Cosmetology Advisory Meeting May 22, 2023

in-person & via Zoom

10:00 AM – 11:58 AM

Attendees:

Patty Glover, Citrus Community College Instructor Maria Fischer, Citrus Community College Instructor

Suzanne Acosta, Citrus Community College Instructor

Naomi Craig, Citrus Community College Instructor

Angie Alvarez, Citrus Community College CTCE Administrative Secretary

Kimberly Matthews, Citrus Community College CTCE Dean

Stevenie Smith Farmer, Citrus Community College Alumni, Salon Owner in Montclair, California

Charles Brown, Citrus Community College Alumni, Lux Salon in Glendora, California

Danielle Esqueda, Lux Salon in Glendora, California

Sami Groven, Sports Clips

Shannon Hensley, Santa Monica College

Debbie Perret, Curlicue Salon

This meeting was called to order by Patty Glover, by welcoming everyone to the advisory meeting.

Re-opening after COVID

Patty inquires with the Advisory Members how things are going in the industry in regards to re-opening after COVID. Sami mentioned client traffic was very slow at first and experienced staff shortages as well, then clients started to pick up and didn’t have enough staff, now are finally starting to reach middle ground with the two. Stevenie mentioned they were blessed in that their clients were ready to come into the salon; therefore, staff was very busy with appointments right away. Patty inquired if Stevenie moved equipment to conduct appointments outside. Stevenie said no as she wasn’t knowledgeable in how to run electrical equipment outside nor does her location have adequate space to conduct business outside, but took COVID very seriously and had clients and staff maintain safe distances. Charles mentioned his location was extremely busy as soon as they opened, comparable to holiday rush, for 8 months straight as people were excited to socialize, go out, and attend celebrations. Danielle mentioned she was working at a salon that did not make it through the pandemic which led her to begin working at Lux Salon. Danielle mentioned the biggest hurdle for her after opening back up was avoiding getting ticketed and getting used to State Board and Health department expectations. She notes that it was challenging to keep up to date with that, but besides that hurdle, she feels that the salons are busier now than they were pre-pandemic. Patty mentioned how the college had a procedure in place where students would scan a QR code to track the locations/classrooms that they accessed during the pandemic, and now the college is no longer requiring students or staff to do so per Health department guidelines.

Citrus College Salon Re-Opening

The Cosmetology program salon is working on a soft opening for clients 18 and older, and by appointment only this Summer. Maria mentioned she wishes the college had opened up to the public far sooner, as other colleges had chosen to do. She believes there is a comfort level that students have with friends and family and it leads them to be unprepared when going on to work on clients in a salon. Maria also said that the program was supposed to open up to the public in the Winter as they had a class called ‘salon success’, but unfortunately the class was set up as an elective because of the change in hours, and consequently only 5 students signed up for that class, even though it was their opportunity to experience working on a real client. Maria noted that she thought it was very telling about the type of students there are right now.

Soft Skills

In regards to Maria’s observation, Stevenie asked if the details of the elective course were communicated to students. Maria replied that she went to each one of the Cosmetology classes to market the course to students and to inform them that the course would provide an opportunity for them to work on clients and learn more advanced techniques. Maria also mentioned she is worried about the students that are out there today: no drive, sense of entitlement, want everything handed to them and not willing to work, which is troubling. Maria mentioned this is probably obvious when these students go on to work in the salons. Charles agreed and pointed out that about 1 out of 6 assistants that come in to work at the salon make it through the 1st year and actually move on to the next step, while the others just disappear. Charles mentioned that the professionals that make it in the industry are generally the ones whom are able to accept challenges and work through/overcome them.

Patty mentioned that students have a hard time talking to people. Charles agreed and mentioned that many of the students that go on to be assistants are not successful in the industry due to their lack of social skills and the inability to connect with their client and make them feel comfortable throughout the service they are providing. Maria mentioned that soft skills has been an issue for students for years and that she tries to get students to practice conversating with her and communicates to them that they need to get comfortable with talking to people of all age groups. Maria also informs her students that age or profession should not deter them from being able to connect and conversate as she points out that the demographic of most of the clients that have the money and time to receive salon services throughout the day are generally not going to be a demographic of their peers and may be older professionals. Maria mentioned technology might be to blame for the lack of social skills as the situation seems to get worse over time. Stevenie agreed. Patty also agreed and mentioned how she incorporates a ‘client consultation’ in her courses and has the students practice this with other students they do not know and has them ask questions that are pertinent to following safety protocols such as if they could be pregnant or if they have any heart problems, etc.

Shannon asked in the chat: Why not design some cooperative learning exercises that require students to talk?

Patty noted that the instructors do try to incorporate practicing social skills in their class. Maria pointed out that the students do not have difficulty speaking with their peers, but rather have trouble with communicating with others outside of their age group. Maria reiterated that the Cosmetology program being limited to only allowing students to invite friends and family to participate at the college salon is not an effective practice to teach the students how to communicate professionally. Suzanne asked “Then, why are we limiting the invitation to the college salon to only friends and family?” Patty mentioned that the college was only allowing the program to invite friends and family in order to follow Health department guidelines due to COVID, but that the college would be allowing the program to open the invitation up to the public starting in the Summer. Maria pointed out that Citrus College was slower at re-opening to the public than other colleges.

Student Statistics

Shannon asked in the chat: “Are there current statistics on what percentage of students are working in five years after school?”

Maria said no, there currently is not and the faculty lose contact with the student once they graduate and are no longer actively participating in the program, but that is something that they would like to create. Maria noted they would like to create a tracking system that would enable them to communicate with the students after graduation and provide them access to employment opportunities that they are made aware of through industry partners. Without this tracking system, it is very hard to track down these students or to remember who would be eligible for job recommendations as the program does not have a senior floor or senior class. Shannon said she thinks that faculty might be able to get some of the statistics from State Board just by seeing how many past students are staying licensed and keeping a license up. She states this will give a rough idea, next to building that tracking system. Shannon mentioned that it was told to her that only about 10% of licensed professionals actually stay in the field and she assumes that currently that percentage is about the same or are lucky if 10% of the people actually work in our field in the long run. In regards to the student statistics, Suzanne pointed out that the percentage of Citrus Cosmetology students whom actually pass the state board is declining. Patty mentioned that pre-pandemic the college had a State Board pass rate of 95%-98% which has now declined to a 50% pass rate this last quarter. Maria mentioned that this might have to do with the fact that the program previously used to have a State Board class which they no longer offer.

Online Modality

Stevenie mentioned that this decline in pass rate may be due to the fact that the students are now attending class online and students might not be learning at all as most people are hands-on oriented, especially those in this field. Maria stated that she agrees that this is true in regards to the student’s practicals, but not in terms of lecture. Maria mentioned that she does not hold live Zoom for her class, but rather does recorded lecture/asynchronous. Stevenie stated that she does not believe that the students would pay attention to the material if taught online, regardless whether lecture is held Zoom or recorded lecture. Maria disagreed and stated that she incorporates embedded quizzes in her lectures and requires substantial note taking so that the students are required to pay attention while watching the recorded lectures. Suzanne stated that she agrees with Maria’s viewpoint that offering the course as asynchronous is beneficial to the students and allows them an opportunity to excel as they manage juggling their other required courses. Patty mentions the struggle with asynchronous courses consists of not being able to get in communication with instructors in real time. Stevenie agreed that not having real time access to communicate with your instructors holds up the learning process when students have questions. Stevenie also points out that as mentioned earlier, the current generation of students experience difficulty with focusing due to technology and social media and feels as though conducting the courses online is not beneficial to the students or program. Maria pointed out that the program is currently offering a hybrid modality so the courses are only 20% online, in which Stevenie pointed out that the program is now at a 50% pass rate which may be due to the modality. Maria disagreed and mentioned there are other reasons that come into factor when evaluating the current pass rate of the program such as the lack of full-time instructors, the high number of adjunct professors teaching courses, the elimination of the State Board course, and the difficulty for full-time instructors to enforce curriculum and standardization.

Standardization

Suzanne mentioned that State Board has eliminated the practicals portion and is now only a written exam; therefore, it would make more sense for all faculty to focus on ensuring the students are successfully grasping the lecture material. Patty stated that during the Executive Director of State Board’s recent visit, she informed faculty that most of the material on the State Board exam would come directly from the Milady course material. Patty also mentioned that the department is currently not cohesive being that there are several adjunct faculty which leads to limitations and difficulty in trying to conduct weekly meetings to ensure that all instructors are on the same page and are all emphasizing essential course material. Suzanne stated that one of her students brought to her attention and wanted to make a point to request standardization across all courses. Maria stated that she agrees and believes standardization is important in regards to the material that is being taught to the students. Maria also pointed out that this is something the department is currently trying to do as the program is changing to the new addition of Milady in the Fall which comes with an online learning system and believes that positive changes will start to be seen once this is implemented. Maria also stated that she is currently working on setting up an additional module in CIMA in which students will be able to take practice exams during the additional time that they have access to the software after they graduate so that they are better prepared for the State Board exam which is similarly conducted online via multiple choice. Maria believes all of these upcoming changes will increase the program’s pass rate.

Hairstyling Certificate

Currently, there is no license required to be able to provide services such as braiding, inserting extensions, or giving a client an up-do in a salon. However, these individuals whom are unlicensed are not allowed to perform any other services such as cutting, shampooing, or blow drying. To help write the curriculum for this new certificate that the State Board is proposing, the committee is in search of (preferably) licensees whom have been in the industry less than 5 years, no instructors.

Patty asked how individuals feel about the new certificate. Debbie said she thinks it's a great idea. She states it is almost a gateway and can be used as a stackable certificate, especially if the rest of the curriculum supports interested students in doing a crossover. Debbie thinks it is a wonderful idea and that there are people who are going to get involved in the certificate, and then think, oh, for just a few more hours I can get the whole thing. Debbie thinks it's a really good curriculum to write and thing to start, and then we can see where that where it's going to go. She also mentioned that it is a great way to incorporate hair extensions and other services that there is not enough time to learn in general Cosmetology and will enhance students’ skills.

Maria asked Debbie how Santa Monica College is offering this certificate. Debbie said they have not actually started offering the certificate and are probably are at about the same as where Citrus is with it. Debbie said Santa Monica has the ideas, the go ahead, the desire, and the basic classes, the rules, and regulations, and disinfection portion of it, and the hair cutting and hair styling. In addition to that, Debbie mentioned they will probably be adding in extensions, wiggery, braiding, twists, and in general more focus on those types of services. Debbie believes it will be offered at her college soon and that people are going to be interested in it and if it can be written in such a way that it leads to some advanced classes and something that is a part of the existing Cosmo curriculum. Debbie mentioned this might be difficult depending on the way the current curriculum is set up at Citrus.

Maria explained that there have been some recent changes to the curriculum to accommodate this Hairstyling certificate. Chemicals and nails were completely removed from the intro module. The other modules include haircutting, hair styling, skin, nails, and chemicals in which they combined hair texture and hair color. Maria stated the freshman class was designed in a way where people interested in the hairstyling certificate can take the intro class, and then all they would need to take is haircutting, then hairstyling. Maria also said that the curriculum was also designed in way that in case the student is interested in continuing on, Citrus is in the process of implementing a barbering program within the next 2 years, so the student can also take the intro class and then go on to barbering. Maria stated the challenge will be having more demand for that intro class which might lead to the need to offer 2 freshman classes rather than one, but will determine that need based off the interest in just the hairstyling and barbering certificate.

Debbie mentioned that it is a great plan and the goal would be that students could do some sort of crossover for all of those classes to help their certificates. Debbie noted that students are looking to get lots of licenses now, more so than ever before so this certificate will be a great addition to the program and it is a great way to offer a more detailed approach that encompasses all of those other services that are not able to fit in the general Cosmetology curriculum. Debbie stated this certificate will offer the students actual practice and on hands training in a classroom setting for these services such as extensions and will be extremely beneficial for them to have the time to practice these techniques.

Naomi mentioned that she has several colleagues that do only extensions or only braiding and thinks this makes a lot of sense as many of them found it annoying that they had to do all of beauty school in order to do like just the one thing and thinks that they would have loved if that had been an option.

All parties in attendance approved that this hairstyling certificate would be beneficial to Citrus College.

Perkins Grant

Fulltime faculty has submitted a request for a Perkins Grant which is a federal grant whose purpose is to promote student achievement in Career Technical programs. The Cosmetology program has applied for this grant to support creating the curriculum and establishment of a barbering program as the goal is to attract underrepresented populations in this field such as males and economically underrepresented individuals. From our understanding, LA career tech and Long Beach State are the only other colleges that offer this barbering program.

Debbie and Shannon mention that it is a great idea. Kimberly mentioned implementing this program would be a 2-step process. The first step is getting the labor market information from the Center of Excellence in which the clock starts and you have a year to submit the regional application.

All parties in attendance approved that this barbering program would be beneficial to Citrus College.

The meeting adjourned at 11:58 AM.