programs and the ability for members of the community to advertise on or job/internship boards on MyCourses.

Deborah Eldridge discussed flex classes and explained the process for hosting these hybrid online/face-to-face classes using WebEx.

Rachel Bennett discussed paid legal databases and changes to such. The current Lexis Nexis database is being terminated at the end of this calendar year and will be replaced with Nexis Uni. Trainings for

faculty and students will be held during Summer and Fall terms. FastCase access has been purchased for all SPC students. Additional training needs to happen.

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Rachel Bennett discussed the potential of a Pre-Program Preparation Course. Ask committee members were asked to identify the types of skills over three hours for initial items.

Kaila Glaros stated that e-filing training is imperative and why are we not allowed access to a mock account for the clerk's office.

Rachel Bennett mentioned that since it is a live system, so the court's system won't allow us to utilize it, but we are searching for video how-tos.

Nathan Suedmeyer suggested including court structure and court names between trial v. appellate courts.

Anona Johnson mentioned IRAC system of writing and legal analysis.

Darryl Henderson mentioned that 100 top legal definitions would be very important and crucial.

Laura Marx suggested that in her office, they maintain resources on legal assisting.

Iryna Bandaryk suggested legal writing samples of major filings and pleadings.

Rachel Bennett mentioned some changes to critical components for both courses PLA 2203 and PLA 2323, Civil Litigation I and II. Starting to move from textbooks to open source materials. Additionally, PLA 4830 Comparative Legal Systems class is eliminating the textbook and utilizing more materials to supplement the course.

Laura Marx asked if it is mandated to use a textbook. Rachel Bennett responded that it is not but necessary materials change from course to course. Bennett gave an example of a few books and articles to address and investigate war crimes and the tribunal.

Karen McLead was interested in how important the PLA 4830 course was and how it is applicable to paralegalism.

Rachel Bennett stated the program requires the course to maintain: critical thinking, how other legal structures work, and a deeper understanding of how the U.S. system works.

Iryna Bandaryk agreed as she is from out of the country and found it valuable.

Kaila Glaros followed up for the Prep course that it should explain the different areas of law and this would help students to select tracks.

Dr. Christy Powers discussed the College's new website and showed it to the group; in addition, she explained how users can select our prior website.

Christy Powers explained the Career and Academic Communities program; our affiliation with Public Policy and Public Safety; and the need for the website to reflect the ABA parameters for

student/potential student access to curriculum information. Discussed the purpose of the CACs including advising accessibility for students which has largely shifted to the full-time faculty in the

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program. In addition to showing the committee the website, Christy Powers asked the members to review the website and share any suggestions in the next month. Christy Powers showed the committee the Academic Pathways and explained that it was necessary to select electives for the sequences but that we encourage students to pursue those they choose to take.

Christy Powers discussed current recruitment efforts which includes information sessions and asked the committee to share any ideas that they may have.

Ellen Poole said that she met with someone at the Pinellas Park High School career day who she thought could help us get in to the career day.

Joseph Benavides asked if there are magnet schools in Pinellas for legal studies. He also mentioned that he has a lot of contacts at the high schools.

Darryl Henderson said that there are two law-related high schools that he knows of.

Laura Marx said that her daughter who is a high school at Seminole is given time to attend career focused events.

Karen McLead asked about the pop-up ads on Facebook and whether or not that is a feasible way to advertise.

Joe Boyd said that we might consider contacting the teachers of American government courses to try and partner with them.

DH said that there used to be weekly contact with the high schools by marketing.

J Benavides expressed that there is an effort by the College to have students visit campus but there are challenges such as testing and funding. He said that he would like to have more tours on campus. He also mentioned that there is some effort by advising employees to visit local high schools.

Christy Powers agreed that it is a great idea to encourage students to come on campus and see the environment.

Kaila Glaros said that we should consider reaching out the local paralegal associations where there are scholarship opportunities and such.

Christy Powers explained that we have considered putting together a series of courses like business law, project management, etc. to market to trade professionals to learn legal skills related to their trades.

Ellen Poole agreed and said her husband who is a contractor would have benefited from that.

KM said that it probably would be wise to reach out to the construction industry because they need the information and they also have continuing education requirements.

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Iryna suggested having groups attend campus on days that there are mock trials or live classes happening.

Christy Powers said that the ABA reapproval process is underway but it is a tedious process because the process has been moved to an online process. She also explained that we have added a student assistant who has been a JAG paralegal for 17 years and has been assisting with the ABA process. The report is due June 15th but we plan to have it completed in a few days so that there is plenty of time to review it. We believe that it is possible that the site visit will happen this fall and we would then ask the committee to come and meet with them.

RB explained that we want the committee to help us determine which student should go to Tallahassee to visit the Florida Supreme Court.

KM said that the writing was not up to par for essay submissions and said that these students would have a difficult time with interviews with the writing in these essays. She feels that this should have been an inspirational writing that is well-polished.

RB suggested that we can ask for resubmissions and new essays.

DH explained that the students suggested the prompt.

NS requested a new round of submissions. He suggested that we revise the prompt to encourage a positive message.

Iryna suggested changing the prompt to something like why does the law inspire you to help drive a positive result.

DH suggested that RB or CP should inform the LSS students that re-writes have been requested to reflect the nature of the field trip.

NS volunteered to review these electronically to vote for the winners and suggested encouraging all of them to re-apply.

Christy Powers thanked everyone for attending.

Meeting ended at 6:56pm.