

# Palm Beach State College

## Business Partnership Council Meeting Minutes Environmental Science Technology

May 13, 2015

9:00 am

Bioscience Technology Complex - Conference Room, SC 201

### ITEM 1: Introductions

Dr. Jessica Miles welcomed all committee members and guests. Self introductions and a brief description of each member's organization were given.

Dr. Miles gave a brief history of the program from its beginning in 2001 as a mean for students to learn the necessary skills that would enable them to work on the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan. Dr. Miles told members that the committee meets two times per year, once in fall and again in the spring semester. Members are asked to participate in various aspects of promoting the program, reviewing curriculum, and partnering with the college and our students.

### ITEM 2: Palm Beach State College Biotechnology Program – Dr. Becky Mercer

Dr. Becky Mercer, Director of the Palm Beach State College Biotechnology Program gave a brief presentation on the biotech program stating, "There is growth in the biotech sector, and that the program provides a good quality education, leading to internships and employment for biotech students in areas of bioscience, technology, research and development and manufacturing." Business Partnership Council members were given an opportunity to learn about other A.S. degree programs offered at PBSC and to see how the college responds to community employment needs.

### Item 3: Follow –up from last meeting – Dr. Jessica Miles

Member's Agencies, internships, careers and employment;

Laura Corry, SFWMD – The SFWMD has initiated their internship program again. Summer internships have become available and have a salary of \$12.00 per hour. Laura provided a listing of current openings at the District and offered to provide an electronic copy as well. Jessica Miles indicated that this list would be immediately distributed to program students. Laura will continue to keep program students in mind when working with HR on the internship postings, with the encouragement to include A.S. degree level as a minimum requirement vs. only listing a bachelor's degree.

Gary Colecchio, Guest SFWMD – The District would like to see more public use of its managed lands. The Dupuis area is presently underutilized, and the District would like to extend an invitation to the college's Environmental Science program to use the area for class field trips and various class projects. Camping is available.

Dr. Miles will follow up with Gary to discuss possible research angles that can involve students on-site.

Tara Bardi, Arthur Marshall Foundation for the Everglades – The Foundation currently has an eleven-week paid internship for Palm Beach Atlantic University graduate students over the age of twenty-one. Additionally, their extensive summer internship program is running. The Foundation would like to become a clearinghouse for environmental internships, and currently has a successful format for operating student internships. PBSC students are invited to apply.

Gloria Harmon, FDEP – Unpaid internships are available with the Department, and they would welcome the opportunity to work with both the SFWMD and the Arthur Marshall Foundation to offer more student environmental internships. They are currently reviewing their internship structure, and discussions focused on the dual concepts of independent internship projects where students design their own work versus having students actually fill a needed job position and work in that capacity. Dr. Miles shared that she tends to send higher-caliber students toward the “job position” type internships and the students that need more assistance toward the more “independent” internship style simply because there is less pressure on the later and she can assume greater responsibility over the student’s work, taking the load of monitoring off of the partner agency.

**Item 4:** Environmental Science Technology Program Detailed Course Curriculum Review – Dr. Miles

Dr. Miles presented a program curriculum overview at the last meeting and followed up at this meeting with a more detailed look at two current Environmental Science Technology courses: EVR 2870C Wildlife Ecology and EVS 2015 Writing for Science. Dr. Miles presented a number of highlights of each course including all course learning objectives and specific course activities such as the study of roosting birds, evening sampling (biological) of geckos and curly-tailed lizards, and Hawksbill sea turtle sponges prey identification studies in conjunction with the Palm Beach Zoo.

Dr. Miles also discussed the various course skills learned in the field including field notes, data sheets, equipment maintenance, tracks and scats, and presentation of field projects.

Additional skills that could be included were four-wheeler operation, boat and airboat training, trailering and prescribed burn certification. Dr. Miles will follow up with Laura on opportunities for students to be trained on these skills in conjunction with the District’s own training as well as with FWC.

Dr. Miles also discussed the Writing for Science course and indicated the importance of communication and presentations. She shared that students also cover topics of resume writing and business email etiquette.

Committee members discussed the importance of public speaking and presenting to large groups. Additionally, the importance of the Florida Sunshine laws when working for a governmental agency are of utmost importance. Members suggested students be taught both written and verbal communication skills and governmental protocols. Students should also become aware of social media etiquette and use. Dr. Miles will follow up with Tara on the etiquette trainer that they use for their internship program to either partner with them or bring them in as a guest speaker for our internship class students.

**Item 5:** Video Presentation – Dr. Miles  
Dr. Miles shared her recent program video highlighting her former program student, Katie O’gara, and her story of research on red-cockaded woodpeckers and journey to publication in the Florida Field Naturalist journal. BPC members were impressed with the video and also the college’s production resources. BPC members were interested in partnering on production projects in the future.

**Item 6:** Adjournment  
The meeting adjourned at 11:35am.

**Attendance:** Ms. Tara Bardi, Ms., Ms. Laura R.H. Corry, Mrs. Gloria Harmon  
Guests – Ms. Diana De la Rosa, Mr. Gary Colecchio  
Dr. Jessica Miles, Chair

Submitted by: Dr. Jessica Miles, Department Chair

Patricia Castro, Scribe