



Santa Ana College

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Business Division

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Minutes Paralegal Advisory Committee 8/21/19

Those in attendance: Sheniece Smith (by phone, CHOC GC, Attorney), Francie Guerrero (IP paralegal by phone), Jessica Feeney (private paralegal), Joanna Burchell (paralegal manager), Kai Williamson (Corporate Paralegal, OCPA), Lorraine Sanchez (SAUSD), Jane Mathis (counselor), Kristen Robinson (faculty), Rick Manzano (faculty), Kim Smith (faculty).

- **Marketing Materials:** Materials for Legal Office were reviewed. Kristen noted that we are working on new brochures for Pathway and Paralegal. Format will be similar to Legal Office brochures. The committee approved the format of the marketing materials.
- **CHOC Clinic:** Sheniece reported that the interpreting students that worked on the CHOC clinic with clients did a great job. Synchronous and Asynchronous translation opportunities are available for students. Kristen noted that this is great opportunity for students. Kristen also noted that we have to make sure SAC counseling is aware of our interpreting program.
- **Update on ABA report/assessment:** Rick noted report is due Dec 2020. Assessment report was passed out to members of committee. The assessment report and plan were reviewed by the committee. The update report will be reviewed at the Spring 2020 meeting.
- **Community Service Over-reach:** Rick received an e-mail to all program directors. Apparently, community services at various colleges were part of an online program that offered paralegal "classes." Rick contacted the SAC administration and SAC

Community Services to make sure they are not advertising or part of the online, non-ABA Paralegal program. Rick addressed it immediately with the college president and the information was taken down asap.

- **Job Market:** Joanna reported people really want to work for the court system. Many interpreters are aging out. Joanna suggested adding a component to prepare students to take the interpreting test. 38% of county employees are leaving by 2020. It is reported most may leave by end of March 2020. Joanna said this could be a great opportunity for interpreters and other positions in the county. Kim said Vietnamese could be a great language. Kim said the court interpreting test is very rigorous. Sheniece said CHOC might want to add a written internship experience for translating documents every week.
- **Internships update:** Kim Smith. Theresa Hagelbager is out on leave for a time, so Kim is covering the admin and instruction side. Over 20 students for Summer with 25 students registered. Kristen said that we have one of the largest internship programs in the state.

Kim enjoys visiting all of the law offices. Great relationship with Community Lawyers (formerly Legal Aid) is really our great partner for entry level internships. Kim co-hosted a naturalization clinic on campus and 5-7 students were able to volunteer. Kristen has done outreach with Hispanic Bar Association.

Higher level internships that Kim has brought in: OCDA's office, OC Public Defenders. Minh Pham got into the OC Public Defenders honors internship program. Joanna noted that OCDA's office can take applications at any time for student interns from SAC. Joanna said the caliber of the students is great and students are getting more opportunities and exposure than they were able to get in 2017.

Joanna said OCDA just started Conviction Integrity Units - so this is a new internship opportunity to review the sentences and implement new laws. They office recently had promotions go through, so that is exciting. They are opening up 6-9 positions for paid 6-month positions, these are really intended for their best interns. Kristen said that we might want to make a sentencing course to address all of the changes in the law and prepare students to work in these areas. Kim said it is great to bring in professionals.

Kim said Bill Wise got great feedback from the Elder Law class. Rick noted that OCPA is a CLE provider, and we could offer our space to run the CLE event.

Kai asked about how Kim is able to judge student readiness for the internships. Kim looks at the students experience and mentors them to see what level they are at. The DA's office evaluates the candidates through interview and resume.

Kai asked why the internship units can go from 1 to 4. Kim explained that the course allows students to do a various amount of units depending on the hours worked. Kristen noted that the course must comply with very specific ed code which is a bit different from other courses.

- **Distance Ed Update:** Rick is working on OEI, BUS 105 and PARA 121 curriculum. These courses will be listed on OEI. Lorraine noted that this is great for students. Rick is also working on ADA issues for courses with DE office. Some of the state bar materials are not ADA compliant. Joanna noted that CDAA board they might have online materials that can be used that are compliant.

Kristen stated that SAC paralegal program is currently at the max units of online courses that ABA will allow, but the department knows this is an area of growth. Rick noted that legal terminology might explore online as well. Kim asked about doing accelerated or online for these courses.

Jessica Feeney commented that online classes are useful but often the discussion boards can be frustrating to students who do the work on time and then have to wait for other students. Jessica does like the experience of interacting with other people online in a professional manner. Sheneice Smith noted that USC has similar staggered due dates in their online discussion boards that our department is using.

- **Pathway to Law School update:** – Kristen gave general update:
 - SAC hosted HS students in summer for summer law camp. HS team is working to make event bigger for next year.
 - Also working to get all articulation forms processed and procedure is much better than year before.
 - Program is on track for 15-20 graduates for the year up from 2 last academic year.
 - Kristen, Kim and Rick noted the program is bringing in first year students as well as students with BA degrees; that variety has been great in the courses.
 - Grant money has been used to enhance student experiences and reach out to HS.
 - Kim mentioned having a competition with pre-law students for mock trial and the para students could create trial notebooks through software programs such as rial Director. Lorraine agreed that the competition would be a great idea.
- **Counseling Issues:** Jane Mathis noted that CJ wants students to have other/additional major options. Guided pathways were created to help students pick areas and have interest groups. Jane noted that often students are interested in law, but don't know which area to join and are encouraged to do CJ, instead of para or law.

Kristen and Rick noted that we will continue to work with counseling to inform them of our program options.

Lorraine noted SAUSD-HS is trying to expose students to the pathway in HS. Kim also sees many students who want to go into CJ and can use our programs to help them. Kai said she also sees the same thing happening at UCI's program as well. Lorraine stated the HS is working with students to include law and para and not just be limited to CJ.

- **Program/SLO Assessment:** Rick reviewed the TracDat (SAC reporting system for Student and Program Learning Outcome Assessments) data for Student Learning Outcomes in general with specific attention on PARA 297 – capstone course.

Advisory board was very interested in the SLO surrounding due dates/time management. Students in 297 are performing very well on this measure. Jessica agreed that due dates are very important for working paralegals. Joanna noted that time management is a key skill and is part of OCPA's new paralegal training that will be offered in September.

Rick reviewed technology assessment. As a result of the prior assessment, the Para 120 Computers in the Law Office curriculum has been revised. Kim noted that program has really improved this area with adding National Society of Legal Technology certificate and materials as well as course redesign and new courses. Kristen noted that as graduates move through, we should see better scores in technology assessments.

Kim noted that the 120 course has really improved with NSLT and has a great connection to the Business Applications department which has benefitted our students with additional computer training.

Kim and Kai said OPCA committee chairs might be able to provide guidance on materials to include in specific classes tied to practice areas.

Jessica noted that tech security/computer security is an area of growing concern and would be a good issue to add/address in courses.

Kai suggested updating the course name for PARA 150 – Legal Transactions to contracts. Kim noted the course covers transactions in multiple settings and was not just focused on contracts. The name was changed from contracts when based on prior assessments the Contracts, Real Property and Business Organization curriculums were blended into Para 150.

Kai gave an update on PARA 138 – course has been well received and will be offered again in Spring 20. The course SLOs will be assessed for Spring 2020.

Meeting adjourned.