



**Northern Marianas College
Accreditation Reaffirmation Action Plan (ARAP)
Update 2: August 6, 2010**

(Note: The following update was emailed from NMC Accreditation Liaison Officer Galvin Deleon Guerrero to the NMC campus community on August 6, 2010.)

IMPORTANT DATES

August 10–12, 2010
Professional Development Days (PDD)

August 12, 2010
8:30 a. m. to 10:00 a. m.
General Assembly to disseminate Draft ARAP
Governor Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center, Susupe

August 26, 2010
Last day to submit input/comments on Draft ARAP

September 24, 2010
Draft Show Cause Report to be disseminated

October 8, 2010
Last day to submit input/comments on Draft Show Cause Report

PDD FOCUS ON ACCREDITATION

You may have noticed that this year's PDD will focus on accreditation, specifically the four standards of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC):

- I—Institutional Mission and Effectiveness
- II—Student Learning Programs and Services
- III—Resources
- IV—Leadership and Governance

We are taking this approach for two reasons. First, given the severity of

Show Cause, we must all come to a better understanding of the standards, all of which are cited in ACCJC's June 30, 2010 Show Cause Action Letter. With that better understanding, we can work together to get accreditation reaffirmed.

Second, we are looking forward to the college's ACCJC Self-Study in 2012. Even if ACCJC had not issued order of Show Cause, we would have focused on these standards to get a head start on the 2012 Self Study. After all, we must all believe that we will overcome Show Cause and reach the 2012 with our accreditation intact and ready for another six-year term.

TEAM UPDATES

What Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said about boats and ships could easily apply to the NMC PROA: "We may have all come on different ships, but we're in the same boat now."

That is why EVERYONE AT THE COLLEGE IS ENCOURAGED TO HELP by signing up for any of the following teams.

I.A: Mission

Team Leader

Dr. Patrick Moran, Director of School of Education

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In exploring how to genuinely integrate the college's mission into all processes, activities, and decisions at the college, the team is developing local and systemic indicators that will help gauge the extent to which the college mission is practiced and manifested.

I.B: Improving Institutional Effectiveness

Team Leader:

Galvin Deleon Guerrero, Director, Office of Institutional Effectiveness/Accreditation Liaison Officer

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In addition to exploring how institutional data and information about institutional effectiveness can be conveyed more clearly and routinely at all levels in the College, the team is reviewing the shared governance model in order to enhance constituent representation in the college's governance. The team is also exploring better ways to link program review with planning, budgeting, and resource allocation.

II.A: Instructional Programs and II.B: Student Support Services

Team Leaders:

Barbara Merfarlen, Dean of Academic Programs and Services

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Leo Pangelinan, Dean of Student Services

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Maria Aguon, Program Coordinator, Tinian Instructional Site

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Daniel Kintol, Acting President, Associated Students of NMC

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Cynthia Deleon Guerrero, Director, Office of Admissions and Records

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While the team is closely studying current and proposed Human Resources (HR) policies that bear on instructional programs and student services to address concerns raised by ACCJC, the team is also taking a close look at key college policies and procedures to identify ways in which instructional programs and student support services can better reflect and uphold best practices in education.

III.A: Human Resources

Team Leaders:

Barbara Hunter, Acting Manager, Human Resources Office

bobbieh@nmcnet.edu

Daisie M. Camacho, Acting Director, Information Technology

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Larry Lee, President, Faculty Senate

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The team is collaborating with Frank Gibson to continue reviewing proposed revisions to the College's Human Resources (HR) policies to address ACCJC Recommendation #6. The team intends to finalize the proposed revisions for action by the Board of Regents this Fall 2010.

III.D: Financial Resources

Team Leaders:

Henry Hofschneider, Chief Financial and Administrative Officer

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David Attao, Acting Dean, Community Programs and Services

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Ross Manglona, Director, Cooperative Research and Extension Education Services (CREES)

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Martin Mendiola, Program Coordinator, Rota Instructional Site

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The team continues to comb through recent audits to develop a corrective action plan that will address audit findings in the short-term and the long-term. The team also continues to explore policies, enforcement measures, and training opportunities to ensure that similar findings do not recur in future audits.

IV.B: Board and Administrative Organization

Team Leaders:

Lorraine T. Cabrera, Interim President

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Frankie Eliptico, Director, Office of Institutional Advancement

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Clarice Deleon Guerrero, President, Staff Senate

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The team continues to review a number of proposed Board of Regents policies for Board autonomy, Board members' training, policy development and review, and a policy regarding the filling of vacancies on the Board, as well as the draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between NMC and the Governor's Office and the Legislature. The team is also researching and studying actions taken at other institutions accredited by ACCJC to address similar commission findings and recommendations.

THE VALUE OF ACCREDITATION

There has been a lot of talk lately about accreditation, with some in our community questioning and challenging the value of accreditation. However, there are many advantages to accreditation: it qualifies our students for federal financial aid; it qualifies the institution for many federal grants; and it helps in the transferability of credits earned at the college.

Above all, however, accreditation provides an assurance of the quality of the education and services that we provide to our students and our community. That assurance is what drives us to cultivate a collegiate culture of data-driven, evidence-based decision-making for continuous quality improvement.

In short, the value of accreditation is that it upholds the value of what we do in higher education.

With that in mind, the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) recently released "The Value of Accreditation", which is attached for your reference. Please take some time to read this short booklet. In it, CHEA takes a look at the big picture of accreditation, within the context of preparing

our students for the global marketplace. As CHEA notes in the booklet, “Accreditation has helped to provide the conditions necessary for the United States to develop diverse, flexible, robust and often admired higher education.”