**Los Angeles Valley College**

**Computer Science and Information Systems Department**

**Minutes of CSIS Advisory Board Meeting on May 11, 2018**

**Date and Time:** May 11, 2018, 11:30 a.m. to 3:00 pm

**Location**: Library and Academic Resource Center, Room 203 (Luncheon meeting)

The meeting started at 11:30 a.m. The members of advisory, LAVC President, Dr. Erika Endrijonas, the CTE Dean, Dr. Laurie Nalepa, The Department Chair, Dr. Michael Rahni, The Advisory Chair, Professor Clark, and a number of faculty members and students were present.

Professor Clark welcomed and introduced the attendees.

**The President’s Opening Remarks**

LAVC President Dr. Erika Endrijonas made the opening remarks. She emphasized the importance of the advisory boards in guiding the direction of the departments. “The state has increased the resources for certain CTE disciplines at the state level. It is important that the individual colleges, where much of the expertise, in this kind of education already exists, continue to progress and adapt in order to meet the needs of students and the job market”.

# **Information on the New CSIS Departmental Organization**

The participants were introduced to the new organization of the Department. The Advisory board members learned about the newly combined department. In fall 2017, The Computer Applications and Office Technologies (CAOT) discipline joined Computer Science and Information Technology (CSIT) discipline to create a new department, Computer Science and Information Systems (CSIS). The chair indicated that the new department created more opportunities to offer new courses demanded in Information Technology field. The integration provided a greater atmosphere of collaboration among the faculty members from different disciplines.

# **The Review and Approval of the Minutes of 2017 Advisory Meeting**

The 2017 minutes of the advisory meeting was presented by the advisory chair, reviewed by the members, and was unanimously approved.

# **Job Market Analysis and Forecast**

The condition of the job market in the CSIS field was discussed. The following provides a summary of the general census of the participants about the current job market, its opportunities, and its challenges.

“Though the job market is tight, those who have technical and computer skills will find good paying jobs. Since it is difficult to find qualified candidates in the area of information technology, specially programming, there is a good level of competition among employers. As, for some employers, the hiring process takes over 2 ½ weeks, the top candidates may accept another offer and reject their offer.

The PRN Ambulance Services’ representative stated, “We have not stopped our hiring, but we are slowing down. One sign of this is that there we have fewer orientation classes for our new candidates; instead of weekly, they are now bimonthly or monthly”.

There were a number of comments and discussions among the participates. The following provides a short summary:

“A challenge for employers is that, they cannot ask about the felony records, and the salary history; this makes it more difficult to assess the candidates”.

“Once a job offer is made, employers can find out about felonies and other history by doing a background check”

**The Use of Software in the Workplace**

The advisory members were asked if they had any new technical requirements, as it related to the use of the office software tools. The majority of the advisory members believed that, in addition to general office productivity tools, like Microsoft Office, the employers required the knowledge of Visio for some jobs. Some of their clients also required the knowledge of specialty software. It was noted by the CEO of a private employment agency that Kenexa, one of their clients, was testing the applicants for Microsoft Office skills.

All the advisory members, and the majority of the participants, strongly believed that because of the high demand in areas of machine learning, IoT, information security, cloud security,, and computerized bookkeeping, LAVC should offer them for certification. It was also noted that there was high demand in areas of logistics, warehouse, supply side software, and AI.

Another advisory member indicated, “Companies are using Co-bots rather than robots. (Human and robot partners to complete specific tasks.) There is an increasing emphasis on fast turnaround of orders. It is highly recommended that the department look into the supply chain and product fulfillment service software areas, in particular, follow the recommendations of ISM (Institute for Supply Chain Management) to see what their needs are”.

“One challenge in this area is the rapid change of technology. Long ago, not all companies were switching to RFID. Now, new equipment has replaced RIFD. Some companies are using Robot interviewers to eliminate some candidates”

# **Preparation for the Interview and the Job Application Process**

# The session’s chair presented a number of questions about resume’s contents and the use of cover letter as a part of the application process.

He asked:” Do they matter. The answer by the participants was yes, but they said it did depend on what the “bot” was looking for. The HR and hiring committee member who were present had the following comments and recommendations:

“Be sure to use action verbs”

“Grammar, spelling errors – they indicate carelessness”

“Be specific about the skills and computer systems you have used”

“Match the job description when writing your cover letter. You can even use some of the same languages on the resume”

“Before applying, ask yourself: Do you meet the requirements? There is no reason to apply if you don’t”

“Resume: list achievements, not functions that are transferrable across industries: phrases like "increased sales", and "cut costs" will be valuable to any company”

“Focus on the job, pay attention to details”

“Sell yourself; read the company’s mission statement, etc. Do your research!”

“Important skills: the ability to read, articulate and conceptualize”

“Analytical skills often come out during the interview process. Listen to the question: what is the interviewer asking? Then, actually answer the question!”

“Sometimes they will ask a difficult question to gauge your thinking and reacting”

“When the interviewer asks a question probing further, it’s not necessarily negative; they may be giving you another chance to answer”

“Don't get overly nervous. A certain level of nervousness is expected, but how you deal with it is part of the interview process”

“When answering question, think about why the interviewer is asking the question”

“If you don’t know the answer to a question, don’t just make it up. Instead, think about how you can redirect it. What information would you need, etc. Showing that your thought process is as important as actually having an answer”

“Don’t oversell yourself. If the interviewer asks you to rate your skills on a scale of 1 – 10 don’t say 10!”

“No matter what you say about your skills, they are going to test you anyway”

“Many companies are doing broad-based testing: computerized testing, probing logical and reasoning skills”

“In general, only 20% of the applicant pool interviewed (on average)”

“Many companies prefer to test first, then to conduct the interview”

“Show that you are creative – think out of box”

“When the interviewer says, “Do you have any questions?” – ask a question!”

“Ask something about interviewer. Or ask something specific about the company (show your research)”

**Question to board member: How did you get your job?**

Joe Cummings, Royal Staffing: “got bored with previous jobs. His advice: Push yourself because if you stop learning you will die. Get out your comfort zone”

“Be professional – on time, reliable. Show me that I can count on you”

“Show your passion for the job, the company, the field”

“Should you go and try to get the job (i.e. show up and try to get an interview)? The answer; Smaller company yes, big company, maybe”

“Don’t wait to be spoken to in an interview. Feel free to initiate conversation, even if it’s just small talk”

“One of the most important interviewing skills is listening. Be there, respond to the question. An interviewer can tell quickly if someone is wasting their time”

“Be careful about a mismatch between your resume and you as a person. Write your own resume and be sure you understand it”

“In response to a question: do not give a one-word answer! Use your time in the interview to express yourself, let them know who you are”

“Scope out the office, try to find something about the interviewer to relate to. Make it more personal. (Example: comment on pictures of Paris)”.

“In today’s job market, entry level positions are always available because people don’t stay in them long. The good ones move up, the others move out”

“Ideally, employers want candidates with 1-2 years’ experience”

“65 percent of being hired is how you get along with interviewer”.

The issue of overseas experience and degrees was debated.

“The Information Technology jobs are looking in particular at more recent experience (because the field changes very quickly). For accounting, overseas experience is acceptable”

# **Job Credential and Degree Requirements**

Some advisory members and participants believed that though, many companies preferred individuals who held a bachelor’s degree or a graduate degree, if an applicant had a certificate, or an associate degree, with specific, employer needed courses, they would have a much higher chance of being hired. These are some of the certificate that were recommended by the advisory members:

1. Certificate in Computerized Bookkeeping- someone who can complete the accounting cycle’s functions and processes. There is a high need for the bookkeepers with experience in QuickBooks, Excel, and other accounting software, to work in accounting, finance, and CPA offices
2. Certificate in Internet of Things-with close to a billion devices connected- there is a high demand to develop coding, configure the devices, and to install the devices in order to for them to optimally communicate with each other. Major industries have high demand for programmers and technical support personnel.
3. Certificate in Cloud Computing and Security- the job market in this area is great. The graduates will have no problem in finding jobs.
4. Certificate in Big Data and Analytics-the ability to develop coding to interpret big data will increase the applicant’s chance to be hired. The market data shows an increasing level of demand for high-paid employment.
5. Certificate in AI and machine Learning- This the future of job market, the demand is significantly increasing for jobs related to these areas.

It was recommended that the department focus on the above promising areas. Michael Rahni indicated that the department was working on a number of related certificates and would share the progress later in the meeting.

**New Certificate and Courses Developed by CSIS Department**

Department Chair, Michael Rahni, presented information on a number of certificates that the department had developed or was in their final developmental stage. The advisory members were provided with the documents to review and debate on the job market values of the proposed new certificates and courses:

1. Proposed Certificate in Computerized Bookkeeping- The department chair presented local market data about the proposed certificate, course requirements, and SLOs. The advisory members unanimously recommended and directed the department to go ahead with the finalization of the process and to seek approval to offer the certificate as soon as possible. The job market data clearly indicated there was a high demand for its graduates.
2. The Internet of Things Certification- the advisory was presented with the job market data as well as the information on the program’s course requirements and its SLOs. It was recommended by the advisory member to continue its development process with a goal to offer a certificate in fall 2020.
3. All the participants especially the advisory members recommended that the department pursue course development in AI, machine learning, information and cloud security, and big data analytics.

**Other discussions:**

“One of the challenges is that the timeline for developing a new course is long”

“More and more functions are moving to online”

“Most of the software development is now on the cloud”

“Even small companies are using AWS – it is easier, cheaper. Large companies using it too”

“Cybersecurity is particularly important as companies move more to the cloud”

“Local internships and industry partnership are very important”

“Staying at one company for one’s entire career is less common in the private sector and more common in the public sector”

“Think about managing your career as a sequence of assignments; more like a consulting relationship than an employment relationship”

“When you move from job to job, you are transporting skills and your approach to work, not just your skills”

“In the job market, think of yourself as a one-person company: You are the brand. You are competing with the world”

**Other suggestions for the department:**

“Offer a customer service boot camp”

“Use professional trainers from the industry”

“Offer some specifically targeted non-credit classes”

“Include training on the employment-related forms like I9, W4 forms”

# **Gap Analysis Attendees**

Ana Arabyan, PRN Ambulance

Jack Condon, Backlot Movie Memorabilia, Inc.

Joe Cummings, Royal Staffing

Heidi Kim, LA County Department of Human Resources

Steve Lahamjian, LAUSD Classified Human Resources

Marge Ordiales, CSI Professionals Incorporated

Adrine Baghumyan, LAVC

Gerry Clark, LAVC

Erika Endrijonas, LAVC

Isaac Fukuda, LAVC

Varduhi Muradyan, LAVC

Laurie Nalepa, LAVC

Chris Petrini, LAVC

Michael Rahni, LAVC

Josie Stein, LAVC

# Agenda

Welcome and Introductions

Approval of Minutes

Job Market

* Entry-Level Skills
* Technical
* Analytical
* Creative
* Other Skills

Application Process

Review of CSIS Courses

* CAOT
* CSIT

Review of CSIS Certificates and Degrees

* CAOT
* CSIT

Gap Analysis

Items from the Floor

Adjournment