

Advisory Board Meeting - Round Table Discussion
April 27, 2018

Attendees:

Lesa Taylor-Dupree, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, BPC
Wesley Bange, Chief Information and Technology Officer, BPC
Megan Martin, Interim Dean of TEM, BPC
Paul Spivey, Interim Assistant Dean of TEM, BPC
Rachel Basco, Project Director LED/CSRA Grant, BPC
Peggy Fuller, Dean of Business
Pam Milstead, Program Director of CIS, BPC
Chris Rondeau, Program Director of Network Security, BPC
Al Shaw, Program Director of SADM, BPC
Suzanne Shipp, Program Director of Programmer Analyst, BPC
Annette Shows, Professor, BPC
Paul Weaver, Professor, BPC
Amy Russell, Administrative Coordinator III, BPC
Steve Turner, Instructor, BPC
Jennifer McCoy, Instructor, BPC
Jeanne Smith, Administrative Coordinator III, BPC
Gayle Flowers, Vice Chancellor Workforce Development, BPC
Ceson Ponder, Electsolve
Will Heflin, Technologix
Lauren Schneider, CSRA
Mark Summers, CSRA
Kendal Droddy, Magee Resources
Dan Fain, Microsoft
Brian Jagot, ECS
Kyle Lilley, Bossier Parish Schools
Susannah Stinson, BPC Foundation
Sandra Partain, Assistant Vice Chancellor Innovative Learning
Cesar Marrero, President, CEO, xentientLABS
Angie White, Northwest Louisiana Economic Development
Eddie Horton, Northwestern State University
Chris Burt, BPC student
Daniel Valentine, BPC student
Latoya Smith, BPC student

At 2:20 PM Megan Martin opened the meeting, thanking those present for attending and for participating in the online voting. The purpose of the online voting is to make the length of the advisory meetings shorter, focusing more on discussion.

The purpose of today's advisory board meeting is to discuss industry needs for BPC's IT students.

Paul Spivey opened discussion with a question about what BPC could do to help our graduates become better prepared for the IT workplace.

Lauren Schneider (CSRA)

- Allow students to start with vague concept. For example, contracts start vague and they are developed
- Students need to understand that thought must be put into the design
- Students need to work through a process

Cesar Marrero (xentientLABS)

- Students need to develop problem solving skills
- Students need to improve soft skills
- Students should be involved in the full life cycle of project

Dan Fain (Microsoft)

- Emphasized that students lack soft skills
- Students need to learn how to write clearly and concisely.
- Students also need to know how to talk through situations with clients and within workplace uncover details
- Suggest that BPCC students do table top exercise – put conflict into the project – life is not easy

Ceson Ponder (Electsolve)

- Need to improve their problem solving skills
- Should understand how to dig to really flush out program requirements.
- Also need to understand importance of communication
- Need to know how to adjust and be flexible.

Mark Summers (CSRA)

- Suggested that BPCC could hold event like the Technology Round UP at NSU to show off ideas
- BPCC courses could have projects that interact with local businesses
- Courses could give vague information and allow students to grow concepts. To make this worthwhile, don't let teams choose topic.

Wes Bange (BPCC)

- Shares how BPCC has created meaningful internships for students. BPCC pair interns with mentor
- BPCC courses could reinforce the need that IT professionals need to make decisions in the moment and know how to look outside their own box to find solutions

Mark Summers (CSRA)

- Incorporate version control in our students
- They need to apply updates
- Suggested that faculty could make classes uncomfortable they need to learn life is not fair.

Wes Bange (BPCC)

- Internship is a MUST because it builds in good team skills

Mark Summers (CSRA) suggested that faculty should enforce deadlines because deadlines are a part of real life. Cesar Marrero (xient Technologies) echoed this importance.

Eddie Horton (NSU)

- Related the success of their Hackathon team competition.
 - This event builds team building.
 - It also help them to communicate which is important. (Students need to know how to communicate)

Kyle Lilley (Bossier Parish School Board IT)

- Continue to improve resume and written skills for students.
- Mock interviews are very helpful.

Lauren Schneider (CSRA)

- Guest Speakers are helpful for students

Dan Fain (Microsoft) – on the resume – tell me why you should get a job, not just the grades that the student earned

Paul Spivey – How important are (industry based) certifications for hiring?

CERTIFICATIONS –

Dan Fain (Microsoft) - stated that he does not value certifications, he has a tech screening during hiring process

Mark Summers (CSRA) - the Department of Defense requires that their workers have these certifications. So yes, certifications are very important for CSRA to get contracts.

Paul Spivey posed the question to CSRA, “Do you still require ITIL?” Mark Summers (CSRA) advised that yes, contracts require it and also advised that Cloud, Security+, and Network+ were also accepted.

Dan Fain (Microsoft) – They still require certifications, but they are not a total hiring factor

Cesar Marrero (xentientLABS) – Certifications are proof of knowledge and a foundation level – Programmers need to know hardware for security and design aspects, likes A+

Mark/Eddie Horton (NSU) now require certifications as final to pass classes which adds weight to the program

Gayle Flowers (BPCC) – stated that Louisiana Work Force feels that certifications add value

Angie White (Techx20) – Questioned if certifications can be offered in HS?

Several members of the board (Lauren (CSRA), Cesar (xentientLABS), Mark (CSRA), Brian Jagot (ECS)) indicated that Cloud certifications were very important

Cesar Marrero (xentientLABS) – indicated that understanding drones, AWS, and Blockchain were important.

Dan Fain (Microsoft) – emphasized that cyber security certifications were important, but that all certifications were important, too

Conversation then changed to what other components of BPCC curriculum would be important. Mark (CSRA) indicated that experience with virtual machines (VM) would be important. He then indicated that we should relook at the BPCC to LSU-S articulation agreement. Lesa Taylor-Dupree, asked if we should look at other articulations. At this moment, computer science type courses are not on the state matrix which presents a problem for articulation agreements. Ms. Dupree proposed the question of which school should BPCC link with?

At 3:30 pm, Paul Spivey thanked everyone for attending, and that the comments provided were valuable.

To summarize the key points of the meeting, BPCC TEM cyber-related programs should focus on the key points of team work, soft skills, problem solving, communication, and that deadlines need to be enforced.

Voting Items were emailed to board members prior to the advisory board meeting. The following were all of the voting items for the Spring 2018 CIS/CIT Advisory Board:

1. Program Outcomes (Attachment A) – Approved
2. Review of Curriculum (Attachment A) – Approved
3. Programmer Analyst Curriculum (Attachment B) – Approved
4. Renumbering of CIS/CIT Courses (Attachment C) – Approved
5. CTS in Health Information Technology – name (New Name: Health Information Security) and curriculum change (Attachment D) – Approved
6. Course Additions: Cloud+ - Approved
7. Course Additions: Operational Assessment of IT – Approved
8. AWS Certified Developer – Approved

Handouts available upon request.