

Minutes of Cañada Paralegal Program Advisory Committee Meeting
April 9, 2013, 5:30-6:30 p.m.

In Attendance: Interim Vice President of Instruction Linda Hayes; Interim Dean of Business, Workforce and Athletics Jan Roecks; Legal community members Nina M. Demers, Carol Karwat, James Thompson, and Andrew Gurthet; Cañada paralegal program alumni Geoff Kelly and Marija Stevanovic; Cañada faculty and staff Anne Nicholls; and Cañada paralegal faculty Dennis Durkin, Dario de Ghetaldi, Colleen Duffy-Smith, Michael Habeeb, and Althea Kippes.

1. Each person in attendance introduced himself/herself.

2. The committee discussed and then approved the following advisory committee goal statement and agreed that it should be placed on the paralegal program website:

With the goal of always improving its paralegal program, Cañada College has an advisory committee comprised of lawyers, paralegals, business professionals, legal research experts, non-profit organization leaders, and present and former paralegal program students. Advice and counsel result in relevant class offerings, courses that best equip students with the skills necessary to perform at the highest levels in the workforce; an ongoing plan to seek and create hands-on work opportunities for students, both while they are in the paralegal studies program and once they have graduated; and current and effective marketing, on and off the Web.

3. Professor de Ghetaldi reported on the enrollment figures for the academic year 2011-12. Enrollment declined over the previous year. Possible reasons were discussed, such as: a better economy (more people working, fewer going to school to retrain, redefine, etc.); and competition with other paralegal programs, some of which are ABA approved. Then, discussion ensued about our program becoming ABA approved. The dean and program coordinator, it was agreed, would explore seeking approval, although that had been done in the past and found to be cost prohibitive.

4. Course listings were compared to course offerings over the last couple of years. It was decided that courses that hadn't been taught in at least the last two years should be removed from the course listings and "banked." Those courses included Corporations and Business Entities (LEGL 255); Bankruptcy (LEGL 257); Administrative Law (LEGL 268); and Advanced Family Law Projects (LEGL 274). It was noted that Torts (LEGL 251) hadn't been taught it some time but should be offered in this academic year. Finally, it was announced that a new course, Immigration Law (LEGL 272) would be taught during the summer session. Suggestions for possible new classes included Keyboarding and Case Management.

5. Updating and improving the program brochure and website was recommended in an effort to improve marketing of the program.

6. There is an ongoing effort to connect our program with the legal community in hopes of finding internships and jobs for students. That effort has intensified with outreach efforts by the program coordinator.

7. Announcements: May 20 is the second annual Paralegal Program Recognition Ceremony, honoring all students who have completed the certificate and/or A.S. program.