

## **11/13/2020 Paralegal Studies, Architecture, Construction and Engineering Technologies Breakout Meeting Minutes**

**In Attendance:** Mary Conwell, Matt Hoffman, John Montoya, Sandi Towers, Caroline Siefert, Elizabeth Schott, Keith Grossman, Deborah Eldridge, Michael Rubbinaccio, and Jill De Valk.

**Review of October 9, 2020 Minutes:** Professor Conwell initiated a review of the minutes from the previous meeting last month on October 9, 2020. There was a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded. There were no objections. The motion carried.

**Learning Assessment Committee:** The committee is seeking full-time or adjunct faculty to evaluate general education competencies on assignments from selected professors. Scorers will receive a modest stipend of \$250 for their evaluations. The committee is seeking exemplary assignments. Interested faculty please look on the webpage regarding the general education competencies and please contact Joe Van Gaalen or Elijah Pritchett. Also, there is a syllapalooza scheduled where participants will review changes to syllabi using their creative acumen.

**Advisory Committee Meetings:** The Paralegal Advisory Committee will be meeting virtually on Tuesday, November 17, 2020. The Architecture, Construction and Engineering Technologies Advisory Committee will be meeting via Zoom on Thursday, November 19, 2020.

**College Credit Certificates:** Professor Montoya explained that we are missing 1 class in the Drafting and Design CCC. We would need to create the Parametric Modeling course to complete the curriculum for the CCC. Also, the Engineering Technology Specialist CCC has been discontinued, which involves electrical and engineering technologies. The CCC was originally created with the TAACCCT Grant. We need to send a note to SACs regarding the discontinuance by June 6, 2021.

**Professional Development:** Since conferences for the time being are virtual and do not cost as much as normal travel to a venue, we are hoping to include full-time and adjunct faculty to attend conferences. Since Professional Development Funds are not available to adjunct faculty we are going to see if Perkins Grant funds could be used. Professor Conwell mentioned the ABA Tech Show and AAfPE Regional Conference will both be virtual in the spring of 2021.

**American Association for Paralegal Education (AAfPE) National Conference:** Professor Conwell and Professor Hoffman both attended the AAfPE virtual conference that was held November 4 through November 6, 2020. Highlights included a seminar about digital badges which are awarded when certain metadata skills are achieved. There was a workshop about faculty collaborating with paralegal students to research and write a textbook. An example from Georgia was the collaboration to choose a Family Law textbook. An inspiring professor from Seminole State noted that students at community and state colleges need their faculty whereas well-prepared students at universities like UF do not need their professors as much and will be fine without any extra help or nurturing. Also, open educational resources (OER) are a factor in textbook changes. Professor Hoffman commented that the conference was very educational, but there was a lot of information there to process.

### **American Bar Association Approval Commission Meeting:**

- Professor Conwell was recently appointed to the commission which met in October. Assessment is the big topic and how assessments align with program goals is important to the commission.
- The Paralegal Studies program needs to submit a Covid-19 report to the ABA to explain what teaching modalities were used in the following semesters: Spring 2020, Summer 2020, Fall 2020, and Spring 2021.
- Our enrollment in the FSW Paralegal Studies program is right on target since the national average enrollment in programs is 81 students. Many programs are reporting funding issues. Other programs are offering legal clinics on topics such as estate and probate planning, immigration, and unemployment benefits. We could offer workshops on project management and eDiscovery certification with key note speakers.
- Equity issues in online learning was also discussed. Many students are challenged with lack of internet bandwidth for participating in Zoom, technology tools, and the poor environmental conditions they are living in. Student access to technology is an issue.

- The Supreme Court in Washington state decided to discontinue the Limited License Legal Technicians program. The LLLT provides limited legal services in family law and is affordable to many participants. No more degrees will be awarded in Washington state after July 31, 2022. Other states offering this program include Utah and Arizona.
- It was also discussed that law firms are discovering that they do not need office space since many attorneys and paralegals are able to work remotely due to the pandemic. The trend is to rent a conference room as needed.

#### **Questions or Comments:**

- Professor Eldridge mentioned that everything is via Zoom these days. The temporary online notary process was created due to covid-19. You can notarize documents online and have them appear electronically before you.
- Professor Towers commented that the students miss face to face classes and interactions.
- It was reported that the Architecture and Construction courses are hands on with many of the students busy working on construction sites and come to class directly from the sites. The CAD designers can work remotely, but everything else is face to face or hands on training.
- Professor Rubbinaccio commented that overall everything is pretty positive. In his ground class, students are careful and practice social distancing. In the online class, students are currently caught up with a couple of students getting too far ahead and then they don't score as well on the assignments. He allows students to resubmit assignments.
- Professor Schott mentioned that in her ground classes, students are respectful of space and wear face coverings. Zoom is more challenging with the hands-on material but it's going as well as possible.
- A discussion ensued regarding mini term class versus full-term courses. One comment is that it depends on the class. A B-term Introduction to Paralegal Studies course is work, but we should keep as a mini-term class. Business Law, however, should always be a full-term course due to all of the material needed to be covered in the course. Perhaps Business Law could work as a full-term course in the shorter summer semester. Introduction to Engineering could be an A or B term class. Maybe adding mini term classes could speed up the time for students to complete the degree.

Professor Conwell adjourned the meeting at 3:00 pm.

*Meeting minutes interpreted and reported by Jill De Valk*