



ST. PETERSBURG COLLEGE  
PARALEGAL STUDIES PROGRAM  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, April 09, 2015

4:00-5:30 p.m.

Clearwater Campus, Clearwater, Florida

**MEETING MINUTES**

PRESENT: Christy Powers, Deborah Eldridge, Rachel Bennett, Karen McLead, Ellen Poole, Andy Sasso Julie Gomez, Nathan Suedmeyer, and Kay Morgan.

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m. in Room 3-303 on the Clearwater Campus.

Following introductions, Dr. Powers began the discussion with reviewing course descriptions recently approved by the Curriculum and Instruction Committee. Dr. Powers thanked everyone for participating in the course description review and final suggestions made to the following courses: PLA 1003 Introduction to Paralegalism; PLA 1763 Law Office Management; and PLA 2800/2801 Family Law I & II. Dr. Powers mentioned part of the information gathering process and placement of changes were through our CurricUNET server. Dr. Powers reminded the committee we are currently waiting on final access from the ABA for e-reporting services, but copious records are kept semester by semester in lieu of the 2017 ABA Site Visit Reporting.

Dr. Powers spoke briefly about current Initiatives and Projects. The current online learning management system is in full launch this semester as ANGEL is shut down officially. All courses were transitioned and all adjuncts were trained on the new system in order to earn a Certificate of Completion which allows them to continue teaching.

Dr. Bennett then reviewed the Legal Studies Society updates. Dr. Bennett discussed the success the Legal Studies Society maintained in a recent Legal Clinic for SPC Students in which all FT staff was present for a Free Legal Clinic. She presented the dates for all events that the Legal Studies Society would participate in for the remainder of the spring session. Dr. Bennett discussed the activeness of the Legal Studies Society and how they have been charged with creating more opportunities for shadowing and in-house training. Dr. Bennett discussed they are currently preparing for the next Law Day event to raise funds for their organization on Friday, May 8th.

Dr. Eldridge discussed the job and internship placements. The partnership with the College-Wide Internship Office is going well as students are directly referred to our program. Dr. Eldridge asked the committee again for suggestions of what could be done to provide more places of businesses interns could complete their internship. Dr. Eldridge introduced the new Student Paralegal Commons as a great asset to assisting students to get internships. Kay Morgan also announced the increased job fairs on

campus with on-site employers ready to interview potential candidates. Also, job readiness workshops are held frequently for all students to participate.

Mr. Suedmeyer expressed the importance of interviews. The Committee discussed tips we could pass onto the program as a whole. Tips were given in the area of not ending an interview early if you can help it; asking to meet other employees; finding out about who you are interviewing with for the position. Dr. Bennett said we stress to our students the importance of attempting to determine whether a student will be placed in a high v. low-paced environment. Ms. Poole said as a former paralegal, now licensed attorney, she has to manage many clients at her position as Corporate Counsel. She stressed the skill set of being able to learn your clients and their personalities to better manage their needs and expectations.

Dr. Powers next topic was Open Enrollment for the current Registration Period for Summer 2015. It was reviewed and the Course Management Details showing course enrollment and identifying information related to campus/time/day, etc. were passed around for each member to examine. Fall 2015 registration will be opening soon.

Dr. Powers reminded the committee we are still in the ongoing process of gauging Employability for PLA Students. The Essential Functions Checklist was passed around for all members to examine. The Instructional Continuity Plan presently posted on the SPC Disaster Preparedness page was also sent around to all members as hurricane season starts June 1.

Dr. Banks discussed he and Dr. Bennett will be attending the Annual AAfPE Conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin this year. Their topic of Cross-Course Assignments has been accepted as a presentation for the conference. These assignments show how classes can work together to provide dual-analyses for various topics (e.g., PLA 3885 U.S. Constitutional Law and PLA 4830 Comparative Legal Systems classes are working together on government analyses.) Future assignments will bring in other programs, e.g., Animal Law and Vet Tech classes; PLA and Public Policy classes.

Dr. Bennett reviewed the continual purpose of paper surveys to get real information from students to help improve the courses by the information provided by these surveys. Depending on the length of the course via 16 week, 12 week or 8 week.

Dr. Bennett then introduced she was seeking to overhaul PLA 3734 Computer and the Law Office with all of the software changes occurring. She asked the committee for ideas on overhaul components. Billing and time-keeping software were noted as top priorities. Mr. Sasso discussed VISION 2016 and the importance of e-filing and knowledge based operating systems which require high levels of proficiencies in technology. Mr. Suedmeyer stated top software proficiencies are Excel and PDF capabilities. Dr. Eldridge offered up information concerning Corporate Training at the college which allows for students and others to enhance particular skills sets in technology. Finally, Mr. Sasso stressed document management both electronic and paper files along with file naming protocols.

Dr. Powers ended the meeting at 5:28 p.m. with a reminder of the Fall 2015 meeting which will be a meeting then a college-wide dinner. All members were invited to the Law School Informational Session from 5:30-7 p.m. in ES 104.