

Santa Monica College
General Business Advisory Board Meeting
November 22, 2024 – Via Zoom 12:30-2:00pm
Minutes

Attendees:

Dana Nasser (SMC), Enrique Lopez (SMC), Aileen Huang(SMC), Jenny Resnick(SMC), Cesar Rubio(SMC), Katya Rodriguez(SMC), Ming Lu(SMC), Erin Steinberger(SMC), Lisa Lewenberg (SMC)
Don Crawford (Board Member)
Stephen Williams (Board Member)
Denise Froemming (Board Member)

- 1) **Dana Nasser Introduction** – Dana reviewed the meeting agenda. Dana mentioned the value of department certificates. Some students do not want a degree, and a certificate is a great option to gain valuable skills and recognition of these skills.
- 2) **Faculty Introductions** – all SMC faculty introduced themselves
- 3) **Welcome from the District:** Lisa Lewenberg, Project Manager, Office of Economic/Workforce Development. Lisa discussed the role of workforce development in developing skills-based initiatives at the school and collaborations with the business community.
- 4) **Presentation of Salesforce Certificate of Achievement**
Katya Rodriguez (SMC Professor) presented a new Certificate in Salesforce Achievement. She presented a PowerPoint presentation that :1) Described what is Sales Force, 2) Use of Salesforce and popularity of software across business and the forecasted job growth of related Sales Force positions – 9.3mm new jobs by 2026. 3) The Course Requirements for the Certificate

Feedback:

Stephen Williams – mentioned the use of Salesforce at Fox Film and that certification of Sales Force knowledge is important.

Denise Froemming – asked about how we track progress of student’s post-certification

Lisa Lewenberg – responded to Denise’s question stating the school is working on a process to track student progress.

Cesar Rubio – mentioned that it would be good to know how Salesforce can be used across various business areas

Aileen Huang – If Salesforce can be leveraged by students interested in the technical space as well as the business space. Katya responded that it can be used in either space.

SMC Board Members recommended the development of the **Certificate of Achievement in Salesforce**. A vote to approve the **Certificate of Achievement in Salesforce** was requested and **Unanimous approval** from all Board Members for the Certificate was recorded.

5) AI and its impact on the workforce: How is it changing the skills needed in the workplace?

Stephen Williams – mentioned that AI is being leveraged at Fox Film in the following areas: 1) Optimizing headlines, 2) Customizing material to audiences and 3) For solving business problems

Don Crawford – mentioned that Deloitte is utilizing AI to solve problems across different segments of their practice. He believes that it is important that SMC students gain the skills to effectively use AI.

Aileen Huang – asked board members how they are best using AI? Stephen Williams responded – Fox is using Chat GBT internally for the areas previously mentioned.

Don Crawford – responded that Deloitte has developed a proprietary AI Chat GBT that they use internally. It has embedded Deloitte content that is used for audits and written communication.

Cesar Rubio – asked how is AI changing business needs. Raised concerns of job loss due to AI utilization.

Don Crawford stated that he does not forecast significant job losses. AI allows staff to spend more time on higher level thinking areas than being task oriented.

Denise Froemming stated she sees a gap between critical thinking and memorization.

Lisa Froemming asked what is main AI that board members recommend? All board members stated that they recommend the most popular application “Chat GBT”

6) Any suggestions for curriculum or course updates that incorporate new workplace skills?

Don Crawford stated: 1) Excel skills, 2) Verbal Communication and 3) Effective email communication skills

Stephen Williams stated: 1) Critical Thinking, 2) Project Management and 3) Ability to break-down problems/solve complex problems

Denise Froemming stated: 1) Resiliency and 2) Ability to deal with uncertainty

Don Crawford also stated that it is important for companies to effectively provide critical feedback to employees and employees to deal with that feedback with resiliency.

7) Do you have any concerns regarding new grads/hires?

Stephen Williams – It appears that recent college grads are less loyal to companies than in the past. Students don't understand the value of staying with a company for many years. This phenomenon has made employee retention critical for companies like Fox Film

Don Crawford – he agrees that employee retention is important to Deloitte as well. They believe that recent hires need to have a more realistic view of lifestyle within the professional services space.

Aileen Huang – express concern that she has students who are making mid-career transitions, and they are finding it difficult to find opportunities with accounting firms given their older age.

Don Crawford responded that he agrees with Aileen as Deloitte's recruitment efforts are more focused on “traditional students” and they need to improve their efforts non-traditional students.

Denise Froemming stated that the accounting firms need to make improvement in these areas.

8) How would you like to be involved as an Advisory Board Member?

Don Crawford – open to what SMC would propose in the future. He would like to be involved in speaking opportunities with other Deloitte professionals. They could communicate internships/student development programs.

Stephen Williams – he would be open to efforts collaborate in building Salesforce student skills.

Denise Froemming – support the Salesforce certification efforts

9) Closing

Dana thanked the board and SMC staff and faculty members in attendance for their time and input