

Biotechnology Program at Santa Monica College (SMC)

Minutes – Industry Advisory Board Meeting
Friday, September 27, 2024, 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

- I. **Call to Order** – 1:05pm, Karol Lu, Ed.D., Project Manager
The Biotechnology Program advisory board meeting was held via Zoom. Karol Lu, Ed.D., Project Manager, called the meeting to order at 1:05pm on Friday, September 27, 2024.
- II. **Welcome & Introductions** – 1:06pm, Karol Lu, Ed.D., Project Manager
Dr. Lu welcomed *five members* from industry and *two program faculty* members in attendance. All advisory board members as well as faculty members introduced themselves:
- In attendance from Santa Monica College – Name, Title, and Association**
Andria Denmon, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Santa Monica College
Thomas Chen, Ph.D., Professor, Santa Monica College
- In attendance from Industry (Voting Members) – Name, Title, and Association**
Samantha Leano* – ABE Lab Technician and Site Coordinator, Pasadena Bio Collaborative Incubator
Damon Tighe, Curriculum Training Specialist, Bio-Rad
Brendan Amer, Ph.D., Principal Investigator, Amgen
Farahnaz Forozan, Ph.D., President/CEO, Vash
Nevija Watson, M.S., Director of Clinical Manufacturing, Kite Pharma
*Note: Samantha Leano serves as a substitute for Wendie Johnston, Ph.D.
- III. **Approval of Minutes** – 1:14pm
- a. **Industry Advisory Board Meeting Minutes – March 1, 2024**
The minutes of the March 1, 2024 meeting were reviewed. An amendment was made to the attendees and the spelling of an attendee's name, adding Maurizio Vecchione (Terasaki Institute) to the list of non-voting attendees and changing "Endie Johnston" to "Wendie Johnston." Dr. Forozan motioned to approve the minutes as amended, Nevija Watson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Vote: In favor (5), Oppose (0), Abstain (0).
- b. **Industry Advisory Board [urgent] Meeting Minutes – June 7, 2024**
The minutes of the June 7, 2024, meeting were reviewed. Dr. Forozan motioned to approve the minutes without amendments, Dr. Amer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Vote: In favor (6), Oppose (0), Abstain (0).
- IV. **New Business** – 1:18pm, Andria Denmon, Ph.D., Associate Professor
- a. **Program Updates**
Dr. Andria Denmon provided the committee members with a program update on recently approved Certificates of Achievement (CoA) and mentioned that the A.S. Degree is pending final approval by the California Community College Chancellor's Office. Dr. Denmon presented a low-unit Certificate of Achievement that could serve as an award offered to high school students who participate in dual enrollment biotechnology courses and SMC program students. Dr. Denmon noted that Option A is a pathway for students at the high school that would allow students to gain more laboratory experience and equipment needs would be similar for Biology 30 course; Option B allows students to be introduced to quality, the course does not have prerequisite requirements and can be offered in a remote capacity (online). The options presented for the low-unit CoA would include:
- i. Option A – CoA (10 units): Biology 30 – Fundamentals of Biotechnology I; Biology 31 – Fundamentals of Biotechnology II
 - ii. Option B – CoA (8 units): Biology 30 – Fundamentals of Biotechnology 1; Biology 36 – Quality Control and Assurance



b. Open Discussion – 1:24pm, Committee Members

Dr. Forozan acknowledged the importance of including a quality assurance course especially with the expansion of gene and cell manufacturing sites in the local industry; she added the online option provides a flexibility for those who are interested in the low-unit CoA. Mr. Tighe mentioned that with the low-unit CoA students have more options with the two-course requirements and echoed the benefit of an online course. Dr. Amer believes that the requirement for a biotechnology fundamentals course is necessary as one of the requirements; Dr. Forozan asked whether students were allowed to take a third course as a dual enrollment student; Dr. Lu explained that dual enrollment courses are typically paired so that students can take one course per semester that make up an entire school year but that a third course is possible if students were interested in continuing the track at SMC. Dr. Amer recommended specialized tracks designed for students with different biotechnology interests; Dr. Forozan agreed with the specialized track suggestion.

V. Action Items – 1:32pm - Karol Lu, Ed.D., Project Manager

a. CoA – Option A - Official Vote

Mr. Tighe made a motion to recommend a new low-unit CoA (10 units) that includes Biology 30 – Fundamentals of Biotechnology I and Biology 31 – Fundamentals of Biotechnology II. The motion failed for lack of a second.

b. CoA – Option B - Official Vote

Dr. Amer made a motion to recommend a new low-unit CoA (8 units) that includes Biology 30 – Fundamentals of Biotechnology I and Biology 36 – Quality Control and Assurance. Ms. Watson seconded the motion. The motion was approved by majority vote. Vote: Yes (4), No (1).

IV. New Business – 1:36pm, continue

a. Program Updates, continue

1:36pm: Dr. Denmon informed the committee members about recent program marketing efforts and the “Day in the Life of a Biotechnology Students” video created in partnership with Univision.

1:39pm: Dr. Denmon informed the committee members about the prerequisite updates: Biology 30 will serve as a prerequisite course for the Life Sciences microbiology course (MCRBIO 1) and Biology 30 will be the only prerequisite option for Biology 31.

1:44pm: Dr. Denmon is working to ensure that the Biotechnology Program is recognized by the Veteran’s Association on campus so that the program will be promoted/recommended to veterans.

1:49pm: Dr. Denmon mentioned that there was a statewide funding cut for Learning-Aligned Employment Program (LAEP) that could affect students’ opportunities to be funded for student work on/off campus; program students may be affected if grant funding is not available for paid internships. Dr. Forozan suggested reaching out to pharmaceutical companies to sponsor student internships; Dr. Amer acknowledged that Amgen offers paid internship, and that the industry seems to be moving in a direction that is more equity-minded; Ms. Watson said that Kite is requiring a bachelor’s degree for students to participate in an internship at the company.

VI. Meeting Summary – 1:46pm, Karol Lu, Ed.D., Project Manager

a. Committee Recommendations

- i. Recommends the addition of a new CoA (8 units) that includes Biology 30 – Fundamentals of Biotechnology I and Biology 36 – Quality Control and Assurance as course requirements.

VII. Announcements – 1:57pm, Karol Lu, Ed.D., Project Manager

- a. Next Meeting Date, Time, Location – Spring 2025 semester, details TBA

VIII. Adjournment – 1:58pm, Karol Lu, Ed.D., Project Manager

Minutes recorded and submitted by Karol Lu, Ed.D., Project Manager, pending approval.

