Computer Information Technology Advisory Committee Meeting

Minutes
March 10, 2020
Time: 6:00 – 8:00 PM
Garden Court, Lethbridge College

Chair – Chris Rabl

PRESENT

Chris Rabl – Autovance Technologies
Shoja Mazidi - Faculty
Daniel Welder – 2nd Year Student Rep
Matt Lynch – Alberta Services
Md. Rafee - Faculty
Fergus Raphael – Tangle Media

Nathan Sailer- Southland Trailers
Stephen Graham - Chair
Candace Lewko – Associate Dean
Brock Price – Altis MSP
Alicia Visser – Program Assistant

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS
Chris called the meeting to order at 6:18 pm. He thanked everyone for their attendance and led a roundtable of introductions.

APPROVAL/ADDITIONS TO AGENDA
MOTIONED & APPROVED

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
MOTIONED & APPROVED

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES
No business arising from minutes.

PROGRAM UPDATES
- Program currently under review. Modifications throughout the process. Review is close to its internal completion. Advisory Committee will be invited to visioning session and to offer strategy for developing program streams. CIT needs more variations in program outputs, and Advisory Committee can provide feedback and recommendations.
  - CIT requires approval from Dean's Council, Academic Council, and Government of Alberta when making any changes to program.
  - In previous years, CIT anticipated new 45 students in the Fall and 30 graduates.
  - In Fall 2020, CIT anticipates 96 new students and 60 graduates.

- CIT Program   Student Applications : 90-ish
  Offers Sent: 70-80
  Confirmed Offers: 46
- CIT has a high application and program confirmation rate. Any student who has confirmed their offer to the program has not changed their mind.
- Look Book is still in development.   Advisory Committee will have the opportunity to review draft and provide input.
  - Timeline for Look Book   May 2020 –Recommendations for Look Book
    October 2020 – Creation of Look Book
    November 2020 – Look Book Completed
    Fall 2021 – Look Book Available
- Funding for Lethbridge College is changing. Funding reduced by 5% over course of three years. Campus Alberta has reduced funding and future funding will be based on performance metrics.
  - Performance metrics are slowly being released by the Government of Alberta.
  - Performance metrics related to labour outcomes for students.
  - Input from the Advisory Committee provides significant value and insight.

STUDENT UPDATES
- Daniel (2nd Year Student):
  - Developed Discord Channel with 1st Years. 60 student participants; most students joined in the second semester.
  - Students are finding the industry much broader than anticipated.
  - Students enjoying the CIT program; no significant changes to suggest.
  - Students have concerns about funding changes, and the impact on their program.
  - Students enjoyed networking and seminar events offered by the CIT program. Many may have been interested, but did not attend due to lack of time.
  - Daniel asked industry members if they prefer to hire college or university students? What skills or knowledge are LC students potentially lacking?
    - Chris: Autovance has hired 5 CIT alumni. Most of whom have returned to the UofL to complete their Computer Science degree.
    - Fergus: Adamant that he likes hiring CIT grads. Seeks out individuals who intentionally seek opportunities for self directed learning. Red flag to employ a student who do not take initiative to continually learn.

INDUSTRY DISCUSSION

i.   Industry Feedback directed to College

a. **CIT Networking Night**

Nathan: Lots of students attended. Plenty of 1st and 2nd years. Students expressed concerns about what they were not learning, and need to understand that a career in IT requires continuous ongoing learning.

Chris: Good representation of industry and CIT students in 1st and 2nd year.
   Read written feedback from Eyren from Economic Development Lethbridge (EDL).
   - Students engaged and had many questions. Discussed entrepreneurship, partnership, collaboration opportunities with students and CIT program. EDL and TechConnect can be a resource for collaboration.

   Students desire to be on the cutting edge of software development, frameworks, and language. There is a need for continuous learning. Void can be filled with Seminar Nights.

Fergus: Themes emerged through dialogue with students. Discussed next steps, capstone projects and SCRUM Board. Similarities between project-based work in course and project management process at Tangle Media.

b. **Industry Seminars**

Stephen: Well attended by students and some committee members. Students thought the event was useful. Would like to see more engagement in the future especially with 1st years. Promoted on Canvas group, called "CIT Crowd", which includes all CIT students.
   - Suggested reaching out to AV to record seminars and build a digital library where videos are held for 6 – 8 months.

Fergus: Invited faculty, staff and student reps to visit industry workplaces as fieldtrips, and to strengthen relationship with industry.

c. **Student and Faculty Feedback directed to Industry Members**
   i. What kinds of topics do faculty want industry members to address in their seminar sessions?
      - Show & Tell – students share programs they do in their spare time
      - Automation
      - Troubleshooting Fundamentals
      - Innovations in Alberta
      - FinTech businesses in southern Alberta
      - Economic Development Lethbridge for connecting Entrepreneurs
      - CIFAR – National Body for Artificial Intelligence
      - Alberta Artificial Intelligence Association
      - Virtualized Networking

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- Linux - emerging trends
    ii. Industry Seminars – what can we do differently next time? What did we like/dislike?
        - Students were not well informed about the seminars.
            o Need to create incentive to get students engaged.

    ii.   Other Business

- Samantha Orr recommended as student rep.
- What differentiates LC from other programs?
    o IT Seminars and 200 hour practicum.
    o Least expensive programs with CIPS accreditation.
- Practicum Concerns
    o By increasing number of students enrolled in CIT program, there will be difficulty in finding enough practicum opportunities.
    o Fergus has anticipated this and created a 200 hr SCRUM Curriculum. Samantha, a CIT student, went through the program that has a standardized onboarding model.
    o SCRUM projects are labour based and allow CIT students to do some analysis and feasibility studies.
    o Local industry is building capacity for increased number of students enrolled in program.
- Changes to Practicum suggested
    o 200 hours stretched over 2 year program instead of in the final semester.
    o Any changes to practicum needs to be approved by the Government of Alberta
    o Suggestion: 50 hours of practicum in the first year and 150 hours in the second year
        ▪ Students will have more flexibility and opportunity to develop some professional experience before selecting their stream in the second year.
- M.E.R.I.T Labs (Mentorship Entrepreneurship, and Research in Information Technology)
    o Nathan suggested LC build an incubation environment
    o Stephen presented his idea of M.E.R.I.T Labs
        ▪ Industry brings projects to LC students in CIT to create prototypes.

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- Applied Research Group will need a tech person on staff to provide ongoing support throughout the year.
- Chris suggested MERIT Lab could connect with EDL.
- Advisory Committee
  - LC is building up the Advisory Committee and the suggested new members are:
    - Lee Moseman from Verge
    - Norm Nelson from Whipcord

NEXT MEETING DATE & TIME

Tuesday, Oct. 6 @ 6:00 pm

ADJOURNED @ 7:38 pm