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2016 PAC Minutes, Paralegal

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Program Advisory Committee Meeting

June 8, 2016 – 5:30 – 8:30
F2005 – Fanshawe College

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, PAST MINUTES AND ACTION ITEMS

- PAC Chair Diane Elliot - Introductions around the table
- Mark Hunter - PAC Meetings are an essential part of college policy – Community Recommendations help build and direct our Programs.
- Mark updated the committee on the C west building – on target
  - Planning on developing a functioning Court room
- 4 New Programs Introduced this year
  - Advanced Ergonomic Studies- 1 year Ontario College Graduate Program
  - Fire Inspection and Fire Safety Education- 3 year Advanced Diploma Program
  - Public Safety Leadership- Online
  - Public Safety Fundamentals –
    - Intended to help bridge the gap
    - Get the right people in the right programs
    - Admission requirements are going up in the Law Clerk Program - this course will help
    - Second Semester student’s stream into one of three
PARALEGAL

PARALEGAL PATHWAYS (Nicholas Dasios)

- Law Clerk Certificates for Paralegal graduates
  - Two streams – Civil Litigation and Corporate Real Estate
  - Offered in 7 week segments at 16 hours a week
  - Case-based learning model, taking files from start to finish, using industry leading software and services
  - Development deferred to 2017 with hoped for Fall 2017 launch - Resource Constraints, Reaccreditation year
  - Will be recruiting for Curriculum Development.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

- Legal Software Applications – Online survey
  - Sent out a survey last month to 55 legal service providers who varied in size from sole practitioners up to law firms with more than 200 employees
  - What software are legal firms using and how can we better train our students on the software so that they are job ready
  - Proper analysis of the results will be crucial to getting maximal value from the survey
  - Need more responses- Only 15 firms have responded so far
  - Will analyze data carefully and draft a final report with recommendations
  - Add software and services not currently offered in our Programs to our curricula based on data and our constituencies’ needs

PARALEGAL – DEGREE AUDIT CHANGE

- Reaccreditation due end of June
- Course Order
  - Law Society Requirement
  - New Degree Audit-per PAC’s Recommendation
- New Course, Contract and Process- Paralegal Placement
  - Intro. to Paralegal Field Placement
  - New field placement Process & field placement contract proposals
    - Reduce time both Field Placement Hosts and Fanshawe spend on field placement contracts each year
    - Assist students and hosts with getting field placement positions arranged:
      - as early as October for Early/Part-Time Placements, and by November for the traditional field placement time period of end of March to end of April
      - New contracts that are self-renewing on an annual basis so everyone can count on placements and placement students being available
    - Online matching system where students apply for positions
Hosts who want to interview students must do so within a set week in Nov.
This week would be known as “interview week” and hosts must leave offers open so
students can go to other interviews if they’d like but everyone has to declare on the first
Monday
Would like system to be flexible and allow us to accommodate hosts who don’t want to
interview and just assign them a student

NEW INITIATIVES & EVENTS

• Fanshawe Law Student Association-Fall 2016
  o Objectives:
    ▪ to provide volunteer opportunities for students to develop their networking skills within the
      legal and college community; and
    ▪ to enrich the college experience of students by allowing them to contribute directly to the
      Fanshawe community;
  o Benefits:
    ▪ get students to take more of an active role in both finding and supporting networking and
      volunteer/fundraising opportunities, along with planning their own social events and
      developing a spirit of community;
    ▪ Develop their leadership, organization and communication skills;
    ▪ Assist the coordinators with various initiatives, events and other opportunities
    ▪ Can coordinate events with other law associations

• Proposed Paralegal Publishing Initiatives
  o Paralegal Journal
    ▪ Focused on paralegal topics
    ▪ Student and paralegal community submissions
    ▪ Format: Electronic / Web-based
    ▪ Similar Services: None
    ▪ Beneficial effect – encourages legal research, writing and scholarship
    ▪ Funding Sources: Law Foundation, government grants, etc.
  o Legal Update Blog
    ▪ Commentary on key topics, cases and legislation, etc. from a Paralegal’s perspective
    ▪ Student and paralegal community submissions
    ▪ Format: Electronic / Web-based
    ▪ Similar publications: SLAW, Paralegal Scope Magazine, Law Times, Quicklaw Specialty
      Databases
    ▪ Beneficial effect – encourages legal research, writing and contact with our legal community,
      develop web-publishing/technology skills
    ▪ Funding Sources: Law Foundation, government grants, legal community

Request: Would PAC Members be interested in contributing to the Paralegal Journal and/or the Legal Update blog and/or
sitting on the board for either/both of these proposed publications? See Summary of PAC responses to Paralegal Program
Initiatives and Questions (attached to these minutes)
**Provincial Offence Mock Trials**
- Will be doing offences day with our Special Constables and Law Clerk student offenders on Monday June 27 this year with Trial down at the London Provincial Offences Court on August 9
- Going forward, the event will be moving to the Winter semester – hope to be working with the APS students as the charging officers and for the culminating courtroom exercise

**Paralegal Cup Mock Trial Competition**
- Paralegal Cup Mock Trial Competition – March 11 and 12, 2016
- First year in the competition- Result: Semifinalists (only loss was to the team that won it all)

**High School Mock Trial Demonstration Event**
- Paralegal students – put on a Mock Trial for High School students at Fanshawe on May 5, 2016
- Special Guest Judge

**Signature Paralegal Charity Event**
- Work with all Southwestern Ontario Paralegals, MOEPA and Fanshawe College Paralegal Students
- Feedback I’ve gotten so far from Placement Hosts, MOEPA and current and former students is incredibly positive and enthusiastic about this
- Met with MOEPA – they will be sending two representatives to sit on our organizing committee

**OTHER THINGS GOING ON**

**Guest lectures**
- Kevin Burrows – Ticket Defenders – gave a great talk on the practice of law as a paralegal and alternative business practice models
- Douglas Keyes and Chelsea McMullan – grads of our Program who put on a licensing exam seminar for our current students – Tips, insights and best practices
- Arshad Desai – Holman Ins. Brokers – will be speaking to our students about Professional Liability Insurance for Paralegals
- Ed Corrigan – will be in to speak to our students about the practice of Immigration Law and paralegal opportunities in this field

**CE course and CPD seminar development**
- Exploring the creation of an immigration law certificate as a Continuing Education weekend course
- Open to developing other courses if our Paralegal community feels the need/would benefit + developing/contributing to CPD seminars

**Law Clerk and Paralegal Heads of Program group**

See also – Summary of PAC responses to Paralegal Program Initiatives and Questions (kindly compiled by Paul Schofield and summarized and presented by Nick Dasios)
LAW CLERK

UPDATES

- Barbara has completed her first year as Law Clerk Program Coordinator
- Student Placement Evaluations
  - One Employer Evaluation Form is currently used for Coop placements. This form is seen as too rigid or standard in nature
  - An additional employer evaluation form has, therefore, been prepared that will allow employers an opportunity to provide greater detail when evaluating student performance
  - This additional form will be circulated to PAC members for their feedback

NEW INITIATIVES

Professional Appearance Policy & Manual

- Barbara has drafted a Professional Appearance Policy & Manual
- Benefits
  - Help students to be successful
  - Help students to be employable
  - Students conduct themselves in a professional manner
  - Demonstrate professionalism in communication, demeanor and attire
- Required in
  - practical lab classes
  - co-op placements
  - guest lectures
  - conferences
  - volunteer placements (where appropriate)
  - occasions where students are representing the College and/or the Law Clerk program to the public
- Proposed Type of Dress code
  - Dress shirts and blouses (men’s and women’s sizes)*
  - Dress pants or skirts (fitted and tailored)*
  - Individual name tag
*Students may purchase the above-mentioned clothing off campus if they wish to do so.
- Policy and Procedures Manual to be presented to Law Clerk Faculty Team for input/feedback in Fall 2016
- Need to look at how some firms dress. Not all Law Firms have dress code
- Professional Appearance Policy & Manual to be implemented in Fall 2017
- PAC Endorsement
  - Endorsement of the Policy & Procedures Manual for Law Clerk Program - In Favor

Academic Admission Requirements

- Proposal
  - Any Grade 12 English (C) or (U)
  - Mathematics ONE OF:
    - Grade 11 Mathematics (U) or (M) or (C)
Grade 12 Mathematics (C) or (U)
(Note: minimum final grade required for each course is 65%)

- Passing Grade
  - Passing Grade for a course is currently 50% - “D”
  - Proposed change: changing the requirement to pass to 60% - “C”

- Employers finding problems with Grammar, Spelling, Professional Communication and lack of general professional training.

- Should have more written assignments throughout the course with examples of good and bad.

- Internal support for changing the academic admission requirements
  - Dean of Health Sciences, Human Services and Public Safety
  - Registrar’s Office
  - Comparable to other School of Public Safety Programs
  - Proposed implementation – 2017/18

- PAC Endorsement
  - The proposed changes to our Academic Admission Requirements- In Favor
  - Consideration of changing the passing grade for a course from “D” to “C”- In Favor

Continuing Education

- Barbara has been working on developing Continuing Education courses for Law Clerks
- Collaboration Lerners LLP – Debbie Miller-How to and procedures workshops
- ILCO
- Annual Law Clerk conference
- Workshops/courses/ideas:
  - e-discovery
  - Changes to Sedona Principles
  - The paperless world – the way of the future
  - How to properly prepare an Affidavit of Documents
  - Inter-disciplinary approach – police foundations
  - Legal project management
  - Law firm etiquette
  - Work/life balance
  - How to be successful - promotions
  - OnCorp certification
Larry Myny Mentorship Program

- matches self-motivated, high-achieving students with a mentor
- Mentors - Fanshawe Alumni or community members who are established professionals
- They help students develop transferable skills and begin building their professional networks
- Promotion of program is required
- Summer 2016 – contact has been made with Level 3 students
- Fall 2016 – in-class presentation to second year students
- **PAC-Canvass the possibility of having your law clerks act as mentors**

Law Clerk Mentoring Program

- This proposed program would offer students a one-on-one peer mentor from third or fourth term students who would help first semester students transition into the Law Clerk Program.
- Also, workshops would be offered on networking and networking events would be organized to give students an opportunity to meet people within the legal community and build their network.

Career Day

- Allows students to meet with representatives of firms
- Gather information
- Network (ties in with Law Clerk Mentoring Program)
- Career plan

Closing

- The Law Clerk and Paralegal programs to each have a PAC- **In Favor**
- Method of holding meeting- best twice a year