

4/22/24: Counseling Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Ross, Castro, Salceda, Allen, Moy, Scurry, Alturk, Perez, Ilarde, Towle

Counseling Updates:

We are meeting with financial aid this week to discuss the SAP Appeal Process.

Suggested changes/updates to the form:

Highlight the quiz with a notation that it has nothing to do with merritt counseling
Appointment is required for SEP instead of "necessary"

Have a box instead of bullets points for each of the requirements

Emphasis UPDATED sep or dated within the same semester (if that's the requirement)

Let students know why they are on SAP appeal. Highlight the reason or a check box

Questions:

How many times can a student appeal (2 times max)?

What are common reasons students get denied?

What are common reasons students get approved?

Would SAS including a letter be impactful?

Will progress reports help if they are included with the SAP?

Are progress reports required for some students? This would monitor progress and incentivize the student doing well.

Committee for SAP - who is on the committee. Is there a counselor?

Other counseling department concerns:

Not allowing SAP appeals for phone appointments nor dismissals. The concern is that students are often distracted and not receiving the information that could help them get off dismissal status. However, ConexEd is not set up to allow for reason codes to be tied to telephone appointments vs. online or in person. So we would have to eliminate all phone appointments or continue offering that option.

Planning Summit- Friday May 10 in person 12-3. Lunch is provided.

See email from co-chairs regarding state approved programs

What other speakers would you like to see this semester? 2-3 more meetings left

-None suggested

-No meeting May 20th (graduation)

Guest Speaker: Chris Grampp - Landscape Horticulture

Laura and Chris (co-chairs) have been updating the program.

Older students are their typical students who have degrees or transcripts and want to substitute courses. Encourage students to come to Chris and Laura first for substitutions suggestions.

Intermediate certificates were eliminated because of lack of interest.

Refer questions students have to Chris or Laura.

Tree Care Specialist: Tree care industry approached the department before covid. Completely vocational. Train people who are on the job or want to enter the field. Major industry in Hort field. Safe work practices, tree/shrub maintenance, small equipment use.

Tree Climbing Specialist: Subsidiary of tree care. Safety and small and large equipment knowledge VIP. Specialized program includes tree removal and advanced climbing skills.

Landscape Architecture: only one of three programs in the state. Directs students into the field. Not a 4-5 year program at Bachelors level. Very successful. Students get placed in the field. Need the degree and experience in the field to get licensed. AA degree in Land Arch and then has an internship for 5 years then can take the licensing exam that allows students to practice legally. The course work prepares students for entry level jobs in a landscaping architecture office, which enables them to fulfill the internship requirement for licensing.

Landscape Architecture is a designer trained to work in the office. Not hands on working with plants, etc. They do the drawings. UCB has a thriving program. Academy of Art is not doing well and lost half its students since covid. Merritt absorbed a lot of UC extension students when their program closed.

Landscape and Parks Maintenance is designed for students to work in the field: pruning, pest control, disease control, etc. and serves a wide group of people. A Lot of students come from east bay parks and city of oakland to go into this program. Best for people who have not learned specialized skills- fertilizing, pruning, etc. Current people in the field. Career opportunities include groundskeeper, park maintenance assistant or aide. Jobs can be found at golf courses, public works, parks and rec depts.

Nursery management- gets people working in the horticulture industry. Some are working with customers, others working with plants- propagation, running a nursery. Learning growth patterns. Closer to botany.

California has the largest propagation in the US. Second is in Florida. Huge industry in CA.

Land Design and Construction Specialist: Directed at helping people be a design builder. For example, if you moved into a new house and needed a backyard garden, the specialist could do the installation for you. Directed toward people who want to get a landscape contractors license. CA. climate is so good that there is a huge demand for this type of work. They do a simple drawing, go out in the field and build it.

Permaculture: popular but slow to grow. Field that is both horticulturally based and belief based on sustainability, social justice and ethics that go along with the work. Not a lot of job demand. See 4/19/24 email for more information.

Basic Cannabis Horticulture:

Working on a degree. Currently a certificate. Slow to build. Thought it would take off but has not yet. Three parts: science of growing hemp, doing the business and creating cannabis as an income generating business, and home use. Refer students to Matthew Witemyre.

Employers want to see what skills a student has versus earning a degree. If a person has a college degree, the difference isn't that much. Recommend students get degrees but employers are more interested in skills.

Artera (industry leader) has hired a lot of Merritt students. UCB students take three months to get up and running but Merritt students take about a month because they teach practical skills.

Horticulture salaries are not great. On par with Teachers. A lot of people come because they are passionate about it.

Good job link on their website.

Side note:

There is some overlap with Conservation and Resource Management and Urban Agroecology so check these certificates out as well for offerings.

Program & Committee Updates:

Career:

- Career fair is Wednesday May 1 (10am-2pm)

SAS: Friday May 3rd SAS will be at CE open house.

Sankofa: On Friday, April 19th Derrick attended an UMOJA Conference at UCM with students- had a student on the panel that was a Merritt alum- expressed appreciation for Derrick while on panel

Puente: Took students to CSUMB- have not gone before- campus tour, student panel. Able to visit a few centers, eat on campus, explored
May 1 - going to UCB

Announcements:

Summer degree petition submission dates begin 6/3 and end 6/27. Late petitions will not be accepted

Reminder: Transfer acceptance list is on the counselor website. Please enter all students who are accepted into a university.