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Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Other:	NA
KEY DISCUSSION POINTS	DISCUSSION
Old Business	NA
Continuing Business	
New Business:	Robin Malone started off the meeting by introducing herself. Introductions were made around the room, members introduced themselves, position, title, and place of employment. Minutes from last meeting were reviewed. Motion was made to approve the minutes as presented and was approved. Ms. Malone began by talking about the Legal Clinic, which was funded by a \$25,000 grant from the Texas Bar Foundation. The grant has ended, and the Legal Clinic has been added into the budget for Amarillo College, allowing it to continue. Ms. Malone proceeded to show a video that was made during the Summer 2017 about the Legal Clinic and the services they offer. The video is being shown in the first year seminar classes on Amarillo College campus as well as shared with other faculty members to share with their students to let them know that the Legal Clinic is here and what kinds of services they offer. Ms. Malone stated that as of July 17, 2017, the Legal Clinic had helped 220 people – 90% of those Amarillo College students. The rest were staff or others that needed assistance. Ms. Malone had her student worker do a rough estimate of the amount of money they have saved students by offering their assistance. The Legal Clinic has saved students roughly \$2,000,000 in legal fees that they would not have been otherwise able to afford. Ms. Malone spoke about a case that had special meaning for her. A young woman in a domestic violence situation was able to get help through the Legal Clinic. Family Protective Services worked with Ms. Malone to get the young woman into a bed at their clinic by 4PM that afternoon. Ms. Malone also contacted the student's instructor on the class she was taking and worked out where she was able to take the final exam for her class and maintain the A-grade she had in the class. David Kemp is an on-call attorney in the clinic and was asked to speak about his experience in the clinic. Mr. Kemp spoke about some of the work that he does when he visits the campus. Mr. Kemp stated that he tries to visit the campus about once a week. He stated that many of the cases that come through are not overly complicated, but there are a lot of twists that weren't expected. Mr. Kemp stated that it is really a privilege to be able to help the students that really need the help and to see the change that their help can make in the lives of the students. April Mock is a student worker in the clinic and was asked to speak about her experience, as well. Ms. Mock spoke about being able to help the students who are stuck in situations that they are not able to get out of on their own, and now much the Legal Clinic can affect those student's lives by helping them through the difficult circumstances. Ms. Malone further stated that the Legal Clinic has created a pool of attorneys that they are able to refer students to for additional legal help, if needed. Some of the attorneys are willing to work with the students financially and offer free consultations, discounted rates, payment arrangements, or possibly even pro bono work. Ms. Malone moved on to discussing the AAFPE (American Association of Paralegal Educators) conference. She referred to one of the sessions that she attended speaking about the importance of evaluating your program periodically. They discussed looking at your program's SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats), evaluating your strategies and creating goals. She spoke about other ideas for classroom development, including reviving your Power Point presentations, kahoot.it, padlet.com and twiddla.com

• Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

which is an online whiteboard allowing teachers and students to collaborate online together at the same time – allowing students to access from their computers, tablets or smartphones – engaging the students in a way that they understand. She also spoke about an assignment being required before being able exit each class. Once the class is over, give each student a short assignment to write about that incorporates what was discussed in the class and require that it be written before the student is allowed to leave the class.

Ms. Malone spoke about the curriculum, stating that over the last two semesters, all of the Legal Studies classes have been full and none had to be canceled. She stated that this indicates that students are interested in and are signing up for the program. She spoke about Learner Centered Pedagogy/Service Learning being discussed at the AAIPE conference. Ms. Malone stated that for the service learning area, the intro students are assigned a pro se divorce case. The cases come from Legal Aid of North West Texas. In the second week of class, the students are assigned a case. It is a real case with real clients. Students are required to sign a confidentiality agreement at the start of the case. The students draft all of the documents. There is a clinic night where the clients are able to come in and meet the student that drafted their documents and are able to hear the attorneys speak about the cases, as well. The students are involved in service learning and able to give back to their community. The Legal Clinic has processed approximately 20 cases so far this year. Ms. Malone stated that many of the cases are funneled in from Legal Aid, so Luisa Vigil with Legal Aid will come over and assist with those cases as well.

Ms. Malone spoke about a recent DACA workshop that the Legal Clinic assisted with. The Texas Equal Justice Commission was seeking volunteers to assist with the workshop. Seven students from Legal Studies volunteered to assist with the workshop. The students were asked to volunteer two hours of their time. During that time, they were assigned whatever duties the attorneys needed them to do. During the course of the workshop, 18 clients were assisted by the attorneys and students with completing their paperwork.

Ms. Malone spoke about practical assignments that Legal Studies students participate in. Creating a portfolio of documents they have worked on is part of the practical assignments area. Students are asked to draft a document related to the area of study they are focusing on throughout the course of the class. For example, if the students are studying Real Estate law, they may be asked to draft a lease agreement. The draft is able to be included in the student's portfolio, allowing the students to be exposed to a wider range of documents, as well as to show potential employers that they have worked on a wide range of documents. Instructor Tom Boyd conducts his final exam in the form of a mock trial. Students are expected to create the entire trial, including creating and entering evidence, finding witnesses, and conducting all aspects of the trial.

Ms. Malone asked Michelle Tyree to talk about some of the things that are covered in her class regarding interviewing and investigating. Ms. Tyree discussed bringing in speakers from various areas of legal and law enforcement. She spoke about how interesting it is to hear different aspects of the jobs, and how the students get to hear about a different perspective than they might have thought about before. Students are able to hear about all different angles of a case. Ms. Tyree also spoke about her students creating document portfolios, as well, by having the students draft documents related to whatever they were studying in class at the time.

Ms. Tyree spoke about students many times expressing an interest in getting involved on the prosecution side and how difficult that can be in this area. Ms. Malone took that time to introduce Amy Connor who had come in late. Ms. Connor is an Amarillo College Legal Studies graduate who was one of 175 applicants to work in the prosecutor's office doing legal assistance and paralegal work. She has been hired on permanently by the District Attorney's office.

Ms. Malone spoke about critical thinking skills that are being taught. She stated that at the AAIPE conference, it was stated that if you can ask a student a question and they can show you straight where it is found in the book, it's not a good question. Students need to be able to think through a question and have to think about the answer. Ms. Malone stated that if a student comes to her with a conclusion that she doesn't agree with but the student can support their thinking with the law and with facts, she will give the student credit for it. Ms. Malone spoke about using music as a means to get students to think about Family Law and analyze song lyrics as they related to Family Law.



Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

	Ms. Malone spoke about court observation assignments, stating that many Legal Studies students have never been inside a court room. The assignment is that the students have two months to observe a court case and report back information about the case they observed – case name, case number, the names of the parties, and names of the attorneys present. The students then have to give a presentation to the class about the case and what they observed. The students also had to use their critical thinking skills to tell Ms. Malone at least three documents they think would have to be drafted if the case were to come to a law firm that the student was working for. Ms. Malone mentioned the Corporate Social Responsibility Project in her Business Law class. The students are asked to watch a movie and discuss the ethical dilemma and how ethics relate to the law. Even if the situation is legal, is it ethical? There are twelve graduates this semester. Seven are receiving Associate's Degrees, and five are getting certificates. Of the graduates, four already have legal jobs, three are going to pursue Bachelor's Degrees and will also be attending Law School. Two of the graduates have non-legal jobs, and three are seeking employment. Ms. Malone spoke about the Legal Society of Amarillo College, stating that last year they did a lot of workshops or community discussions, but this year, she would like to be much more pointed and calculated about what they present. She stated that they co-sponsored a DACA panel discussion with the Diversity Committee that was very successful. Attorneys came in to speak about what DACA actually is. Someone from Catholic Charities also spoke at the panel. Ms. Malone discussed the results of a meeting they had about the impacts of social media. They emphasized the importance of being careful about what you say on social media. They stressed that even though a person may think they can keep their posts private, it may not always be as private as they might think it is. She stated that attorneys are now having clients sign statements about their social media behavior to confirm that they were notified of the possible ramifications of social media activity. Ms. Malone stated that she was approached by some attorneys at Legal Aid that are concerned about housing in the community. They attorneys are going to hold a community forum on January 20, 2018, sponsored by LSAC. They will be bringing in people from all over the state. It is open to the public. They will be discussing housing issues and community development. The Lambda Epsilon Chi, LEX, paralegal honor society had six eligible students, and five have accepted. Students are required to have a 3.25 overall GPA, and a 3.5 GPA in Legal Studies. Ms. Malone asked for new business and points of discussion, asking if the committee had any panel discussion ideas – if they were seeing anything in the community that they would like to see Legal Studies put on a workshop about or any issues that they see in the area. Ms. Malone asked Mr. Braidfoot directly about any mediation issues that might have been brought to him. Mr. Braidfoot stated that many people don't really know exactly what mediation is, and if they knew what mediation could offer them in place of going to court, more people might be willing to explore it as an option. Ms. Malone stated that if anyone had any issues come up that they wanted Legal Studies to address, to let her know, and she would look into it. Robin then asked for comments, critiques or suggestions. No one spoke up with any additional questions or comments. Thank you all for coming. Meeting adjourned at 12:51pm
Curriculum Decisions:	NA
Other:	

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Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Chairperson Signature: 	Date: 2.19.2018	Next Meeting: To be announced
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