



Comprehensive Program Review and Analysis
(6 year review)

PROGRAM REVIEW
Paralegal

March, 2014

Michael E. Habeeb, Attorney at Law

Dario De Ghetaldi, Attorney at Law; Dennis Durkin, Attorney at Law; Colleen Duffy-Smith, Attorney at Law; Althea Kippes, Attorney at Law; Michael E. Habeeb; and Alisa Young, Paralegal



COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

Program Title: Paralegal **Date Submitted:** March 2014

1. Planning Group Participants: Dario De Ghetaldi, Attorney at Law; Colleen Duffy-Smith, Attorney at Law; and Michael E. Habeeb, Attorney at Law, all paralegal program adjunct faculty; Carolyn Jung, full-time professor of computer business office technology (CBOT); and Business, Design & Workforce Division Dean Linda Hayes.

2. Contact Person: Michael E. Habeeb at habeeb@smccd.edu and (650) 306-3409.

3. Program Information

A. Program Personnel

Identify all personnel (faculty, classified, volunteers, and student workers) in the program:

FT Faculty: None

PT Faculty FTE: Dario De Ghetaldi, Attorney at Law; Dennis Durkin, Attorney at Law; Colleen Duffy-Smith, Attorney at Law; Althea Kippes, Attorney at Law; Michael E. Habeeb; and Alisa Young, Paralegal

FT Classified: None

PT Classified (hrs/wk) None.

Volunteers Advisory committee made up of Division Dean Linda Hayes; Paralegal and other faculty: Dennis Durkin, Dario DeGhetaldi, Colleen Duffy-Smith; Michael E. Habeeb; Althea Kippes, and Alisa Young, and Carolyn Jung, Anne Nicholls, and Paul Rosecelli; Attorney Jim Thompson; Paralegals Nina Demers and Carol Karwatt; San Mateo County Law Library Director Andrew Gurthet.

Student Workers None.

B. Program mission and vision

Include the purpose of the program, the ideals the program strives to attain, and whom the program serves. The program mission and vision must align with the college's mission and goals. (200 word limit)

The Paralegal Program at Cañada was developed in cooperation with the San Mateo County Bar Association to train personnel to assist attorneys in both civil and criminal matters. Instruction focuses on assisting the



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attorney in interviewing clients and preparing for court appearances, as well as completing legal research and preparing legal documents.

Some graduates of the Program may decide to practice as independent paralegals. A variety of substantive and procedural law-related courses are offered to prepare paralegals for employment in the legal field. We believe students should be taught communications skills, computer applications used in the legal offices, and legal concepts to become well-trained professionals and provide legal services in such law-related environments as law offices, corporate legal departments, governmental entities, and other law-related occupations. We continue to believe that the Program's instructional delivery providers should be a mixture of practicing paralegals and attorneys.

Contribution to the Mission of the College and the District

The Program contributes to the mission of the College and District by:

- 1) Providing a quality Paralegal program that leads to a Career Technical Education career as a Paralegal and is in cooperation with business, industry, labor, and public service agencies.
- 2) Providing a supportive faculty/student teaching and learning relationship that contributes to personal growth and success for students.
- 3) Providing a lower division program to enable students to transfer to baccalaureate institutions;
- 4) Celebrating the community's rich cultural diversity.

Additional strengths of the program include Cooperative Education credit for students who presently work in legal environments and Cooperative Education internships for students who are not presently in the workforce.

C. Program Student Learning Outcomes

List Program Student Learning Outcomes (minimum of 3) and assessment tools for each.

Tool: <https://sanmateo.tracdat.com/tracdat/>

Reflections:

- Review 5-year data and identify changes that have occurred in your program as a result of annual SLO assessment cycle.
- Explain how the assessment plan for Program Student Learning Outcomes measures quality and success of each Program.
- Summarize assessment results of Program Student Learning Outcomes.
- Describe and summarize other data that reveals Program performance.

Program Learning Outcomes:

Students completing this program will be able to:

1. Use effectively both book and electronic legal research tools, and to identify and use primary and secondary law sources.



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2. Use California superior court judicial council forms, and at least one software program containing such forms.
3. Understand, follow and apply ethical rules for attorneys and paralegals and to identify potential ethical issues in the legal environment.
4. Demonstrate proficiency in the use of office software, including word processing.

Last year, for the first time during this cycle, we began developing methods on how to assess our program SLO's. We developed an "exit" interview/exam to assess the effectiveness of SLO 1. Detail of the assessment, including the results, are in TracDat and attached to this document. We hope to develop and implement assessment tools/methods for the other three SLO's this 2013-14 academic year. Our goal is to design and use methods that will allow us to measure whether graduates possess the knowledge and skill level required to perform as a paralegal. The results of our SLO 1 assessment revealed that the cohort of students participating did possess the skills necessary to perform the tasks listed in the SLO by answering, with confidence and accuracy, numerous and varied relevant queries. We deemed that the quality of our program, at least in regards to this SLO, was high and that our program successful. We also looked to our program's success rate in the core class (Legal Research & Writing/average of more than 90% from 2010-12) as evidence of our program meeting this SLO. Please see attached retention and success data.

4. Curricular Offerings and Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Cycle

Tools:TracDAT <https://sanmateo.tracdat.com/tracdat/> CurricUNET <http://www.curricunet.com/smcccd>

All curriculum and SLOAC updates must be completed when planning documents are due.

A. Attach the following TracDat and CurricUNET data in the appendix:

- List courses, SLOs, assessment plans, and results and action plans (attach report from TracDat for the CURRENT year only. The others will be in your previous annual plans).
- List courses with CORs over 6 years old (data from CurricUNET)

Please see TracDat for the information sought in bullet one above. We do not have any course CORs older than six years. All COR's are up to date.

B. Identify Patterns of Curriculum Offerings

Reflections:

- Review the 2-year curriculum cycle of course offerings to ensure timely completion of certificates and degrees.
- Identify strengths of the curriculum.
- Identify issues and possible solutions.
- Discuss plans for future curricular development and/or program modification.



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Students, with a good education plan, can finish the paralegal certificate and A.S. degree in an optimal amount of time (two to five semesters) as there are enough core and selective courses offered each semester, including summer sessions, to accomplish this task. We review course offerings a number of times, including at our advisory committee meetings, to ensure our course cycle is viable and also relevant. Our curriculum strength centers on the high caliber of legal professionals/professors teaching in the paralegal program and their ability to provide the most up-to-date information about their subjects and infusing technology and forms into classroom lectures. A possible issue is that some students do not develop an education plan and will sometimes take longer to obtain their certificate or A.S. One possible solution is for the plan to be required before a student starts the program, requiring submission of the plan to the department for review and approval, perhaps also including a meeting with each student to discuss the plan's viability. We are constantly discussing what paralegal courses would be most relevant in today's legal world by consulting with professionals in the legal field and monitoring legal trends. We also explore alternative ways of teaching or instruction, such as online courses. We are still in the discussion phases of a possible launch into online learning in this area. We are discussing a hybrid model (e.g., eight in-class meetings and eight online meetings) as a possible offering, providing our predominantly working-during-the-day-and-taking-classes-at-night students more flexibility in their busy schedules and relief of not having to trek to the college for half of a semester.

5. Program Level Data

A. Data Packets and Analysis from the Office of Planning, Research & Student Success and any other relevant data

Tool:

http://www.canadacollege.edu/inside/research/programreview/info_packet/info_packet.html

Reflections:

- Review 5-year data to describe trends in student success, retention, demographics.
- Analyze trends and discuss plans to address significant findings.

The Office of Planning, Research and Institutional Effectiveness provided us with “tailored” data our review. It is attached. From that data, we developed a data report of our own. It is attached. The following is what we discerned from analyzing that data:

- The average Census Headcount declined 30% from an average of 313 in the 3-year period from 2008-2011 to an average of 220 in the 2-year period from 2011 to 2013.
- The average Student Headcount declined 26% from an average of 144 in the 3-year period from 2008-2011 to an average of 107 in the 2-year period from 2011 to 2013.
- The number of section offerings remained steady over the 5-year period.
- The Load increased 17% from 465 in 2008/2009 to 544 in 2010/2011, and decreased 34% from 544 in 2010/2011 to 360 in 2012/2013.



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- Success and Retention Rates have remained relatively constant over the past five years at approximately 80% and 90%, respectively.
- The FTES value declined 30% from an average of 33 in the 3-year period from 2008-2011 to an average of 23 in the 2-year period from 2011 to 2013.
- The FTEF value declined 14% from an average of 2.08 in the 2-year period from 2008-2010 to an average of 1.78 in the 3-year period from 2010 to 2013.
- Students 30 years and older have made up approximately 60% of the total over the past four years.
- Hispanic students have made up approximately 33% of the total over the past four years.

What did the program do differently over the five-year review process that may have led to the drop in Census Headcount and Student Headcount, and correspondingly FTES and FTEF, over the last two years? Over the last five years our program has remained consistent in the courses offered, when they have been offered, and who has taught them. Our Success and Retention Rates have been very good to excellent over that time. We have continued to offer new and topical selectives (Immigration Law) to our course menu and removed now not relevant courses from that list. We are not aware of any new competition in the area of paralegal education, nor have we received an inordinate amount of complaints from students about the program or the professors. Essentially, we are left scratching our heads and concluding what many in academia believe, which we assume is supported by underlying evidence, and that is the following: When the country's, state's, county's economy is not doing well and there is higher unemployment, enrollment in community colleges is higher than when the economy is health and more people are employed. There is pervasive evidence that the economy was suffering in the first three years of this review cycle, mostly because of the devastating effects of the mortgage crisis and financial collapse in 2008. Although some may argue that the economy has not completely rebounded, it has certainly been better in the last two years of the cycle and more people are employed. But if and fact this is the reason, or at least the main reason, we plan and will continue to do more to improve the program and increase the program headcount numbers, if there are more and significant numbers of students out there to bring into the program. One group may be student from ages 18-30 years old. Presently, that group makes up 40% of our program students. We can possibly step-up our recruitment efforts at job and career events for high school students. Perhaps we can strengthen our relationship with high school counselors by meeting with them and /or providing them with more information about the program. We can also step-up recruitment efforts to new college graduates who would like to augment their degrees with a certificate to make themselves more employable. That may require target marketing, the type that costs money, and with funds at a minimum, this avenue of recruitment may be limited. Another way to bolster numbers and attract students to attend our program as opposed to the many competitors in the area and region is to somehow stand apart, offer something better than the other colleges and institutions. We have been aggressively attempting to establish strong ties to the local legal community to pave the way for job opportunities for our graduates. If we can be the number one college to successfully find jobs for students, we believe that is an important special program feature that can draw students into the program. We already have



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a quality program, quality professors and staff; this would be an additional plus. In fact, our program has already built in a class that offers students credit for internships, which can later lead to paying jobs. We would like to strengthen that program in combination at the same time we created opportunities for paying jobs for our students. We also understand that communicating information about and marketing are keys always to success and are now creating a new brochure and constantly improving our program website, which includes a plan to provide a link to job leads. Lastly, we have noted that a large segment of our students are Hispanic. Not all, but some, speak English as a second language. We also have other students in our classes who fall into that category. We are now working with the Learning Center to establish a tutoring program for students who faculty has recognized as needed additional assistance with learning. Our professor will select an outstanding and bilingual students in his/her class and refer them to the Learning Center for training and a paying job. We believe this can be a win-win situation.

B. Future Program Expectations

Tools: San Mateo County's Largest

Employers <http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/majorer/countymajorer.asp?CountyCode=000081>

Staffing Patterns in Local Industries &

Occupations <http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/iomatrix/staffing-patterns1.asp>

Reflection: Describe how changes in business, community and employment needs, new technology, and new transfer requirements could affect the Program.

In a world in which technology is advancing and impacting every aspect of our society at a mind-boggling speed, we cannot and should not ignore its impact in the area of law. We don't. We recognize the move from book to online research at law firms and we have adjusted our curriculum to address this change. We recognize people's advanced skills and ability to use the computer and the internet. Our District has provided us with tools to provide assignments, documents, and data through WebACCESS, for example. We realize, from talking to professional in the legal field, how important technical skills are in performing paralegal work and we are planning to bolster our certificate and A.S. programs by offering/requiring more technological expertise through course such as Excel.

6. Action Plan

Provide your action plan based on the analysis and reflections provided in the previous sections.

Actions:

- Identify next steps to be taken and timelines.
- Identify questions that will serve as a focus of inquiry for the next year.



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- Determine the assessments; set the timeline for tabulating the data and analyzing results.
- Describe what you expect to learn from the assessment efforts.

Please see the discussion under 5. above. We will look to the Office of Planning, Research & Student Success for reports on an ongoing basis to see if our efforts are improving the declining numbers over the past two years. We will try to institute some method of determining how are successes are being achieved—whether through communication and marketing improvement, successfully establishing our special, set-apart feature, etc., as scientifically as possible.

7. Resource Identification

A. Faculty and Staff hiring requests

Actions:

- Explain how hiring requests will serve the Program/Division/College needs
- Use supporting data.

We again request a 7.5 hours-per-week part-time coordinator as the tasks necessary and required to complete (annual program reviews, annual program SLO assessments, ensure course SLO assessment completion, update the program’s website, coordinate faculty and advisory committee meetings, recruit new faculty and advisory committee member as necessary, answer and address questions about the program via email and through other means of communication, make presentations to groups on and off campus about the program, and cultivate job leads for students, etc.) may be extremely difficult or if not impossible to meet if some or all of this work is expected to be completed on a voluntary basis by a busy staff of adjunct faculty, all of whom work full-time, demanding day jobs and teach at most two classes per academic year at night.

B. Professional Development needs

Actions:

- List the professional development activities the faculty and staff participated in this year.
- Explain how professional development activities in the past six years have improved student learning outcomes.
- Describe professional development plans for next year.

We applaud the college for offering stipends for adjunct faculty to attend Flex Day activities. We learn a great deal about the planning and analysis components of teaching through presentations, group discussions, and individual and group exercises. Our participation in these activities has been minimal, usually one adjunct attending. Our hope is that more department adjunct will attend these activities or there may be another way, perhaps through video-recording, the adjunct faculty members (all with full-time demanding legal day jobs) can avail themselves of this important information.



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C. Instructional Equipment requests

Actions:

- List instructional equipment requests (include item description, suggested vendor, number of items, and total cost).
- Explain how it will serve the Program/Division/College needs.

We have no requests.

D. Facilities requests

Actions:

- List facilities requests (include custodial, repairs, maintenance, new building/lab/classroom, utility needs)
- Explain how the requests will serve the Program/Division/College needs.

We have no requests.

E. Office of Planning, Research & Student Success requests

Actions:

- List data requests for the Office of Planning, Research & Student Success.
- Explain how the requests will serve the Program/Division/College needs.

We suggest that data be provided in complete academic year views, rather than splitting the data in to fall and spring.



**COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM REVIEW AND ANALYSIS
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE SMCCCD BOARD OF TRUSTEES
(2 page maximum)**

Program Title: Paralegal

Program Vision and Mission (refer to #3B)

The program offers a quality paralegal program that leads to a Career Technical Education career as a paralegal, by employing a supportive faculty/student teaching and learning relationship that contributes to personal growth and success for students, by celebrating the entire community's rich cultural diversity, by working cooperatively with business, industry, labor, and public service agencies, while also providing a lower division program to enable students to transfer to baccalaureate institutions.

Program Strengths

All of whom working in the legal profession as lawyers or paralegals, a high caliber of professors teaching in the paralegal program and their ability to provide the most up-to-date information about their subjects and infusing technology and forms into classroom lectures.

Program Challenges

1. We are experiencing an enrollment decline.
2. A possible issue is that some students do not develop an education plan and will sometimes take longer to obtain their certificate or A.S.
3. Our participation in professional development, Flex Day, activities has been minimal, usually one adjunct attending, despite the generous stipend offer.
4. We again request a 7.5 hours-per-week part-time coordinator as the numerous program tasks necessary and required to complete may be extremely difficult or if not impossible to meet if some or all of this work is expected to be completed on a voluntary basis by a busy staff of adjunct faculty, all of whom work full-time, demanding day jobs and teach at most two classes per academic year at night.



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Action Plan Summary (refer to #6)

See corresponding challenges above.

1. We plan to strengthen our relationship with high school counselors by meeting with them and /or providing them with more information about the program to share with their students. We can also step-up recruitment efforts to new college graduates who would like to augment their degrees with a certificate to make themselves more employable. If we can be the number one college to successfully find jobs for students, we believe that is an important special, “set-apart” program feature that can draw students into the program. We already have a quality program, quality professors and staff; this would be an additional plus. Communicating information about and marketing are keys always to success and are now creating a new brochure and constantly improving our program website, which includes a plan to provide a link to job leads
2. One possible solution is for the plan to be required before a student starts the program, requiring submission of the plan to the department for review and approval, perhaps also including a meeting with each student to discuss the plan’s viability.
3. Our hope is that more department adjunct will attend these activities or there may be another way, perhaps through video-recording, the adjunct faculty members (all with full-time demanding legal day jobs) can avail themselves of this important information.
4. We would like to hire a program coordinator for 7.5 hours per week.

EVALUATION OF THE PROCESS

To improve the Comprehensive Program Review and Analysis process your help and suggestions are instrumental. We ask that all parties responsible for preparation of this review have input into the evaluation..

Program Title: Paralegal

Estimate the total number of hours to complete your Program Review. 10-15 hours

1. Was the time frame for completion of the Comprehensive Program Review and Analysis adequate? If not, explain.

Yes.

2. Was the instrument clear and understandable? Was it easy to use? If not, explain and offer suggestions for improvement.



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Yes.

3. Were the questions relevant? If not, please explain and offer specific suggestions.

Yes.

4. Did you find the Comprehensive Program Review and Analysis process to have value? If not, please explain and offer suggestions.

Yes.

5. Was the data you received from administration complete and presented in a clear format? Would you like additional data?

We suggest that data be provided in complete academic year views, rather than splitting the data in to fall and spring.

6. Please offer any comments that could improve and/or streamline Comprehensive Program Review and Analysis process.

None.



**COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM REVIEW AND ANALYSIS
CHECKLIST**

- All Annual Program Plans since the last Comprehensive Program Review process
- Completed Executive Summary page
- Completed Evaluation of the Process page
- Additional data

Program Title: Paralegal **Date Submitted:** March 2014

Review Committee Chair [Click here and type]

Review Committee Members [Click here and type]



**COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM REVIEW AND ANALYSIS
INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE SHEET**

Program Title: [Click here and type]

Thank you for your time and effort in preparing this Comprehensive Program Review and Analysis. Your Executive Summary, with recommendations, will be forwarded to the College Planning Council.

1. Division Dean Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Comments:

2. Curriculum Committee Chair: _____ **Date:** _____

Comments:

3. College Vice President: _____ **Date:** _____

Comments: