



Accounting Advisory Committee

Friday, October 2, 2020, 10 – 11:30 a.m.

Meeting to be held on Zoom

MINUTES

Advisors Present: Lisa DeGoede, Lake Washington Partners
Kendyl Prosser, Deloitte Touche
Jennifer Fenske, Shoreline Community College
Janelle Von Birgelen, protiviti

Staff Present: Dan King, Faculty
Lauren Hadley, Director of Employer Engagement
Brigid Nulty, Acting Associate Dean, Business, Communication, Social Science,
Student Learning

Welcome and Introductions – Dan welcomed the committee members and invited them to introduce themselves. Two new members were present, Jennifer Fenske replacing Satoko Prigmore from Shoreline Community College and Janelle von Birgelen from Protiviti.

Approval of May 8, 2020 Minutes – The May 8, 2020 minutes were approved with modifications.

New College Structure – Brigid introduced her role and provided an update for the new college structure. To provide equity in workload and some budgetary savings, the college restructured its' educational department divisions moving communication and business under Acting Executive Dean, Tim Wright. Acting Associate Dean of Business, Communication, Social Science, and Student Learning Brigid Nulty will work with Tim and provide support to professional technical program advisory committees. Brigid's primary role is to support associate faculty so that they have a point person and a sense of continuity. She also has a role with Guided Pathways work. Additionally, she works with the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Steering Committee and will bring outcomes review work to the Accounting Advisory Committee this year.

College Updates – All campus activities went online mid-March due to COVID-19. The college will continue operating remotely with campus services and online instruction through winter quarter. and will continue to teach and learn through winter quarter. Enrollment is down by 8% partly due to COVID-19, but also due to reduced enrollment at the college overall. Accounting classes are fully enrolled.

The college is planning for a \$5 - \$7 Million permanent budget reduction from the state due to loss of revenue due to COVID-19. While the final number has not been announced it has and will cause much difficulty amongst the campus community.

Program updates/input needed – Dan reported that the pandemic has been stressful for accounting students. Dan has adjusted his course to a self-paced model so that students can work on their own. This has helped a lot with program completion. For accounting students, Dan has chosen to be generous with incompletes. While historically 90% of students who take an incomplete, never complete their coursework, during COVID, students are returning to complete. This indicates to him that the self-paced model for accounting is working for student success.

Dan shared that his biggest dilemma has been advising students who are taking the two-year professional technical accounting degree. He asked the committee for help identifying the companies and organizations that need and value students with a two-year applied degree versus a four year-CPA track student. He needs help on where students who complete can look for jobs and how students can network with those companies and prepare them to get those positions. Each member of the committee commented on this challenge and the discussion will continue at the winter quarter meeting.

Lisa spoke to her experience as a graduate of the program and working her way up. Graduates are good candidates for accounting clerk positions (accounts payable and accounts receivable). She noted that if there was not a hiring freeze at Lake Washington Partners they would be hiring for this type of role because there is a need.

Jennifer spoke to college practices. Shoreline follows DES accounting practices and follows their model for minimum qualifications. The college will be transitioning its accounting and business office system and having skilled employees who understand debits and credits will be essential for this effort to be a success.

Janelle shared that Protiviti is owned by a Robert Hass Placement Agency and she will come to the winter meeting with information on what skills they look for in the accounting temporary personnel they place. Working in temporary positions put graduates in front of several different clients and gives a student or recent graduate an introduction to many firms and work environments.

Kendyl also plans to return to the winter meeting with hiring information from Deloitte. She did note that there are opportunities and that Indeed currently has 50 jobs in the greater Seattle area posted.

The committee agreed that once COVID lightens, hiring will be rampant, the discussion will be about onboarding multiple employees in a remote or partially remote environment.

Discussion – The committee was asked, *“How has the workplace evolved now that we are six months into COVID-19? Are there practices that were stopgaps that will now never go back to the way they were?”* Brigid followed up and asked about technical requirements of working at home.

Lisa’s company gave her equipment and sent it to her house. This included a laptop, web cam, and docking station. She has not seen this with colleagues that work in non-profit and government. Her company has the philosophy that as long as you get your work done and are available between 10 – 2, that is the expectation. Employees can work anytime.

Kendyl was already set up to work from home due to her mobile role at the company, however, she was also given a work from home subsidy. Kendyl has noticed that her clients have had to do more and learn to trust employees to get work done. Conversations around professionalism and “be ready for work

when work starts” have occurred. The biggest challenges have been around setting boundaries for good mental health.

Janelle was already mobile to visit work sites and so they were ready and used to work remotely. Her clients are tech companies, so they were used to remote operations and working with various technologies. Her company has done a good job of stressing the importance of setting boundaries and taking breaks.

When discussing communication and document management software the committee members are using Teams, WebEx and Dropbox.

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.