



**Advisory Board Meeting
February 19, 2021
Minutes – Confidential for Advisory Board Members Only**

In Attendance:

Board Members by Zoom video: Bob Gach, Donald Almeida, John McCombe, Patricia David, Becky Peters, Brendan Albee, Brendan Ryan, Carl Majette, Carly Guerra, Chris Fitzmaurice, Dave Duggal, Eileen Walsh, Kevin Meenan, Milton Longobardi, Nora Grose, Louis Romeo, Samuel Mok, Sihien Goh, Spero Zacharias, Sunil Garga, Teresa Heitsenrether, Brian Benedik, William Chess, and William Sickles.

Administrative Note – Please note the following dates for future Advisory Board meetings (calendar invites to follow): May 4, October 5, December 14 – all meetings are planned for 8:30 AM– 10:30 AM.

Plenary Session Summary

Donna welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced new board members Dave Duggal and Becky Peters. Dave and Becky introduced themselves and the board welcomed them.

Donna thanked board members who have been teaching, supporting the school, and our Centennial. Donna then welcomed Mario Gabelli to the meeting.

Mario greeted the board and spoke about being in the digital revolution and what we can achieve at Fordham University. Mario spoke about Whitney Wolfe Herd of Bumble, which went public this week, as an example of how the GSB can train and inspire the next generation of leaders.

Bob then greeted the board and introduced the two topics that they would be discussing:

- *Collaborations and Partnerships* – this topic included an overview of what the GSB has in place today (such as the multifaceted PVH partnership) and what our emerging strategy is. Bob explained that collaborations and partnerships is one of the six “tracks” that are being developed in support of the MS portfolio redesign that we have been sharing with the advisory board over the past several meetings. He noted that his particular initiative also has broader impact than just the MS program.
- *Career Development* – this topic included an overview of the processes used by Personal and Professional Development (PPD of the GSB) and Career Services of the University to help prepare students for career development, job searches and interviews.

Donna had sent out her presentation in advance with a recorded voice over. There was a brief discussion on these materials, and it was noted that alongside the Law School, that the GSB can provide some important ideas and inspiration to the rest of the University in these challenging times.

Lerzan Aksoy and Francis Petit then presented on our partnerships and collaborators at the Gabelli School of Business. PVH was highlighted as a leading example of a robust and high impact partnership. The PVH relationship is instructive as it is the most comprehensive to date regarding joint efforts on research, social responsibility activities, student engagement, funding for GSB initiatives, etc.. Some highlights of the plenary discussion include:

- PVH participates in the classroom and presents in the Ground Floor first year course for students. We've been able to establish a relationship that has led to more career development for students and have been successful in opening up four corporate social responsibility internships for our students. We've partnered on events and conferences together, including the Future of Work in a Sustainable World conference.
- A second partnership that was highlighted was PwC. It was noted that PwC is one of our longest standing partnerships and yet may still offer the opportunity for scope expansion. The board members discussed what we might want from these partnerships and how we can better explore the full range of opportunities they present.
- Lerzan then presented on the Responsible Business Coalition, which has 46 CEOs within the fashion industry and 275 brands and is only expanding at the Gabelli School.

After Lerzan concluded her presentation, the Board members moved to break out sessions for discussion. Following the breakout sessions, leaders of the rooms read out their findings including these summary points:

- A recommendation was made to formalize the partnership development process and agreements where applicable
- We need to be able to clearly articulate: Why Fordham and what are our capabilities? We should test this and get feedback from current and potential partnering organizations and ensure we are remaining authentic to who we are.
- Some of the key potential company priorities discussed include responsible social media and DEI topics. It was also noted that being able to demonstrate student education in these spaces would increase their attractiveness to employers as well as meet the needs of potential partnerships.
- We should do external research to see what others are doing. It was noted that this is just the start to the conversation and the collaborations will continue.
- We should endeavor to learn what are the top three things important to companies now in a post-COVID environment? An ask for the board members: what are the top three things on each board member's company's agenda?

Donna then welcomed Cynthia Bush to present on undergraduate careers featuring the capabilities of Personal and Professional Development (PPD). PPD's activities include their support for one-on-one assistance for undergraduate students, events, internships, interview preparation, etc. A pre-recorded video showed a student, who is currently employed at JP Morgan, discussing how PPD allows undergraduate students to present their best selves to companies and on the interview.

Additional PPD capabilities were then discussed including support for First year scholars, diversity, equity and inclusion programs, as well as support for specific career majors

There was also a brief discussion about current intern and job offer experience with it being noted that investment banking and accounting remain prominent. Some internships were cancelled due to COVID.

Kim Lewis-Collins then spoke about the Career Development Center (CDC) team and their capabilities to support our Graduate students including recruiter and employer relations, virtual recruiting, customized resume books, corporate site visits (to be resumed in the future), networking events and diversity initiatives, support for international students, student recruiting tools (e.g., Big Interview). etc. We have heard from several companies that they expect MBA and specialized Master's programs to return to pre-COVID levels in 2021. We then had a brief discussion in plenary including support for international students, distribution of job offers external to NYC and related experience from CDC over the past year.

Following the breakout sessions, leaders of the rooms read out summary findings:

- A recommendation was made that rather than distributing standard resume books, the Board would find it easier to assist if they received very targeted resumes that fit their respective industries or focus areas. In addition, we should jointly look for more direct and specific connections that we can facilitate between students and companies
- Another recommendation was to enrich the connections between students and the Board – possibly including developing individual student videos to introduce them to board members
- Recognizing that students also benefit from mentoring relationships with professional closer in tenure to themselves - Board members could potentially oversee more “junior” mentors who could engage with students.
- As an alternative to mentor and mentee pairs, an option would be to focus on clubs and assign one mentor for 5-6 mentees. Students would also be expected to prepare before meeting with advisory board members to focus the sessions on priority topics.

Bob thanked the board members for their participation and let them know that we would be following up on both topics.

Donna concluded the meeting and let the board members know that she would be reaching out for more information about what their companies are doing and what they are looking for from Gabelli School students.