

University of Nebraska at Kearney

Industrial Distribution Program

Advisory Council Minutes

October 15, 2024 at 4:30 CST

Holiday Inn, Stateroom C

110 2nd Ave.

Kearney, NE

Attendees:

Program Partner Representatives

Cameron McCarthy – AIT, Haleigh Hoefs – AIT, Kelly Richards – NAP, Joe Nelson – NAP, Dave McCarthy – Titan, Brent Hall – Ryerson, David Zahner – Ryerson, Ed Ketcham – Riekes, Joe Kment – IFP, Val Burns – IFP, Brett Douglas – Kearney WinNelson, Cory Hendrickson – Rensenhouse, Camden Van Brocklin – Rensenhouse

UNK Representatives

Ben Brachle – Associate Professor, Alejandro Cahis – Lecturer, Mitch Peters – Lecturer, Jim Vaux – Chair of Industrial Technology, Whitney Kuta – Office Associate

UNK Students Attending

Eli Bond, Lainey Parsons, Kaidence Spiegel

Minutes

- Welcome - Cameron McCarthy
 - Meeting Called to order
- Business - Agenda Additions?
 - None; moving on.
- Approval of minutes — No changes or corrections
 - Unanimous; moving on.
- IDO Report
 - Peters:
 - Faculty advisor, had a few changes w/ integrating LIIDs into IDO
 - Bond:

- Planning to have six events this semester
- Considering renting out Birdies and Brews or other local business for recruitment
- Campus adoption
- Tailgate
- Renting out Axe Holes as student networking opportunity
- Food Drive — looking for sponsors
- Toys for Kiddos — 10th anniversary
 - Hat Sales
- Next semester, hosting a blood drive
- Further brainstorming to come after this career event is over.
- Parsons: Ladies in Industrial Distribution (LIID)
 - Created support group for women pursuing careers in Industrial Distribution
 - New leadership in IDO for LIIDs
 - The organization is now working under IDO.
 - Big goal is recruitment, getting new freshmen in and encouraging women to join the major.
- Questions?
 - Food drive for Thanksgiving, how can we engage as companies?
 - Bond: We will be sending out information to companies.
 - Does LIID want female speakers in classes?
 - Lainey: Reach out to us and we'll be glad to get some involvement!
- Recruitment Report:
 - Peters:
 - 30 enrolled in Intro to ID course.
 - We're now offering it both semesters!
 - We are in the middle of the advising season for S24, so we're trying to capture new majors/minors and get them into ITEC 114.

- 24 enrolled → 23 of them are now affiliated with the major or minor
 - Interactions with community colleges/schools.
 - Legacy enrollment!
- Spiegel
 - Scholarship for incoming freshmen
 - Focusing on getting awareness out to the high school counselors
- Brachle:
 - We've gotten 50 in between the two semesters coming in to the program this year!
- Peters:
 - We're starting to capture some of the new people
- Questions
 - Scholarship — you're doing active recruitment; how can we incentivize students already enrolled?
 - Brachle: We have a few program-specific scholarships; 10% of program partner funds go towards the scholarships we have set up
 - Scholarship — Is there one for newly declared majors? Would that be a good talking point among the other recruiting efforts?
 - Brachle: No, but it depends on the timing heavily— financial aid is awarded based on a February deadline.
 - Brachle: Scholarships are an arduous process, details to come as we get them.
- Sales Competition Report
 - Cahis: We tried company-sponsored scenarios; it worked quite well.
 - We're doing it over again, IFP is sponsoring the scenario this time around.
 - The casting for the competition will be announced soon; given a couple weeks to record and submit the videos which will be sent to you.
 - If you can split the work amongst your team, that will help greatly; we're planning on doing it very similarly this time around.
 - Questions

- Have you tried a board of volunteers or peer reviewing for the entrants?
 - Cahis: We do this in class 2 or 3 times a semester; it's great experience for them
 - Cahis: In their senior class they go through their former videos and then use the peer evaluation
 - Cahis: Maybe we could incorporate it with a few classes at a time.
 - I think having the company-sponsored scenario was helpful as we have an inside look at what the students strengths are based on what they learn in the program
 - Cahis: Thank you
 - Cahis: We just came back from Iowa, actually having 3 alumni here focused on the engineering part. It was a great experience for them! They got a lot of experience with how engineers think, and doing technical information demos
- Old Business - Accreditation
 - Brachle: We went through ATMAE Accreditation this past year
 - The entire visit was over our 80-page report
 - 12 Standards
 - In compliance with all but 2 of them
 - Standard 5 (pg. 9): Wanting us to lessen the ratio of students to faculty
 - We're currently at 40:1; they want us to hire someone else to join. It's a good problem to have.
 - Standard 12 (pg. 13) We did not include average years to meet degree
 - Dean got involved, we got this taken care of shortly after
 - Remember that most of the students don't come in to UNK as ID Majors
 - Our reviewers felt we did a great job, want a report in 2 years, we got the second from best possible result.
 - Questions:
 - Have there been administrative hangups?
 - Vaux: Will be covered in my portion

- What about like, the ratio? How many new hires do we need?
 - Brachle: Yeah, we are growing so we will need to have more people. For now, we should focus on getting one new hire.
- Why did we not just put up the starting freshmen time to complete? Was it worse?
 - Brachle: No, I wouldn't say worse — it's just that there was not enough data to come to a fully conclusive answer. Very few of our students come to UNK initially wanting to pursue a degree in ID.
- Isn't it odd that they don't have a specific standard for the ratio?
 - Vaux: They're mainly looking for consistency across the university system, I suppose.
- Could we just hire adjuncts?
 - Brachle: The measurement goes off of full-time faculty only, so that wouldn't solve the ratio problem.
- Did the shift of the curriculum to ITEC help or hurt?
 - Brachle: It did not really skew these results of this evaluation.
- Hiring: Vaux
 - Traditionally, finding people that are qualified has been difficult due to the specialist nature of the field.
 - Normally, 30 days gives like 20-40 applicants; we have 45 days out and have only 5.
 - The process includes vetting, a phone interview, and an on-campus interview following after.
 - The process takes a month or two after the final shortlist has been created.
 - Questions
 - Don't you feel the need to pull the trigger quickly?
 - Vaux: We're keeping in contact, but the issue is that the process needs to remain proper.
 - The pain of the shallow candidate pool is shared.
 - Brachle: Thank you!
 - Do you need a Master's degree to teach at UNK?

- Brachle: Yes, that's a higher learning commission requirement
- What degrees are you looking for?
 - Brachle: MBA, Master's in logistics, management, technology, something along that line at least.
- Have you interviewed anyone who has left UNK due to faculty budget squeezes or programs being cut?
 - Brachle: Most of the programs experiencing these are unrelated to our program/ITEC
- Does ID program offer a Master's?
 - Brachle: We did at one point put together a MID program.
 - Brachle: We don't currently have the people to facilitate that degree.
- Would you need to turn that program on to be able to do that to help grow the candidate pool?
 - Brachle: Yes
 - Vaux: That would require a lot of logistical work, and at the moment we do not have time to do that.
- Are there any ITEC Master's Programs?
 - Vaux: ID is the only one right now, but it's on hold due to staffing limitations.
- How are jobs like this posted?
 - Vaux: We posted on a couple of websites specializing in academic careers and advertised through ATMAE.
 - Brachle: We also posted on the chronicle, which is more academic-based.
- Would tuition be cheaper than that of Texas A&M's MA program?
 - Brachle: I can't quote it right now, but I would assume ours would be cheaper
- Would it draw in more people, if it were more affordable?
 - Brachle: I'm not sure if the money alone would do it.
- Could program partner funds be used to fund a signing bonus for the new?

- Vaux: What an interesting question— we'll need to look in the policies.
 - What about emphasis areas within the degree?
 - Vaux: We have not done it.
- McCarthy: Motion to adjourn.
 - Unanimous, meeting adjourned