



Santa Ana College

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Business Division

Paralegal Program

Pathways to Law School Program

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SAC Paralegal Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

October 26th 7:30 to 9:30 AM

S-205

1. Attending: Sheniece Smith, Francine Guerrero, Eya Garcia, Laurali Kobal, Don Isbell, Kim Mathews, Kim Smith, James Harmon, Kristen Robinson, Rick Manzano
2. Enrollment Update: Kristen reviewed current demographic information for colleges in the area. The state of California is down a bit as is the area. However, the program was able to meet their targets. Rick noted that the bigger impact is the changing in the funding model from the state which now be based on enrollment and completions. Kim noted that the program has been doing a great job of attracting students. Kim attended the OCPA paralegal fair and represented the program
3. Curriculum Update: Rick said we added in LAW 110 – Legal Terminology as an elective for the paralegal program curriculum. This course is part of the legal interpreting program and has been a great way to attract students to the field. Kim Smith noted that this course and program is serving a need in the legal market and community. Rick noted that the new professor for the course has great experience and also teaches at USC. Sheniece agreed her experience sounded excellent and shared with the group that is also teaching a law class at USC.
4. Pathway Mapping: Kristen explained that the college is embarking on a massive re-design of programs around the idea of “program maps.” Rick reported that the department and program met the college deadlines to turn in the pathway maps and had worked with their counseling partners to create a plan that allows students to complete the program in 2 years (using summer and intercession). Don Isbell noted that similar efforts are underway at the K-12 districts. SAUSD is doing similar work to show students what their options are after high school. He suggested that the college team create a better website or additional brochures to show the connection between the high school program and the college. Kristen noted that the high school course is currently articulated with SAC, and that she meets once a month with the high school legal

academy board. Rick agreed that new/additional information on the website would be great.

5. PARA 120: Tech Improvement: Kim Smith said that she is on the tech committee of Cal Lawyers Association. Kim has attended a training session and has another training in the Spring/Summer. Kim hosted a tech event for spring semester with OCPA to offer tech training. Kim noted that SAC is now offering EDiscovery, and that we have a good number of students with internships in ediscovery. Kim noted that jobs in legal tech often pay more than other legal jobs, and that this is a great opportunity for our students to increase their marketability. Laurali Kobal agreed with Kim's labor analysis and said she wanted more publicity to these event as she feels there are more students that could attend these events. Rick noted that in the Fall, SAC will host another legal clinic and then Spring of 2019 will be another tech event. Rick said the tech event for Spring of 19 is May 5th. Sheniece noted that this is a great service to the community and the students.
6. Clinic: Sac is hosting a legal clinic. Sheniece inquired as to the student involvement with the clinic. Kim informed the group that students are working as interns for the event as well as taking the lead in several areas of planning. Kim wants to involve students more each year so they feel more ownership. Students will assist attorneys with intake, interpreting and various other tasks during the day. Rick said we are looking to develop a clinic class and the department is exploring the curriculum options for this type of program. Rick explained that the focus is also on providing experience for the students. Kim Mathews asked if she could share the flyer with groups she works with, and Don Isbell wanted to publicize the information with the school district.
7. ABA Re-Approval Report: 2 years away. Rick and Kristen updated the group on the upcoming ABA Re-Approval Report. We are using the new online system and are inputting data as we get it. Rick has added a great deal of information to the report already. Kristen has been working with the research department to get the graduate/completion data the minute it is available. This is challenging as research won't make it available until October, but Kristen begins contacting graduates the minute she gets the data.
8. Internship Update: Kim Smith noted that our paralegal program has almost 40 interns per semester - which is the biggest of the entire college. Rick reviewed the department's position on an internship coordinator. The committee agreed to support the department in seeking funding for the position. Laurali was concerned about the pay rate for the position which led into a great deal of discussion about the compensation as well as a discussion about how the college pays people in general. Rick asked what will help on the resumes. Kim Smith said that research shows that students who do an internship are more likely to complete a program and get a job at the end. Kim Smith said that Theresa Hagelbarger really works with county counsel. Don Isbell wanted to know how many sites we are short a semester – or are there students that want an internship that can't get one. Kim said that she isn't sure it is a numbers issue as most of our students get placements, but we need to make sure the site meets the qualifications for the college guidelines and our program. Laurali moved to approve the position. Sheniece seconded the motion and the committee voted unanimously to approve support for the internship coordinator position.
9. Eya Garcia has noticed that students need help with the background application (which takes a great deal of time for students to fill out). These applications are usually due at

mid-terms or finals, which is hard time for students, and the deadline is very firm. Eya also noted that every school has a different timeline it would help to have someone who can be in contact with the school to coordinate timelines, and do on-campus interviews. She also noted that hours is an issue: every unit has a paralegal supervisor that has to supervise the paralegal. When the paralegal student is finished with a program, they don't have the minimum of a one year experience that would qualify for a full-time position at OCDA., as OCDA requires a minimum of 1 year experience (10/12) hours per week. James Harmon agreed with the assessment. Kim stated that this was wonderful information and that the students really develop over time. Kristen agreed that the complexity of the different internship opportunities in the local legal market really highlighted the need for a full-time internship coordinator.

10. Sheniece said she is on the board of the OCB Foundation (which used to be known as - Project Youth/Self); this group works with at-risk/underserved youth in our region to help them transition from high school to college. Don Isbell said the Project Self students need additional opportunities. Don said some students can continue in the program. Don would like to see the Project Self program be able to articulate with SAC. Don noted that 50% of the Project Self kids are the first to get through high school in their family. Sheniece noted that Project Self follows students through college - even training for how to move into the dorm. Laurali stated that her firm has also worked with Project Self and that she often keeps track of these students for years after. Kristen would like to increase the connection to our program. She informed the committee that she met with the directors during the summer and presented about the paralegal program to their students on two different occasions.
11. Distance Ed: Rick updated the committee on the work being done with BUS 105. The school is offering the course with OER, and is working to get it listed with the state's online inventory. This could mean more students coming to our program, and make it easier to transfer.
12. Program assessment: Kristen reviewed the latest results from the annual survey of students in the capstone class as well as the recent graduates. The biggest area of concern was the computer/technology training. The department has aggressively attacked this area to make dramatic improvements. Kim Smith is now teaching the redesigned PARA 120 course. Kim also reviewed the change in curriculum – she is using the program from NSLT to give students a better review of current technology. As this is the first semester using this platform we won't have data for a while. However, Kim has noticed students are excited for the new platform, and she is very happy with the curriculum. Kristen shared that most other ABA programs in our region (and state) have adopted the NSLT program and she has heard good things from other program directors. Rick stated that the enrollment in the course has increased with the announcement of the new curriculum. Kim Smith also created the tech conference to address some of these issues. Ewe had a great response from students for the first one, and this will be an annual event. Laurali said the biggest need is computer training. Have the ALA, OCBar, OCPA would be great to bring together to do the training.
13. Meeting was adjourned with the next meeting to be held in Spring of 2019.