

Computer Information Technology Advisory Committee Meeting

Minutes

October 20, 2020

Time: 6:00 – 8:00 PM

ZOOM: <https://lethbridgecollege.zoom.us/j/92304743709>

COMMITTEE CHAIR: Chris Rabl

PRESENT

Chris Rabl - Autovance Technologies

Matt Lynch - Service Alberta

Rena Barlow - Economic Development

Norm Nelson - Whipcord

Nathan Sailer - Southland Trailers

Lee Mosemann - Verge

Alfonso DeCicco – Alberta Health Services

Brock Price – Altis MSP

Shealyn Cossette - 1st Year Student Rep

Satoru Honda - 1st Year Student Rep

Daniel Welder - 2nd Year Student Rep

Terry Kowalchuk - Dean

Candace Lewko - Associate Dean

Deb Hadley - Program Chair

Stephen Graham - Faculty

Timothy Frantz - Faculty

Shoja Mazidi - Faculty

Md. Rafee - Faculty

Terry Allred - Program Technologist

Stephanie Savage - Alumni Engagement

Christie Robertson - LXD Manager

Toni Gfrerer - Program Assistant

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Chris called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm. He thanked everyone for their attendance and introduced new members.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTIONED and APPROVED

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTIONED and APPROVED

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

No business arising from the minutes.

DEAN AND ASSOCIATE DEAN COMMENTS

- Terry Kowalchuk, Dean
 - Going back to January, 2020, the biggest challenge we were facing were the Provincial cuts and changes to the funding model, what was going to take place and how were we going to deal with it. We are still dealing with this, not necessarily the first level of importance right now, but definitely still on the College's to do list.
 - Government has looked at changing the way post-secondary is funded, the provincial government is paying a smaller portion of the post-secondary costs and students are being asked to pay a bigger portion.
 - Government has stressed the importance of work-integrated learning and Lethbridge College is well positioned to meet that challenge.
 - Cost efficiency - how efficient are we in operations, we are meeting that challenge.
 - Faculty and staff spent much time over the summer retooling programming to be delivered online in a video format, incorporating field, lecture and labs in ways that were different from what we normally had done. This meaning, smaller class sizes and smaller lap groups. Work at home projects, virtual desktops and being able to log onto computers from remote locations.
 - Social interaction has been a challenge, not necessarily meaning students are being shy, but could be the quality of the internet.
 - We are in phase two of three, phase one was lock down and online only, phase 3 will be normal. Right now, we are in the middle of the two, and as we move forward to next term, we will be in phase two plus. That might mean a bit more face-to-face activity on campus, not just in our academic, but also in our services (Library, Registrar's Office, and Bookstore).
 - We are looking at the new normal, what are the new opportunities that come from using this technology, what have we learned about ourselves, the way we can teach.
 - Currently we have an instructor teaching from BC another teaching from ON, it has given us the opportunity to take advantage of some of that expertise worldwide.
 - Working on the program reviews will also give us an opportunity to explore new opportunities.

- Candace Lewko, Associate Dean
 - Industry coming to us asking for our support through Applied Research Opportunities.
 - We have instructors who are involved highly in grants and applied research projects.
 - One of the goals and priorities for CIT is involving students in these opportunities

- We will continue to build our new programming, we will gather your input and feedback and we will strive for excellence in teaching in the IT industry.
- We are working in a collaborative approach to building leadership in the program, building instructional leadership.
- Student success is our focus right now, we have had some challenges in the delivery, but we found solutions.

PROGRAM UPDATES

- Christie Robertson, LXD Manager
 - Part of the Learning Experience Design Team, Centre for Teaching Learning and Innovation and our area of expertise is in curriculum design.
 - Part of our role is to help take a deep dive every three to five years and ask what is working, what is not working and where might we go with it. We have heard this feedback from Advisory and Industry and maybe we need to make a shift or change.
 - With program review methodology, we look at many data sources. We look at comparable programs, college's institutional plan, program demand, retention and graduation.
 - Operational contacts we look at partnerships, we talk with advisory and industry members, and we dive into the curriculum.
 - Program review process is very much evidence based. There were three resulting recommendations from the review:
 1. Program & Course Adjustments
 2. SOTL (Scholarship of Teaching and Learning) & Applied Research - develop a plan for creating space in the curriculum to include more applied research and social opportunities for both faculty and students.
 3. Operational Viability Assessment of the new majors:
 - I. IT Generalist
 - II. Systems and Networking
 - III. Programming

STUDENT REPORTS

- Daniel Welder - 2nd Year Student Representative
 - Uses discord to keep in touch with other students
 - Students not liking online learning, they liked and preferred last years structure of face to face and on campus
 - Missing engaging with others
 - Can the seminars, networking and meet and greet be brought back this year? Online?
 - How has COVID affected the job sector? Business practices, are employees working from home? Office?
 - Biggest struggle for students is productivity, keeping on tracking and getting the work done.

- Shealyn Cossette - 1st Year Student Representative
 - Communicating with other first year students using Discord
 - Trying to adapt to the program and the learning style
 - How will students get practicum experience with the online world?
 - Students complaining about the workload
- Satoru Honda
 - Also trying to adapt to the program and the learning style
 - Not on discord often
 - Teaching style - not much opportunity to interact with other students
 - Feeling frustrated and isolated

PRACTICUM DISCUSSION

- a. Recap meeting Stephen and Chris had with Eyren Uggenti from Teconnect
 - Teconnect receives a large number of entrepreneurs in their program who are interested in building software, but they do not necessarily have the skills.
 - There are a number of students and grads who are eager to accept jobs building software. Stephen had mentioned in the last committee meeting that the college is planning to put together and he is specifically working on merit labs (mentorship entrepreneurship research information technology).
 - A few months ago, Teconnect hosted some entrepreneur sessions that were widely attended including a few students.
 - This blends in with the outcomes based funding model that the provincial government has bestowed upon the college.
 - Eyren had six people in mind who might be a good fit for piloting this project.
 - The start up needs a go to IT person, so we are not just setting up students for failure with the lack of an IT mentor.
 - Intention is to have either someone on their staff who can mentor or to have a faculty member stand in for that role.
 - Stephen and Chris will be presenting an information session hosted by Teconnect on November 16th from 7:00 to 8:00 pm.
 - We will discuss what it means to take a practicum student, what our vision is for entrepreneurs going through this program and how they best leverage what the college is delivering.
 - Stephen - one of the angles discussed in that meeting was the potential one new entrepreneurial start-up being sort of the tech extension arm. A mentor start-up in tech support and that person/organization would then become the technical host.
 - **ACTION ITEM:** someone from the CIT Faculty or LXD connect with Teconnect to discuss what are they seeing and what can the college do to help.

- b. Discuss challenges and opportunities industry stakeholders have encountered surrounding practicums and collect knowledge that can be passed on to entrepreneurs wishing to take on practicum students.
 - AgENT which is a program through Applied Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship where students go in and work directly with industry members on challenges and they learn how to solve those challenges and problems. It also connects the student and industry.
 - College is looking more and more into work integrated learning, service learning and experiential learning.

INDUSTRY DISCUSSION

- Virtual seminars with industry speakers and brainstorming other initiatives to which industry stakeholders could contribute
 - If and when employee roundtable's and employer speed interviews get organized, perhaps a list of entrepreneurs could be put together and provided to the college.
- Discussion around practicums this year, how are the college and industry members adapting?
 - Norm Nelson - always had someone on site mentoring practicum students, assisting them, teaching them new skills and answering any questions they may have.
 - Nathan Sailer - two practicums this year that started right around the time COVID went down. We tried doing the off site portion, one of the students had not idea which direction he wanted to go, programming or networking and system administration type things. After a month of off site programming, they decided to pivot and go back on site to work, adhering to the rules and regulations. The second student tried to work remotely, but found it very challenging, so he came on site as well.
 - Alfonso DeCicco - working with a mentor, working with someone from a team pretty much the entire time.
 - Chris Rabl - when they do practicum, it will be completely online.
- Emerging trends in IT
 - None to report

OTHER BUSINESS

No other business to report

NEXT MEETING DATE & TIME

Tuesday, March 9th at 6:00 pm

ADJOURNED at 7:48 pm