

**PARALEGAL STUDIES**  
**Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**April 22, 2008**

**Summary Notes**

**Present:** Ms. Sharla Miller Fowler, CP; AC Paralegal Studies Coordinator  
Ms. Rhonda Brashears, CP; Chair  
Ms. Ann Britt, AC Business Division Advisor  
Mrs. Jana Comerford, AC Library Network  
Mr. David Hernandez, AC Business Division Chair  
Dr. Paul Matney, AC Vice President of Instruction  
Ms. Susan McIntire, ACP  
Mr. Carl Mueller, CLAS  
Ms. Carolyn Ottoson, WTA&M Law Librarian  
Ms. Regina Veith, Member-at-Large  
Ms. Donna Pergrem, AC Assistant Career & Employment Services

**Absent:** Mr. Tom Boyd, Attorney  
Mr. Scott Brumley, Potter County Attorney  
Ms. Melba Fenwick, CLA, RP; AC Graduate  
Dr. Steven W. Jones, AC President  
Mr. Mike McDearmon, Firm Administrator  
Ms. Carol McRoberts, CLA  
Ms. Cathy Peek, CLA, TBLs  
Ms. Heather Reynolds, Paralegal Studies Major  
Ms. Rita Saldierna, PLS, CLA  
Mr. Dan Schaaap, Attorney; Paralegal Supervisor  
Mr. Don Sanders, Member-at-Large  
Ms. Shirley Vessel, Legal Assistant  
Ms. Luisa Vigil, Northwest Texas Legal Services  
Ms. Cassie Williams, AC Graduate  
Ms. Kim Davis, AC Director of Continuing Education  
Mr. Ron Faulkner, AC Director Technical Training Solutions

The Paralegal Studies Advisory Committee met for a 12:00 luncheon in the Badger Den Room of the College Union Building. Rhonda Brashears welcomed the committee members.

**Minutes of November 29, 2007, Meeting**

The minutes were available for review; Regina Veith presented a motion to accept the minutes as written. Susan McIntire seconded, and the minutes were approved by the committee.

### **Introduction of New Committee Member**

Donna Pergrem, Assistant at Amarillo College Career and Employment Services was recognized.

### **Change in payment process for Lexis fee**

Rhonda Brashears explained to the committee that the Lexis fee had been personally collected by Sharla Fowler the past two fall semesters. Sharla Fowler gained approval from Dr. Paul Matney and worked with Lexis and the AC Business Office so that the Lexis subscription fee would be charged as a “laboratory fee.” It is now programmed in the AC system that when students register for certain classes in the Fall Semester, they will automatically be charged the \$40 Lexis subscription fee. If there are students who enter in the Spring or Summer semesters, Lexis will allow us to add the students for the remainder of the year after the student pays the \$40 Lexis fee.

### **Survey Results**

The survey results from the Spring and Summer 2007 graduates (completed the in Spring of 2008 due to technical difficulties) was reviewed by the committee. Sharla Fowler explained that the survey for the Fall 2007 graduates was still in progress. There were no questions or comments from the committee.

### **Special Thank You to Don Sanders and Sir Speedy**

Rhonda recognized Don Sanders and his company, Sir Speedy, for copying and binding the ABA Interim Report.

### **ABA Interim Report to be Submitted January 18, 2008**

The ABA Interim Report was mailed to the ABA on December 14, 2007, and received on December 17, 2007. A final copy of the report was available for the Advisory Committee members to review.

Another Interim Report will be due January 15, 2010.

### **ABA Re-approval Fee**

The Committee was made aware that the \$700 re-approval fee to ABA has been paid for this year. They were also informed that the cost of re-approval would increase to \$900 for next year.

### **Status Meeting with Dr. Matney**

Sharla Fowler reported that she and Mr. David Hernandez, Business Division Chair, had met with Dr. Paul Matney, Vice President of Instruction, on April 15, 2008. This meeting was to provide Dr. Matney with a status of the program and share some success stories. Sharla Fowler and Rhonda Brashears then shared some of the AC paralegal student success stories with the Committee.

### **Utilization of Paralegals in the Legal Community:**

A discussion was held about the utilization of paralegals in the community. Rhonda Brashears discussed the pro bono opportunities which had been done at Legal Aid of West Texas utilizing paralegals and attorneys. Some of these same opportunities are available to paralegal students. Sharla Fowler also said that she would be working with Luisa Vigil at Legal Aid of Northwest

Texas, to implement service learning for the students enrolled in Family Law during the Fall of 2008. Rhonda Brashears suggested that when students were at Legal Aid of Northwest Texas doing service learning or volunteering, that a poster be displayed showing that the students are from the paralegal program. This may help with recruiting.

Some discussion was also held about how the students were getting jobs in the legal field, where some of the graduates were located, and the importance of the practicum experience. There will be at least two students in the practicum experience during the Summer 2008 term.

Donna Pergrem said that the online employment service at Amarillo College has partnered with Career Builder to enhance the tools available to all Amarillo College students, including the paralegal majors.

The Committee felt that paralegals were being utilized in the area as a very cost-effective way to deliver legal services.

### **Spring 2008 Enrollment**

There are currently 56 actively enrolled paralegal majors. The Fall 2007 term had 8 graduates. The Spring 2008 term will have 1 graduate.

### **New Business**

Sharla Fowler explained that the paralegal program would be recruiting students at the Amarillo College Sneak Peak for high school seniors on April 24, 2008, and would also participate in the Top of Texas Career Expo for high school sophomores on May 14, 2008.

### **Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharla Miller Fowler, CP  
Certified Paralegal  
Amarillo College Paralegal Studies Coordinator