

# Computer Information Technology Advisory Committee Meeting

## Minutes

March 7, 2023

Time: 6:00 – 8:00 PM

TE1202 Sunflower Room

**COMMITTEE CHAIR: Chris Rabl**

## PRESENT

**Chris Rabl** - Jobber

**Lee Mosemann** - Windscribe Ltd.

**Matthew Lynch** - Service Alberta

**Brock Price** - Altis MSP

**Nicole Daub** - National Research Council

**Cal Koskovich** - National Research Council

**Dave Sehn** - Telus

**Charlee Sereda** - Economic Develop/RINSA

**Razel Ventura** - 1<sup>st</sup> Year Student Rep

**Donavon McDowell** - 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Student Rep

**Terry Kowalchuk** - Dean

**Deb Hadley** - Program Chair

**Toni Gfrerer** - Program Assistant

**Timothy Frantz** - Faculty

**Stephen Graham** - Faculty

**Shoja Mazidi** - Faculty

**Md Mahmudul Has Rafee** - Faculty

**Chiye Kinjo** - Manager Int'l. Services

**Colby Hayward** - Recruiter

## WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Chris called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm. He thanked everyone for their attendance and led the roundtable introductions.

## APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTIONED and APPROVED

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTIONED and APPROVED

## BUSINESS FROM MINUTES

- a. **ACTION ITEM:** do not skip introductions in the future.
- b. **ACTION ITEM:** share results of the SOTL project with Advisory Members
- c. **ACTION ITEM:** invite CIT Advisory Members to tour the lab
- d. **ACTION ITEM:** invite CIT Members to Discord

**LOCATED ON TRADITIONAL BLACKFOOT TERRITORY**

- e. **ACTION ITEM:** before and after in person events, meet for 15-30 minutes for feedback.

## ALL ACTION ITEMS ADDRESSED

## DEAN AND ASSOCIATE DEAN COMMENTS

- Terry Kowalchuk, Dean
  - Thanked everyone for attending and staying connected with the CIT program, faculty and students.
  - Thank you to our students, we appreciate your input.
  - New President, Dr. Brad Donaldson, came to us from SAIT.
  - Cost of Education - receiving less from Government.
  - Students paying about 15% more than they were three years go.
  - International students pay a base tuition that's the same as Domestic students, plus a visa surcharge per credit that is quite substantial.
  - Government has put a 2% cap on tuition for next year.
  - Early Alert Reporting System - students that are facing challenges in the academic environment or dealing with mental health issues, we use this system, which alerts the appropriate people. We want to retain our students, help them get back on track and be successful.
  - New Program Advisory Committee Handbook was released in December, 2022 and was shared with Members.
- Brock Price, Altis MSP
  - Going from year one to year two, what is retention like?
- Stephen Graham, Faculty
  - We started out with around 80 students, and we now have 47 second year students.
- Deb Hadley, Program Chair
  - 198 applications received to date compared to 149 last year.
  - 107 offers to date compared to 89 offers last year.

## PROGRAM UPDATES

- 13 students out of 46 placed in practicum.
- If you have a practicum opportunity for students, please get in touch with Stephen Graham. Students need to complete 200 hours. Anything from hardware support, help desk, networking to technical writing for new software packages. It should support what the students have done in the program, and it needs to be monitored by someone with an IT background.
- Busy time of year with projects and Systems Analysis and Design, there are 7 teams.

- CIT-2276 Final Presentations (finished projects) - Save the Date for Friday, April 21<sup>st</sup>
- Speed Interviews were held in October, always a great opportunity for members/employers to interact with students. Opens the door for a future practicum student or employee.
- Database Management and Computer Programming II courses are going well.
- From a college level, courses are mapped and properly sequenced.

## STUDENT REPORTS

- Donavon McDowell - 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Student Representative
  - Enjoys programming and problem solving.
  - Lose a lot of students in the first year, especially in the programming courses. You need to have the mind set to logically think through the programming.
  - Instructors teach and prepare students to be entrepreneurs.
  - Wish more Python was taught in the program, the language is used everywhere and is super universal.
  - The CIT program gives you the basics you need and sets you up for success.
  - Students get thrown into a lot of things, which encourages them to think. Faculty are always there along the way to help.
  - Feels prepared to go out into industry with ability to learn new things if he doesn't already know it.
- Razel Ventura - 1<sup>st</sup> Year Student Representative
  - Students overwhelmed with Programming and the demands of the CIT program.
  - Tight group of students, they have built good relationships.
  - Students like the selection of the subjects and the grouping of the subjects. The selection gives them a broader idea of what they can do once in industry and the options available to them.
  - Good class sizes.
  - They like the detailed instructions they receive from instructors.
  - Confident in learning new skills in the field.
  - Material taught is up to date.
  - Like that the program is student centered, hands-on, they learn by doing it.
  - They like getting feedback from the instructors, helps them to know the areas they need to improve on.
  - Scaffolding of lessons from introduction to exercises, to assignments, to quizzes and exams.
  - Feels they are receiving a good foundation in what they are learning.
  - Time management is always a challenge.
  - Feels very supported by classmates, faculty, and the college
  - As an international student adjusting to the cold has been tough, as well as missing home.

- There are lots of activities for international students.
- There is a group chat with other international students, they support each other.
- Cost of tuition for international students is high.
- Language can be a barrier, but there are programs at the college that provide assistance.
- Chiye Kinjo, Manager International Services
  - Letter of Acceptance to students lists the total program costs for year one and year two.
  - If tuition does change, the college does their best to maintain the amount, it won't go over the amount that was stated on their acceptance letter.
  - Prospective students are given a projected cost for the current year and are told that the costs are subject to change.
  - In terms of other post secondary institutions in Alberta, Lethbridge College is one of the more affordable colleges in how we calculate our international student tuition, it is quite different.
  - International tuition at most institutions is the domestic tuition x 3 and at Lethbridge College it's by credit plus 300.
  - CIT is one of the top three programs that fills up first.
- Terry Kowalchuk, Dean
  - 111 International students in the Centre for Technology, Environment and Design.
- Dave Sehn, Telus
  - How many students plan on staying in Lethbridge after completing the program?
- Razel Ventura, 1<sup>st</sup> year Student Representative
  - General census is there are not enough jobs in Lethbridge unless they can find remote jobs.
- Donavon McDowell, 2<sup>nd</sup> year Student Representative
  - Would say 30% plan on leaving Lethbridge after completing the program, due to the limited jobs here.
- Donavon McDowell, 2<sup>nd</sup> year Student Representative
  - Is there a Game Development Course?
  - There were a few students in the class interested in Game Development.
- Terry Kowalchuk, Dean
  - Currently working on five Micro Credentials in Game Development as we speak. It's in conjunction with our Architectural Animation Technology and Virtual Augmented Reality programs, they are the lead schools. These will be non-credit at this point, if there is a demand, there is a possibility to transition to credit.
  - There is a new Kodiaks athletics team, a gaming Esports Athletic Team.
  - You can be an athlete and get a scholarship to play Esports at Lethbridge College.
  - There is a Esports lab in the Andrews Building

- Chris Rabl, Jobber
  - If you could change one thing about the program, college, or your experience, what would it be?
- Donavon, 2<sup>nd</sup> year Student Representative
  - Parking
- Razel Ventura, 1<sup>st</sup> year Student Representative
  - President list and Dean's list - there was no recognition from the Centre.
  - Some students never got their pins.
- Terry Kowalchuk, Dean
  - Going forward present pins to the students who make the Dean's list.

## INDUSTRY DISCUSSION

- Charlee Sereda, Economic Development Lethbridge/RINSA
  - Launch Point Pitch Competition (Entrepreneurship) coming up at the end of April.
  - Alberta Innovates (Tech) event May 31<sup>st</sup> to June 2<sup>nd</sup> - discount codes thru RINSA available for registration fees.
- Stephen Graham, Faculty
  - Attending Adventures - Presenting Public Safety VR training system.
- Chris Rabl, Jobber
  - React Rally and React Native Conferences happening soon.
- Nicole Daub, National Research Council
  - What's the current demand for hiring?
- Matt Lynch, Service Alberta
  - Looking at hiring five or six in the near future.
  - Lower classifications to grow people.
- Chris Rabl, Jobber
  - Open requisitions on the tech and business development side.
  - Other partners in the industry are looking for junior talent.
  - Market for junior talent has slowed.
  - Strong demand still for senior developers and folks with practicum and industry experience.
- Dave Sehn, Telus
  - Bigger companies depressing the hiring, not letting people go, but they are not hiring. Smaller and mid size businesses coming in and snapping up the talent.
- Cal Koskovich, National Research Council
  - Opportunities are still out there.
  - Smaller companies are hiring.
  - Trend is working for smaller companies; bigger companies are at a plateau.

- Chris Rabl, Jobber
  - Any technology trends or new to the market in the last year?
    - ChatGPT
    - Cyber Security becoming a big thing, very important.
- Dave Sehn, Telus
  - 3 main ones for Telus are GCP (Google Cloud Platform), Amazon and Microsoft Azure
  - Asked about Cloud Datasets in the CIT program, Cloud Technology an area of opportunity for the program.
- Matt Lynch, Service Alberta
  - Using Terraform

## OTHER BUSINESS

- Committee Chair Appointment 2023/2024
  - Chris motioned for the election of a committee chair and asked for nominations
  - Chris let his name stand as Chair, no other nominations were received

**CHRIS RE-ELECTED AS CHAIR**  
MOTIONED and APPROVED
- IoT Membership
  - IoT stands for Internet of Things
  - Over 100+ companies that are members of the association.
  - All focused on embedded electronics.
  - Would be a good fit with the CIT program, a lot of potential employers looking for programmers.
  - Very successful organization.
  - Monthly events and get togethers.
  - IoT North Conference - RINSA can sponsor seats for CIT students to attend.
  - Networking for job placements.
  - Cal can provide contacts.
- Speed Interviews and Networking Event
  - Involvement from our community.
  - In October we had 10 interviewers
  - In Fall 2023 there will be 40-50 students in the class.
  - Two hours to complete the interviews, Tim would like for each student to have at least three interviews, 10-15 minutes.
  - Minimum of 15 interviewers would be ideal for Fall 2023.
  - Reach out to Charlee, Economic Development/RINSA for volunteers.
  - In person events more successful than online.
  - Future Fireside chats or panel discussions, unstructured, students attend to ask questions.



CENTRE FOR  
**TECHNOLOGY,  
ENVIRONMENT  
AND DESIGN**

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- Future Networking event, with enough notice students should be able to attend an evening event.
- Discord
  - Online communication tool.
  - If it's attached to the college, then an Admin on behalf of the college, will need to monitor, and college policies will apply.

**NEXT MEETING DATE & TIME**

Tuesday, March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 6:00 pm

**ADJOURNED at 8:40 pm**