



ST. PETERSBURG COLLEGE  
PARALEGAL STUDIES PROGRAM  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, April 10, 2018, EpiCenter Campus, Clearwater, Florida  
5:00pm-6:00pm

#### MEETING MINUTES

PRESENT: Dean Susan Demers, Christy Powers, Rachel Bennett, Joseph Benavides, Deborah Eldridge, Joseph Boyd, Bob Shumaker, Darryl Henderson, Ian Banks, Audwin Scott, Joseph Nicholson, Rebecca Frank, Candi James, Laura Marx, and Vanessa Marin.

NOT PRESENT: Kandice Hyatt, Anona Johnson, Kaila Glaros, Nate Suedmeyer, Ellen Poole, Lisa Brody, Heather Arbuckle, Erica Hartman, Andrew Sasso, Vitalia Shafer, and Iryna Bandaryk

The meeting was called to order at 5:08 p.m. in Room 450, on the EpiCenter Campus.

Following roll call and introductions,

Dean Demers opened with the introduction Dr. Tonjua Williams, the President of SPC, and explained a home-grown product for the State College System. Expressed the importance of community colleges and how they are governed by local boards.

Dean Demers discussed the ongoing initiatives at SPC and about State mandated electives and meta-majors. She discussed the 10 career majors to choose from and how the state wants students to graduate within 2 years with 60 credit hours.

Deborah Eldridge talked about community connections and ask for ideas on how to contribute to it for internships. She like to encourage students to do internship and talked about the new law about the usage of interns. She asked the board members about partnership ideas and talked about project management courses.

Laura Marx talk about individual and small firm's internships. She said they only do paid internships and ask if that was the issue with the new law.

Rachel explain that is something we are working on and will provide support to the firm and the interns. They can offer the students 20 hrs.

Dean Demers ask Candi James if they can provide 20 hours internships with Raymond James and asked Darryl Henderson with Clearwater Chamber of commerce.

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Dean Demers explained that the law for internship changed and now they allow pay for internships and talked about the previous laws. She explains the importance for students that does not have worked experience, to learn how the job is done and to adapt.

Deborah explain that our students are not traditional students, and if a lawyer needs help with a specific trial or with research outside the office, we can provide support.

Dean Demers told the story about a student that is in the program and is a great student, but the only previous job was as a bartender.

Christy said the faculty helps her by encouraging other students with related issues, like students that are parents, to tailor their resume based on what they do by selling the best of themselves.

Candi explained they have a student who is a mom from SPC, and how they have no issues training her to do what they need from her.

Deborah talked about meetings with Christy and conversations about combining the business law class in a 12 week course. She expressed how this could affect the business models and social media issues related to insurance and how we keep information secure, and how they have to buy additional protections for their business.

Dean Demers talked about how before, a book for this class cost \$500 and explained the difficulties in covering all 600 pages of the book. She asked if the group had any informative details to applied contracts. Everything is about a contract issue. Asked for ideas that are new and different for the students.

Darryl suggested that one of the issues with the legislature is home-grown business. He talked about a proposed bill specific to businesses in Pinellas County, and how this bill is coming back.

Dean Demers talked about Tallahassee, the court system and funding. She explained Tallahassee cut many funds, and there is a big policy issue and explained there are challenges.

Deborah explained she is in the Veterans Advisory Board and asked if anyone would like to be part of it or would like to volunteer.

Christy talked about marketing and recruitment efforts and how we should explore efforts beyond social media as to draw people out specifically with AS degrees because of the skill set they have. She proposed hitting the high schools for marketing and target certain groups that are eligible for the program.

Joe Benavides explained how to best approach connecting with Pinellas schools. He explained that we need to find the main linkage, like the counselors, and then start conversation with the schools, like Pinellas Park and Bayside to collaborate with and build from there. He said we should highlight the AS program at SPC by explaining potential students about the great resources we have. He said that if

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we want this to work, why let students go to other universities if we can have them at SPC. He offered to be used as that extra piece for help.

Rachel talked about the local institutions that only offer AS degrees and to market to those who want a BAS degree.

Dean Demers talked about the program that Deborah is promoting to take students to Portugal next summer. She talked about the 4-year program and when it was first created and how the new opportunities given to the 4-year program and the hiring opportunities.

Deborah said to give a more personal touch by visiting the high schools.

Christy added that by approaching the high schools and being there first face to face with the students could make the difference.

Darryl said he had the opportunity to talk to students that expressed they were not planning on going to college because they cannot afford it.

Christy said we should sell them what is true about the college. That they need to get involved with the sports offered by SPC and clubs that we offer. She talked about summer bridge programs.

Laura talked about how some kids have no idea how to keep money, pay taxes, or how to go to college or what to do.

Christy asked for other ideas for marketing and recruitment.

Joe asked for ideas that help him to build other projects to help everyone.

Darryl said, at the Clearwater Chamber of Commerce, the committee meeting is a workforce committee that is interested in knowing what business partners are interested in and what's going on in Tallahassee and want to know what to do to get high quality persons and students. He explained that the main concern with most business owners are High-tech talented students.

Dean Demers said we have so many people looking for better employees and people looking for better jobs and these people do not get together. We can find and make that connection out there.

Darryl said that one of the challenges is to tell the business people to not expect to have people with BAS degrees and to expect to pay them minimum wage. It is not great for the Florida Economy.

Christy talked about the career and academic communities and talked about the milestones.

Rebecca talked about pathways, which is designed with milestones along the way and said the paralegal program fits perfectly.

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Christy explained how the workforce works in showing how to be professional and how the students will be able to network. She explained the milestones are broken down and in defining milestones and incorporating them into the program to prepare the student to be ready for the workforce.

Jason said that the job shadows activities help with showing them how to act and prepare them for the real job.

Candi said that Raymond James is willing to bring 10 students in to do shadowing and for them to get the experience in the corporate setting for a paralegal.

Rachel is looking for ways to brush off the courses by adding learning field trips, and shadowing opportunities. It is great to address the issue because many of our students that have no experience struggle to get a job.

Jason offered to help with the students to get the help they need.

Laura talked about the term "Paralegal," and how they do not have a paralegal, but they have legal assistants and they cannot pay them more based on the title.

Candi said that they have paralegal and legal assistants and that they don't understand that even if they studied for 4 years they will not work as a paralegal right away if they are considered an entry level paralegal.

Dean Demers explained that even if you are an experienced paralegal it will depend on the attorney and how the paralegal fits with that attorney, and if it is even the right fit.

Christy explained we are still awaiting an ABA site visit date.

Rachel talked about the legal studies society and the events. She talked about Saturday's 5K race and that we need volunteers. She explained that the money collected would go to scholarship funds. She talked about Law Day is scheduled for April 27 and it will have a speaker and would like to have students who are willing to talk about their experience with SPC as students.

Dean Demers talked about all the students we will have graduating with AS, BAS and Certificates for spring and 15-20 for summer graduates. She is very proud because usually students take a few classes and do not graduate, and we have students graduating spring, summer and fall.

Darryl talked about Thursday August 2nd, they will have a Politics in Pinellas Event. He said it is a great opportunity to show case SPC and the programs.

Dean Demers gave closing remarks.

Christy Powers thanked everyone for attending.  
Meeting ended at 6:11 pm.