

PROGRAM COMMITTEE NAME:		Paralegal Studies Advisory Committee			
CHAIRPERSON:	Robin Malone, Program Director; Michelle Tyree, Chairperson				
MEETING DATE:	12/06/2022	MEETING TIME:	12:00 pm	MEETING PLACE:	Virtual Zoom Meeting
RECORDER:	Kathy Davenport			PREVIOUS MEETING:	04/22/2022
COMMITTEE MEMBERS					
	NAME	TITLE	EMPLOYER INFO	PHONE	EMAIL
X	David Kemp	Attorney / Legal Clinic	AC Legal Clinic	570-6890	dgkemp@sbcglobal.net
	Carl Mueller	CLAS/ Paralegal	Burdett, Morgan, Williamson & Boykin	358-8116	cmueller@bmwb-law.com
	April Mock	Paralegal	Amarillo College, Legal Clinic	681-4805	amock@actx.edu
	Diana Hathaway	Attorney	Hathaway Law Office	322-7899	dhathawaylaw@gmail.com
X	Christopher Wrampelmeier	Attorney	Underwood Law Firm	379-0392	Chris.wrampelmeier@uwlaw.com
	Bruce Moseley			353-3596	
	Luisa Vigil	Paralegal	LANWTX	373-4309	VigilL@lanwt.org
	Randy Braidfoot	Director Dispute Resolution Center	Dispute Resolution Center	372-3381	rbraidfoot@theprpc.org
	Amy Conner	Paralegal	Potter County DA Office	336-6730	amyconner@co.potter.tx.us
X	Becky Wilson				
	Becky Burton	Associate Vice President-Academic Services	Amarillo College	371-5122	bkburton@actx.edu
X	Kathy Davenport	Administrative Assistant	Amarillo College	371-5269	kathy.davenport@actx.edu
	Dr. Edie Carter	Dean of STEM	Amarillo College	371-5335	elcarter@actx.edu
	Michelle Tyree	P-T Instructor - Paralegal Studies	Amarillo College	290-3617	mltyree@actx.edu
	Luis B. Salazar	Advisor, Legal Studies	Amarillo College	345-5664	lbsalazar21@actx.edu
X	Tom Boyd	P-T Instructor – Paralegal Studies	Amarillo College		jtboyd@actx.edu
	Emily Gilbert	Library	Amarillo College	371-5462	mlweathersbee@actx.edu
X	Robin Malone	Assistant Professor-Legal Studies	Amarillo College	345-5671	r0114502@actx.edu
	Hanna Homfeld	Library	Amarillo College		H0390346@actx.edu
	Tamara Clunis	Vice President of Academic Affairs	Amarillo College	371-5226	ttclunis@actx.edu
AGENDA ITEM		ACTION / DISCUSSION / INFORMATION			RESPONSIBILITY
Old Business:		Review of previous meeting minutes			

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Continuing Business:	Report from Division Advisor, if any Ex-Officio Member Reports Old Business	
New Business:	Change of Structure/Name of Advisory Committee/Membership of Advisory Committee	
Curriculum Decisions:	N/A	
Other:	N/A	
KEY DISCUSSION POINTS	DISCUSSION	
Continuing Business	<p>Robin Malone called the meeting to order at 12:01PM. The meeting was held virtually via Zoom. Attendance was low, so Robin Malone chaired the meeting.</p> <p>Robin began the meeting by thanking those who were able to attend. There were not enough in attendance to approve the previous meeting's minutes. She stated that she would be sending out an email vote to all the committee members.</p> <p>The Division Advisor was not in attendance, so Robin started with the Program Coordinator report. She stated that enrollment is up by 18%. She stated that the vast majority of the students are Paralegals already working in the field, that have a Bachelor's Degree, but are coming back to school to get the Paralegal Certificate. She stated that enrollment increase can also be credited to events like Success 360 that presents the program to high school students in the fall. She stated that recently, a similar event began in the spring called Springboard. She stated that some of the students are coming from other programs, such as Criminal Justice. Robin stated that the student group LSAC has started back up. She stated that they are a vibrant group with ten members. She stated that they have already had two events. She stated that the students really wanted to participate in Trunk or Treat held on campus, and they won first prize for their trunk. She stated that one of the events was a Paralegal Panel and the other was Lunch with a Lawyer. She stated that they have some good ideas for Spring, as well, and that the Lunch with a Lawyer might become a regular event. She stated that she wants to get the students involved in fund raising in the Spring.</p> <p>Robin stated that one thing that has been added to the program is Mediation. Dave Kemp has been teaching the class, and it is offered in the Spring. Robin turned the meeting over to Dave to talk about Mediation and what the mission is for the class going forward. Dave stated that they were originally talking with the Dispute Resolution Center about some kind of joint education project to help generate education and get the center some qualified volunteers. He stated that is still the goal of the program, but also that Mediation itself is a valuable thing for the students to know. He stated that the Spring 2022 class had seven students, and he would like to see more students in the next class. He stated that he is trying to make the class as practical as he can to help the students as much as possible.</p> <p>Robin thanked Dave for his input and stated that they have also introduced Law Office Management, and that they are hoping for enough interested students to be able to have the class in the Spring.</p> <p>Robin stated that another class that is suffering from low enrollment is Family Law, but stated that many lawyers in</p>	

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Amarillo practice Family Law, so she is thinking of making the class mandatory for all Paralegal students. Everyone agreed that would be a good idea. Chris Wrampelmeier stated that there is a lot of demand for Paralegals in the Family Law area, so that would be a great idea. Robin stated that so many other cases might have Family Law involved. She stated that things like Immigration Law would have Family Law involved, or even something like starting a business with a spouse and later divorcing, how would that business be split up – that would involve Family Law. She stated that is what she will bring to the Curriculum Committee when she seeks to make it mandatory.

Robin then gave an update on the AAFPE Conference. She stated that due to Covid, the conference has been virtual for the last couple of years, but this year was in person. She stated that there was so much information provided at the conference. She stated that the main focus was the lack of legal services to lower income populations. She stated that she believed approximately ten states are looking at getting Paralegals licensed. She stated that they had an attorney from Tanzania as a guest speaker. She stated that Tanzania is experiencing the same lack of representation for lower income people. She stated that she took notes on the numbers. She stated that Tanzania has 63 Million people, but only 11,084 attorneys – only 8,524 are actively practicing. She stated that they came up with a system similar to Legal Aid. She stated that a licensed attorney will be supervisory over one or two Paralegals. She stated that most people there are more likely to listen to people from within their own community when seeking legal advice, so they went into the various communities and trained people to be Paralegals, then set up centers in the various communities where people can come to get legal advice. She stated that the Paralegals can do everything except go to court. Robin stated that there are a handful of states in the US that are wanting to do something similar. She stated that she thinks maybe Colorado and New Mexico have already had programs of this nature passed. So Paralegals can pretty much do anything except go to court, and depending on the situation, they might even be able to go to court. Robin stated that this is causing some rifts with the Lawyers that are feeling they will lose business if this kind of program exists. She stated that when you look at the numbers – 86% of civil legal problems are with lower income individuals that have little to no legal help. She stated that 36 Million people nationwide represent themselves. She stated that this action can really clog the legal system because a lay person doesn't understand about motions and what needs to be filed, and more, so by training the Paralegals to assist with this, it could potentially really help to unclog the system. She stated that 40-60% of the legal needs of the middle class go unmet because it's hard to retain a proper attorney. Robin stated that if there were a license implemented, we would need to teach towards the license. She stated that they shared what a license like that would look like and that a lot of it was very similar to what we are already teaching. Robin stated that another thing that was discussed at the AAFPE conference was the idea of entertainment being a part of education and how the students are bringing in entertainment to the classroom. She stated that one thing mentioned was TikTok, that students are using TikTok to make their presentations. She stated that she has her students do a court observation project and that one of the schools had talked about having their students do a Facebook Live of their court observation. She stated that they were full of really good ideas to keep the existing students engaged and to pull in the younger students. She stated that the majority of her students are coming in straight out of high school due to the THRIVE program with AISD, so figuring out a way to reach those students is really important. She stated that the conference people refer to it as "Edutainment" and it was really interesting.


Robin asked the committee what they think about this idea of licensing Paralegals and giving them the same rights and responsibilities as an licensed attorney. Dave Kemp stated that when he goes to the doctor, he doesn't really see the doctor, he sees a Nurse Practitioner. He stated that when he is working with the mental health patients at the Pavilion, they don't really see a doctor. He stated that this is really the same kind of concept. He stated that he doesn't really see any other way to bridge the gap of the need for legal services without something like this program. He stated that he does think it will need to be monitored, but he would be in favor of it. Chris Wrampelmeier stated that the Supreme Court has created a task force and one of the things they are looking into this idea of

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“ParaProfessionals”. He stated that it would not be lawyers, but would presumably provide legal services for the poor. He stated that is one thing the task force is looking into. He stated that they are researching this on a very fast track so there might be information about it very soon. Dave Kemp spoke up and stated that it really doesn’t make sense for lawyers to say that this kind of program will take money away from them. He stated that this problem is addressing a population that really cannot afford a lawyer, so it’s not taking money from the lawyers because these people couldn’t afford one to begin with. Chris Wrampelmeier stated that one thing to keep in mind is the question of how far could a program like this go. He stated that he spoke with one judge who talked about his early career when someone would come in and pay a small fee for him to go over a decree, and that was access to justice. He stated that once you came out forms and everybody could do this themselves. He stated that the problem with that was that it eventually weeded out that bit of business because everybody could do it themselves now. He stated that now there are no people that provide that service so if the need arises, you have to go up a level and it’s not inexpensive anymore. He stated that when you start tinkering with things, it can mess it all up. Dave Kemp stated that he agrees and it must be done carefully. Robin stated that in the states that have done this, they have a large group of professional people working on it, and it is not something that can be done overnight. Robin stated that California had worked for several years on a similar project, but there was one incident that came up and the vote stopped the program dead in their tracks. She stated that one thing she learned from this was that there is a need for indigent help in criminal cases, but that sometimes we forget about indigency representation in civil cases. Robin stated that so often, civil cases can eventually build up to a criminal, so she thought that maybe this could be a more preventative practice. Chris Wrampelmeier stated that it really comes down to what kind of training will be involved in this ParaProfessional job. He stated that right now, certain types of cases require a lawyer to be present. He wondered if a ParaProfessional will be able to spot the issues their clients are facing. Becky Wilson stated that she feels that anything like this will need to be tested, just like a lawyer has to be. She stated that, for example, if a ParaProfessional wants to go into Family Law, they should be tested on Family Law. She stated that they don’t need people going to school and just going straight in the legal force without someone making sure that they know what they are doing. Chris stated that there will also be the question of will there be an attorney available to supervise? Dave stated that he does agree with that, but also he sees how much work the Paralegal does. He stated that April (Mock) does so much work in the Legal Clinic and that for someone who needs that help, it’s a huge relief. Robin stated that the states who have done this already have a vigorous curriculum for this licensing. Robin stated that she appreciated the discussion on this topic and moved the meeting along.

The next item on the agenda was a report from a faculty member, so Robin asked Dave Kemp if he had anything he’d like to add. Dave stated that the group of students that he had in his Mediation class were really good students. He stated that he was very impressed with them and that they were all really hard workers. Robin asked if Tom Boyd wanted to add anything. He stated that he is still trying to find a way to squeeze Bankruptcy in there somewhere. He laughed and said he knows it’s been 20 years or more since we had Bankruptcy, but he still has hope. He stated that he does agree with Dave about the students. He stated that he has seen over the years an increase in the level of commitment and the seriousness of students. He stated that for a long time, it felt like many students were there as a placeholder until they could decide what they really wanted to do in life, but more and more lately, he feels that the students are there because they really want to be. Dave stated that when he talks to his students, he gets the impression that they all really like their teachers and feel like they are getting a good, quality education here. Robin stated that when they started, most of the students only wanted to be Paralegals, but now, there are more students that want to eventually go on to law school, so they are looking for a greater level of exposure to all areas of Legal Studies. Robin stated that one of their recent former students, Kenzie Lackey, originally got into Legal Studies because she was going through a particularly rough situation and she wanted to learn how to navigate through that. Robin stated that she graduated from AC and went on to Baylor Law and graduated at the top of her class and works

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	<p>at a law firm in Waco now.</p> <p>Robin moved to the last point of the agenda and stated that the committee has probably been getting emails from the college for the advisory committee invites that says “BLC”. Robin explained what the BLC is – Business Leadership Council – and that AC is going to this BLC model. She explained that this model will require more time and attention from the members. She stated that we have not reached that process for Legal Studies yet, but likely within the next semester. She stated that there will be a later meeting that will include a representative to explain the process and what it will entail. Robin stated that there is probably going to be a “Learn and Earn” component. She stated that the committee can be on the lookout for more information about that.</p> <p>Robin asked if there were any other questions. She thanked everybody for coming and stated that she appreciates everybody taking time out of their schedules to attend.</p>		
New Business:	<p>With no further questions or comments, Robin adjourned the meeting.</p> <p>The meeting was adjourned at 12:36PM.</p>		
Curriculum Decisions:	N/A		
Other:	N/A		
Recorder Signature: 		Date: 12/08/2022	Next Meeting: To be announced