



BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL

PALM BEACH GARDENS CAMPUS

MINUTES November 17, 2014 Meeting held via conference call starting at 5:00 p.m.

MEETING CALLED BY: Cary High – Paralegal
NOTE TAKER: Barbara J. Scheffer
IN ATTENDANCE: Thomas Baker, Jennifer Beck, Karen Brown, Bettee Collister, Cary High, Vera Long, Barbara Scheffer, Robert Van Der Velde, Bette Collister, Laurie Salzer

1. The meeting was call to order. Note, this was a specially called meeting for the limited purpose of determining several items related to course curriculum issues.
2. Prof. High presented several concerns related to the goal of obtaining the American Bar Association (ABA) approval of the program as noted from his attendance at the recent American Association for Paralegal Educators annual meeting. Including in these concerns was the need to complete a detailed assessment process of the program. He indicated this self-study, once begun, will take approximately one year to completion before being finalized for submission to the ABA.
3. Part of that assessment includes the need to evaluate the current course offerings which includes the following items which were submitted for approval to the Business Partnership Council for approval:
 - a. Renaming PLA 2762 - Paralegal Office Systems to Law Office Management. Bettee Collister, who has been teaching this course for a number of years, voiced the opinion that this change is in order and gave a brief explanation of what is covered in the course. A motion was made to change the name, which was seconded and passed.
 - b. Course sequencing and/or additions to curriculum: Prof. High explained the current sequence of courses as noted on the college webpage and then requested discussion on creating either “pre” or “co” requisites for a number of these courses.

- 1) As a pre or co requisite for every course, students should be required to take PLA 1003 which is Introduction to Paralegalism. The council members discussed the content of this course and agreed that this course should be required as a co-requisite. This will permit the college's day program students to take this course simultaneously with other credits when they begin the program and not require them to wait until the course is completed. At the same time, the foundational material taught in PLA 1003 will be studied to set the stage for further program courses. After thorough discussion a motion was made that PLA 1003 be a co-requisite requirement for all courses in the Paralegal Program.
- 2) A review of the already present "pre" requisite courses was shared with the council. Presently Legal Research and Writing I is a prerequisite for Legal Research and Writing II, Court Systems and Procedures I is a prerequisite for Court Systems and Procedures II, Real Estate Law and Property Transactions is a prerequisite for Real Estate Closing and Document Preparation. The council was informed that in order to have students adequately prepared for Legal Writing and Research I, it was recommended that the students have at least some writing composition experience. A question was posed as to waiver of these prerequisites. The council was informed that very rare exceptions are made to these requirements and only after thorough review of the incoming students educational and employment background to assure that they come to the course with all the knowledge that the prerequisite would have provided. A motion was made to require ENC1101 as a prerequisite for Legal Writing and Research I (PLA1104) which was seconded and passed. No other changes were suggested to be made to the already existing prerequisite requirements.
- 3) The Coop-Legal Assistant I course which is an elective was discussed. Vera Long asked about whether the student enrolling in this course would have to meet any particular requirements. Prof. Scheffer noted that this course requires professorial permission to enroll which permits the professor to evaluate each student as to his or her readiness for this course. She then explained what the requirements are to complete this course. Furthermore, she indicated the course should only be taken when a student has completed a significant number of introductory courses in the program and achieved a working understanding of legal research and court systems. After careful consideration and

discussion of the most important courses to establishing a students working understanding, a motion was made to require PLA1003, PLA1104, PLA2209 and the already existing professorial permission as prerequisites for the Coop-Legal Assistant. The motion was seconded and passed.

- 4) Elective Course change. Prof. High, in order to comply with American Bar Association requirements for program specific legal specialty courses, presented a proposal replace the current Criminal Law (CJL 2100) elective course which focuses mostly on the role of law enforcement in the criminal justice system and adopt instead a course which focuses more on the necessary skills and tasks that a paralegal would be expected to perform in a criminal law practice. While the current criminal law course is taught from a law enforcement perspective that address only substantive criminal law, the new program specific specialty course would focus instead on litigation, including legal research, the drafting of legal motions, and trial preparation. Prof. Scheffer had reviewed the offerings and requirements at colleges throughout Florida to see which one is presently being offered at other similar paralegal programs for purposes of expediting transferability. The Council moved and passed the motion to make this change and adopt Criminal Litigation I (PLA 2303) as a new elective paralegal course.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 6:15PM