



Computer Information Systems Advisory Meeting Minutes, Cuesta College

Friday, February 1, 2019

In attendance:

Faculty:

Randy Scovil (Full-Time Instructor, Computer Science Lead)
Cinita Vanessa Salas* (Part-Time Instructor)
Robert Sfarzo, (Part-Time Instructor)

Industry:

Addison Grant, iFixit*
Nathan Macfarlane, Tapestry Solutions*
John Osumi, Bishop Peak Technology*
Anthony Peach, IQMS (current student)
Rachel Peterson, Adventure Aide*

(*) Former Cuesta CIS Student

Education:

Dr. Clinton Staley, Cal Poly Computer Science Professor

Cuesta Administrative:

Dr. John Cascamo, Dean
Matthew Green
Kim Espino

- Randy thanked everyone for participating, and everyone introduced themselves.
- **Overview of CIS Program:**
 - Randy mentioned that there was no new curriculum for the coming year and that the focus was on increasing offerings of existing courses as resources allow.

- Randy shared that the program's enrollment is in the middle of another growth period, especially in CIS 201 and in the core computer science courses (CIS 231-233, 240-241).
- Randy also mentioned that while the existing group of part-time instructors is very strong, there is an ongoing need for instructors with advanced degrees and/or specialized knowledge (e.g. mobile, cloud).
- **Dual Enrollment:**
 - Cuesta began offering CIS 201 and CIS 210 at local high schools during the regular school day starting in Fall 2016.
 - The courses were initially offered at New Tech High School in Nipomo and Paso Robles High School, with San Luis Obispo High School coming on board this year. Other schools in the county may be participating as well.
- **Potential New Courses/Programs;**
 - Bob Sfarzo outlined the new curriculum Cuesta is developing in Cloud Computing in partnership with AWS Academy.
 - The curriculum will be a combination of revising existing web-oriented courses along with new courses while leveraging existing mobile offering to provide a "mobile full stack" option for students.
 - The revised courses are set to begin this coming Fall. Courses will eventually include Intro to Cloud, Cloud Development, Databases, Mobile Cloud, and Architecture/Security.
 - The industry panelists were asked for their feedback on this new curriculum. The response was universally positive. They felt that this is a growth area with strong career opportunities and that there is a need for available training in this field.
- **Student Opportunities/Employment**
 - Randy reported that Cuesta students continue to have a strong track record in securing and performing in local internships and entry-level positions.
 - Many employers express a preference for student with strong fundamental and conceptual skills for entry-level programming positions. They can train in their internal procedures and encourage them to finish their degrees.
 - Commonly students who finish CIS 233 (capstone of the Computer Science A.S. degree) are very desirable but motivated students who have taken CIS 231 have also been successful, as have student that have taken mobile development courses (CIS 203/204, 207/208).
 - One area where students can get a leg up is by learning more about how to succeed in a technical interview, which is very different than typical interviews. Following up on last year's meeting, Randy and Tim Burks from Google (who attended that meeting) did a special presentation to the CIS 233 course where Tim went discussed the interview process at Google and conducted a typical Google tech interview (with Randy as the test subject). Students were able to ask

questions about the process. This was seen as very favorable and there may be opportunities to expand this idea.

- John C. discussed some of the recent local tech apprenticeship programs and outlined for the group some of the disconnects with what is being presented publicly.
- John C. asked for the group's feedback on these programs. Industry response was mixed, citing a variety of skill levels and preparation in graduates of these apprenticeship programs. They suggested that some "cherry-picking" is being done in candidate selection and it is not known if the program is sustainable. There were also concerns about the depth of the material students receive in these workshops and that it did not favorably compare to what students receive in an accredited college curriculum.
- John C. also asked the industry panelists about claims that there could be a large number of remote jobs created locally by apprenticeships. The panelists felt this was very unlikely, especially some of the larger (c. 2000) number of jobs being cited by some. There was also a feeling that such jobs would not be particularly good jobs.
- **New Opportunities**
 - Randy asked the group for ideas for potential opportunities for new courses or workshops. The panelists suggested industry skills that could be woven into some courses given time or perhaps offered as workshops or short-form courses.
 - Areas cited by the panel included DevOps, Source Control Management, SQL Databases, and Command-Line Interface.
- Once the formal agenda was completed all participants had contributed to the discussion and felt that their concerns had been heard. At that time the meeting was formally adjourned and additional smaller conversations ensued.