

College of San Mateo
Business, Management,
Public and Non-Profit Admin.
Department Advisory Board

MARCH 14, 2025



Meeting Agenda

2:00: Welcome and introductions

2:05: Overview of Business/Management/Public and Non-Profit
Administration

2:10: Feedback from industry partners about our programs/courses

2:55: Final words

March 14, 2025

CSM BUS Advisory Meeting Attendees

CSM:

Peter von Bleichert, Ph.D. (faculty)

Alberto Espinoza (faculty)

Philip Tran (faculty)

Sujata Verma, Ph.D. (faculty)

Lale Yurtseven (faculty)

Industry:

Stephen Cash, MBA, Senior Director Sales/Business, SJSU Lecturer

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/stephen-cash-mba>

Rahimulah Rahimi, MBA, Head of SecOps and Risk, CDW ServiceNow Solutions

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/rahimulah/>

This file contains excerpts from an advisory board meeting for the College of San Mateo (CSM) Business Management, Public and Nonprofits Administration Department. The meeting involves faculty members Philip Tran, Peter von Bleichert, Lale Yurtseven, Sujata Verma, and Alberto Espinosa, along with Advisory Board members Stephen Cash and Rahimulah Rahimi. The agenda includes discussing emerging skills, hiring practices for students with certificates or two-year degrees, and anticipated future business-related majors.

Key Discussion Points:

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Emerging Skills:

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Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a significant emerging skill. Both Stephen Cash and Rahimulah Rahimi emphasize the importance of understanding and utilizing AI tools for job efficiency. Cash breaks this down into knowing available AI, understanding how current tools can help, and the crucial role of soft skills.

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Rahimi views AI as a **catalyst for team expansion**, particularly for less experienced employees, but underscores that **soft skills are still essential**, especially for understanding client needs.

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The discussion also touches on how to teach these skills, with suggestions to incorporate challenging scenarios and ethical considerations of AI in the classroom. Lale Yurtseven points out that **critical thinking** is closely related to understanding customer needs and is a key institutional outcome for CSM.

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Hiring Students with Certificates or 2-Year Degrees:

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Both Stephen Cash and Rahimulah Rahimi have hired individuals without bachelor's degrees, often based on specific skills and experience, especially in more technical roles.

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Internships and practical experience are highly valued by companies. Cash encourages students to pursue internships at every opportunity and emphasizes that industry experience often outweighs academic grades.

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Networking is also deemed critical for students seeking jobs.

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Rahimi highlights the importance of being **comfortable with ambiguity** and proactively seeking opportunities. He suggests that engaging students with real-world projects and companies before graduation can enhance their employability.

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Future Business-Related Majors:

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Rahimulah Rahimi suggests that business knowledge combined with an understanding of the **health sector** could be valuable due to its projected growth.

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Stephen Cash believes that the **combination of business and technical knowledge is a powerful asset**. He notes that having some basic technical understanding relevant to the industry can significantly set candidates apart, even more than the specific major.

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For entry-level sales and marketing roles, especially in technical fields, a **business degree is often preferred** over a purely science-based degree, as the focus is on business value proposition rather than deep technical expertise. However, having a foundational understanding of the technical aspects is still beneficial.

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Philip Tran raises concerns about the general nature of business administration degrees lacking specific technical skills, leading some graduates to seek further certifications.

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Transferable Skills:

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Rahimulah Rahimi emphasizes the importance of building a **personal brand** through online presence, projects, and community engagement to demonstrate initiative and interest.

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Stephen Cash highlights transferable soft skills such as **organization, communication, and confidence**, noting the significant difference in interviews between students with and without prior internship experience.

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Rahimi reframes the job-seeking process as an exchange of value ("give me money") and the importance of demonstrating what one brings to the table to meet the employer's needs and goals.

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Value of Blogs:

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While not specifically blogs, Rahimulah Rahimi suggests that **writing in general and active participation in relevant communities** contribute to building a personal brand.

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Stephen Cash advises that any form of personal branding, including blogs, should align with the individual's desired professional image.

The meeting concludes with Philip Tran thanking the advisory board members for their valuable input

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Welcome Advisory Board Members!

Stephen Cash, MBA, Senior Director Sales/Business, SJSU Lecturer

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/stephen-cash-mba>

Rahimulah Rahimi, MBA, Head of SecOps and Risk, CDW ServiceNow Solutions

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/rahimulah/>

Business & Management Team

- Francisco Gamez, Ed.D. (Dean)
- Peter von Bleichert, Ph.D. (faculty)
- Alberto Espinoza (faculty)
- Philip Tran (faculty)
- Sujata Verma, Ph.D. (faculty)
- Lale Yurtseven (faculty)

Summary of Degrees and Certificates

- A.S. - T Business Administration (transfer degree)
- A.S. Business Administration
- A.S. Business Analytics
- A.S. International Business
- A.A. Management
- A.S. Public and Non-Profit Administration
- Business Analytics (certificate)
- International Business (certificate)
- Entrep. and Small Business Managment (certificate)
- Entrepreneurship - The Start Up (certificate)
- Business Managment (certificate)
- Marketing Specialist (certificate)
- Management (certificate)
- Human Resources Management (certificate)
- Project Management (certificate)
- Real Estate (certificate)

Questions for Advisory Board

- What emerging skills do you anticipate industry will be seeking?
- Do you employ students with certificates or 2-year degrees and if so, in what areas and/or positions?
- What business-related majors do you anticipate industry will be seeking in the future?
- Identify one hard skill and one soft skill that you believe are most lacking in recent college graduates.