Program Review 2013

A Composite report

Academic Program and Services

July 2014

The purpose of this report, *Program Review: A Composite Report of Academic Programs and Services (*hereinafter referred to as the "Composite Report") is to highlight college wide assessment activities, by way of program review, at the Northern Marianas College for Academic Year 2012-2013.

The Composite Report is authored by the Program Review and Outcomes Assessment Committee (PROAC) for submission to the Budget and Finance Committee and the President to inform the decision making process with the ultimate goal of improving student learning at the College.

This report covers an overview of the program review process, strengths and areas for improvement, findings and recommendations for action, feedback to the program and institution, structure and process, and recommendations for the next cycle.

Program Review and Outcomes Assessment Committee
(PROAC)

PROAC was created on July 13, 2007 with committee members appointed by the President from a cross-section of the campus community.

PROAC Mission Statement

Build and sustain a campus-wide culture of evidence, which promotes, fosters and improves student learning outcomes at the course, program and institutional levels.

Committee Members	
Name	**REPRESENTING**
Jacqueline Che	Director, Office of Institutional Effectiveness (PROAC Chair)
Barbara Merfalen	Dean, Academic Programs & Services
Leo Pangelinan	Dean, Student Services
David Attao	Dean, Administration & Resource Development
Tracy Guerrero	Chief Financial Officer
Amanda Allen	Director, Distance Learning Education; ALO
Jonathan Liwag	Director, Information Technology
Floyd Masga	Vice / President, Staff Senate
Barbara Hunter	Faculty Representative
Charlotte Cepeda	Faculty Representative
Vacant	Faculty Representative
Jennifer Maratita	Faculty Representative, School of Education
Rose Lazaro	Program Coordinator, Tinian Instructional Site
Vacant	Rota Instructional Site
Vacant	Academic Council
	Student Representative, ASNMC
Former- or Alternate- Members, Contributors and Supporting Staff	
Orrin Pharmin	Program Coordinator, Area Health Education Center, for Dave Attao
Maria Aguon	Instructor/Program Coordinator, Tinian Instructional Site, for Rose Lazaro
Jesusa Atalig	Media Specialist, Tinian Instructional Site, for Rose Lazaro
Priscilla Cing	Administrative Officer, Tinian Instructional Site, for Rose Lazaro
Lisa Hacskaylo	Institutional Researcher, Office of Institutional Effectiveness

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Table of Contents

I.   History

In a major effort to meet ACCJC standards and to address the Northern Marianas College's probationary status with the Commission, the Program Review and Outcomes Assessment Committee (PROAC), the overall assessment guidance and working committee for the institution, was established in July 13, 2007 with an appointment memo from NMC President Dr. Carmen Fernandez. The mission of PROAC is to build and sustain a campus wide culture of evidence, which promotes, fosters and improves student learning outcomes at the course, program and institutional levels. Membership in PROAC is representative of the different constituencies at the College, including faculty, staff, administrators, and students.

NMC has had difficulty in meeting Accreditation Standards on a consistent basis since the visit in 2006. By the time of the visit in October 2012, the College had moved from Show Cause to the sanction of Probation and was required to remedy all identified deficiencies.

In January 9-11, 2013, the Commission considered all presented evidence and found that NMC was in substantial non-compliance with Eligibility Requirements 5 and 13, as well as with Accreditation Standards, II.C.2, III.A.1, III.A.2., IV.B.1.a, and IV.B.1.j, as reported in Recommendations 2,3, and 8 of the Evaluation Team Report. In a February 11, 2013 letter, Commission President Dr. Barbara Beno informed the College of the Commission's action for being out of compliance with Eligibility Requirement 5 and 13 and significant parts of Standards II.C.2, III.A.1, II.A.2, IV.B.1, and IV.B.2.

Since the Reaffirmation Visit in the fall of 2012 and as a result of the ACCJC's subsequent action at its January 2013 meeting, the Commission took action to order Show Cause and to require that the College complete a Show Cause Report by October 15, 2013.

Since then the College has been working hard to address the actions taken by the Commission, specifically in the deficiencies noted and identified in the October 2012 External Evaluation Report, including all areas of improvement.

Over the last seven years, the institution has made steady progress in transforming itself into a place where integrated planning and assessment have become the norm. Moreover, this transformation has been embraced by the campus community. The College has institutionalized systems for program review to maintain the momentum of the program review process. Participation in program review is stipulated in all job vacancy announcements and contracts. Program review is also embedded into the employee evaluation process. The College continues to provide professional development opportunities throughout the year to help everyone at the College understand and embrace the program review process and see it as a tool for continuous quality improvement for student achievement and institutional effectiveness.

The objectives of the current process of program review are made clear to all programs and include identification of strengths and weaknesses of the program; analysis of current human, physical, technology and financial resources; analysis of potential areas of needed change or improvement based on data collected around outcomes for the

program; and discussion of needed additional resources to either meet the stated outcomes or for improvement of the program in other areas.

PROAC aspires to maintain its momentum in program review and planning and plans to strengthen these processes even further in the coming cycles.

II.   Process Overview

PROAC did not allow the disheartening news over the Show Cause sanction stand in the way of progress; however, program review activities during the past cycle were intermittent due to several competing priorities and the subsequent granting of extended submission deadlines.

Current Process

NMC currently uses the Nichols and Nichols' "Five-Column Model" for reporting Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and Administrative Unit Outcomes (AUO's). This five-column model essentially provides the substantive framework that all programs, departments, and units must use in designing their assessment plans and reports. The complete Five-Column Model is also identified as Form 1.

For the Five-Column Model for SLOs, Column 1 identifies the College mission as the driving force behind all assessment activities. Column 2 includes program learning outcomes (about 2 to 3) which indicate what students will be able to know, do, think or value as a result of a given educational experience. Column 3 provides specific assessment tools that will measure what is to be achieved as identified in the previous column, as well as criteria for success. Column 4 summarizes assessment findings, as linked to the set program learning outcomes, while Column 5 discusses implications of the data (either quantitative or qualitative) in terms of how they can be used to improve certain aspects of the program.

For the Five-Column Model for AUOs, the same information is contained in the columns, as discussed above. The primary difference, however, occurs in Column 2 where a variation of the question may be asked, "What will the unit or department provide, improve or increase to improve student learning or services?" or "What will the students or clients be satisfied with, receive, understand or do?" What is important to remember is that SLO assessment results in improved *learning*, while AUO assessment results in improved *service*.

To assist programs in completing the Five-Column Model, a system of memos detailing the sequence and scope of each step of the model was kept in place. All the identified academic and student services programs were scheduled to submit the first three columns completed in "Memo 1" on December 31, 2012. PROAC reviewed Memo 1 submissions for improvement through a process of dialogue with the various programs. PROAC members, also known as Program Mentors assigned to work closely with programs for which they took primary reading and feedback responsibilities, took the lead in reviews and feedback to programs. With the first three columns having been completed with

Memo 1, each program was then required to submit a Memo 2 (completed 5-column Form 1), which reports on the fourth and fifth columns, by July 31, 2013.

The completion of the Form 1 was planned on a College-defined two-year assessment cycle, with specified deadlines for submission of assessment requirements. It was hoped that this cycle would gradually regularize and routinize all assessment activities on campus since both academic and non-academic groups in the assessment taxonomy had a document submission requirement every semester. A *Compliance Monitoring Matrix* was maintained by PROAC, with administrative support from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness staff.

Cycle 6
For the current cycle, only Academic Programs and Services were required to submit a Form 2. All other programs submitted a Form 1 during this cycle.

Program Review Form 1s for Cycle 6 were due in July 31, 2013 and extended for a month to August 31, 2013. 64% of Non-Academic Programs and 100% of Academic Programs reported assessment activities.

PROAC met over several months to review the reports submitted in December 2013. Program Mentors took the lead in the review of their respective programs, although each PROAC member read and participated in the discussions. Decisions were made by the group and not by the Program Mentors. These Program Mentors documented strengths, weaknesses, general comments, and PROAC decisions on the recommendations to programs and to the institution. The results of the extensive reviews are presented in the PROAC Composite Report 2013.

Program Mentors met during the months of October 2012 to March 201 4 and dialogued about the strengths and weaknesses of submitted Form 2s. PROAC scheduled weekly meetings to discuss submitted Form 2s and discuss findings made by the Program Mentors.

At the end of the review process, PROAC concluded the need for continuous improvement in the next cycle and the need for the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and PROAC to increase communications with all programs and provide assistance to authors of program review documents.

PROAC decided to set new deadline(s) following numerous requests for extension from the division of Academic Programs and Services. PROAC took action to extend the September 30, 2014deadline for Cycle 6 Form 2 submissions for Academic Programs to November 1, 2013, December 2, 2013, December 16, 2013, and finally January 31, 2014. Programs that met the December 2, 2013 deadline received assistance and feedback to minimize errors and improve the quality of their respective Form 2 drafts.

100% of Academic Programs submitted a Form 2 by the final extended deadline--showing that Academic Program are steadfastly marching forward, albeit slowly.

Several factors have contributed to the late Form 2 submissions. Lack of time and competing priorities were the two major obstacles to attending to the Form 2. To complicate matters, there was a delay in disseminating student achievement data to Academic Programs. This was due to the work involved in responding to internal and external reporting requirements for accreditation.

Regardless of the factors contributing to the late Form 2 submissions, there are generally a number of challenges that both the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Academic Programs confront. NMC should assess the extent to which these challenges exist on its campus, and consider how each will be addressed.

Looking ahead. When faculty return to campus in fall 2014, the process of training faculty and staff on program review and assessment will begin.

I.   Strengths and Areas for Improvement

Strengths:

1. 100% Form 1 and 2 submission rate for Academic Programs and Services in Cycle 6 2013.

2. The Form 2 template was revised to include more substantial data, evidence, and analysis and required programs to link recommendations directly to data, evidence, and analysis included in the Form 2.

3. PROAC revised the rubrics to improve and assess the merit of each Form 2 submission.

4. As a result of the program review process, more information, data, and evidence is being shared between programs and being consolidated, reinforcing the growing culture of evidence at the College.

5. With more data and evidence collected, shared, and consolidated, more programs are making the shift to data-driven decision-making to achieve prescribed outcomes.

6. All Academic Programs conducted assessments that focused on two or three of their outcomes each year (using the 6 Year Outcomes Assessment Mapping Tool), thereby spreading out the assessment of all their outcomes over a long period of time. This will ensure a regular flow of meaningful data that can be used on a continuous basis for evaluating student learning in relation to outcomes.

Weaknesses and areas for improvement:

1. 64% Form 1 submission rate for Non-Academic Programs in Cycle 6 2013.

2. Some student achievement data were not provided by the deadline to Academic Programs, others that were provided were not included by the program authors, and sections of the template that should have been removed were not.

3. Since losing two additional staff in the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, the task of supporting program authors was passed on to PROAC members in their roles as Program Mentors. The work of reviewing and evaluating Form 2s was inconsistent across the board, and ongoing support and feedback was not fully realized.

4. Stemming from the time crunch and pressures of reaffirming accreditation, efforts of PROAC to promote program review through training and mentorship have been limited.

5. Attendance at PROAC meetings has been irregular. Because of members' inconsistent meeting attendance some key decision-makers were not able to grasp the full picture or take part in the decision-making.

6. No assessment management system is in place. The current manual paper bound system cannot sustain the work of program review.

7. Some programs struggled to adequately analyze data and evidence in their program review narratives. Data and evidence were often incomplete and sporadic, and very few programs effectively used data and evidence to justify their recommendations.

8. Several Academic Program's Form 2's did not close the loop in articulating how assessment evidence is improving program improvements.

III.   Findings and Recommendations

It should be noted that many common findings from this cycle of program review echo common findings from the previous cycle. Recommendations and common findings from both cycles of program review are as follow:

Recommendations to the President, programs, and PROAC:

➢ To the President:

1. Assessment and program review is everyone's business, beginning with the President. The President's role is to keep NMC transparent in its assessment efforts, review student satisfaction surveys, and use assessment findings in the budgeting and planning process. The President can demonstrate support of assessment and program review by attending workshops and becoming conversant in assessment and program review, as well as committing sufficient resources and incentives to the effort.

2. The support of the President and Management Team in providing adequate resources to permit Academic Programs to conduct meaningful outcomes assessment is imperative.

3. The College needs to continue to aggressively address the staffing needs of its programs; this includes faculty and staff to support the ongoing college initiatives. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness is inadequate and lacks the administrative support needed to sustain program review efforts. There is a need to hire an Assessment Coordinator/Specialist.

4. Programs continue to draw attention to inadequate, damaged, and unsafe facilities. While many programs have done what they can to address health and safety hazards as well as become ADA compliant, these programs continue to appeal to the College to repair dilapidated facilities and to provide more space for classrooms, offices, laboratories, learning centers, and storage.

5. Use resource allocation decisions to ensure that programs and departments include outcomes-based assessment and evidence-based and data supported decision making in the program review process to ensure that the process is a meaningful tool for quality enhancement. This can be encouraged by withholding resources if these two elements are absent from the Form 2 or granting additional resources for those programs and departments engaged in meaningful assessment of student learning and development and which demonstrate evidence-based decision-making within program review.

➢ To the Programs:

1. Be mindful of established deadlines. It is further recommended that programs ensure complete submissions.
2. Use varied assessment tools to enhance data and evidence collection. In particular for professional development, programs should employ proficiency/competency assessments, in addition to participant evaluations.
3. Academic program reviews need to incorporate recommendations for program improvement to go beyond just purchasing new lap top computers. Recommendations resulting from program review can be used to informing curricular planning, re-sequencing of courses, refinements in the criteria for student evaluation, adjusting faculty teaching loads and assigned release time, etc. Consider discussing student learning, to naturally include consideration of curriculum, pedagogy, and student support services. Recommendations from Cycle 6 point to budget requests that have little or no linkage to improving student learning.
4. The assessment and program review process should be meaningful, manageable, and sustainable. Faculty time is valuable and should be spent on assessment activities that target important learning outcomes and that are like to improve student learning.

➢ To PROAC:

1. PROAC members, with the support of OIE, need to better assess each program's grasp of the program review process, and provide individualized assistance to programs that need the most guidance in the next cycle.

2. PROAC needs to revisit the mechanism for regular follow-up that will enable it to evaluate progress resulting from recommended actions and monitor implementation of recommendations. PROAC should be responsible for following up on institutional recommendations in the next cycle of program review.

3. PROAC should take up a more active and visible role on campus. This means overseeing and maintaining a program review process that is ongoing and reflective. Refine and simplify program review process and forms to ensure better understanding of and buy-in to the process. Also, consider revising the reporting cycle and process.

4. Consider re-investing in an assessment management system (AMS), similar to *TracDat*. The sharing of information and practices are limited by reporting formats and templates that may seem cumbersome for the programs. The current

Northern Marianas College - Composite Report 2013

practice of submitting hard and soft-copy documents reinforces silos and retards organizational learning.

5. PROAC may consider coordinating their reviews so that each program moving through program review would receive an in-depth PROAC review and report. The customized reports will include commendations, recommendations for improvement, and a summary of the overall quality of the assessment and program review work being done in the program. The report is then used by the program faculty to assist in revising their assessment planning and activities as part of the program review process.

6. More faculty involvement is needed. Consider addressing membership composition and incentivize the work of program review.

7. Develop Program Review and Assessment policies and practices to move NMC away from a compliance model toward a continuous improvement cycle based on a culture of evidence.

PROAC Advisory

The following advisory by the Program Review and Outcomes Assessment Committee (PROAC) shall apply to all recommendations and feedback, both at the Program and Institutional level.

1.   All changes to, and creations of, programs and courses should be addressed through the Academic Council, and in compliance with Board policies and procedures and WASC requirements.

2.   All of the recommendations related to facilities and technology upgrades should be addressed in the context of the overall facilities and technology needs of the College.

3.   All of the recommendations related to the hiring of personnel should be addressed.

Academic Programs and Services

ACADEMIC PROGRAM	RECOMMENDATION:
Education	• There is a need for the Information Technology Department to assess the need for laptop upgrades in the School of Education , and see to the connection of Smart Boards. • Re visit the use of the teach-back requirement at introduction -level beginning courses, and consider limiting teach back methods to capstone courses for programs intended to prepare students for the teaching profession. • Identify an improved process to collect program and learner data. • Implement continuous, ongoing and relevant Professional Development in student-centered teaching and learning pedagogy, pedagogical content, and knowledge, and assessment practices grounded in increasing student learning. • The Curriculum Resource Center (CRC) - Management and Resources needs to improve services and instructional tools to assist students in their class development and practical experiences.
Liberal Arts	• Develop articulation with other accredited institutions. • Develop a systematic process for helping students transfer to four year institutions. • Improve student advising by providing more guidance and resources to advisors and advisees—streamline advising processes. • Increase marketing of the Liberal Arts program. • Map the curricula of the Liberal Arts program with the following departments: Language, Arts and Humanities (LAHU), Social Sciences and Fine Arts (SSFA), and Science, Math, Health, and Athletics (SMHA) to ensure better alignment of PLOs and SLOs and scope and sequence. • Collaborate with CNMI Public School System to address high placement rates in the NMC developmental courses. • Provide space and resources for a math lab. (This is also a Math

NDU recommendation)

- Modify current annual evaluations of faculty to formalize Professional Development Plans for faculty in order to ensure that quality service, updated teaching pedagogy, and best practices are realized in all programs. This will also support personal enrichment and growth of faculty and staff.
- Procure updated computer hardware (laptops) and software for faculty use in planning, teaching, and assessment activities. Procure updated television sets for each classroom to support teaching and learning. Provide reliable and accessible wireless connectivity for all classrooms and buildings on campus.

Natural Resource Management

- Develop local Natural Resource Management course materials
- Begin working on the envisioned "Marine & Environmental Science and Management (MESAM) Center."
- Begin working on streamlining the A.S. degree to facilitate early completion and the BS degree for NRM/Environmental field of studies such that local graduates/students will have a better opportunity to complete BSc and future graduate studies in the CNMI.

Nursing

- Reactivate Nursing Program Health Advisory Council.
- Revisit current Individualized Degree Plan which became effective spring 2013.
- Admit new cohort in fall semester of each academic year and not spring semester.
- Review sequence of core courses, prerequisite courses, and nursing courses.
- Lessen time to degree in the Nursing degree program from five semesters to four semesters.
- Revisit the Nursing curriculum and work on mapping of program courses to program learning outcomes and alignment to general education outcomes. Make curricular changes to improve student learning and retention, and to increase graduation and completion rates.
- Implement the Assessment Technologies Institute (ATI) – Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEASV) on a regular basis for admission into the program. The request to make this effective fall 2015 will be included in the upcoming FY15 budget request.
- Implement the National League for Nursing Diagnostic Readiness Test (DRT) on a regular basis for 2nd year nursing students in the last semester of their nursing training prior to graduation. The request to make this effective fall 2015 will be included in the upcoming FY15 budget request.

- Update Nursing's instructional library resources, instructional equipment and supplies. The request to make this effective fall 2015 will be included in the upcoming FY15 budget request.
- Develop and utilize proper coding of Pre-Nursing and Nursing students in PowerCampus.
- Continue to work with the five U.S.-affiliated Pacific Island jurisdictions nursing program directors through the Pacific Partners Investing in Nursing's Future (PIN) Project.
- Continue to explore what it takes to make NMC's Nursing Degree Program National League of Nursing (NLN) accredited.
- Identify need to replace computers in Nursing Resource Center, Rm. A-8 (only 3 are minimally working). Identify need to purchase new laptops for three full-time faculty. The laptop assigned to the Department Chair is frequently being used for lecture and skills lab.
- Renew existing MOU with CHCC and develop new MOU with other agencies for clinical sites (Office on Aging, Marianas Medical Center, Marianas Health Services, Marianas Visiting Nurses, Kagman Community Center).
- Purchase the ATI TEAS Test on a regular basis for pre-nursing students to take for admission into program.
- Purchase the National League of Nursing (NLN) NCLEX-RN Diagnostic Readiness Test (DRT) on a regular basis for second year nursing students to take in their last semester prior to graduation.
- Consider building, renovating and/or expanding the current nursing Building C. Expand the Skills Lab in Rm. C-5 and the current classroom in C-4.

English Institute
- Implement of ReadingPlus instructional computer reading program to improve pass rates and better achieve the learning outcome goals of students in EN083 and EN093 developmental reading courses.
- Provide covered walkway to building entrance to shield students and faculty.
- Provide noise-reducing insulation between M-1 and English Learning Lab.

Business Administration: Accounting, Management, 1 A.A.
- Continue to build on data collection particularly in areas where baseline data is not available.
- Develop Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with the local business community, particularly with regard to partnering for internship programs.
- Provide support to the program to implement its DACUM.
- Apply DACUM methodology/training to other departments.

Hospitality	• Consider internship/on-the-job apprenticeship training in the hotels and other businesses.
Adult Basic Education	• Update CASAS TOPSPro to Enterprise. • Purchase needed desktops for CASAS e-tests and computer-based testing with the next round of awards. • Purchase Literacy based online software with the next rounds of awards. • Consider expanding space in Building T. to accommodate testing and assessment needs.
Criminal Justice	• Need sufficient number of faculty to maintain program quality and workload. • Need direct evidence of student learning and specific linkages to student learning. • Ensure Criminal Justice Program Advisory Council (PAC) continues to meet. • Need to provide evidence of program viability and sustainability.
Developmental Math	• Consider making it mandatory for all developmental students to take on a math class each semester (consecutive, non-interrupted pathway). • Offer enough sections of developmental math courses to ensure that no student gets left behind without a math class. • Consider having short semesters (winter and summer) that would provide developmental students a chance at a higher grades if the course was failed during the regular semester, and to make it mandatory for a student to retake the failed course right away. • Expand availability of tutoring. Consider opening a math lab. • Consider Carnegie Statway/Quantway. From Complete College America "Game Changers" – align math to programs of study/majors. • Open in class homework/lab meetings for Math 89. • Revisit and review the NDU Math Program including math course offerings. • Revisit and review the Entry Math Placement tests and the Exit Exam to find ways and means to enhance its performance.

To the College
  • Introduce half-semester courses in developmental math.
  • Enroll developmental students in two consecutive courses in mathematics each Fall and Spring semester. This ensures that in the case a student fails the first two courses, the student retakes

the failed course right away. Half-semester courses should be introduced along with regular full semester classes.
- Allow for students to get tutoring without appointment-based scheduling. Consider offering night and weekend tutoring for courses that run during those times.
- Offer enough sections of NDU math courses.
- Implement accelerated developmental math courses.
- Developmental math needs a systemic reform, not an initiative limited to the math department.

Distance Learning Education	- Review Form 1 Means of Assessment for DLE PLO.1. - Perform workload analysis to determine if demands on program require an additional FTE. - Document workload in Section IV "Resources" to demonstrate effort to contribute to student achievement and learning. - Collect and analyze student achievement and enrollment data and integrate results into Section III of Form 2.