



INDUSTRY ADVISORY BOARD

Meeting Minutes

May 5, 2025 12:00 – 1:00 PM via Zoom

ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

Carlene Gray – *CA Cosmetology Association*

Lisa Rolle – *CosmoProf*

DEPARTMENT ATTENDEES

Deborah Baker – *Assistant Professor*

Oksana Brinson – *Instructional Aide*

Rafael Delgado – *Staff Assistant*

Lizette Fontana – *Storekeeper*

Erin Gruman – *Instructional Aide*

Aurora Medrano – *Associate Professor*

Kim Salido – *Associate Professor*

Tasia Scott – *Assistant Professor*

Yvonne Williams – *Instructional Aide*

AGENDA:

1. **Are you noticing that students are less inclined to work full-time after graduating?**
2. **Are there any specific soft skills that new stylists are lacking or could improve on?**
3. **Since the removal of the State Board Practical Exam requirement, have you observed any significant changes in the skills level or job readiness of recent graduates?**

MINUTES

1. Students' Willingness to Work Full-Time Post-Graduation

- Students are showing less interest in working full-time, preferring flexible or part-time roles.
- Industry professionals noted a shift in student mindset compared to past generations.
- Possible causes include:
 - Social media and influencer culture
 - Reduced program hours (from 1600 to 1000)
 - Unrealistic expectations about the profession
- Suggestions included:
 - Introducing students to brand educators via social media
 - Hosting more guest speakers and brand education
 - Emphasizing the importance of hands-on practice and exposure to different career paths

2. Soft Skills Development

- Communication skills and professional attitude are seen as more critical than technical skills by salon owners.
- Students lack confidence in product knowledge and client communication.
- Suggestions for improvement:
 - Encourage students to learn and present product knowledge regularly
 - Emphasize the stylist's role as an educator to the client
 - Reinforce professionalism, passion, and positive attitude
- Esthetics students were noted to be more focused and career-driven, possibly due to age or second-career motivation.

3. Effects of Removing State Board Practical Exam

- Concerns were raised that students feel less prepared after graduating.
- Reduced hours and lack of practical testing may contribute to lower confidence and job readiness.
- Recommendations:
 - Promote continued education beyond graduation
 - Use social media and brand resources to stay current
 - Explore opportunities for competitions or extra projects to build skills and confidence

Action Items and Next Steps:

- **Education Opportunities:**
 - Lisa offered to help schedule manufacturer education sessions in the fall (Mondays preferred).
 - Suggestion to reach out to tool brands (e.g., Wahl), though limited by purchasing channels.
 - Potential to invite multicultural guest artists in future semesters.
 - Combine classes during guest events to maximize participation.
- **Fall Focus:**
 - Plan for increased brand and guest educator involvement
 - Encourage student engagement with professional development resources

1. Are you noticing that students are less inclined to work full-time after graduating?

TRANSCRIPTION

Lisa: I am not in the salons but work with the chain divisions of CosmoProf – the owners are saying that most stylists don't want to work weekends or full-time, most are looking for part-time employment.

Carlene: Yes, this is the case. I am from the Danville area with 30+ years of experience in a salon and I had to work every Saturday.

Kim: I had a speaker come to class to talk about an apprenticeship program that was several years long and the students were appalled. They are not looking for a full-time vibe.

Tasia: I completed my licensing program when it was still 1600 hours, I was conditioned from school that I would be working Tuesday – Saturday.

Deborah: Why do students have that mentality? Where is it coming from? Could it be the reduction in hours, maybe? Do the students have unrealistic expectations, if so, why?

Carlene: Habits don't necessarily come from school. These students may not be as focused. Some of them will become licensed but will never work in a salon. It is important that they take advantage of everything that Cosmetology school has to offer. The schools should be enlightening students to the different career avenues that are available to them after licensure – not necessarily working in a salon.

Tasia: I remember when I was starting, the more time that you spent in the salon the more practice you would get and your skills would improve. Practice is important.

Lisa: It isn't just this industry. There does not seem to be the same drive to work. It could be because of influencer culture. The reality though, is that it is really expensive to live here in the Bay Area. In order to survive, if they only work part-time, stylists will need some type of supplemental income. This is frustrating to a lot of salon owners that I work with.

Kim: Social media could also be playing a role. Maybe they don't think that they'll need to work full-time. Their perceptions could change once they enter the workforce.

Lisa: I follow a lot of manufacturer educators on social media, they are great. Maybe have the students follow and listen to them. Also, maybe have some education for specific brands.

Deborah: I've been an educator for a manufacturing company and I always share that story and journey with the students. We miss the trade shows.

Carlene: Maybe you could bring more educators to the school. Social media can be both a positive and a negative tool.

Tasia: Our students are looking for flexibility, not to be tied down.

Carlene: Maybe make the education more exciting and appealing to the students. Can they get extra hours?

Kim: Yes, but an instructor must also be present. I try to book salons to speak to the students but it's hard to balance with the shift to 1000 hours.

2. Are there any specific soft skills that new stylists are lacking or could improve on?

Tasia: I tell students that soft skills are 80% of the industry – communication skills are super important.

Lisa: I agree, communication skills are needed. It is important that students know about product knowledge as well. I tell them they are the experts in their field. There is a product solution to every problem. It is a disservice for a client to walk out without purchasing a product. Students don't seem to be interested in talking about products, not knowing that they could make commission off that sale.

Tasia: When I was in school, I would focus on learning two products a week. That's how I learned about products. The stylist is not necessarily selling a product but educating the client on it. Students need to get rid of their fear of talking as well.

Lisa: Stylists are practically influencers as they build trust and a relationship with the client.

Kim: When talking to salons, they never mention the hard skills, but rather they want stylists that are passionate and want to learn and can communicate. They will teach them how they do their services in the salon.

Carlene: Having the right attitude is half of the battle. Do you get a lot of clients? Do you get free education from the companies that you stock?

Kim: We have a really high clientele list and students get a lot of hands-on practice. In terms of education, we don't get as much from the companies.

Deborah: The Esthetics program is a cohort-based class. The skincare companies have been accessible and helpful with education. Do you notice a difference between Cosmo students and Esti students?

Deborah: Esti students tend to be older, some are in their second career and they have a better idea of what they are looking to gain from their education. Maybe there's a difference in the students' motivation?

Carlene: Yes! This has been the case. Esti students seem to be more focused.

Lisa: I can't really speak to Esti since we don't carry skincare.

3. **Since the removal of the State Board Practical Exam requirement, have you observed any significant changes in the skills level or job readiness of recent graduates?**

Tasia: In the shift to 1000 hours and with the removal of the practical component, our students feel as though they are not ready when they graduate. I stress to them that is what continuing education is for. It is when they leave school and enter the field, that they will find their niche.

Kim: The students seem to be really distracted. Social media could be playing a role.

Carlene: Are students doing extra projects? Are they learning the art of hairdressing? The art of competition? Social media can be used for both good and bad. They just need to channel that energy into something that can be beneficial to their education.

Lisa: I recommend to students that they start following brand manufacturers on social media. That way they can learn new tricks and techniques. A brand's website also has a lot of useful information.

Tasia: Any final thoughts?

Lisa: Reach out to me if you would like to schedule some education classes for the students with the manufacturers that you use in the department.

Kim: Let's set something up for the fall.

Lisa: Mondays work best for scheduling guest speakers. I would need a couple dates to make the requests with the companies.

Deborah: Maybe we can get education from the tools manufacturers that we use. Maybe Wahl? Or some of the other hot tools.

Tasia: I tried setting something up with Wahl but it didn't go anywhere.

Lisa: A lot of times it depends on if the company has a local educator. Now that I think about it, I wouldn't be able to set something up with them since you do not buy your tools from CosmoProf.

Carlene: Do you have guest artists that focus on multicultural hair?

Tasia: Not yet since the scheduling is really tight but this is a goal for upcoming semesters. Our clientele could also be more diverse.

Carlene: Madrid Johnson would be a great guest. The California Cosmetology Association also offers education.

Kim: We will focus on something for the fall semester and we'll remember to combine the classes as well that way everyone can participate.