



SDSU Student Accounting Society

Meeting Minutes: San Diego State Faculty SDSU Faculty Panel

4/8/2021

Presenters:

- Narelle Mackenzie
- James Vogt
- Shira Cohen
- Kristin Mikolajczak
- Nancy Jones

Presentation:

Q: Please introduce yourselves and say a little about yourself.

Narelle Mackenzie

- Teaches Acctg 332
- Focuses on taxation
- Teaching at SDSU since 2007
- From Australia
- Licensed CPA in Australia and California
- Moved to the US in 1996
- Worked in both Industry and Public Accounting
- Encourages people to learn tax

James Vogt

- Started out in Banking and in Banking Operations
- Worked and developed payment systems
- Was interested in fraud and became a Certified Fraud Examiner
- Originally from Denver, Colorado
- Teaches classes on Fraud Examinations
- Has been teaching Fraud Examination at SDSU for 6 years
- Also teaches ACCTG 390w
- Begun teaching Forensic Accounting
- Going to teach Accounting 325

Shira Cohen

- Teaches Intermediate Accounting II
- First year teaching at SDSU

- Worked in Consulting and Financial Industries
- Has government experience
- Got PH.D from Columbia

Kristin Mikolajczak

- Fellow SDSU Alumni
- Graduated with a Masters in Accountancy
- Started to teach in while studying for her Master's degree
- Licensed CPA and worked at PWC
- At PWC worked with Pharma and Life Science Companies
- Worked with Intuit at for 5 years
- Came back to SDSU to teach
- Teaches Part-time
- Teaches an Graduate Auditing Class

Nancy Jones

- Graduated from Chico State
- Started career at a manufacturing Company
- Went back to school to get a Masters Degree
- Worked as a controller for a company
- Does Consulting
- Primarily teaches in the Masters Program (usually AIS)
- Also teaches Managerial Accounting (ACCTG 202)

Q: Favorite aspect about your Job(s)?

Mackenzie:

- Did not like the tax classes for her undergrad
- Had a teacher in the upper division classes that was very knowledgeable and passionate about taxation
- Loves to Encourage others to love tax
- Enjoys international tax consultation

Jones:

- The students
- Lives through her students
- Like to see her students learning and applying what they learned
- Takes her students success as her own

Vogt

- The energy that comes from students
- Loves the "lightbulb"- the moment when something connects or clicks
- Loves playing a small part in opening new avenues in students
- Loves making a difference

Mikolajczak

- Likes to be able to bring real world experience to the classroom
- Sees the difference in learning from a book versus learning from real life examples

Cohen

- Teaching is instrumental
- Being able to clear the puzzle for the students to build

Most Memorable experience at SDSU? Why?

Jones

- Being able to go see graduation
- Graduation is favorite time of the year
- Proud of her students as if they were family

Vogt

- The "lightbulb" moments
- The interaction and energy with students
- Students choosing to stay connected with teachers after graduation
- Those interactions tie it all together
- Loves the continued connection

Cohen

- Started a new position in a pandemic
- Getting to know the students

Mikolajczak

- Has students make a presentation as they are presenting to an Audit Partner or Audit Manager
- Sees how the students tie it all together
- Constant praises to the students from other staff

Q: One Piece of advice for students entering the professional workplace.

Mikolajczak

- Go with a good attitude
- A good attitude and hard work go a long way
- Ask questions and don't be afraid to admit your stuck
- Build a strong connection

Mackenzie

- Networking is key
- Most jobs that came were from others who recommended her rather than applied for those jobs.
- Has had people ask for her opinions about others (including students)

- Integrity is important

Jones

- Leave your options open
- Networking is important
- Had Big 4 options and other opportunities but decided against it
- But found her place in a company Accounts Payable
- Do what's right for your

Cohen

- 3 p's:

1. Positive- Have a good attitude
2. Professional- Work hard
3. Proactive- Network

- Network within the group and outside
- Talked to a partner about joining a group that was going to work on a project she was interested in. Got to be part of the project.

Vogt

- Be Humble
- Kindness and respect go a long way in the business world
- Treat everyone equally
- Had a master plan to one day teach
- Started Networking with local fraud examiners
- Many individuals knew that he wanted to teach
- Got a call from someone about an opening that they knew about and were willing to reference him.
- Ended up getting the job in teaching Fraud Examination at a graduate level

Questions:

Q: If you can go back in time to your college self, what advice would you give yourself?

Mackenzie

- GPA is irrelevant
- After you get your first job, GPA becomes irrelevant

Cohen

- Get some sleep
- Don't stress over your career
- Careers take different paths
- Enjoy the journey

Vogt

- Be open to opportunities
- Don't get so fixed up on your career
- Your career is going to have turns
- Each Job helped in developing themselves
- The Learning is in the struggle
- When presented with the opportunity, say "yes" and figure it out later

Mikolajczak

- The hard work and struggle are going to help you
- Be able to problem solve
- Don't cheat yourself

Jones

- Don't take shortcuts
- Integrity is important
- Learn through failure

Mackenzie

- Learn from your experiences
- Apply what you learn elsewhere
- Continue to learn
- Don't be afraid of failure

Q: What has been one of the biggest changes you have seen in the field?

Jones:

- A lot of pressure from industry to teach more
- Focus on technology
- More on Diversity and Inclusion
- Education is moving quickly

Vogt

- Analytics are growing in the profession
- Learning to use analytics to ease our jobs and be more effective
- Develop your communication skills
- Learn how to write, learn to communicate and learn to communicate with others

Mikolajczak

- No matter the path, the more IT classes you take the more you benefit from them

Mackenzie

- The basics have not changed but the application has evolved
- Use analytical skills to solve problems

Cohen

- Analytics and Data proficiency has become a necessity
- Worry about learning the material and not the grades