



Imperial Valley College

Business Local Program Advisory Committee

ADOPTED MINUTES

Thursday, November 6, 2014

6:00 PM

IVC Board Room

BUSINESS/INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT

Tammy Grimm, Superior Court Executive Officer	Jack Staton, Immigration Judge
Veronica Henderson, Local Attorney	Cindy Tengler, Superior Court Human Resource Manager
David Talamas, VP of Sun Community Bank	David Wells, Educator and Small Business Advisor

IMPERIAL VALLEY COLLEGE REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT

Dr. Nicholas Akinkuoye, VP of Academic Services	Alison Brock, Office Technologies
Frances Arce-Gomez, Recording Secretary	Efrain Siva, Dean of Economic & Workforce Development
Craig Blek, Business Department Chair	

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Craig Blek at 6:10 pm.

II. Welcome

Craig Blek welcomed all members in attendance.

III. Introductions

All members present introduced themselves.

Purpose and Role of the Committee:

Efrain Silva gave a brief overview of the role of our advisory committees. He emphasized how valuable their input is to our programs. Their input helps us improve and make necessary modifications to our curriculum. Our goal is to make our students more employable.

Mr. Silva informed the committee that the meeting was especially important because IVC is contemplating eliminating the Legal Assistance program. Yet, IVC does not want to eliminate a program that is viable. Therefore, he wanted to ask the committee to provide input.

Mr. Silva introduced the new VP of Academic Services, Dr. Nick. Dr. Nick thanked the committee for taking the time to attend. He told the committee that their input is vital to our programs. Their

knowledge as employers will help us better train students for employment. Dr. Nick added that there are times when students are not completing programs and at that point it's important to find out the reasons why.

IV. Discussion of Legal Assistant and Court Services Programs

Mr. Silva opened up the discussion by informing the committee that he spoke with attorney Frank Oswalt regarding the Legal Assistance program. Mr. Oswalt shared that he did not agree with the elimination of the program. He said that local legal assistant positions are limited in the valley and the skills acquired at IVC can be used in other positions, such as in real estate or in the court system.

Mr. Blek reported the following:

- The Legal Assistant program is under-marketed
- Enrollment is low
- The average number of students in courses is 12-14
- Family law course is very popular
- There are 39 declared majors or certificates
- Only 14 of these have taken classes
- There are ESL students that are interested, but are still semesters away from taking legal courses
- According to database, legal secretary or legal support positions are very few in terms of growth
- Last 3 years only 4 degrees and 4 certificates in the Legal program were earned.
- If program continues, we need 25 or 30 students minimum
- We have other programs that are servicing similar populations
- Legal assistance positions are rare in the valley
- Not opposed to boosting program, but according to the state employment database no jobs available

Mr. Blek asked the committee to provide their input regarding the possible elimination of the Legal Assistant and Court Services programs.

Veronica Henderson stated that she would hate to see the program go. She believes in dual education, in both vocational and academic training. She sees many legal assistant/paralegal jobs posted all the time. She also believes that courts would favor an applicant that has a basic understanding of the legal process. She also has seen legal assistant and legal secretary vacancies in the courts and county offices. She suggested that the program be augmented towards a paralegal program. The position is more coveted, more jobs are available out of the valley, and employees can even commute.

Craig responded that part of the CTE rules say that jobs need to be available locally.

David Wells wanted to know if there was an overall state wide rule that states you have to take specific courses in order to get a legal degree/certificate. Mr. Silva responded that a few years ago a committee made up of several local attorneys suggested modifications be made to the curriculum. He added that there is no state exam that needs to be taken.

Mr. Silva also stated that the Court Service Specialist program was developed with input from the court. The courses in the certificate are a combination of different disciplines. It's a combination of Administration of Justice, Business, Computer Information Systems, Legal, and Political Science courses.

Dr. Nick added that another issue is financial. The college can't hire a full-time instructor if enrollment is low. The college is paid by student enrollment. We are tightly regulated by the state Chancellor's Office.

Cindy Tengler shared that 17 units is a lot of time to invest. She felt it would be best if the Court Service Specialist certificate would roll into an associate's degree. Mr. Wells added that those court services courses should fit within a 60-unit degree program. Mr. Blek responded that most of the students taking the court classes are in the Administrative Assistant and Accounting Technician programs.

David Wells feels that certificates are a valuable milestone for students. Dr. Nick agreed that sometimes students feel that two years is too long, short-term certificate are incentives for students.

Ms. Tengler would like the Legal Assistant program to continue and perhaps combine the Court Services Specialist certificate with it.

Ms. Henderson asked if it was possible to have an Administrative Assistant program/certificate with an emphasis in Legal or in Business.

Mr. Silva proposed to the committee that IVC eliminate both the Court Service Specialist certificate and the Legal Assistant certificate, but in turn create specialization options within the Office Assistant or Administrative Assistant programs. The committee agreed to the change.

The committee agreed to incorporate the following courses into the specialization certificates:

- General Introduction to Law course
- Legal Procedures course
- Substantive Law course

V. Open Discussion of other IVC Business Programs

The committee discussed the importance of having internships. The internships may help create jobs and are vital to all programs.

VI. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by Efrain Silva at 7:25 p.m.