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| **Palomar College**  **Cabinet & Furniture Technology**    **CFT 2023 Advisory Committee Meeting** |  |

**Meeting Minutes**

April 24, 2023 1600-1730

**Attendees:**

Jordan Clarke Chairman/CFT Instructor

Chance Coalter CFT Instructor

Adria Salvatore Association Director, AWFS

Scott Paul Taylor Guitars

Steve Spooner Spooner Woodworks

Chris Geldert San Marcos High School

Randy Zubieta Oceanside High School

Brandon Tarrac San Pasqual High School

Patrick Lorenz CFT TA; background in CNC manufacturing & Mgmt.

Georg Kast CFT Instructional Support Assistant

1. **Welcome Overview**Jordan Clarke kicked off the meeting stating the purpose as a discussion with local industry professionals engaged in wood manufacturing industry along with secondary school and college faculty representatives. The meeting was held both in person and remotely over ZOOM. The discussion is focused on the current status of the CFT Program and the woodworking industry to solicit recommendations for the Program to better serve our students and provide them with opportunities to earn income in the woodworking industry. Introductions were made all around.
2. **CFT Program Overview and Update**  
   Jordan reviewed the highlights and issues in the college and the CFT program including the following topics:

- The CFT Program scope, while significantly reduced from its zenith of about 10 years ago is making a comeback in terms of the number of courses offered, the number of students enrolled and the number of Degrees/Certificates awarded.

- The new President and the CTEE department Dean continue to be very supportive of the CFT program.   
  
 - Jordan acknowledged that the CFT program has another new full-time faculty member beginning in Fall and that Jennifer Anderson, the Program Lead, will be returning from sabbatical in Fall.

- Jordan reviewed the ongoing transformation process to consolidate the number and types of degrees/certificates offered and progress being made on the new Digital Fabrication Certification.

1. **CFT Equipment and Facilities Update**  
   There was a brief review of the status of the facilities and equipment in the CFT operations. Topics included:  
    - Overall the state of equipment in the CFT labs is good, however some of the equipment is showing its age. A request is pending to replace some of the cabinetmaking machinery and to upgrade the shop to be more in line with industry standard production equipment.  
     
    - The equipment supporting the Urban Lumber operation is need repair and the lack of a structure to house them preclude their full utilization and contribute to ongoing degradation.   
     
    - The Program has been able to augment tools for cabinet installation with portable table and sliding compound miter saws. In addition, other tools to facilitate installation work were acquired.   
     
    - The Program has also been able to buy 2 Shaper Origin hand held CNC routers to provide a means to gently introduce students to digital fabrication techniques.
2. **Workplace Trends and Needs/SWOT Analysis - Discussion**- Steve Spooner provided some insight into the cabinetmaking business and data from his shop regarding wages for the various aspects of cabinet design, manufacture and installation. The business outlook is good, though not as robust as during the pandemic. Wages ran the gamut from $60k for shop workers to $150K for experienced Project Managers. CNC Draftsmen/Engineers can earn $90-$100K+ and can be trained on his system/processes in 6-8 months with a solid background in AutoCAD. He is always needing resources for his shop; he gets about half by word of mouth and half through a service.  
     
   - Scott Paul also indicated a favorable outlook for the acoustic guitar business, though, again, not like very high demand during the pandemic. Supply chain issues have resolved themselves for the most part and the demand for ‘skilled’ workers is high. Taylor Guitar is actively looking for workers with good ‘Woodshop Skills’ that they can train to work in their facility. They are looking to re-forge the employment pipeline with Palomar College CFT that they had enjoyed in previous years.  
     
   - Outreach and collaboration was discussed. Adria Torrez shared some insights and indicated that for this work to be effective it requires someone working if full time. This function should also include update of the social media platforms. Other ideas is to host a job fair and to consider having a ‘signing day’.  
     
   - Chance Coalter made the observation that the timeline to complete a Certification at Palomar is lengthy. Many of the required classes are only offered only infrequently. Other woodworking schools use a more intensive approach where students spend 3-6 months full time and come out with skills and finished work at the end. Many potential students are not willing or are unable to invest 2+ years to complete a Certificate here. Scheduling classes must be adjusted so that students can complete in a shorter period.  
     
   - CNC manufacturing skills are transferrable to other industries including metal and plastic fabrication. This coupled with the CFT approach using project-based learning can provide students significant opportunities in a variety of fields. The program must integrate digital skills and a work-based mission into all classes offered.  
     
   - Some discussion centered on attracting younger students. High School teachers shared their students are interested the high paying jobs and they are available in this industry. Steve Spooner and the HS teachers suggested we establish a Pre-Apprenticeship program for introduction to the Association of General Contractors (AGC) apprenticeship.
3. **Recommendations**   
   The purpose of this segment was to review the discussions and to develop recommendations for the Palomar College CFT Program.

1. **Digital Fabrication -** Continueto integrate CAD/CAM tools and incorporate them as quickly as possible into the curriculum for all appropriate classes. Consider making ‘pre-engineered’ components available to students to use in existing classes and incorporate other gateway technologies to get students interested/excited about CNC technology and production woodworking. Continue to move forward in creating a separate certification/degree program emphasizing Computer Aided Manufacturing.

2. **Outreach –** CFT needs a full-time person to perform outreach activities including social media updates, soliciting jobs, partnerships, internships and other work opportunities. Investigate having students upload their resume/CV into the Handshake system and encouraging prospective employers to look there for resources.

2. **Employment –** Provide a dedicated point of contact to work with Taylor Guitar to channel students and graduates of the CFT Program into employment at Taylor. Investigate the possibility of creating a CFT Employee board on Handshake so that potential employers could browse our students’ resumes for consideration.

3. **Curriculum –** Consider adding a class as an “Introduction to Production Manufacturing” that should include ‘Gateway machines’, Rapid Assembly techniques and field trips.

4. **Equipment Replacement –** Continue to replace equipment as it ages or becomes non-functional. This should include hand tools in addition to floor standing equipment.