

CIS DEPARTMENT ADVISORY MEETING

LOCATION: Online through Zoom

DATE: May 15, 2025

TIME: 6:00 PM

MEETING MINUTES

ATTENDEES:	Mehrak Amirfazlian	Adjunct Faculty
	Paul Belknap	Proponent Inc
	Delara Daryaei	Adjunct Faculty
	Hector Felix	Northrop Grumman
	Jolene James	Proponent Inc
	Kenny Lou	Full-Time Faculty
	Angel Hernandez	Imperial Dade
	Fadi Muheidat	CSU-San Bernardino
	PhuongNguyen	Full-Time Faculty
	Luis Perez	CSU-Long Beach

Introduction

The advisory meeting for the CIS Department at Cerritos College began with introductions from faculty members and industry professionals, including Kenny Lou, the co-chair, and several adjunct professors and industry experts. Participants shared their backgrounds and current roles, emphasizing their commitment to contributing to the department's programs. The meeting aimed to gather input and feedback on the programs offered, with participants expressing gratitude for the opportunity to collaborate and enhance student learning experiences.

CIS Program Overview

Lou provided an overview of the computer science and IT tracks offered by the department, detailing the various certificates and degrees available. He explained the approval process for degree programs, which involve regional consortiums to avoid duplicates and ensure proper documentation. Lou and Phuong discussed upcoming programs, with Phuong presenting an overview of the applied data science certificate and degree, which includes required and elective courses. The meeting focused on evaluating the viability and opportunities of existing programs and identifying any potential additions or improvements needed.

Data Science Curriculum Overview

Phuong presented the curriculum for the Applied Data Science certificate and degree programs, outlining required courses and electives. The programs include courses in Python programming, statistics, data analysis, and visualization. Phuong discussed plans to modify existing courses and

develop new ones to better serve students' needs. The advisory committee members were invited to provide input and suggestions on the data science curriculum.

Database Tools for Community College Courses

The group discussed the relevance of teaching Microsoft Access in community colleges, with Phuong explaining that Access is suitable for small business database needs and Lou suggesting the department should review its actual usage in businesses and organizations before deciding on whether to continue offering the course. Angel recommended using Microsoft Power BI for CIS 220 and suggested RapidMiner as an alternative to Texera for CIS 193, offering to send details via email. Lou mentioned that AWS Academy provides a sandbox environment with SQL and MongoDB databases that could be useful for database classes.

AI Program Development and Support

The meeting focused on two main topics: support for the applied data science program and the development of an AI program. Lou proposed a motion to document committee support for the applied data science program, which was agreed upon by all present. The group then discussed a potential AI program aimed at training students to use AI tools for productivity augmentation, rather than becoming AI developers. Paul suggested focusing on agent building and interconnecting external data sources, while Jolene emphasized the program's necessity across disciplines. The committee agreed that offering an AI program was crucial given the current direction of various fields.

AI Education for Students

The group discussed developing an AI program for students, focusing on practical AI tools and applications rather than deep technical knowledge. They agreed to create a general course that would introduce students to various AI tools and their potential uses across different fields, with the possibility of deeper exploration for those interested. Phuong emphasized the need to carefully consider the target audience for the program, while Fadi suggested incorporating the course into the curriculum as a certificate program or elective. The group also discussed the potential benefits of such a program in attracting more students and preparing them for the job market.

Software Engineering Career Pathways

The group discussed job opportunities in the software industry, with Hector noting that a four-year degree in computer science or software engineering is typically required for entry-level positions, though relevant work experience can sometimes substitute. Phuong agreed that the field is evolving rapidly, particularly with AI integration, and emphasized the importance of skills like software architecture, system integration, and testing for modern engineering roles. Both Hector and Phuong highlighted the competitive job market, where many graduates with degrees are struggling to find positions, and stressed the need for students to demonstrate exceptional skills through side projects and practical experience beyond formal education.

Technical Internship and Education Requirements

The discussion focused on internship opportunities and education requirements for various technical roles. Hector explained that internships are generally easier to secure than full-time positions and can

lead to future job opportunities. Angel shared that their company typically hires systems administrators with associate's degrees and cloud computing professionals with relevant experience, while data scientists require master's degrees. Phuong emphasized the benefits of pursuing online master's degrees for career advancement, particularly in computer science.

Certificate Program Curriculum Restructuring

The group discussed updating their certificate programs, particularly focusing on transitioning from client-side to full-stack web development. Phuong and Angel suggested redesigning the curriculum to include both front-end and back-end technologies, with courses covering React, Node.js, and MongoDB. They agreed to keep the JavaScript programming course while restructuring the sequence of classes. The conversation ended with plans for a follow-up discussion in the fall, and Lou invited participants to express interest in part-time teaching opportunities.