

Computer Information Technology Advisory Committee Meeting

Minutes

March 5, 2024

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

Nicole Daub - National Research Council

Cal Koskowich - National Research Council

Charlee Sereda - Economic Develop/RINSA

Fergus Raphael - Tangle Media

Jonathan Arnoldussen - Nerds on Site

Chris Roberts - Tollestrup Construction

Nathan Sailer - Southland Trailers

Josh Wildeboer - 1st Year Student Rep

Razel Ventura - 2nd Year Student Rep

Terry Kowalchuk - Dean

Candace Lewko - Associate Dean

Deb Hadley - Program Chair

Toni Gfrerer - Program Assistant

Timothy Frantz - Faculty

Stephen Graham - Faculty

Shoja Mazidi - Faculty

Md Mahmudul Has Rafee - Faculty

Barry Robinson - Faculty

Chiye Kinjo - Manager Int'l. Services

Maclayne Hanson - Recruiter

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Chris called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. He thanked everyone for their attendance and led the roundtable introductions.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTIONED by Matt Lynch SECONDED by Jonathan Arnoldussen

APPROVED

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTIONED by Matt Lynch and SECONDED by Md Mahmudul Has Rafee

APPROVED

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 student reps for bringing your colleagues perspectives and then go back and share this info with them.
 - President, Dr. Brad Donaldson been here just over a year and he's starting to do some work.
 - Still offer quality experiences to students in an inclusive way
 - Refocusing Mission, Vision, and Values.
 - More community engagement, partnerships, and interesting relationships
 - CIT has solid enrolment Numbers
 - 223 Applications received to date for 24FL
 - 197 Applications are International
 - 26 Applications are Domestic
 - 96 Offers Issued
 - 78 Offers are International
 - 18 Offers are Domestic
 - 62 Offers Confirmed
 - 48 Offers are International
 - 14 Offers are Domestic
 - Graduate Surveys
 - How do we keep students in Lethbridge?
 - CIT most difficult to find jobs in the area.

Charlee Sereda - how do we facilitate retention, and keep the opportunities in Lethbridge?

ACTION ITEM: Charlee EDL/RINSA to set up meeting with Terry Kowalchuk, Dean to discuss retention.

 - International student compliment is large.
 - Government budget wasn't clear, we believe there is money coming to the institution, just not sure where.

- Candace Lewko, Associate Dean
 - Looks forward to the orientation at the beginning of the school year.
 - Dedicated instructors and commitment of students to their careers.
 - Advisory informs us to build the curriculum we have, which gives students the job opportunities that are out there.
 - Services that Lethbridge College provides to students in supporting students in their academic journey:
 - Mental Health
 - Academics

- Motivation Coaching
- Providing students with the opportunities to practice Lethbridge College's Student Core Competencies, along with building skills for entering into the field.
- WIL (Work Integrated Learning) mandate provided to us by the government.

PROGRAM UPDATES

- Stephen Graham, Faculty
 - Program going well, students attending classes.
 - Started off in the Fall with being over full in many sections. Historically, some students don't show up, not this year.
 - We managed to get students all sorted out.
 - Larger sections and more work.
 - Practicum season - 20 students placed out of 60 students.
 - If you, or you know of other companies that have IT departments and IT people, we still have 40 students that need to be placed. 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.
- Tim Frantz, Faculty
 - IT Integration Seminar
 - Fall Speed Interviews - staged job interviews for students. We ask the interviewers to be prepared to conduct a typical job interview, with a position, actual or made-up, for which they are applying. Interviewers provide them with a brief description for the position, including basic qualifications, pay, etc., and ask typical employer questions. CIT related interviewers needed.
 - Please consider helping with the Speed Interviews. You will receive an email in the Fall.
 - Charlee Sereda: reach out to Economic Development/RINSA for volunteers.
 - This year there are 60 second year students.
 - Anticipating 75 second year students in 2024/2025.
 - Systems Analysis & Design - 11 projects this year, probably 14 next year.
 - Save the Date for the Systems Analysis & Design Final Presentations on Thursday, April 25th and Friday, April 26th. You will receive an email.
- Barry Robinson, Faculty
 - Teaching load is mainly in the second year.
 - Second year students very busy, heavy workloads.
 - Assist and try to keep students focused on completing their work.

- Rafee, Faculty
 - Teaching two courses this semester.
 - Computer Programming II
 - Database Management
- Shoja Mazidi, Faculty
 - Keeping students busy and engaged
 - Business project with two first year students and Aquaculture Centre of Excellence.
 - Presentation to Industry - end of March.

STUDENT REPORTS

- Razel Ventura - 2nd Year Student Representative
 - I enjoy being a student again.
 - I feel like 1st year 2nd semester is the most difficult in terms of content and workload. That's the semester where it felt like each CIT subject had 2 exams (lab and lecture). 2nd year is relatively lighter (unless you're doing practicum).
 - Strengths
 - I liked IT Integration Seminar, it's good for those who have little to no work experience.
 - I liked the online portfolio - Maybe we can start that earlier, like in HTML (1st year, 1st semester) so that students are more conscious about documenting projects.
 - Pace is good despite mix of students (first time and experienced)
 - Classmates enjoyed programming, Linux, mobile app.
 - Teachers are good and supportive.
 - Teacher assistant Claire is a good addition. I hope Networking and Hardware classes also have a teaching assistant.
 - I like forcing us to work in groups and do a lot of presentations because IT people need those soft skills.
 - Challenges
 - Finding a practicum is a challenge. Doing it within the semester is more challenging.
 - Maybe allow some subjects to be taken within summer (between 1st year and 2nd year) so that 2nd semester load is lighter.
 - Expectation was that the college has partnerships.
 - Systems Analysis and Design
 - It's a lot of work.
 - Lots of self-directed learning (framework, languages, version control)
 - Sectioning - Maybe if people already have groups by the end of 1st year, 2nd semester, they can be put in the same blocks for 2nd year.
 - Worry of classmates: AI "will it make 1st year useless?" Networking seems to be secure.

- Not too happy with Marketing and other "minor" subjects
- What's rewarding
 - Systems Analysis and Design, working with clients and applying learning.
- Wish List
 - Physical programming - Arduino, Raspberry pi
 - More breakout rooms
- Some classmates feel confident working after practicum.
- Some still plan to continue studying after this diploma.
- Josh Wildeboer - 1st Year Student Representative
 - The current state of mind between several students based on opinions and observations seems to be positive. People sound like they're enjoying their courses.
 - Personally, I would agree with them. My experience here at Lethbridge College has been quite fulfilling. I've learned tons of valuable information from each of my classes and my professors.
 - The teaching staff have all been great – both helpful and informative, and for the most part courses are laid out well in terms of pacing and grading.
 - The course material has all felt very relevant to the potential industries that we will likely be joining, and I appreciate how the courses are focusing on job-oriented content instead of being laid out simply as prerequisites for another course.
 - A gripe that I've heard being voiced among students has been that the workload for this semester feels like a bit too much especially for students who need to keep a job during the semester. I personally feel similar, but I agree that it is post-secondary education and only a two-year diploma with lots of material to cover.
 - Other than that, I have been truly enjoying my time at Lethbridge College and I look forward to next year.
- Chris Rabl: if you can change one thing in the program, what would it be?
 - Razel Ventura
 - More breakout rooms
 - Systems Analysis and Design - if students know their groups after first year second semester, students be placed in the same blocks for second year.
 - Josh Wildeboer
 - Adding a course in Video Game Development

INDUSTRY DISCUSSION

- Does the CIT program prepare students? Further Certification, is it a pressing need?
 - CIT Diploma is a foundation, steppingstone to 2+2
 - Provide more guidance to students in furthering their education
 - Micro credentials - can be pursued while working
 - Cyber Security is a pressing need

- AI
 - Cyber Security as it relates to AI
 - Teach and incorporate it into daily lives.
 - Use it as a tool, just like we do the internet
 - Students need to learn the fundamentals without AI

OTHER BUSINESS

- START Hackathon
 - May 3, 2024 - 9:00 am to May 5, 2024 - 4:30 pm
 - High school students across Alberta will have a chance to show how extended reality (XR) technology can be used to benefit the real world with Hack and Seek: Alberta XR Career Quest <https://lethbridgecollege.ca/hackandseek>
 - Fun, free and highly competitive event is presented by Lethbridge College in collaboration with Bow Valley College, NAIT, Alberta Innovates and Digital Alberta.
 - Coding and development experience is not required, but students must have an interest in technology and a love of competition.
- High Level Innovation Conference - Tech, Tourism, and Gaming
 - May 3rd and May 4th at the AgriFood Hub
 - This event will explore the latest trends and advancements in the fields of technology, tourism, and gaming.
 - Explore innovation across industries including Entrepreneurship, Emerging Tech, BIPOC Business, Trades, Digital, Gaming, Music, Tourism and more.
- Committee Member Engagement
 - Increase engagement from Advisory Members
 - Speed Interviews
 - Networking
 - Guest Speakers
- Committee Chair Appointment 2023/2024
 - Three-year Advisory term will be up at the end of June, 2024. Toni will email renewal letters at the end of May/beginning of June.
 - Recommendations for new Advisory Members - email Toni their names and contact info.
 - 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

NEXT MEETING DATE & TIME

Tuesday, March 4th, 2025 at 6:00 pm

ADJOURNED at 7:40 pm

LOCATED ON TRADITIONAL BLACKFOOT TERRITORY