

# WMT DEPARTMENT'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

**Date: March 27, 2025 at 9 AM**

## **1. Welcome and Introductions:**

- Reuben Foat, full-time faculty and department chair, welcomed everyone and reminded attendees to sign the attendance sheet. He announced that **Eric Loucks would be stepping up as department chair starting June 1st.**
- **Full-time faculty present:** Reuben Foat, Eric Loucks. Anthony Fortner was absent due to teaching.
- **Part-time faculty present:** Steven Romo (wood turning), Courtney Gale (wood turning), Ron Murase (cabinets and installation).
- **District employee (not present):** Sam Millard (technician).
- **Industry representatives present (with their affiliations/roles):**
  - Mike Lind (Complete Cutting Solutions, Altendorf and other brand sales).
  - Saul Martin (AWI - Architectural Woodwork Institute).
  - Ben Angerer (Shaper Tools).
  - Corey Kidder (Festool USA).
  - Eddie De La Torre (Biesse America, territory representative).
  - Diana Ramirez (Reborn Cabinets, employer).
  - Adria Salvatore (AWI - Architectural Woodwork Institute, Education Director).
- Students not present

## **2. Introductions:**

- Introductions were conducted, with attendees stating their names, employers (if applicable), and roles.

## **3. Approval of Previous Minutes:**

- Steven Romo made a **motion to approve the previous meeting minutes.**
- Ron Murase **seconded the motion.**
- The motion passed by unanimous vote (ayes heard, no opposition or abstentions noted).

## **4. Program Overview:**

- **Enrollment:** Spring 2025 enrollment is **439**, up from Spring 2024 (414). Fall 2024 enrollment was 392, and Fall 2023 was 388. **Overall enrollment has been steadily increasing and is at the highest in the last 10 years for the current academic year (including Fall and Spring at 831 students).** The program has room for more students, with a capacity of 550 in the spring and 597 in the fall.
- **Full-time equivalent students (FTES):** FTES are increasing.
- **Success rates:** Fall semester success rates were at **82%**, a slight decrease from a steady upward trend, but still above 80%.
- **Retention rates:** Retention rates have also slightly decreased but remain above 80%.
- **Disaggregated data: Age and Gender:** The highest student population is in the 50 and over age group, with some increase in the 20-24 range. The female population is holding steady between 26% and 32% in fall semesters. **The Hispanic/Latino student population has surpassed the white population for the first time.**
- **Scholarship Updates:** Approximately **\$27,000** of the **\$88,000** endowment has been awarded. Another \$10,000-\$11,000 is expected to be awarded for summer workshop classes students attend at other woodworking institutions. There is discussion about potentially giving \$200 scholarships to all woodworking program students who seek financial aid to increase the distribution of funds.
- **Curriculum Updates:**
  - Furniture Intensive Cohort 2 and WMT 126: History of Furniture Design are running.
  - **New Courses:** WMT 124: Rhino3D for Woodworkers and WMT 172L Intermediate Furniture Intensive Lab have been added. Rhino3D was chosen for its faculty expertise and flexibility in file formats.
  - **Revived Courses:** WMT 211: The Workbench, WMT 157: Passage Door, and WMT 218: Intermediate Woodturning and corresponding completion lab, WMT 219L, have been revived.
  - Existing intensive courses (WMT 171ABC) will now satisfy prerequisite requirements for existing courses.
  - **Future updates under consideration:** guitar making courses, potentially an intermediate digital fabrication course and a woodworking digital fabrication certificate, and lowering units for existing certificates while offering more certificates.
- **New equipment:**
  - **Ordered/recently installed:** Striebig Vertical Panel Saw with scoring blade, Barth vacuum (4x8), dust collector for small CNCs, furniture design

supplies, hand tools and sharpening supplies, 3D printers, new laser cutters, Hollow Chisel Mortisers, Festool Contouro machines (potentially backordered), plotters/large format printers, large lathes, shop carts, and 3.25 HP routers for router tables. This was made possible by Strong Workforce Grant and Perkins funding.

- **Looking at:** Another sliding panel saw, edge boring/drill/dowel machine, 3D scanners, another disc sander, compound miter saw, new small CNCs, 24” jointer, and potentially a panel hoist. Mike Lind offered to discuss options for a panel hoist. Courtney Gale requested chucks for each student in turning classes. Eric Loucks suggested face shields for every student.
- **Events faculty attended:** None since the last meeting. Eric Loucks attended a Shaper Origin event previously .
- **Recruiting efforts faculty participated in:** On-campus events for high school students, Woodworking Institute for HS Woodshop teachers (February), AWFS Sponsored event coming in April (making a finger joint box with a carved logo using Shaper Origin). Approximately 40 teachers will attend the AWFS/Shaper Origin workshop on April 25th.
- **Marketing projects faculty completed:** Ad in the school magazine (spring), Instagram campaign (spring), website improvements (FAQs, Scholarship). The job board has been quiet.

#### 5. Potential job opportunities for students (Job Board):

- The job board has been very quiet recently, with only two inquiries this semester. A CNC company will be speaking to the CNC class as they are looking for 5-axis CNC operators.
- Discussion arose regarding the **significant need for maintenance technicians for woodworking machinery** (edge banders, CNCs, etc.). There is potential for a machine maintenance class to expand and include more advanced machinery. Industry representatives highlighted the **high demand and good earning potential for such technicians (potentially over \$100,000 annually)**.

#### 6. Committee member feedback:

- **Technology needs:** Covered under new equipment discussion.
- **Curriculum training needs:** Covered under curriculum updates.

- **Software needs:** Discussion about potentially offering an AutoCAD class (faculty available) and looking at Mosaic as a potentially more affordable alternative to Cabinet Vision.
- **Digital Fabrication Certificate and Degree:**
  - Eddie De La Torre made a **motion to approve the idea of pursuing the creation of a digital fabrication certificate and degree in the woodworking area.**
  - Ben Angerer seconded the motion.
  - The motion passed by majority vote (ayes heard from multiple members, no nays or abstentions).
- **Furniture Design Certificate and Degree (different than Furniture Making one):**
  - Steve Romo made a **motion in support of creating a furniture design certificate and degree.**
  - Ron Murase seconded the motion.
  - The motion passed by majority vote (ayes heard from multiple members, no nays or abstentions).

#### **7. Open discussion:**

- General feedback was solicited, but no specific items were raised beyond those already discussed.

#### **8. Scheduling of next meeting:**

- The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for **Mid-November 2025.**

#### **9. Adjournment:**

- The meeting was adjourned. Reuben Foat reminded attendees of the **end-of-year celebration on Saturday, May 24th**, where student work will be displayed.
- Completed at 9:44 AM

Minutes created by: Reuben Foat

Minutes generated: March 29, 2025