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2014 PAC Minutes, Law Clerk

Christa Nassar

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Present:

Mary Williams    Law Clerk Student, Fanshawe College
Shannon Holek    HR & Administrative Coordinator, Harrison Pensa LLP
Carmen Dawdy    Paralegal/Owner, Carmen Dawdy Paralegal Services
Jessica Klaver   Law Clerk Student, Fanshawe College
Dianne Elliott   Chief Administration Officer, McKenzie Lake
Chandra Renner   Law Clerk, Ferguson Patterson Professional Corporation

Mark Hunter      Interim Chair, School of Public Safety
Nicholas Dasios  Coordinator/Professor Law Clerk & Paralegal Programs
Sabrina Alexander Assistant to the Chair, School of Public Safety

MARK & NICK ACTION ITEMS

- Explore an option to provide lab space for students to use in the interim to Cloud implementation
- Interest in collecting more data on size of firms students are being employed by - software taught should reflect where students are getting jobs
- Survey for co-op students to fill out rating experiences and sharing the software that was taught to help determine what courses should be taught and when
- Review Mapping to see how courses align in respect to co-ops
- Send course CIS to Dianne – she will review it and find gaps and opportunities
- Nick to distribute mentor program information to PAC members

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

- Mark and Nick welcomed the committee members
- Diane introduced committee members to the Agenda

INTRODUCTION TO THE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SAFETY

- Mark introduced the School of Public Safety and the important factors that must be considered in creating new programs
- Mark distributed and discussed his “White Board” document which shows the different programs being considered for the School of Public Safety and those currently in the process of being implemented
- Mark discussed the different space that is being considered to expand the College

TECHNOLOGY SURVEY

- Nick distributed and discussed an electronic survey to collect data on software being used by different industry partners
- Cloud initiative being reviewed to enable students off campus to access to College software (2016 est. launch)
- New software being used by companies can be implemented into curriculum quickly (Primafact, Merchant, Elite(larger firms) PC-Law (small firms))
Final Law PAC Review & Comments/Suggestions Prior to Launch

- Law Clerks do less research in larger companies than smaller companies
- Carmen Dawdy: applauds Fanshawe for being the only one of the three Colleges in London that asks students to give a detailed overview of their co-op experience

Discussion/Feedback on Programs/PAC Member Needs/Wants

- First co-op term need more understanding of law accounting – trust accounts, disbursements, basic accounting terms in a legal environment, annual filings, debits/credits, fixing GL’s, billing, bookkeeping, transaction levies, real estate
- Committee agrees it would be beneficial for students to deal with case studies as early as possible in program
- Law Clerks begin in a more administrative role and move up from there – basic admin skills are important for them to know – formatting, filing, electronic filing, client intake calls, typing speed
- Nick introduced some programs being considered – accelerated law clerk for paralegal grads, IT management cert.
  - Committee noted it would be beneficial to have employees specialized with legal industry computer, internet systems and IT security management
- Larger firms looking to eventually bring in more paralegals – makes more sense than bringing in law students
- Firms interested in weekend courses/day seminars to update on software training – market to firms as employee improvements and retention
- Pilot project through the College to align with CE – offer more weekend courses, degree completion, etc.
- Need to drum up more interest in companies investing in paralegal awards
- Students that do well in high school are being encouraged to take a University or College class – offer an introductory class
  - SWIC/SWAC
- Consider offering criminal law as a cert.
- Committee members all agree students from Law Clerk & Paralegal are well prepared to enter the job market, co-op experiences are invaluable
- Opportunity to make internships longer – biggest challenge is the cost
- Mentorship program through the College not advertised enough

Topics for Discussion Next Meeting

- Have counsellor with TVDSB assist with marketing strategy to students
- Investigate articulations with law schools – students find it difficult to move between the two

Meeting Close

- Nick and Mark thanked the committee for their continued support and contributions