

Business Advisory Council

Wednesday, April 27, 2011, 6:30pm

Attendees: Tim Weaver, Bill Sgro, Reet Sumal, Stephanie Branca, Felix Masci, Dave Kern (insurance), Shigeru Kimoto (technology), Melissa Benassi (marketing)

Opening Remarks

- Welcome by Reet Sumal, Introductions, Review of agenda
- Purpose of BAC
- State of the college
- State of the department
- Review of SB 1440 and impact on community colleges

Discussion Question:

- How will SB1440 impact the employers?

Advisory Board input:

David Kern: Insurance employer has two Pierce College graduates as employees. These employees can speak and write well and they are effective researchers. These employees work full-time and attend Pierce College. They also demonstrate proficient basic skills in math. Suggestion: educate the local employers that students may now receive 'transfer degree' and what that means.

Shigeru Kimoto: Technology employers may raise concern about how the "transfer degree" will pass the initial screening for positions requiring a specific skill set. Suggestion: encourage students to complete a certificate along with the transfer degree; the certificate can help with the initial screening.

Melissa Benassi: Marketing employers may be concerned that the college system is becoming "cookie cutter". Melissa is concerned that students lack problem solving skills. Melissa finds that when recent graduates are given a project they are most interested in being told the correct answer rather than them determining the path to the answer. Suggestion: incorporate problem solving exercises (beyond the "theory").

Suggestions and concerns:

- Invite business professionals to speak to the classes.
- Use technology in the classroom. An advantage of today's college graduates is their proficiency with technology.
- Use webinars and video conferencing to involve "real-life" professionals in the classroom.
- All graduates should complete an internship because the degree is a minimum requirement; the internship gets the job. Feedback from employers is that MC is not effectively communicating with local employers about the internship program.
- Concern: Lack of respect of deadlines and time management skills.