

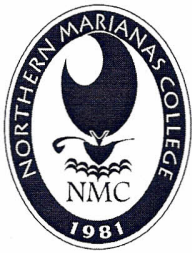
# 2012 SELF EVALUATION REPORT

## For Reaffirmation of Accreditation

**Northern Marianas College**  
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands







# Northern Marianas College

P.O. Box 501250 • Saipan, MP 96950 U.S.A. • Phone: (670) 234-5498

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## INSTITUTIONAL SELF-EVALUATION REPORT BOR CERTIFICATION PAGE

August 22, 2012


TO: Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges,  
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

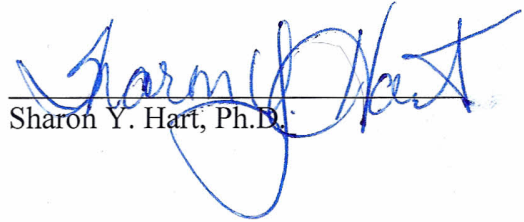
FROM: JUAN T. LIZAMA  
Chairperson

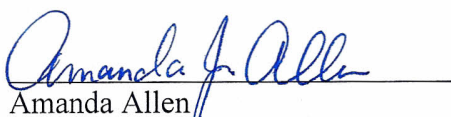
Northern Marianas Community College  
P.O. Box 501250  
Saipan, MP 96950

This Self-Evaluation of Educational Quality and Institutional Effectiveness is submitted to the ACCJC for the purpose of assisting in the determination of the institutions' accreditation status.

We certify that there was a broad participation by the campus community, and we believe the Self-Evaluation Report accurately reflects the nature and substance of this institution.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Juan T. Lizama  
Chairperson, Board of Regents

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Sharon Y. Hart, Ph.D.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Amanda Allen  
ALO & Dir. of Distance Education







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## INSTITUTIONAL SELF-EVALUATION REPORT CEO CERTIFICATION PAGE

August 22, 2012

TO: Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges,  
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

FROM: SHARON Y. HART, Ph. D.  
President

Northern Marianas Community College  
P.O. Box 501250  
Saipan, MP 96950

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Amanda Allen  
Accreditation Liaison Officer & Director of Distance Education

Sharon Y. Hart, Ph.D.  
President







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Northern Marianas College | 2012 Self Evaluation Report

# Introduction



## Overview and Context

The main campus of Northern Marianas College (NMC) is located on the Pacific island of Saipan, the capital of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). Saipan is located 120 miles north of the US territory of Guam and approximately 6,000 miles south-west of the continental United States. An archipelago of 14 islands running roughly north and south, the Northern Marianas is one of several such archipelagos marking the western edge of the Pacific Ocean and the eastern boundary of the Philippine Sea. Japan, China, and Korea are within 1,500 to 2,000 miles of the CNMI, all maintaining direct air links to Saipan. Saipan sits at the peak of a submerged mountain that rises 37,820 feet above the floor of the Marianas Trench, the deepest water on earth. The CNMI is west of the International Date Line, making it 18 hours ahead of California. Public Law 106-564, passed by Congress in 2000, established the standard time zone for the CNMI as Chamorro Standard Time.

### CNMI's Ethnic Composition

The Mariana Islands have experienced a succession of foreign control: Germany, Spain, Japan, and is now a commonwealth of the United States. These elements, along with an influx of international workers, have been instrumental in creating a dynamic multi-lingual, multi-ethnic community. Its population has fluctuated over the past thirty plus years, from less than 17,000 in 1980, to over 80,000 at the height of the garment factory era, and the latest census reports it is at 53,883. As shown in Table 1, the indigenous population comprises about a third of the total population with the remainder comprised of citizens from throughout the United States, and people from countries from all parts of the world. The islands have benefited from a political affiliation with the U.S., the tropical climate, and proximity to prospering Asian economies. Much of the economy is now centered on tourism. The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands is the closest U.S. territory to Asia.

Table 1. Ethnicity

Population by Ethnicity	
CNMI Descent	31.99%
Asian	56.27%
Multiple Ethnic Groups	5.59%
Other Pacific Islander	4.31%
Caucasian	1.84%

(Source: Central Statistics Division, 2000  
CNMI Department of Commerce)

### Labor Force

Even though there has been a substantial decline in non-resident workers due to the loss of the garment industry and an overall reduction in jobs, the CNMI businesses continues to

remain heavily reliant on foreign workers. The negative economic factors have changed the composition of the CNMI's labor force, which will continue to dramatically change as the implementation of U.S. immigration and immigrant worker laws continues. For the past twenty years, the CNMI has been largely dependent on imported workers.

The complete 2010 U.S. Census data for all U.S. Territories, including the CNMI, has not been yet been released. According to the CNMI American Community Survey (ACS), conducted in July 2003, about 82 percent (39,179) of all persons 16 years of age and older were in the labor force on Saipan. An estimated 37,389 persons were employed, while an estimated 1,791 persons (or five percent) of the total labor force were unemployed. About 91.2 percent of all non-U.S. citizens in Saipan participated in the labor force while U.S. citizens' participation was 60.3 percent. U.S. citizens' unemployment rate of 13.5 percent was higher than the non-U.S. citizens 2.8 percent unemployment rate. Chinese was the largest single ethnic group at 39 percent, followed by Filipinos at 28 percent, Chamorro posted 12 percent, Micronesian represented five percent, Korean three percent, Caucasian two percent, Japanese one percent, and the rest from other ethnic groups. CNMI Census 2010 has yet to be released for a more accurate description of the CNMI's population demographics and its relation to the CNMI's labor force landscape.

The implementation of US PL 110-229 paves the way for educated and trained residents and US workers to enter into employment opportunities expected to be vacated by foreign workers by December 31, 2014. The vacuum that will be created by the exodus of foreign workers mainly in entry level positions will still create a need for the CNMI to bring in foreign workers for higher skilled positions such as those allowed for the utilities industry, management positions in certain sectors to include the health care industry. Yet, the CNMI community also expects NMC to be a driving force in providing an educated workforce.

According to statistics released at 2012 Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve Job Fair (ESGR, July 2012), the number of unemployed U.S. citizens and residents, including those from the Freely Associated States (FAS) released by the CNMI Department of Labor is 6,000+ while 25 percent of the CNMI's military reservists are unemployed. The CNMI's 2010 population count dropped from 69,221 in 2000 to 53,883, a decrease of -22.2 percent. The 2010 census report only released population counts for all U.S. Territories, and the CNMI continues to wait for the rest of the 2010 census reports such as those of the population demographics, to gain a better perspective of the CNMI's labor market.

In 2011 the CNMI initiated its first Prevailing Wage Report, <http://commerce.gov.mp/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/2011-CNMI-PWAS-Occupation-Hourly-Wage-and-Fringe-Benefit-Summary-Report-Final-2.pdf>, a two part series 1) Prevailing Wage on Occupations, Hourly Wages and Fringe Benefits Report and 2) Workforce Assessment Study. The first part of the report was released and approved by the CNMI Office of the Governor on April 30, 2012. The second part of the report is pending approval; however, a final draft report has been submitted. A total of 1,201 employers reported on a total of 14,450 employees which was used to produce the occupational and wage statistics study. The same 14,450 employees were analyzed by cross-tabulating the variable Standard Occupational Standards (SOC) Major Group Titles with each of the five variables – Island, Sector, Age, Gender,



Citizenship, Ethnic Group, and Major Industry, to reveal useful general information about the 14,450 employees reported in the study.

In each of the islands, employees with at least a high school education have the highest employment rate. Higher education levels are directly related to an employee's age. More than half of the employees surveyed below the age of 30 had only a high school diploma, while a higher percentage of employees aged 30 or more had a Bachelor's Degree or a Master's Degree. Interestingly, this survey shows a higher percentage of females have education levels higher than their male counterparts, for example 23 percent of employed females compared to 14 percent of employed males had a Bachelor's Degree. About 45 percent of non U.S. citizens had a high school diploma, 19 percent had a Bachelor's, about 15 percent had some college, and 10 percent had a vocational certificate; whereas, about 50 percent of U.S. citizens working for small employers had a high school diploma, 13 percent had some college, about 12 percent had a Bachelor's, about five percent had an Associate Degree, and about four percent had a Master's Degree.

The Workforce Assessment Study, the second part of the Prevailing Wage Report, included analysis of the 14,450 employees in both soft and hard work skills capacity such as English, Accounting, Reading, English Speaking and Writing skills, Mathematics, Management, Word Processing, Spreadsheet applications skills, Internet and website and web pages skills, and computer programming. The result of this report provides NMC the opportunity to improve in areas of discipline that will help continue to build the CNMI's workforce capacity for economic growth and development in alignment with the CNMI State's overarching economic and workforce strategies and goals to make the education and skill levels of the CNMI labor force specialized enough to compete in a technologically driven global economy.

### **Legal Status and History of the College**

Northern Marianas College was established in May 1981 when Governor Carlos S. Camacho created the College as an official governmental entity through Executive Order #25. The Executive Order established the College as one of the divisions within the Commonwealth Department of Education. By mid-summer of 1981 the College was offering training programs for government employees and teachers of the public school system. In January 1983 Public law 3-43 established NMC as a public, nonprofit corporation having the Board of Education as its governing board. In order to assure broad public representation, the law requires that at least one board member be from each of the smaller neighboring islands of Tinian and Rota; at least one member be of Carolinian descent, representing the minority indigenous ethnic group in the CNMI; at least one member be a woman; and of the seven members, five be from the private sector. Board members serve staggered four-year terms which were determined at the first organizational meeting of the Board. The chief executive officer of Northern Marianas College is the president, who is appointed by the Board of Regents and also serves as the executive officer of the Board.

In March of 1985 the passage of CNMI Public Law 4-34 made NMC a public corporation under the general governance of its own Board of Regents, and granted it autonomy in both

fiscal and personnel matters. This law stipulated the mission of the college and designated NMC to serve as the land-grant college for the Commonwealth. In November of 1985, the Second Constitutional Convention in the CNMI adopted a series of proposed amendments to the CNMI Constitution. Among them was Amendment 38 concerning education in the Commonwealth. Article 15, Section 2 of that proposed amendment provided for the establishment of Northern Marianas College and stipulated that the College's Board of Regents should have autonomy in conducting its affairs. This amendment restated the mission of the college and guaranteed annual funding. Amendment 38, among others, was adopted by the people of the Commonwealth in a special election held in January of 1986. As the only public postsecondary institution in the CNMI, the US Department of Education designated NMC as the Adult Basic Education (ABE) center for the Commonwealth in 1983. In 1986, the College was designated a land grant institution by the US Congress. By mandate, the College is to (1) provide the best quality and meaningful post secondary and adult educational opportunities for the purpose of improving the quality of life for the individual and for the Commonwealth as a whole, (2) provide education in the areas of adult and continuing education, and post secondary and adult vocational education, and (3) provide professional development for the people of the Commonwealth.

Since its beginning, NMC has focused on meeting the higher education and vocational training needs of the CNMI. From the times of its first program in teacher education, NMC has developed a comprehensive set of academic programs and services to meet the social, cultural, occupational and economic development needs of its island communities. Today, students are enrolled in various educational programs of study leading to Certificates of Completion, Associate Degrees, and a Bachelor of Science in Education. In addition, there are hundreds of students enrolled in credit and non-credit, continuing adult education courses. Throughout the years, more than 20,000 people have enrolled in regular NMC degree and certificate courses, over 3000 persons have been awarded certificates and/or degrees in programs offered or coordinated by NMC; and more than 12,000 individuals have been served in our community through such programs as the Adult Basic Education, Continuing Education, and the Cooperative, Research, Extensions, and Education Service.

### **Accreditation**

In June 1985 the college received its initial accreditation from the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). The accreditation was reaffirmed in 1990, 1996, 2001, and 2009. In March 2001, the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges & Universities of WASC granted NMC initial accreditation for offering a Bachelor of Science degree in Education. This marked the first time in the history of WASC that a two-year community college offered a four-year degree.

### **Goals and Vision**

The vision remains for the CNMI to become a globally recognized workforce that is less dependent on welfare programs and becoming instead well-educated and trained with industry recognized credentials. Having an educated and skilled workforce is key to local,

regional and global economic success. A competitive CNMI workforce with the required knowledge and skills will foster and lead the CNMI to a sustainable demand driven and robust economy. With NMC's continued accreditation sanctions, the college has been unable to expand into new degree program offerings to better meet the workforce needs of the Commonwealth. The government remains committed to funding the CNMI's generation of on-going and in-coming college seeking students enrolled in NMC). Pending legislation, CNMI HB 17-218, shows a commitment to the college in furtherance of its U.S. Registered Apprenticeship Program and Higher Education Institutional Strategic Plan.

## Student Demographics at the College

### Student Body Composition

Most of the students attending NMC have learned English as a second language. Aside from the students indigenous to the CNMI who speak Chamorro or Carolinian, there are students whose first language is Japanese, Korean, or one of the languages of China, the Philippines, or Micronesia. With such a diverse mix of nonnative speakers of English, the College has made a significant effort through its well-organized and successful English Language Institute and its Educational Enrichment Center to provide supplemental assistance to these students to enable them to succeed in their classes, all of which are taught in English. Approximately 80–90 percent of the incoming students in a given semester enroll in one or more developmental English or English as a second language classes.

Even though the College was established specifically to benefit residents of the CNMI, NMC has a very diverse and geographically wide-ranging student population (see Table 2). All ethnic groups, except White, Non-Hispanic, have increased from over the numbers reported in 2007. A greater number of students are beginning to identify as being multi-ethnic in origin.

Table 2. Ethnic Composition of Students: Five-Year Trend

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Fall 2007</b>	<b>Fall 2008</b>	<b>Fall 2009</b>	<b>Fall 2010</b>	<b>Fall 2011</b>
Asian	329	298	370	440	434
Pacific Islander	582	475	597	733	617
White Non-Hispanic	22	17	19	25	13
Two or More	0	0	0	27	49
Other*	1	3	2	6	11

\*Includes Black, Hispanic, American Indian or Alaska Native

### Enrollment Trends

Full-time equivalent as well as unduplicated headcount enrollments, as shown in Tables 3 and 4, have increased considerably over the past five years. In addition, the College has continued to make course offerings more accessible to students. This past school year an

intercession was run during the winter break, and, for the first time ever, the School of Education offered summer courses in 2012. The student response was remarkable. Full-time equivalencies have shown a significant increase, however, the number of part-time students has not increased.

Table 3. Enrollment Status: Five-Year Trend

FT/PT	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011
FT	683	569	771	995	957
PT	251	224	217	236	167

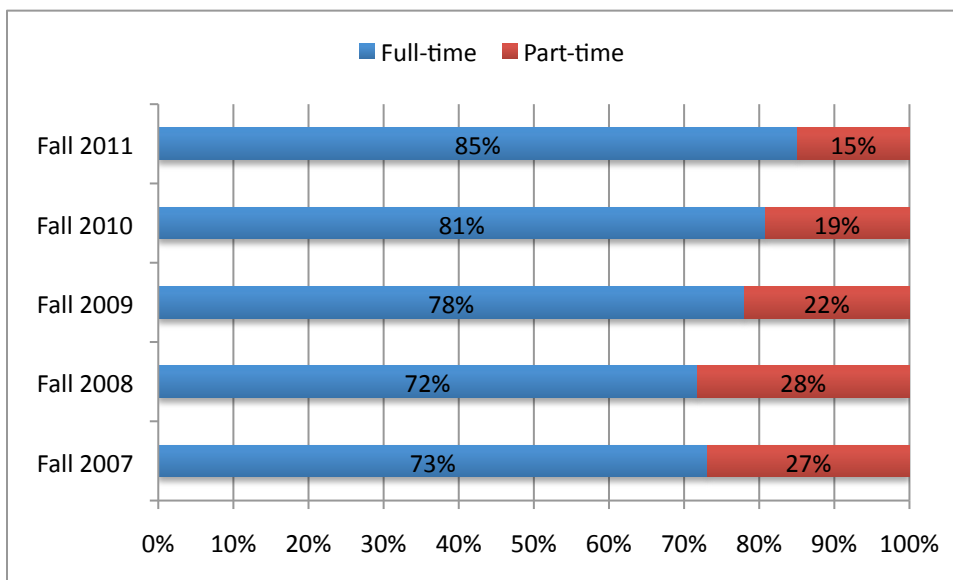
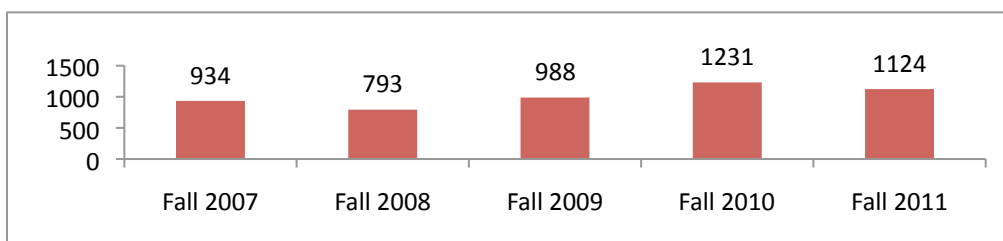


Table 4. Unduplicated Fall Enrollment: Five- Year Trend



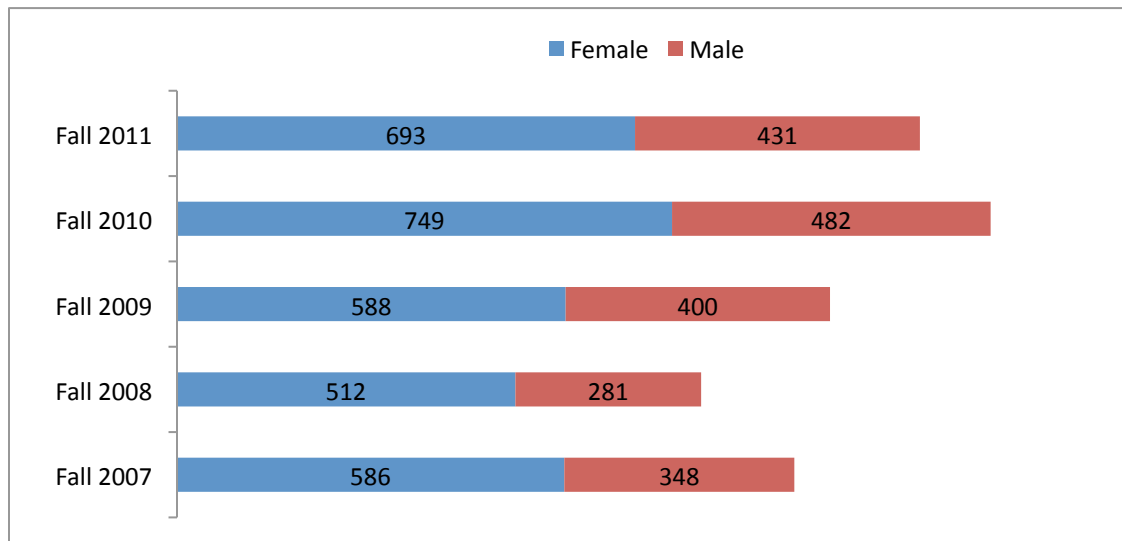
The college continues to make programs and courses more accessible to non-traditional students through such efforts as offering evening, Saturday, and online or hybrid courses. In addition NMC is continuing to make more courses available to older citizens and other nontraditional students. These courses are also being offered at times that cater to the needs

of working students. Still, the vast majority of students are youth directly out of high school (Table 5.a, 5.b).

Table 5.a Unduplicated Enrollment by Age Group: Five-Year Trend

	20 and below	21-25	26-31	32-41	42-54	55 and above
Fall 2007	54%	21%	11%	10%	3%	0%
Fall 2008	50%	24%	10%	13%	3%	0%
Fall 2009	54%	20%	9%	13%	3%	0%
Fall 2010	55%	22%	8%	11%	4%	0%
Fall 2011	43%	33%	10%	9%	4%	1%

Table 5.b Unduplicated Enrollment by Gender: Five-Year Trend



### Educational Programs at NMC

Since it began, NMC has focused on meeting the higher education and vocational training needs of the CNMI. Since its first program in teacher education, the College has grown significantly and developed a comprehensive set of programs and services to meet the social,

cultural, occupational and economic development needs of its island communities. Its students have been enrolled in programs of study leading to associate degrees and, in the past, to certificates of achievement and completion.

The College provides extension services for the agricultural industry through its Land Grant program, and adult education courses leading to high school equivalency diplomas through the General Educational Development (GED) program and the Adult Basic Education School. Noncredit classes in a variety of subjects are provided through the Community Development Institute, which also coordinates a degree program provided to local residents by an off-island institution of higher education. This partnership with an accredited postsecondary educational institution provides to local residents an opportunity to obtain an advanced degree while continuing to reside in the Commonwealth, through mutually agreed upon graduate level courses and support activities for the completion of the Master of Education Degree for Teachers in American Schools Overseas. To the extent feasible, programs and services are also extended through NMC facilities and personnel located on the neighboring islands of Tinian and Rota, south of Saipan.

The College offers a Bachelor of Science degree with four concentrations: Early Childhood, Elementary, Special Education, and Rehabilitation and Human Services. The College also offers the following Associate Degrees: Associate in Science degrees in Nursing and Natural Resources Management; Associate in Arts in Business and in Liberal Arts; and Associate in Applied Science in Business Administration (with emphasis in Accounting, Business Management, and Computer Applications), Hospitality Management, and Criminal Justice.

NMC awards its students with degrees and also honors those with outstanding achievements by recognizing outstanding scholars, Staff of the Year, Faculty (Instructional and Non-Instructional) of the Year, and Alumni of the Year.

### **Degree and Certificate Programs**

The Bachelor of Science in Education offered through the School of Education continues to be the biggest draw at the college. TEACH Grant is available for the first time for the Fall 2012 semester, which has created a 33 percent increase in the number of students enrolled in the introduction to teaching course for Fall of 2012 compared to the previous year. The local school district has an expressed and continued need for teachers and has offered employment to all residents who have graduated. Nursing and Business are the other two main areas of focus for NMC's degree programs, along with the degree in Liberal Arts. Recently a new degree in Natural Resource Management has been added and is beginning to thrive. All such offerings are in direct response to the needs of the community. Of course, the degree programs rely on the other departments at the college to provide the necessary core and general education course offerings. Because all programs at the College are offered with the needs of the Commonwealth taken into consideration, some of the certificate programs have been phased out. Table 6, below, outlines the change in enrollment for each program over the previous five years.

Table 6. Enrollment by Program

<b>Program Enrollment</b>	<b>Fall 2007</b>	<b>Fall 2008</b>	<b>Fall 2009</b>	<b>Fall 2010</b>	<b>Fall 2011</b>
<b>Certificate of Completion</b>					
CC in Accounting*	1	*	*	*	*
CC in Computer Applications*	1	*	*	*	*
CC in Early Childhood Education*	0	4	*	*	*
<b>Program Enrollment</b>					
	<b>Fall 2007</b>	<b>Fall 2008</b>	<b>Fall 2009</b>	<b>Fall 2010</b>	<b>Fall 2011</b>
<b>Certificate of Completion</b>					
CC in Fire Science Tech*	8	*	*	*	*
CC in Hospitality Mgt*	1	*	*	*	1
CC in Related Services*	20	7	*	*	*
<b>Associates of Arts Degree Program</b>					
AA in Business	47	37	59	75	69
AA in Liberal Arts	191	222	254	297	236
<b>Associates in Applied Science Degree Program</b>					
AAS in Accounting	43	35	32	44	44
AAS in AV Production*	1	1	*	*	*
AAS in Business Mgt	58	36	42	50	43
AAS in Computer Applications	32	30	32	50	56
AAS in Criminal Justice	43	36	83	107	97
AAS in Hospitality Mgt	18	15	17	32	33
AAS in Sales and Marketing*	0	1	*	*	*
<b>Associates of Science Degree Program</b>					
AS in Natural Resources Mgt	2	2	6	20	36
AS in Pre-Nursing Track	85	92	109	143	139
AS in Nursing	42	25	20	31	17

<b>Bachelor of Science Degree Program</b>					
BS in Education	212	176	227	316	301
<b>Other</b>					
Undecided	5	0	0	0	0
Non-Degree	124	74	107	66	52

\*Program not offered or inactive

The number of awards conferred on graduating students does not directly correlate to the number of students who have enrolled. The best explanation for this is the elimination of the certificate programs, requiring students to focus on the more time-consuming and difficult task of earning a degree. Tables 6a-6h, below, outline the awards granted and demonstrates the flow of awards from year to year in the certificate areas.

Table 6a. Awards Conferred-Total

<b>Total Number of Awards Conferred</b>	<b>AY 2007-08</b>	<b>AY 2008-09</b>	<b>AY 2009-10</b>	<b>AY 2010-11</b>	<b>AY 2011-12</b>
	<b>175</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>118</b>

Table 6b. Awards Conferred-Certificates of Completion (\*Program not offered or inactive)

<b>Certificates of Completion</b>	<b>AY 07-08</b>	<b>AY 08-09</b>	<b>AY 09-10</b>	<b>AY 10-11</b>	<b>AY 11-12</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
CC in Accounting*	3	*	*	*	*	<b>3</b>
CC in Business Management*	1	*	*	*	*	<b>1</b>
CC in Computer Applications*	2	*	*	*	*	<b>2</b>
CC in Early Childhood Education*	1	21	*	*	*	<b>22</b>
CC in Fire Science Technology*	25	*	*	*	*	<b>25</b>
CC in Hemodialysis Technician*	1	*	*	*	*	<b>1</b>



CC in Nursing Assistant*	2	0	1	*	*	3
CC in Related Service Technician*	22	1	*	*	*	23
CC in Sales & Marketing*	3	*	*	*	*	3

Table 6c. Awards Conferred-Certificates of Achievement (\*Program not offered or inactive)

<b>Certificate of Achievement (CA)</b>	<b>AY 07-08</b>	<b>AY 08-09</b>	<b>AY 09-10</b>	<b>AY 10-11</b>	<b>AY 11-12</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
CA in Accounting	2	*	*	*	*	2
CA in Business Management	1	*	*	*	*	1
CA in Computer Applications	1	*	*	*	*	1
CA in Construction Trades	0	2	*	*	*	2
CA in Hospitality Management	*	*	*	*	1	1
CA in Sales & Marketing	2	*	*	*	*	2

Table 6d. Awards Conferred-Associates in Applied Science (\*Program not offered or inactive)

<b>Associates in Applied Science Degree Program</b>	<b>AY 07-08</b>	<b>AY 08-09</b>	<b>AY 09-10</b>	<b>AY 10-11</b>	<b>AY 11-12</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
AAS in Accounting	0	0	0	0	6	6
AAS in Audio/Video Production*	0	0	1	*	*	1
AAS in Business Admin.-Accounting	8	6	6	10	0	30
AAS in Business Admin.-Business Management	11	8	5	10	0	34
AAS in Business Admin.-Computer Applications	9	2	5	3	4	23
AAS in Business Admin.-Office Technology	2	0	0	0	0	2
AAS in Business Admin.-Sales & Marketing*	0	1	*	*	*	1

Sales & Marketing*						
<b>Associates of Arts Degree Program (AA)</b>	<b>AY 07-08</b>	<b>AY 08-09</b>	<b>AY 09-10</b>	<b>AY 10-11</b>	<b>AY 11-12</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
AA in Business	2	3	3	6	8	<b>22</b>
AA in Liberal Arts	32	31	35	55	47	<b>200</b>

AAS in Business Management	0	0	0	0	9	<b>9</b>
AAS in Criminal Justice	3	3	3	6	7	<b>22</b>
AAS in Electrical Installation & Maintenance	1	1	0	0	0	<b>2</b>
AAS in Hospitality Management	1	3	3	2	2	<b>11</b>

Table 6e. Awards Conferred-Associate of Arts (\*Program not offered or inactive)

Table 6f. Awards Conferred-Associate of Science (\*Program not offered or inactive)

<b>Associates of Science Degree Program</b>	<b>AY 07-08</b>	<b>AY 08-09</b>	<b>AY 09-10</b>	<b>AY 10-11</b>	<b>AY 11-12</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
AS in Natural Resources Management	*	*	0	1	4	<b>5</b>
AS in Nursing	12	20	5	12	16	<b>65</b>

Table 6g. Awards Conferred-Bachelor of Science

<b>Bachelor of Science Degree Program</b>	<b>AY 07-08</b>	<b>AY 08-09</b>	<b>AY 09-10</b>	<b>AY 10-11</b>	<b>AY 11-12</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
BS in Education	28	28	18	14	14	<b>102</b>

Table 6h. Awards Conferred-Grand Total

Grand Total	175	130	85	119	118	<b>627</b>
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### Student Retention and Course Completion Trends

A high priority for NMC is to improve student retention and increase student completion rates. Constant efforts have resulted in marked improvement in retention and course completion (Tables 7a-7c). However, the College is not satisfied with the results and is focused on making even greater strides to improve student success and satisfaction in order to increase retention and completion rates.

Table 7a. Retention Fall to Spring

<b>Retention: Fall to Spring Five-Year Trend</b>					
	<b>Spring 2008</b>	<b>Spring 2009</b>	<b>Spring 2010</b>	<b>Spring 2011</b>	<b>Spring 2012</b>
Prior Fall Enrollment	934	793	988	1231	1124
Retention Total	607	564	725	902	876
Percent	65%	71%	73%	73%	78%

Table 7b. Retention Fall to Fall

<b>Retention: Fall to Fall Five-Year Trend</b>					
	<b>Fall 2007</b>	<b>Fall 2008</b>	<b>Fall 2009</b>	<b>Fall 2010</b>	<b>Fall 2011</b>
Prior Fall Enrollment	969	934	793	988	1231
Retention Total	397	370	385	540	611
Percent	41%	40%	49%	55%	50%

Table 7c. Course Completion

<b>Course Completion Rates: Five-Year Trend</b>					
	<b>Fall 2007</b>	<b>Fall 2008</b>	<b>Fall 2009</b>	<b>Fall 2010</b>	<b>Fall 2011</b>
	73%	70%	72%	75%	80%

## Job Placement

While it is a vital concern to NMC that all students who enter remain until graduation, it is also a key indicator of the College's success if graduating students are qualified to, and do enter the workforce. Tracking of all graduates has not been done, and efforts are being made to rectify this situation. Tables 8a-8i demonstrate NMC's efforts to track job placement by degree.

Table 8a. Job Placement Rates by Programs, 2006-2007 to 2010-2011

<b>B.S. in Elementary Education</b>					
<b>Year Graduated</b>	<b>No. of Graduates</b>	<b>No. Tracked</b>	<b>% Tracked</b>	<b>No. Employed</b>	<b>% Employed*</b>

2006-2007	29	24	82.76	24	100.00
2007-2008	28	24	85.71	24	100.00
2008-2009	28	28	100.00	28	100.00
2009-2010	18	18	100.00	18	100.00
2010-2011	14	14	100.00	14	100.00
Grand Total	117	94	80.34	94	100.00

Source: School of Education records, Public School System Human Resources Office

\*Percent of graduates tracked that have found employment

Table 8b. School of Education Certificate Program Job Placement

School of Education Certificate Programs (Related Services Technician & Early Childhood Education)					
Year Graduated	No. of Graduates	No. Tracked	% Tracked	No. Employed	% Employed*
2006-2007	1	1	100.00	1	100.00
2007-2008	21	20	95.24	20	100.00
2008-2009	22	22	100.00	22	100.00
2009-2010	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2010-2011	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Grand Total	44	43	97.73	43	100.00

Source: School of Education records, Public School System Human Resources Office

\*Percent of graduates tracked that have found employment

Table 8c. Nursing Job Placement

<b>A.S. in Nursing</b>					
Year Graduated	No. of Graduates	No. Tracked	% Tracked	No. Employed	% Employed*
2006-2007	26	15	57.69	14	93.33
2007-2008	12	8	66.67	8	100.00
2008-2009	20	20	100.00	8	40.00
2009-2010	5	5	100.00	3	60.00
2010-2011	12	12	100.00	8	66.67
Grand Total	75	60	80.00	41	68.33

Source: Nursing Department records

\*Percent of graduates tracked that have found employment

Table 8d. Job Placement Business Accounting

A.A.S. in Business Administration: Accounting Emphasis					
Year Graduated	No. of Graduates	No. Tracked	% Tracked	No. Employed	% Employed*
2006-2007	12	4	33.33	4	100.00
2007-2008	8	5	62.50	5	100.00
2008-2009	6	5	83.33	5	100.00
2009-2010	6	5	83.33	3	60.00
2010-2011	10	5	50.00	5	100.00
Grand Total	42	24	57.14	22	91.67

Source: Business Department records

\*Percent of graduates tracked that have found employment

Table 8e. Job Placement Business Management

A.A.S. in Business Administration: Business Management Emphasis					
Year Graduated	No. of Graduates	No. Tracked	% Tracked	No. Employed	% Employed*
2006-07	12	4	33.33	4	100.00
2007-08	8	2	25.00	2	100.00
2008-09	8	4	50.00	4	100.00
2009-10	5	3	60.00	3	100.00
2010-11	10	5	50.00	5	100.00
Grand Total	43	18	41.86	18	100.00

Source: Business Department records

\*Percent of graduates tracked that have found employment

Table 8f. Business Computer

A.A.S. in Business Administration: Computer Applications Emphasis					
Year Graduated	No. of Graduates	No. Tracked	% Tracked	No. Employed	% Employed*
2006-07	2	0	0.00	unknown	unknown
2007-08	6	2	33.33	2	100.00
2008-09	2	2	100.00	2	100.00
2009-10	4	3	75.00	2	66.67
2010-11	3	3	100.00	3	100.00
Grand Total	17	10	61.67	9	91.67

Source: Business Department records

\*Percent of graduates tracked that have found employment

Table 8g. Job Placement Hospitality

<b>A.A.S. in Hospitality Management</b>					
Year Graduated	No. of Graduates	No. Tracked	% Tracked	No. Employed	% Employed*
2006-07	2	0	0.00	unknown	unknown
2007-08	1	0	0.00	unknown	unknown
2008-09	3	2	66.67	2	100.00
2009-10	3	1	33.33	1	100.00
2010-11	2	2	100.00	1	50.00
Grand Total	11	5	40.00	4	83.33

Source: Business Department records

\*Percent of graduates tracked that have found employment

Table 8h. Job Placement Criminal Justice

<b>A.A.S. in Criminal Justice</b>					
Year Graduated	No. of Graduates	No. Tracked	% Tracked	No. Employed	% Employed*
2006-07	4	4	100.00	2	50.00
2007-08	3	3	100.00	2	66.67
2008-09	3	3	100.00	2	66.67
2009-10	3	3	100.00	3	100.00
2010-11	6	3	50.00	3	100.00
Grand Total	24	18	75.00	13	72.22

Source: Social Science & Fine Arts Department records

\*Percent of graduates tracked that have found employment

Table 8i. Job Placement Natural Resource Management

<b>A.S. in Natural Resource Management</b>					
Year Graduated	No. of Graduates	No. Tracked	% Tracked	No. Employed	% Employed*
2006-07	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2007-08	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2008-09	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2009-10	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2010-11	1	1	100.00	1	100.00
Grand Total	1	1	100.00	1	100.00

Source: Science, Mathematics, Health & Athletics Department records

\*Percent of graduates tracked that have found employment

## Transfer of Students

Not all students attend NMC with the goal of earning an associate's degree and then entering the job market. Many students enter NMC with the goal of earning an associate's degree in Liberal Arts, and then transferring either to another institution or to NMC's School of Education to pursue a bachelor's degree. The number of students pursuing a liberal arts degree has increased. The percentage remaining at NMC for its bachelor degree program has also increased (Table 9).

Table 9. Transfer Rates-Liberal Arts

Transfer of A.A in Liberal Arts Graduates							
Year Graduated	Total No. of Graduates	No. of Transfers to NMC BS in Ed.	% of Transfers to NMC BS in Ed.	No. of Transfers to Other Institution*	% of Transfers to Other Institution*	Total Graduates Transferred*	% of Total Graduates Transferred*
2006-07	39	13	33.33	11	28.21	24	61.54
2007-08	32	9	28.13	7	21.88	16	50.00
2008-09	34	14	41.18	9	26.47	23	67.65
2009-10	35	14	40.00	8	22.86	22	62.86
2010-11	55	23	41.82	10	18.18	33	60.00
Total	156	60	38.46	45	28.85	105	67.31

Source: Admissions & Records, CNMI Scholarship Office, National Student Clearinghouse

\*Number of students known to have transferred to another institution

Note: "Other Institution" includes 2-yr and 4-yr schools, and online programs

On the other hand, there are relatively few graduates from the Business department, with a total of only six who have continued on to a bachelor degree program over the past five years (Table 9). Much of this can be attributed to the nature of the degree and the opportunity for employment that each degree offers without further educational degrees.

Table 9. Transfer Rates for Business

Transfer of A.A in Business Graduates
---------------------------------------

Year Graduated	Total No. of Graduates	No. Transferred to NMC BS in Elem. Ed.	% Transferred to NMC BS in Elem. Ed.	No. Transferred to Another Institution*	% Transferred to Another Institution*	Total Graduates that Transferred*	% of Total Graduates that Transferred*
2006-07	2	0	0.00	1	50.00	1	50.00
2007-08	2	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
2008-09	3	0	0.00	1	33.33	1	33.33
2009-10	3	1	33.33	0	0.00	1	33.33
2010-11	6	0	0.00	3	50.00	3	50.00
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7.14</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>35.71</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>42.86</b>

Source: Admissions & Records, CNMI Scholarship Office, National Student Clearinghouse

\*Number of students known to have transferred to another institution

Note: "Another Institution" includes 2-yr and 4-yr schools, and online programs

### Student to Faculty Ratio at NMC

Data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) show NMC's student to faculty ratio (Table 10). The ratio has remained constant over the past three years, and is not likely to decrease due to the state of the economy. The ratio is somewhat high when compared to the other institutions. For example, nearby Guam Community College has a student to faculty ratio of 11 to 1.

Table 10. Student to Faculty Ratio

<b>Year</b>	<b>Student-to-Faculty Ratio*</b>
<b>2011</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>2010</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>2009</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>2008</b>	<b>19</b>

\* Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)

Not yet available are the figures for the Fall 2012 semester. In order to remain fiscally responsible and viable, NMC has, beginning in 2012, sought to save money in numerous ways. One identified savings measure is that of increasing the enrollment capacity of each course, thereby reducing the number of sections offered. This will undoubtedly increase the student to faculty ratio.

### College Personnel

#### Faculty, Staff, and Administration

In the spring of 2006, NMC employed 45 faculty on a ten-month contractual basis and 30 non-instructional faculty on a 12-month basis, the latter group consisted of department chairs



(who carry a reduced teaching load), counselors, librarians, research scientists, home economists, and extension agents. At that time, there were also 83 support staff and 18 administrators (including executive management and program directors) working as full-time employees. The total number of full-time employees stood at 176. The increase in total employees experienced beginning with 2010 can be explained as a result of grants received from Federal stimulus programs such as The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) (see table 11). With the present state of the economy, it was not fiscally responsible to maintain all employees hired under the Federal programs. Total employees at the end of the 2012 fiscal year will reflect these changes.

Table 11. NMC Employment Status and Primary Function / Occupational Activity\*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total FT</b>	<b>Total PT</b>	<b>Total: FT/PT And Staff</b>	<b>Total: Instruction/ Research/ Public Service</b>	<b>Total: FT Executive/ Administrative and Managerial</b>	<b>Total: FT Other Professional</b>	<b>Total: FT Non-Professional Staff</b>	<b>Total: PT Instructional/ Research/ and Public Service</b>
<b>2011</b>	148	52	<b>200</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>2010</b>	157	35	<b>192</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>2009</b>	151	25	<b>176</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>2008</b>	143	28	<b>171</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>2007</b>	149	34	<b>183</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>34</b>

\*IPEDS data

### College Finances

The College is directly impacted by the financial conditions of the CNMI. The projected revenues of the CNMI in 2007 were about \$200M. The projected revenues for FY 2012 were \$102M. This has placed serious financial constraints on the ability of the government to maintain its traditional levels of funding for the College. Improvements are expected, and the projected revenues for FY 2013 are at \$114M. The economy was once buoyed by the garment industry, which no longer is present. Tourism has relied heavily on visitors from Japan, which was greatly reduced in 2011 due to the effects of the earthquake in Japan. Recent efforts to encourage tourism from China and Russia have shown initial positive results, giving hope for increased tourism in the future. Other factors having a negative impact on the economy include the discontinuance of service by Japan Airlines and Continental Micronesia, the failure of the Saipan Air venture, continuous closures of small

businesses, and passage of US PL 110-229 giving the federal government control over immigration and policy matters governing the hiring of foreign workers.

NMC has been able to balance its fiscal resources (see Charts 1 and 2) to maintain financial stability through careful planning and management of both federal and local funds. For fiscal year 2011, the College was able to use funds from the American Recovery Reinvestment Act State Financial Stability Funds (ARRA SFSF) and an increase in Tuition and Fees to offset reductions received in other fund categories. Savings in other categories of NMC funds realized after the ARRA SFSF and Tuition and Fees absorbed such expenses and was set aside for use in fiscal year 2012 to help ease the pain of the dwindling finances and across the board reductions in CNMI government wide appropriations. The College also received its fourth consecutive Unqualified Audit Opinions on financial statements from independent auditors Deloitte & Touche, LLC, ranging over the periods of fiscal years 2008 through 2011. The figures below provide data on the College's revenues and expenditures over a five-year period.

Chart 1. Revenues

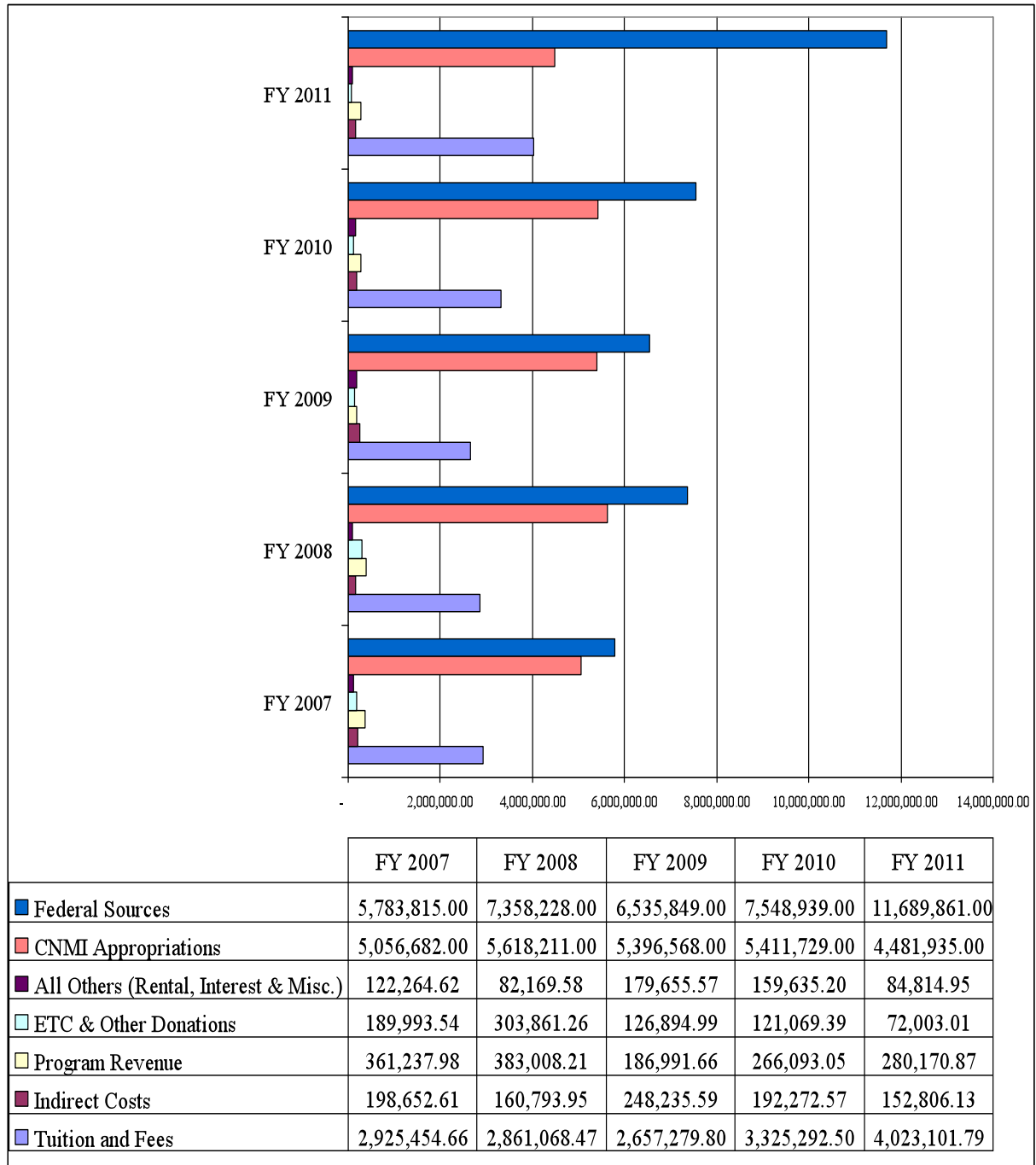
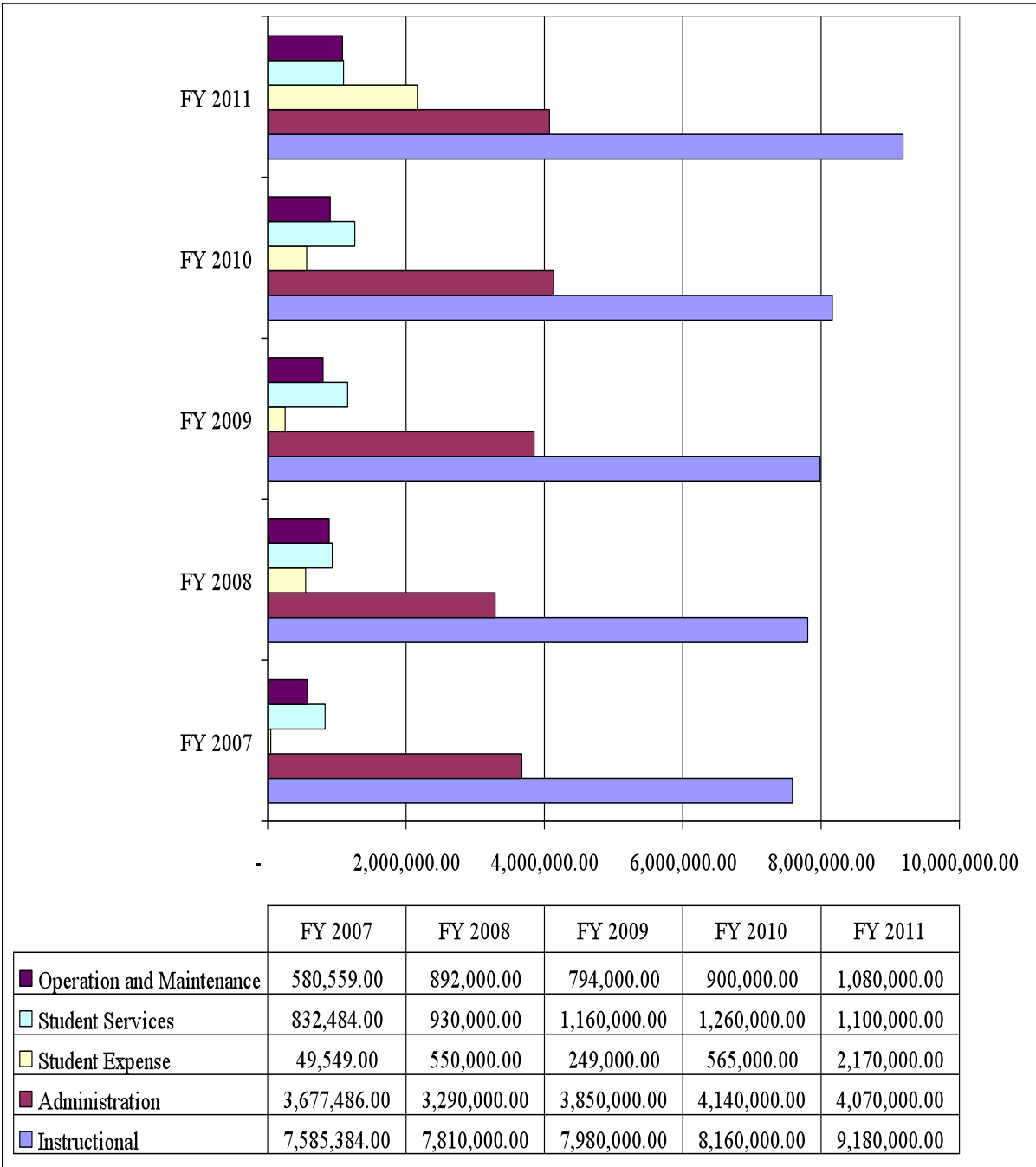


Chart 2. Expenditures



## Data

### Importance of Data

Most of the quantitative data presented above has been compiled through the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE). This office is charged with developing and sustaining assessment momentum through capacity building efforts that will empower each constituent group to use the results for assessment, planning, implementation, and “closing the loop.” Through its financial, technological, and human resources, NMC continues to improve its capacity to collect, analyze, and use information for effective decision-making. The College maintains a systematic, information-driven approach to decision-making at all levels of the organization. Systematic data collection and analysis are officially conducted by OIE and are available for public view at <http://www.nmcnet.edu/content.php?id=5&cat=412>, on the official NMC website.

OIE guides and monitors the assessment, planning, and implementation process through the use of various assessment forms and activities, and individual department and program reviews. Data for this report has been extracted and collected from composite and annual reports, accreditation reports, resource guides, and the NMC Factbook.

Surveys are also conducted on a regular basis as a means to rate all aspects of the college, including courses, instructors, leadership, and the Board of Regents. OIE is able to gather and report statistics related to key components of the institution and provide a thorough analysis and meaningful recommendations for improvement based on the data available. The reports have grown in depth and in comprehensiveness, demonstrating how assessment has become an integral part of the College’s routine and providing evidence of the impact of assessment on successful student learning outcomes and quality institutional planning, decision-making, and effectiveness.

Over the past several years the College has developed a student learning outcomes based system of assessment. The groundwork began in 1999 when the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) was established and staffed by a director and an institutional researcher. A Strategic Plan and Institutional Assessment Plan have been developed. Under the guidance of the Assessment Task Force, the Academic Council, department chairs and individual faculty, the College has strengthened course guides by building into them specific and measurable student learning outcomes, developed program learning outcomes and produced a general education philosophy. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness has generated a growing body of meaningful data. In sum, awareness of assessment has been raised, the assessment literature has been explored and learning outcomes and operational objectives have been developed.





Northern Marianas College | 2012 Self Evaluation Report

# Organization of the Self Evaluation Process





## Organization of the Self Evaluation Process

Accreditation has been a continuous focus at Northern Marianas College, especially since the last Reaffirmation Visit in the fall of 2006 and as a result of subsequent actions the Commission has taken on the College.

The College recognizes that accreditation is indeed a voluntary system of self regulation developed to evaluate overall educational quality and institutional effectiveness. As such, it has been working hard since 2006 to address the actions taken by the Commission. This has resulted in individuals from across the College being continuously engaged in the process of self evaluation.

Mr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero, the institution's Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) and Director of Institutional Effectiveness, led the oversight of the process as well as the preparation of this report until his recent departure from the College to assume the presidency of Mt. Carmel School in Saipan. On Friday, August 10, 2012 NMC president, Dr. Sharon Y. Hart, appointed Ms. Amanda Allen to serve as the new ALO. Ms. Allen is the Director of Distance Learning Education.

As Northern Marianas College has a robust participatory governance process, this report has benefitted from input provided from across the institution—including faculty, staff, students, and the Board of Regents. It includes numerous reports, various institutional research findings from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE), as well as meeting notes and agendas from Faculty Senate Meetings, Academic Council, the President's Management Team, and the Board of Regents. The complete list of Resources utilized for this report can be found in the Directory of Evidence. The College is also making all of these resources available via the NMC website.

At various points in the development of this report, the following individuals contributed separately and collectively in the preparation of the Institutional Self Evaluation Report. The 163 individuals, which included over 90 percent of all employees, were:

	<b>Last Name:</b>	<b>First Name:</b>	<b>Division:</b>	<b>Standard Team:</b>	<b>Title:</b>
1	Aguon	Maria	<i>Tinian Campus</i>	II.C	Instructor/Program Coordinator III
2	Aguon	Rufino	<i>Academic Programs and Services (APS)</i>	II.A	Program Coordinator I (Gym Manager)
3	Aldan	Johnny	<i>APS</i>	II.C	Instructor, Nursing
4	Algaier	Poonsri	<i>APS</i>	II.A	Instructor, Language and Humanities/Faculty VI
5	Allen	Amanda	<i>APS</i>	III.C	Director, Distance Learning Education

6	Almada	Jovian	<i>Division of Finance &amp; Administrative Services (DFAS)</i>	III.C	Network Specialist II
	<b>Last Name:</b>	<b>First Name:</b>	<b>Division:</b>	<b>Standard Team:</b>	<b>Title:</b>
7	Angui	Angelita	<i>Cooperative Research, Education, and Extension Service (CREES)</i>	I.A	Extension Aide (Sewing Instructor)
8	Arriola	Clarice	<i>Student Services</i>	III.B	Administrative Manager IV
9	Attao	David Peter	<i>Office of President</i>	I.A and III.D	Dean, Administration
10	Babauta	Eileen	<i>Student Services</i>	III.D	Program Coordinator III
11	Baker	Timothy	<i>Student Services</i>	II.B	Director, Counseling Programs & Services
12	Barnes	Solita	<i>DFAS</i>	III.D	Accountant IV (Chief Accountant)
13	Belyeu-Camacho	Tayna	<i>CREES</i>	I.A	Program Coordinator II (NCD)
14	Biado	Celina	<i>APS</i>	III.C	Data Entry Clerk
15	Bier	Claus	<i>CREES</i>	I.B	Outreach Coordinator
16	Blas	Shirley Ann	<i>APS</i>	III.D	Administrative Manager IV
17	Borja-Robinson	Guadalupe	<i>APS</i>	II.A	Instructor, English
18	Brown	Daniel	<i>Student Services</i>	II.B	Data Entry Clerk
19	Buenpacifico	Keolester	<i>Student Services</i>	II.B	Work Study
20	Cabrera	Elsie	<i>APS</i>	II.A	Instructor/Program Coordinator III
21	Cabrera	Lorraine	<i>APS</i>	III.A	Director, Adult Basic Education
22	Cabrera	Sarah	<i>CREES (Work study)</i>	I.B	Work Study
23	Camacho	Anita	<i>DFAS</i>	III.B	Procurement Manager
24	Camacho	Daisie Mae	<i>DFAS</i>	III.C	Computer Lab Supervisor
25	Camacho	Edward	<i>APS</i>	Military Leave	Instructor/Program Coordinator, Criminal Justice
26	Camacho	Helen	<i>Office of President</i>	I.A, IV.B	Executive Secretary I(Board of Regents)
27	Camacho	Monalyn	<i>APS</i>	III.A	Administrative Manager II
28	Castro	Manny	<i>Student Services</i>	II.B	Financial Aid Counselor

29	Castro	Rose	<i>CREES</i>	I.A	Extension Aide III (Nutrition Educator)
30	Cepeda	Charlotte	<i>APS</i>	WASC SC	Instructor, Education
	<b>Last Name:</b>	<b>First Name:</b>	<b>Division:</b>	<b>Standard Team:</b>	<b>Title:</b>
31	Cepeda	Rosaline	<i>Student Services</i>	II.B	Registrar
32	Cing	Priscilla	<i>Tinian</i>	II.B	Administrative Officer III
33	Coleman	Marie	<i>DFAS</i>	III.D	Accountant II (Accounts Receivables)
34	Coleman	Patricia	<i>CREES</i>	III.A	Program Coordinator III (EFNEP)
35	Cruz	Angelica	<i>Student Services (Work study)</i>	I.B	Work Study
36	Cruz	Christina	<i>DFAS</i>	III.D	Accountant II (Payroll)
37	Cuellar	Romeo	<i>Student Services</i>	III.A and III.C	Counselor (Disability Service Coordinator)
38	De Torres	Alfredo	<i>APS</i>	II.A	Department Chair, SMHA
39	Del Avellano	Jennifer	<i>Student Services</i>	III.A	Academic Records Specialist
40	Dela Cruz	James	<i>Bookstore (Work study)</i>	I.B	Work Study
41	Dela Cruz	Josephine	<i>DFAS</i>	III.B	Administrative Manager I
42	Dela Cruz	Ramon	<i>CREES</i>	III.B	Extension Aide I
43	Deleon Guerrero	Anthony	<i>CREES</i>	IA	Agriculture Research Assistant (Food Science)
44	Deleon Guerrero	Crystal	<i>Student Services (Work study)</i>	II.C	Work Study
45	Deleon Guerrero	Cynthia	<i>APS</i>	WASC SC	Instructor, Education (Early Childhood Education)
46	Deleon Guerrero	Galvin	<i>Office of President</i>	I.B	Director, Institutional Effectiveness
47	Deleon Guerrero	James	<i>DFAS</i>	III.C	Program Coordinator I
48	Deleon Guerrero	Janel	<i>Student Services</i>	II.C	Administrative Manager II
49	Deleon Guerrero	Joaquin	<i>CREES</i>	III.B	Extension Aide I
50	Deleon Guerrero	Neda	<i>Student Services</i>	II.B	Career Office Manager
51	Deleon Guerrero	Ni	<i>Student Services</i>	III.A	International Student Coordinator/Counselor

52	Deleon Guerrero	Tim	<i>Office of the President</i>	IV.B	Work Study
53	Deleon Guerrero	Velma	<i>APS</i>	II.A	Program Coordinator (Liberal Arts Coordinator)
	<b>Last Name:</b>	<b>First Name:</b>	<b>Division:</b>	<b>Standard Team:</b>	<b>Title:</b>
54	Demapan	Stacey	<i>Student Services (Work study)</i>	I.B	Work Study
55	Diaz (Angel)	Amanda	<i>APS</i>	WASC SC	Instructor, Education
56	Duenas	Jennie	<i>DFAS</i>	III.B	Administrative Assistant I
57	Ealy	Ivyanne	<i>DFAS</i>	III.D	Accountant II (Accounts Payable)
58	Eliptico	Frank	<i>Office of President</i>	IV.B	Director, Institutional Advancement
59	Faimau	Petrus	<i>CREES</i>	III.B	Aquaculture Research Assistant
60	Fejeran	Phillip	<i>DFAS</i>	III.B	Maintenance Manager
61	Flores	Mark	<i>CREES</i>	III.B	Extension Aide I
62	Flores	Oscar	<i>DFAS</i>	III.D	Accountant III
63	Foels	Eugene	<i>APS</i>	III.C	Instructor, Social Sciences
64	Garces	Odin	<i>DFAS</i>	III.B	Accounting Technician I
65	Gonzalez	Marcelo	<i>APS</i>	II.A	Instructor, Languages and Humanities
66	Goobaad	Tonny	<i>Student Services</i>	II.C	Archivist Technician
67	Green	Chavel	<i>APS</i>	III.D	Department Chair, Business
68	Greenland	Roy	<i>APS</i>	WASC SC, IV.A	Instructor, Education
69	Guerrero	John	<i>DFAS</i>	III.B	Facilities Manager
70	Hacskaylo	Lisa	<i>Office of President</i>	I.B	Institutional Researcher/Evaluator
71	Hart	Sharon	<i>Office of President</i>	IV.A IV.B	President
72	Herrera	Jose	<i>APS</i>	WASC SC	Instructor, Education (Human Services)
73	Hofschneider	Hedwig	<i>Student Services</i>	II.B	Program Coordinator (Guidance Specialist)
74	Hunter	Barbara	<i>APS</i>	III.A	Instructor, Business
75	Jacinto	Hervin	<i>APS</i>	II.A	Instructor, Nursing
76	Javier	Zenaida	<i>Student Services</i>	II.B	Program Manager III
77	Johnson	Eric	<i>APS</i>	I.D	Instructor, Math
78	Joseph	Bill	<i>CREES</i>	III.B	Agriculture Research Assistant (Plant Pathology & Entomolgy)

79	Kim	Ki Young	<i>Work study</i>	I.A	Work Study
80	Kingzio	Lolitha	<i>APS</i>	II.A	Administrative Manager II
81	Kintol	Daniel	<i>Student Services</i>	II.B	Program Coordinator I (Testing)
	<b>Last Name:</b>	<b>First Name:</b>	<b>Division:</b>	<b>Standard Team:</b>	<b>Title:</b>
82	Kiyoshi	Joaquin	<i>Office of President</i>	III.A	Personnel Specialist II
83	Kline	James	<i>APS</i>	II.A	Department Chair, Languages & Humanities
84	LaMarche	Daniel	<i>APS</i>	IV.A	Instructor, English
85	Larson	Claudia	<i>Student Services Work study</i>	II.B	Work Study
86	Lazaro	Rose	<i>Tinian</i>	II.B	Extension Aide II
87	Lee	Lawrence	<i>APS</i>	I.A	Instructor, Hospitality & Tourism
88	Lisua	Emiling	<i>Office of President</i>	III.A	Administrative Assistant
89	Lunde	Lisa	<i>APS</i>	II.A	Instructor, Health & PE
90	Mafnas	Velma	<i>APS</i>	II.A	Instructor/Counselor (ABE)
91	Manglona	Michael	<i>Work study</i>	I.A/III.C	Work Study
92	Manglona	Ross	<i>CREES</i>	III.B.	Dean/Director of CREES
93	Manglona-Propst	Daisy	<i>Student Services</i>	IV.B	Director, Financial Aid
94	Manibusan	Jose	<i>DFAS</i>	III.B	Administrative Assistant II
95	Mareham	Karla	<i>DFAS</i>	III.D	Budget Technician
96	Masga	Floyd	<i>Community Development Institute (CDI)</i>	III.D	Program Manager (EDUP)
97	Matsunaga	Isabel	<i>Adult Basic Education (ABE) (Work study)</i>	IV.A	Work Study
98	Maui	Willhelm	<i>APS</i>	III.A	Instructor, Computer Applications
99	Mendiola	Chanelle	<i>Office of the President</i>	IV.B	Work Study
100	Merar	Roland	<i>APS</i>	III.A	Instructor, Education (Rehabilitation & Human Services)
101	Merfalen	Barbara	<i>Office of President</i>	II.A	Dean, Academic Programs & Services
102	Mesa	Selina	<i>CREES</i>	III.D	Administrative Assistant III
103	Morales	Leonard	<i>APS</i>	III.C	Administrative Manager I
104	Muna	Raymond	<i>APS</i>	I.B	Instructor/Counselor (ABE)
105	Muna	Yolanda	<i>DFAS</i>	III.B	Bookstore Assistant II

106	Nelson	Randall	<i>CREES</i>	III.C	Data Manager
107	Ngewakl	Timberley	<i>DFAS</i>	III.D	Accountant II (Funds Certification Officer)
108	Ngirmekur	Beverly	<i>APS</i>	II.B	Teacher Aide I
	<b>Last Name:</b>	<b>First Name:</b>	<b>Division:</b>	<b>Standard Team:</b>	<b>Title:</b>
109	Norita	Belinda	<i>APS</i>	WASC SC	Administrative Assistant
110	Norita	Francisco	<i>Student Services</i>	III.C	Student Activities Coordinator I/Administrative Assistant II (CREES)
111	Nurmi	Michael	<i>APS</i>	II.A	Instructor, English
112	Ogo	Michael	<i>CREES</i>	III.B	Aquaculture Extension Agent
113	Ogumoro-Uludong	Lescheweisei	<i>CDI</i>	III.D	Program Manager III (CSPE)
114	Omechelang	Polly	<i>CREES</i>	III.C	Agriculture Extension Agent I (4-H)
115	Palacios	Franklin	<i>ABE (Work study)</i>	IV.A	Work Study
116	Palacios	Jesusa	<i>DFAS</i>	III.C	Media Specialist III
117	Palacios	Katherine	<i>DFAS</i>	III.D	Accountant IV
118	Palacios	Keane Jay	<i>DFAS</i>	III.D	Bookstore Manager
119	Palacios	Veronica	<i>Student Services</i>	II.C	Administrative Manager III
120	Pangelinan	Christlaine	<i>Student Services</i>	II.B	Counselor III
121	Pangelinan	Justin	<i>ABE (Work study)</i>	IV.A	Work Study
122	Pangelinan	Leo	<i>Office of President</i>	II.B	Dean of Student Services
123	Papadopoulos	Constantine	<i>APS</i>	II.A	Instructor, Languages and Humanities
124	Pastula	Matthew	<i>Student Services</i>	II.C	Director, Library Programs & Services
125	Pizarro	Richard	<i>ABE (Work study)</i>	IV.A	Work Study
126	Podziewski	Kyle	<i>APS</i>	WASC SC	Instructor, Education (Reading)
127	Prater	Margarita	<i>Student Services</i>	II.B	Administrative Manager I
128	Quitugua	John	<i>DFAS</i>	III.C	Computer Lab Technical Assistant
129	Rasa	Margaret	<i>CREES</i>	I.A	Administrative Assistant III
130	Revilla	James	<i>DFAS</i>	III.C	Program Manager III (Database Administrator)

131	Reyes	Jake	<i>APS</i>	III.D	Work Study
132	Royal	Bonnie	<i>CREES</i>	IV.B	Administrative Manager IV
133	Sablan	Gregorio	<i>Student Services</i>	II.C and III.C	Program Coordinator
	<b>Last Name:</b>	<b>First Name:</b>	<b>Division:</b>	<b>Standard Team:</b>	<b>Title:</b>
134	Sablan	Isabel	<i>Office of President</i>	III.B and I.A	Executive Secretary I
135	Sablan	Queanna	<i>Student Services</i>	II.B	Program Manager II (Student Activities)
136	Sablan	Teresa	<i>Office of President</i>	III.A	Personnel Specialist II
137	Salas	Eva	<i>DFAS</i>	III.D	Work Study
138	Sanchez	Eldred	<i>Work study</i>	I.A	Work Study
139	Santos	James	<i>DFAS</i>	III.C	Network Specialist III
140	Santos	Julene	<i>Student Services</i>	III.A	Admission Specialist I
141	Santos	Kimberly	<i>Student Services</i>	II.B	Administrative Assistant II
142	Seidler	Marissa	<i>Office of President</i>	III.A	Program Coordinator I
143	Sharts	Thomas	<i>APS</i>	III.C	Department Chair, Social Sciences
144	Skang-Ngewakl	Ruthie	<i>APS</i>	III.C and IV.B.	Instructor / Counselor III
145	Smith	Magiel	<i>Student Services</i>	II.C	Library Technician II
146	Suzuki	Robert	<i>DFAS</i>	III.B	Supply Specialist II
147	Taisacan	Lydia	<i>DFAS</i>	III.C	Administrative Manager III
148	Taitano	Chantel	<i>Student Services</i>	II.B	Admission Specialist I
149	Tomokane	Gina Lynn	<i>APS</i>	III.A	Administrative Manager
150	Torres	Joan	<i>Student Services</i>	III.A	Outreach Counselor
151	Travilla	Raynard	<i>Office of President</i>	IV.B	Administrative Assistant II
152	Tudela	Irene	<i>Student Services</i>	III.D	Financial Aid Specialist I
153	Tudela	Jane	<i>Student Services</i>	II.C	Program Coordinator III (Lead Instructor)
154	Tudela	Jerimay	<i>DFAS</i>	III.B	Work Study
155	Tudela	Margarita	<i>CREES</i>	I.A	Program Manager II
156	Tudela	Maria Ana	<i>Student Services</i>	II.B	Director, Upward Bound
157	Tudela	Rosa	<i>APS</i>	II.A	Department Chair, Nursing

158	Villagomez	Catherine	DFAS	III.D	Accountant I (Cashier)
159	Villagomez	Colleen Genae	Student Services	III.A	Financial Aid Specialist II
160	Wicksman	Barry	APS	II.A	Instructor, English
	<b>Last Name:</b>	<b>First Name:</b>	<b>Division:</b>	<b>Standard Team:</b>	<b>Title:</b>
161	Wonenberg	Barry	APS	IV.A	Instructor, Art
162	Worswick	Theresa	Student Services	II.B	Outreach Counselor
163	Yoshida	Anemary	CDI	III.D	Administrative Manager I

Individuals no longer with the college, but who also provided input were:

	<b>Last Name:</b>	<b>First Name:</b>	<b>Division:</b>	<b>Standard Team:</b>	<b>Title:</b>
1	Abragan	Eric	DFAS	III.C	Program Manager III)
2	Cook	John	Student Services	IV.B	CNMI Archivist
3	Castro	Luis John	Student Services	II.B	Administrative Assistant
4	David	George	DFAS	III.B	Maintenance Manager
5	Deleon Guerrero	Galvin	Office of Institutional Effectiveness	I.B	Director, Institutional Effectiveness
6	Griffin	John	APS	III.A	Department Chair, Business
7	Jardinero	Lauren	DFAS	II.B	Supply Specialist I
8	Joab	Michele	Student Services	III.A	Career Office Manager
9	Lizama	Barnaby	Student Services	II.B	Outreach Counselor
10	Madriaga	Rogelio	President's Office	III.D	Chief Financial Officer
11	Manalo	John	Human Resources	III.A	HR Manager
12	Nandwani	Dilip	CREES	II.B	Plant Pathologist
13	Palacios	Octavius	President's Office	IV.B	Data Analyst
14	Pangelinan	Rachel	Student Services	II.B	Financial Aid Counselor
15	Pangelinan	Rose	Student Services	II.B	Program Manager II
16	Revilla	Dawn	DFAS	III.D	Budget Officer
17	Santos	Ana	Student	III.C	Program Coordinator III



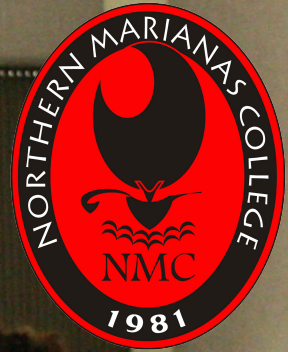
			Services		
18	Sobolewski	Frank	APS	III.D	Instructor, Social Sciences
19	Taro	Joyce	APS	II.A	Administrative Manager APS
20	Willis	Geri	APS	IV.B	Program Manager Apprenticeship

Additionally, a number of key individuals stepped forward to serve as chairs or co-chairs on various Standards throughout the institutional review process. An Ad-Hoc Committee of the Board of Regents was assembled to provide specific input on Standard IV. In addition, the Board of Regents also met to review and provide input on each and every Standard.

Key individuals who served as chairs/co-chair per Standard were:

Standard 1: Mission and Institutional Effectiveness		
1A. Mission		David Attao/Larry Lee/Becky Sablan
1B. Improving Institutional Effectiveness		Galvin Deleon Guerrero
Standard 11: Student learning and Programs		
2A. Instructional Programs		Barbara Merfalen
2B. Student Support Services		Leo Pangelinan
2C. Library and Learning Support Services		Matthew Pastula
Standard III: Resources		
3A. Human Resources		Jack Kiyoshi/John Manalo Bobbie Hunter
3B. Physical Resources		John Guerrero
3C. Technology Resources		Eric Abragan, Amanda Allen Daisie Camacho
3D. Financial Resources		David Attao/Ivyanne Ealy Roger Madriaga/Dawn Revilla
Standard IV: Leadership and Governance		
4A. Decision-Making Roles and Processes		Roy Greenland/John Griffin Sharon Hart
4B Board and Administrative Organization		Frankie Eliptico





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# Organizational Charts



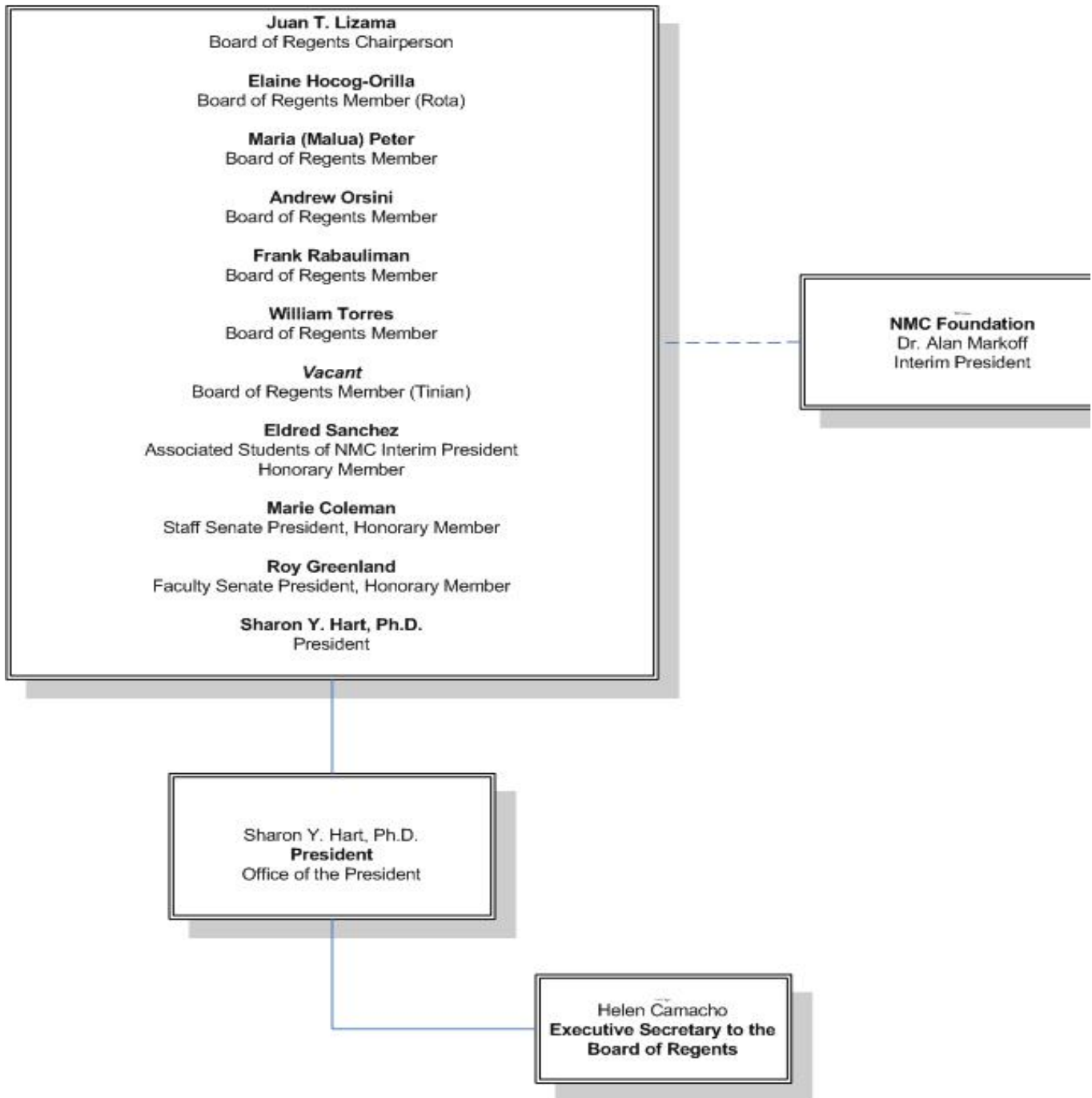




# Northern Marianas College

## Organizational Structure

### Board of Regents

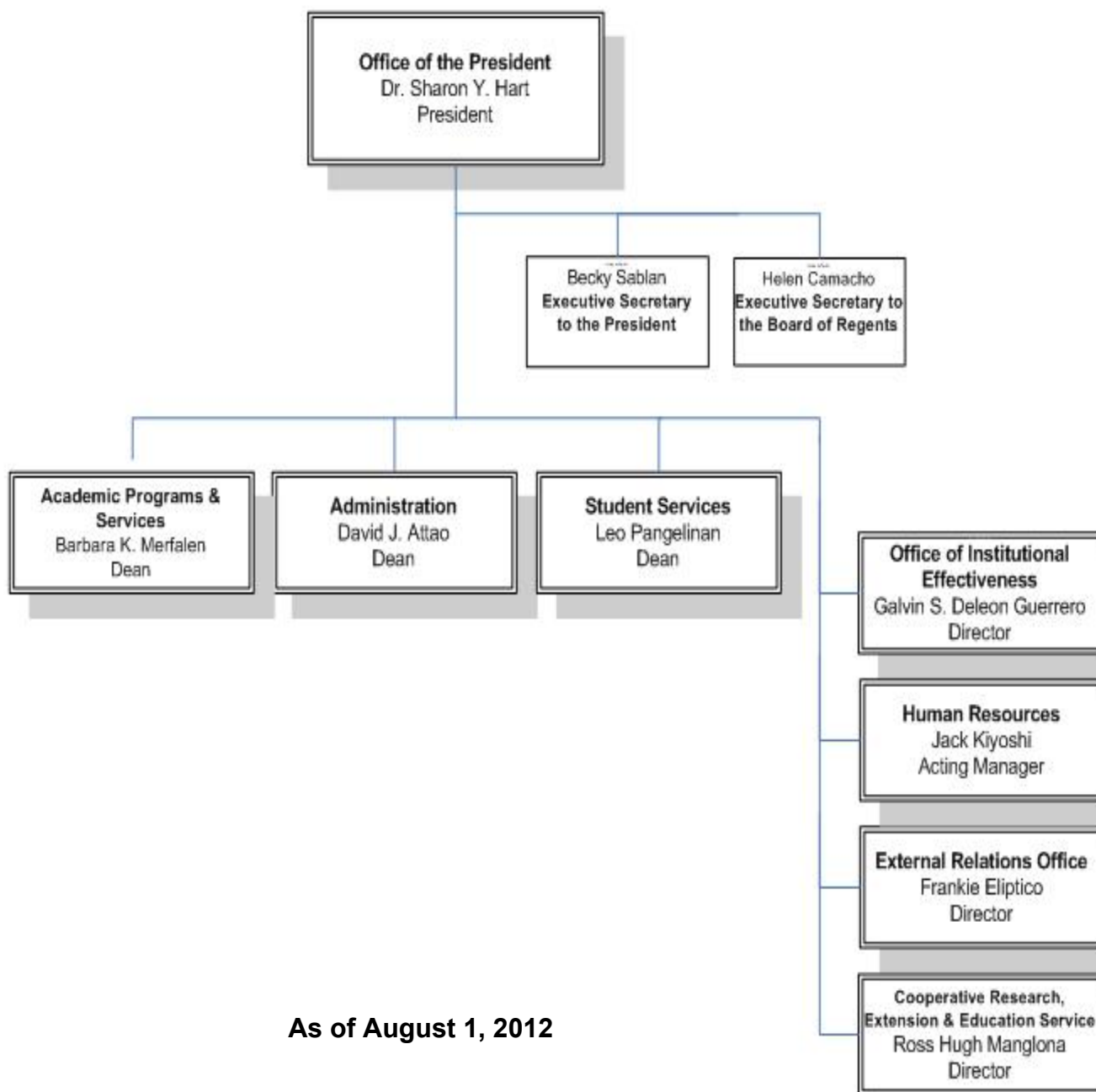


As of August 1, 2012



# Northern Marianas College

## Organizational Structure Office of the President



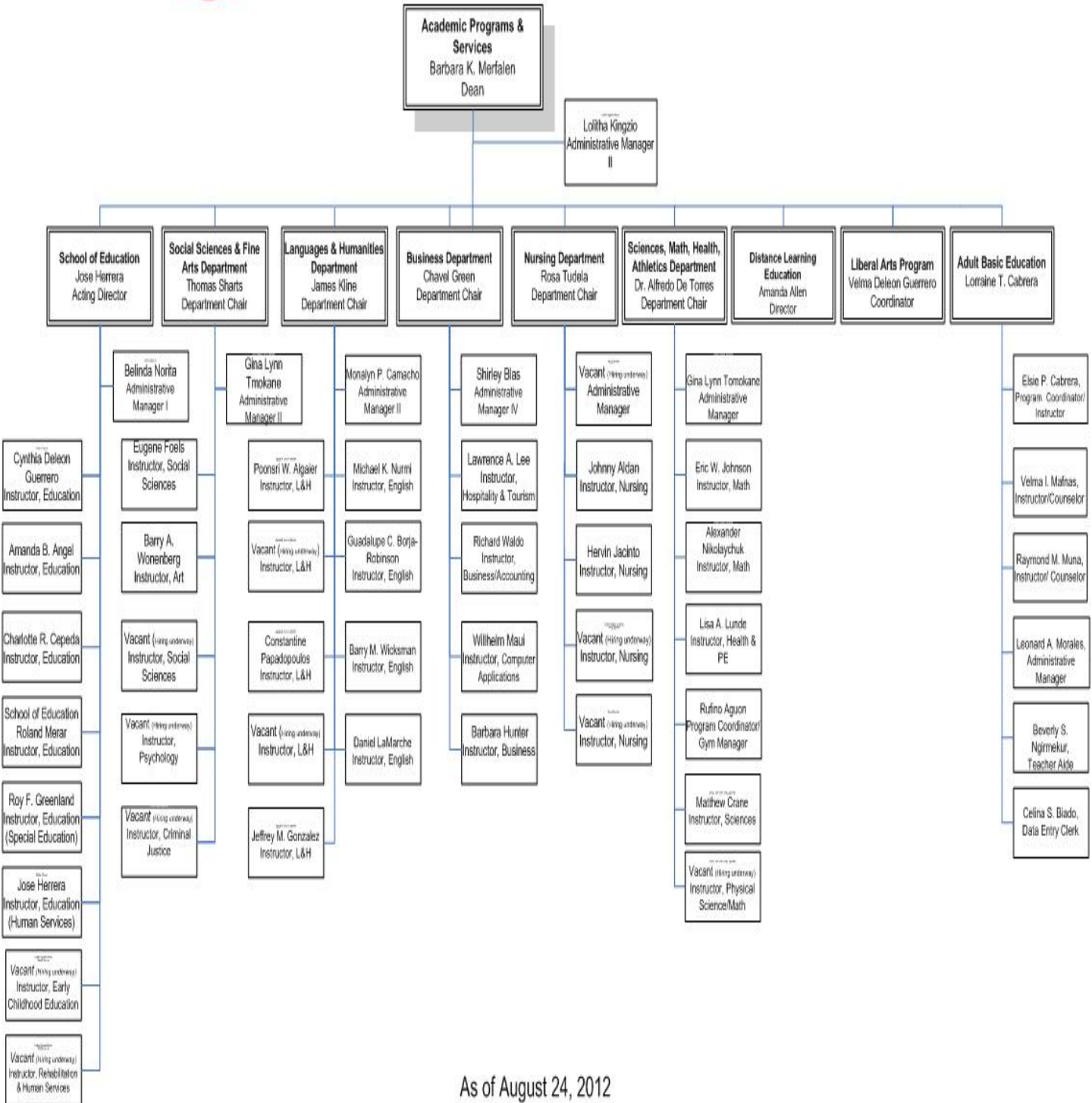
As of August 1, 2012



# Northern Marianas College

## Organizational Structure

### Academic Programs and Services



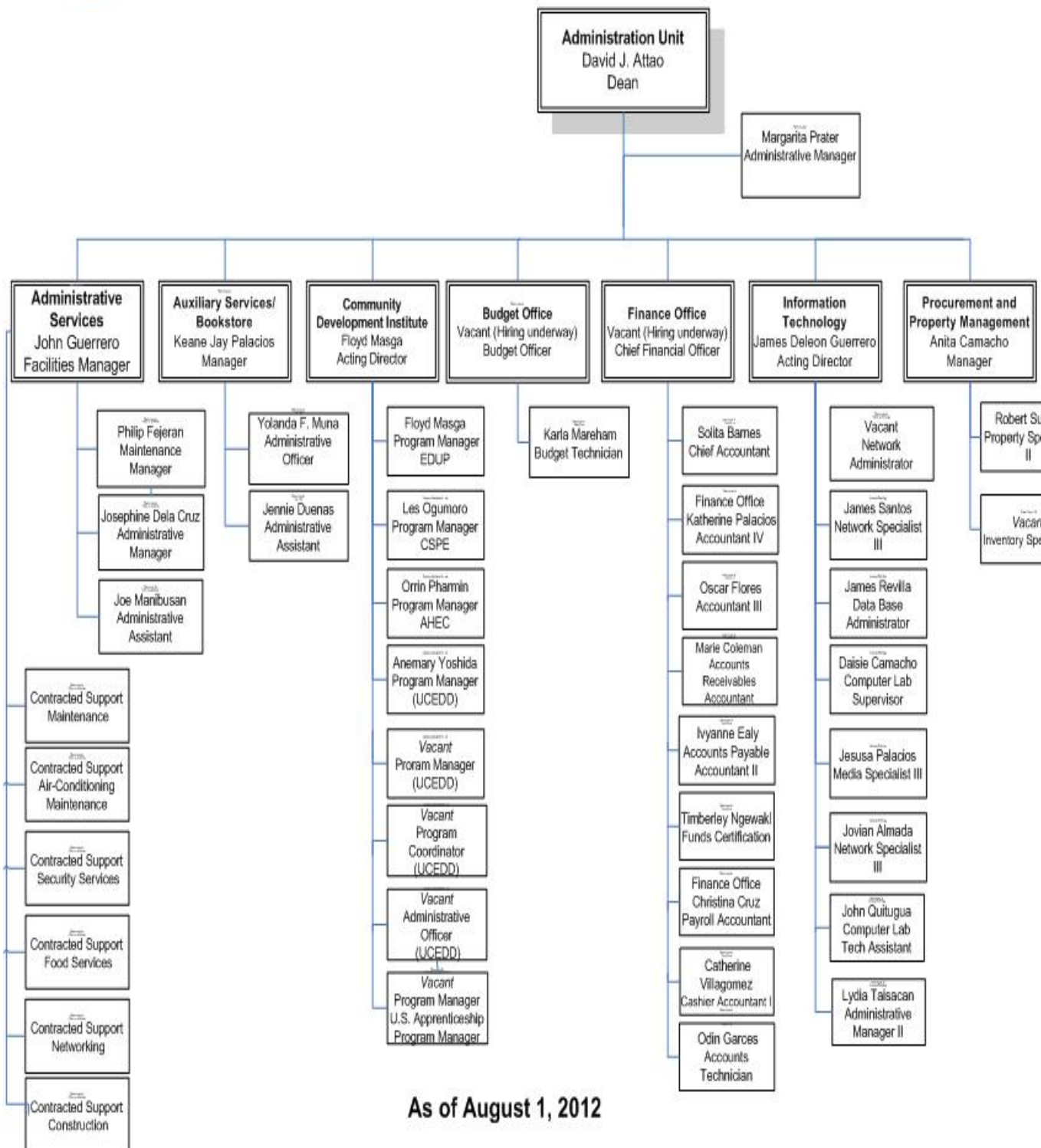
As of August 24, 2012





# Northern Marianas College

## Organizational Structure Administration Unit



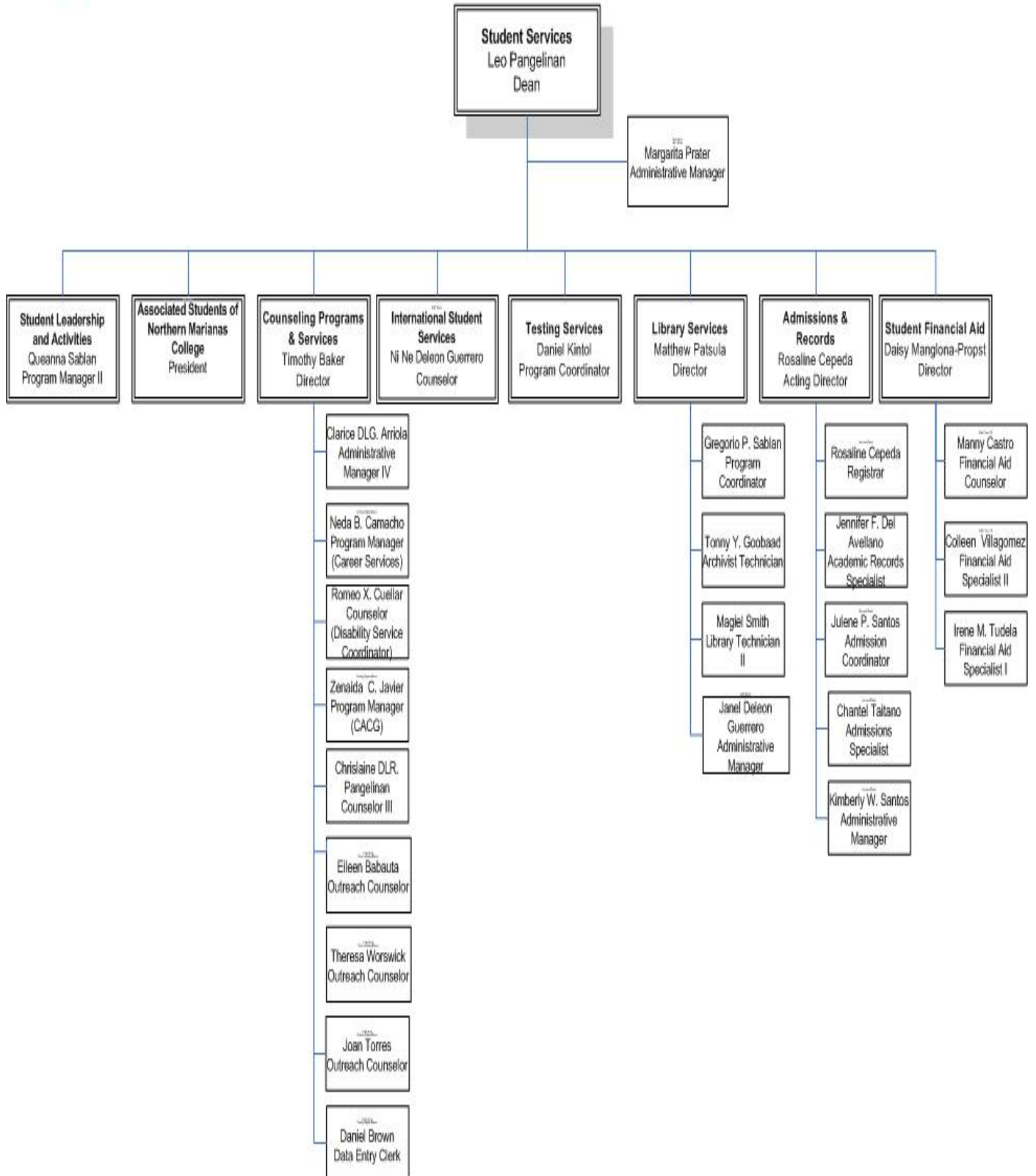
As of August 1, 2012



# Northern Marianas College

## Organizational Structure

### Student Services

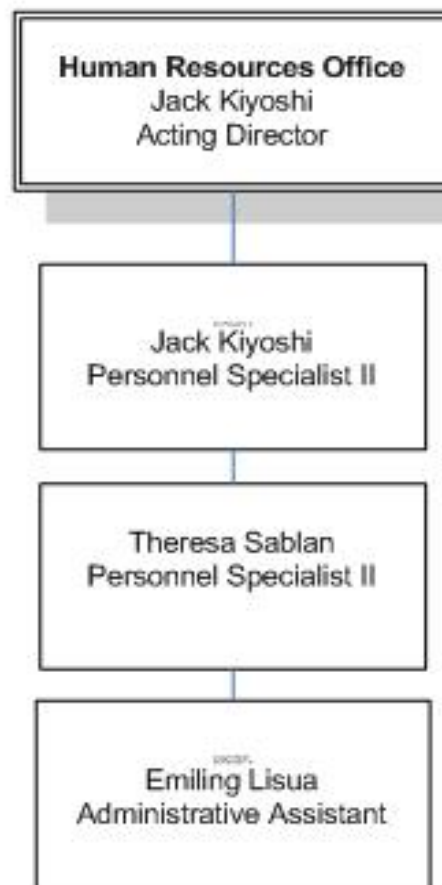




# Northern Marianas College

## Organizational Structure

### Human Resources Office

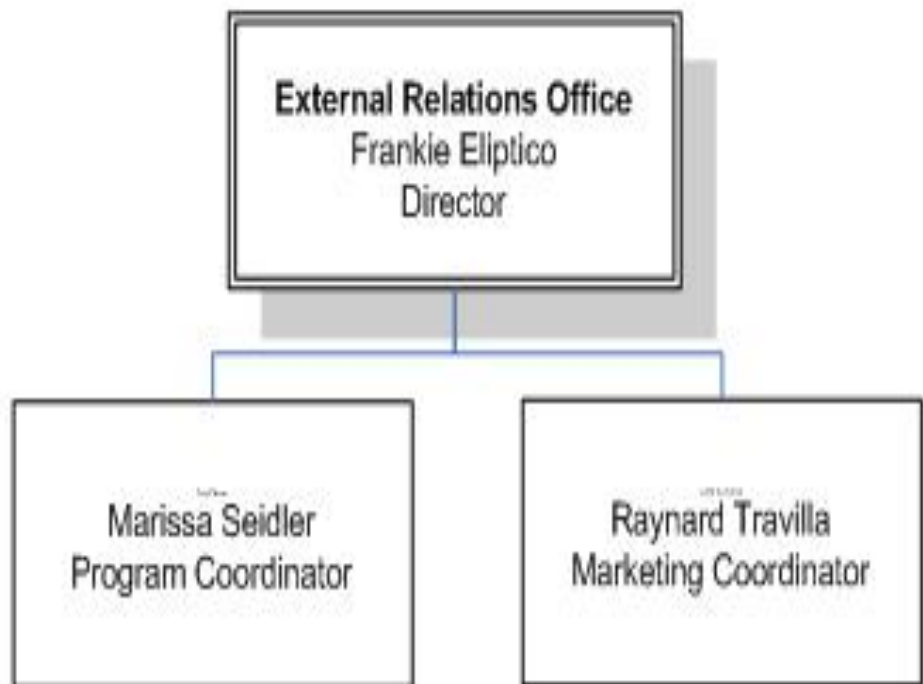


As of August 1, 2012



# Northern Marianas College

## Organizational Structure External Relations Office



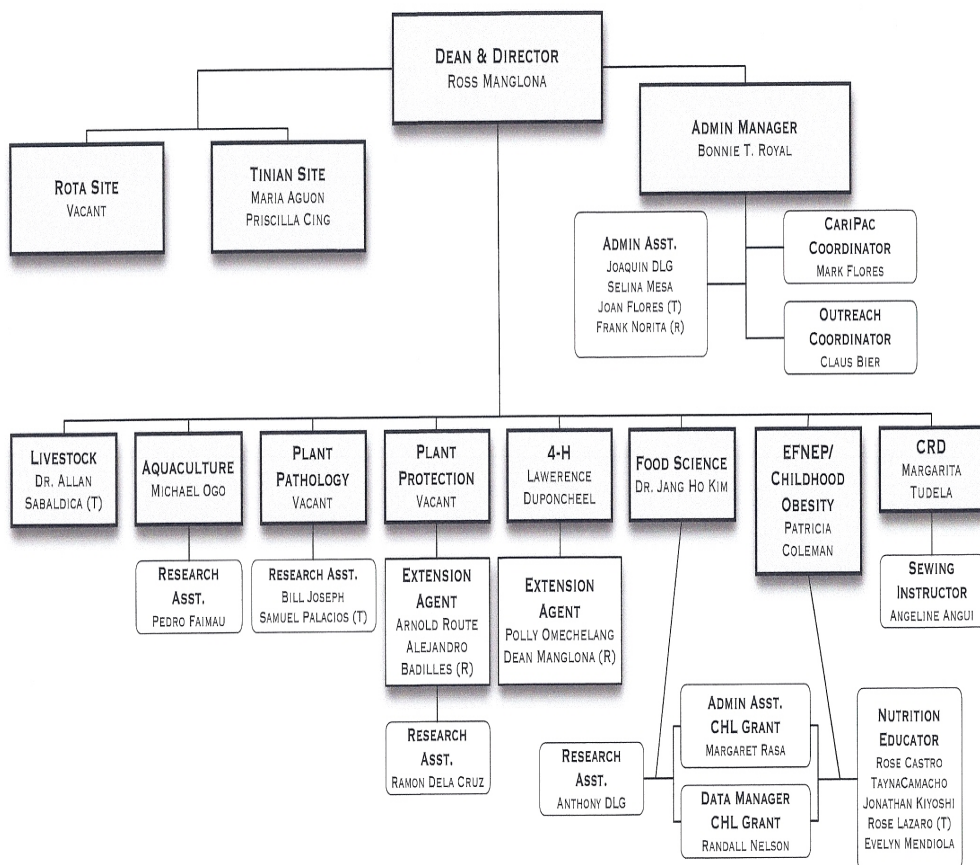
As of August 1, 2012



# Northern Marianas College

## Organizational Structure

### Cooperative Research, Extension & Education Service (CREES)



As of August 1, 2012



Northern Marianas College | 2012 Self Evaluation Report  
**Eligibility Requirements for Accreditation Certification  
of Continued Compliance with Eligibility Requirements**



## ***ACCJC Eligibility Requirements***

### 1. Authority

The Northern Marianas College receives its authorization to operate as an educational institution from the Constitution of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Article XV of the Constitution directed the Commonwealth Legislature to establish the Northern Marianas College, which shall be headed by a president who is appointed by a representative Board of Regents. In addition to asserting the mission of the College, the CNMI Constitution also states that the Board of Regents shall have “autonomy in the administration of affairs” and that the College shall receive a guaranteed percentage of the total CNMI budget.

The College’s authority and its autonomy have been reinforced through various state laws that specify the Board of Regents’ responsibilities and composition, the duties of the College president, and other institutional mandates.

### 2. Mission

Section 2 of Article XV of the CNMI Constitution states that "The mission of Northern Marianas College shall be to provide the best quality and meaningful post secondary and adult educational opportunities for the purpose of improving the quality of life for the individual and for the Commonwealth as a whole. The College shall be responsible for providing education in the areas of adult and continuing education, post secondary and adult vocational education and professional development for the people of the Commonwealth." This mission is posted in the NMC catalog and other College publications, on the NMC website, and in NMC classrooms and offices.

In the last several months, the Northern Marianas College has been collaboratively working with members of the CNMI Legislature to pass a legislative initiative to amend the CNMI Constitution to provide the NMC Board of Regents with the authority to establish the College’s mission statement. Recently, the initiative passed unanimously in both houses of the legislature and will now be placed on the ballot for the upcoming general election. The College will be mounting a public awareness campaign to support the passage of the Constitutional amendment.

### 3. Governing Board

The Northern Marianas College is governed by a duly authorized Board of Regents that consists of seven members who are appointed directly by the CNMI Governor. The Board of Regents is responsible for the quality, integrity, and financial stability of Northern Marianas College and the successful completion of its mission. This responsibility is outlined under Section 2(a) of Article XV of the Commonwealth Constitution. Under statute, the general duties and authority of the Board of Regents are reinforced by 3 CMC § 1304(b), which directs that “the Northern Marianas College is established as a nonprofit public corporation



under the general control and direction of a board designated as the Board of Regents of the Northern Marianas College . . .” Commonwealth Code also specifically empowers the Board of Regents in 3 CMC § 1316 to perform a number of duties, including setting the direction and goals of the College and to adopt, amend, and repeal College policies governing the conduct of business.

The Board adheres to a code of ethics policy and conflict of interest code (Board Policies 1019 and 1022, respectively) that assures that conflicts of interests are disclosed and that they do not interfere with the impartiality of governing board members or outweigh their greater duty to secure and ensure the academic and fiscal integrity of the institution.

#### 4. Chief Executive Officer

The Northern Marianas College Board of Regents recruits and hires the College president, who is empowered by the Board with full administrative responsibility for the College. Dr. Sharon Y. Hart, who was hired by the Board of Regents in July of 2011, has full time responsibility to the institution and possesses the requisite authority to administer board policies. The president’s authority as the college’s chief executive officer stems from 3 CMC § 1321 and from board policy.

#### 5. Administrative Capacity

The Northern Marianas College (NMC) has a total of 161 full-time employees, as of August 20, 2012, composed of administrators, instructional and non-instructional faculty, and administrative staff. All employees were chosen for their professional qualification and experience, which enable them to carry out the institution’s mission and goals.

The College has executive positions that report directly to the President which include one Dean of Academic Programs and Services, one Dean of Student Services, one Dean/Director of Cooperative Research Extension and Education Service (CREES), one Dean of Administration, one Director of External Relations, one Director of Institutional Effectiveness and one Interim Human Resource Manager. The individuals serving in these positions possess extensive leadership skills and educational backgrounds necessary to support the College’s mission and purpose.

#### 6. Operational Status

Northern Marianas College’s academic programs and full complement of student support services are provided year-round out of only the Saipan As Terlaje campus. Other College activities, including community development and adult basic educational programs, educational outreach, research, and extension services, that are also provided on Tinian and Rota through satellite instructional sites located on each island. Normal business hours at all three locations are between 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Instructional activities and support services are scheduled on the Saipan campus between 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturdays. During the year, the duration of academic courses are scheduled within the fall, spring, summer, and intersession terms.

Security services, including access to the College website and online library catalog and resources, are provided 24 hours per day. Current enrollment in degree programs is approximately 1,200 full-time equivalent students and as many as 20,000 duplicated headcount from the community participate in college-sponsored programs and activities each year.

## 7. Degrees

A majority of students at NMC are enrolled in educational offerings that lead to the following degrees: Associate in Arts, Associate in Applied Science, Associate in Science, or Bachelor of Science program.

## 8. Educational Programs

The College's degree programs are aligned with its mission, are identified as a post-secondary education of higher learning, are practitioners of nationally recognized standards of content and length, are facilitated at levels of quality and rigor appropriate to the degrees offered, and are completed in identified student learning outcomes.

## 9. Academic Credit

As a public institution governed by national regulatory systems of higher learning, the College awards academic credits based on recognized practices by degree granting institutions of higher education. The College also awards academic credits based on accepted practices in the Pacific Post-Secondary Education Council (PPEC) and degree granting institutions of higher learning. The institution is governed by a Board of Regents that approves the criteria for awarding both academic credits and degrees. Academic credit is measured by the credit hour, as communicated in the College's General Catalog 2012-2013, the College's website, the semester schedule, an Individualized Degree Plan (IDP), and Course Guides.

## 10. Student Learning and Achievement

The College defines and communicates clearly for each program the expected student learning outcomes and degree completion requirements. Through regular and systematic assessment, the College demonstrates that students achieve program completion, no matter where or how they are offered. Program and student learning outcomes are described in the college general catalog published every year, course guides that are reviewed and updated on a cycle, and course syllabi that are distributed at the beginning of each semester for every course section.

## 11. General Education

The College defines and includes in all its degree programs a substantial component of general education courses designed to ensure an acquisition of general knowledge, academic skills, critical thinking skills, and the ability to integrate knowledge that promotes the

capacity for life-long learning. The general education component includes demonstrated competence in English and math skills and an introduction to some of the major areas of knowledge. Degree credit for general education and core courses are aligned with program and student learning outcomes at levels consistent of quality and rigor appropriate to higher education.

## 12. Academic Freedom

The Northern Marianas College has a policy, BOR Policy No. 301.1, declaring that academic freedom and academic responsibility are inseparable. Academic freedom is the right of members of the academic community to conduct research, to publish the results, to teach and to communicate knowledge in their fields of expertise freely and openly without fear, and free from intimidation or undue influence. With academic freedom comes academic, social, and civic responsibility; thus, members of the academic community are sensitive to the culture, thoughts, and feelings of the community when addressing controversial topics. Faculty members distinguish between personal convictions and course goals and objectives, and present relevant data fairly and objectively.

## 13. Faculty

The Northern Marianas College has a substantial core of full-time, qualified faculty, sufficient in size and experience to support all the College's educational programs. There are currently 30 full-time instructional faculty, as well as 30 non-instructional faculty. Each faculty contract contains statements of faculty responsibility, which includes the duties to develop and review the curriculum, as well as properly assess learning. Faculty members are required to initial each page of the contract to verify they understand and agree with these responsibilities.

## 14. Student Services

The College is focused on providing the best quality and meaningful student services to the people of the Commonwealth in support of their learning and development. Student services address the needs of a diverse student population and contribute to student achievement. The Division of Student Services, its programs, staff, and non-instructional faculty work cooperatively to support and enhance student learning and development by providing leadership, programs, services, and partnerships that address student needs, progress, learning, and success in support of the Northern Marianas College mission. Continuous quality improvement in the delivery of services provided by Counseling Programs & Services, Financial Aid Office, Office of Admissions & Records, Library Programs & Services, Office of Student Activities & Leadership, Career Services, International Student Services, and Testing Center is assured through program participation in program review and assessment, and professional development activities.

## 15. Admissions

The College adopted Board Policy No. 8001 to define requirements for admission of students that stand to benefit from its programs. These statements of policy are an expression of the College's commitment to ensuring access to a postsecondary education for the people of the Commonwealth. The College has a non-competitive, open admission policy to promote access to educational opportunities among a diverse community from various backgrounds and educational attainment levels. Extensive course offerings in developmental English (10 courses) and math ( three courses) are a mainstay in the curriculum to meet the developmental learning needs of students and prepare these same students for completion of a College degree. The Office of Admissions & Records monitors student completion of admission and enrollment requirements, maintains student records and compliance with FERPA, and assists the institution in tracking student progress toward graduation.

#### 16. Information and Learning Resources

The Northern Marianas College owns, or otherwise provides, long-term access to sufficient information and learning resources and services to support its mission and instructional programs.

The Olympio T. Borja Memorial Library serves as NMC's main library center, having nearly 40,000 items, including books, encyclopedias, periodicals and audio/visual materials in the collection, along with providing access to over 8,000 full-text journals accessed through online subscription-based article databases. The EBSCO databases, one of the largest information providers to libraries around the world, include coverage of academic journals, magazines, encyclopedias and newspapers, which are linked to from the library's website. The library promotes information literacy through ongoing instruction and outreach.

At present, the Department of Library Programs & Services has three branches on the Saipan Campus and is responsible for library holdings at the instructional sites on Tinian and Rota. These components on the Saipan Campus are the Olympio T. Borja Memorial Library, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas (CNMI) Archives, and the Curriculum Resource Center (CRC), an education library held in concert with the School of Education. The Pacific Collection is composed of over 7,000 books specifically on the Pacific-region and is housed in the CNMI Archives. The library's collections are searchable through NMC's Online Public Access Catalog, from any computer connected to the Internet. The library provides access to computers, wireless broadband Internet and issues netbooks to students to utilize within the library.

#### 17. Financial Resources:

The Constitution of the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands prescribes the Northern Marianas College's base funding by guaranteeing a percentage of the total CNMI government budget for the institution. Various public laws identifying funding sources for NMC and the provisions of such laws are addressed through legislative appropriation. In addition to financial support from the central government, the College also receives revenue from tuition and fees as well as from grant support from various federal government entities, including the Department of Education, Department of Agriculture, and the Department of

the Interior.

Through its budget process, the Northern Marianas College allocates its financial resources to support its educational programs and services. The financial resources are intended to meet the expectations of NMC's Priority Initiatives, Institutional Priorities, Goals, Objectives, Expanded Statements of Institutional Purposes and Mission. Budget planning emphasizes resource allocation to revolve around maintaining and supporting existing programs and services to effectively run the College. The College allocates funds within reasonable comparison of the national averages for similar functions as represented by National Association of Colleges and University Business Officers Published 4th Edition "*A Guide to College and University Budgeting*" by Larry Goldstein, for two-year public institutions (NACUBO). Budget planning is also tied to assessment, program review, and data collected from NMC's assessment tools such as Forms 1, 2, and/or 3; and Composite Reports.

#### 18. Financial Accountability

The Northern Marianas College recently reported that it received an "unqualified opinion" or clean opinion on its financial statements, which makes this the fourth consecutive year that the College has received such an opinion. The audit was conducted by independent auditors Deloitte & Touche, LLP. The audit also identified no material weaknesses, significant deficiencies, or material noncompliance with the College's financial statements.

Representatives from Deloitte and Touche have indicated that the College is one of the most financially compliant and stable entities in the CNMI and the region. An electronic copy of the audit can be downloaded from the CNMI Office of the Public Auditor Website at [www.opacnmi.com](http://www.opacnmi.com).

#### 19. Institutional Planning and Evaluation

Board of Regents Policy 201 establishes the framework for the College's use of quantitative and qualitative data and analysis in an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, implementation, and re-evaluation to verify and improve the effectiveness by which the College mission is accomplished. BOR Policy 201 has been implemented at the College through a shared governance model and manuals and guides, such as the Institutional Excellence Guide, promote a collegiate culture of data-driven, evidence-based decision-making for continuous quality improvement.

#### 20. Integrity in Communication with the Public

The Northern Marianas College has recently released its latest catalog (*NMC General Catalog 2012-2013*), which includes general information about the College including the official name, address, telephone numbers, and website address. The new catalog also provides the institutional mission, college profile, course descriptions and degree offerings, academic calendar, and lists the names and degrees of administrators and faculty members. The publication also includes admissions requirements and major policies affecting students,

including those policies involving academic regulations, transfer credits, student grievance, and refund of fees.

The *NMC General Catalog* is provided to students during orientation and is also available for download from the NMC website at [www.nmcnet.edu](http://www.nmcnet.edu). Furthermore, students may also request an electronic copy on CD-ROM from the Office of Admissions and Records. In addition to the catalog, the College also makes the Schedule of Classes available for download prior to the start of every semester; the Schedule includes the class times, duration, and prerequisites.

## 21. Integrity in Relations with the Accrediting Commission

The College continues to create a culture of accreditation awareness through the work of Standard Teams and the leadership of the President and the Management Team. Broad and sustained participation of the campus community in efforts to meet accreditation standards is evident in membership on Standard Teams, participation in assemblies and professional development activities that focus on accreditation topics. The College regularly communicates to its constituent groups information concerning timelines, key activities, decisions, and actions that have some measure of impact on the College's efforts to meet Commission Standards. The College is committed to abiding by the standards, policies, and procedures established by the Commission and makes every effort to comply with all Commission requests for submission of reports in a reasonable and timely manner.





Northern Marianas College | 2012 Self Evaluation Report  
**Certification of Continued Compliance  
with Commission Policies**





## **Certification of Continued Institutional Compliance with Commission Policies**

Northern Marianas College certifies that it continues to comply with all the Commission policies identified below:

- Policy on Award of Credit
- Statement on Benefits of Accreditation
- Policy on Commission Actions on Institutions
- Policy on Commission Good Practice in Relations with Member Institutions
- Policy on Complaints Against the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
- Policy on Contractual Relationships with Non-Regionally Accredited Organizations
- Policy on Credit for Prior Experiential Learning in Undergraduate Programs
- Policy on Distance Education and on Correspondence Education
- Statement on Diversity
- Policy on Insider Trading
- Policy on Institutional Advertising, Student Recruitment and Representation of Accredited Status
- Policy on Institutional Compliance with Title IV
- Policy on Institutional Integrity and Ethics
- Policy on Institutions with Related Entities
- Policy on Interregional Policies on the Accreditation of Institutions Operating Across Regions
- Policy Regarding Matters Under Litigation
- Policy on Principles of Good Practice in Overseas International Education Programs for Non-U.S. Nationals
- Policy on Public Disclosure
- Policy on Refund of Student Charges
- Policy on Representation of Accredited Status
- Policy on Review of Commission Actions
- Policy on the Rights and Responsibilities of ACCJC and Member Institutions in the Accrediting Process
- Policy on Student and Public Complaints Against Institutions
- Policy on Substantive Change
- Policy on Transfer of Credit

Starting in April 2012, the College is reviewing all policies going to the Board of Regents to ascertain their conformity to ACCJC policies and standards. The Board of Regents policy template includes this identification [E:\*].





**Northern Marianas College | 2012 Self Evaluation Report  
Response to Recommendations from the Most  
Recent Educational Quality and Institutional  
Effectiveness Review**



## **Responses to Recommendations from the Most Recent Educational Quality and Institutional Effectiveness Review:**

### **ACCJC Recommendation #1**

Northern Marianas College must take appropriate steps to ensure that the delivery system used to provide instruction to Tinian and Rota is completely reliable and works at all times, or discontinue offering classes via telecommunications. The College must also detail how it intends to provide education services, including instruction and support services, that ensure the education obtained on the Tinian and Rota sites is equivalent of that obtained on the main campus and meets all accreditation requirements.

Throughout the spring of 2007, the College undertook a number of initiatives to respond to the Commission's concerns about the sustainability, reliability and equivalency of instruction at the Tinian and Rota instructional sites. Despite these efforts, an exhaustive review conducted in Summer 2007 concluded that the resources and projected enrollment would not provide sustained, reliable and equivalent instruction at these sites. On October 8, 2007, at the recommendation of the President, the Board of Regents suspended academic instruction at these sites, effective in Spring 2008. Despite that suspension, however, the College continued to engage the Rota and Tinian instructional sites in its strategic planning and program review processes. As a result, the Rota and Tinian instructional sites participated fully in Cycle 2 of program review and planning by submitting all program review documents. The College is mindful that any initiative to revive academic instruction would place the institution within the ACCJC Policy on Substantive Change.

Consistent with relevant ACCJC requirements, standards, and policies, over the past year, the College has embarked on several online and distance education initiatives that are helping meet the educational needs of Rota and Tinian.

### **ACCJC Recommendation #2**

The governing board of Northern Marianas College must undergo sufficient training in accreditation requirements of the ACCJC.

Members of the Board of Regents have participated in various training activities geared to improve their effectiveness as policy makers for the College. In October 2008, the Pacific Postsecondary Education Council (PPEC)—in partnership with the Northern Marianas College—hosted a two-day boardsmanship training agenda including “Ethical Issues that Accompany a Board Member’s Role,” “What is the Board’s Responsibility with the CEO,” “How does a Board Monitor its own Performance,” and other highly relevant and helpful forums. All Regents (who were members of the Board at the time) participated in this training. The NMC President, newly elected chair of PPEC has once again requested that the boardsmanship be held on Saipan so that new board members can receive the training in a timely manner. PPEC has agreed and the training is tentatively set for December 2009. At

this time, two board members still need to receive comprehensive training and are expected to participate in the 2009 PPEC boardsmanship training.

Each of the Regents regularly participates in training and development activities that include participation in national conferences that focus on the role of Board members in intuitional effectiveness. Further, the Board has a mechanism in place—that is prescribed by CNMI law—that provides for the continuity of board membership and staggered terms of office.

The honorary regents serve as non-voting members of the Board. These honorary regents have not participated in all of the training and orientation activities that the other members have undergone, and the College realizes that this needs to be improved.

Nonetheless, the honorary regents are involved in policy development from the very beginning of the process—when policies are first introduced to the campus for review and input prior to submission to the board. These honorary regents are specifically involved in obtaining input from their respective constituents on board policy.

Voting and honorary board members have participated in training sessions on a number of topics and issues, including “Accreditation 101,” “Boardsmanship and Accreditation,” and “Accreditation Eligibility Requirements and Standards,” and the ACCJC/WASC online “Accreditation Basics Course.”

The members of the Board of Regents have also participated in training activities that include the following:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Organizer</b>
02/19/10	Training Session	Accreditation 101	ALO
02/26/10	Training Workshop	Self Study Workshop	ACCJC
06/14/10	Training Session	Boardsmanship and Accreditation	PPEC
08/04/10	Training Conference	New Trustee Governance Leadership Institute (Washington DC)	ACCT
09/08/10	Lunch Training Session	Role of Governing Board	ALO
09/29/10	Training Workshop	FERPA	President's Office
10/13/10	Lunch Training Session	ACCJC (Site Visit Prep)	ALO

01/05/11	Lunch Training Session	Governing Board and Institutional Quality & Effectiveness	ALO
02/25/11	Lunch Training Session	Accreditation Eligibility Requirements and Standards	ALO
03/04/11	Lunch Training Session	CNMI Constitution, Commonwealth Code, and Standard IV	LinC Director
03/10/11	Accreditation Standards Team Briefings	Standard 1.A, Standard, 2.A, Standard 2.B, Standard 3.A	President's Office
03/11/11	Accreditation Standards Team Briefings	Standard 1.B, Standard 3.D, Standard 4.B	President's Office
10/12/11	Taining Workshop	ACCT 42nd Annual Leadership Congress Conference in Dallas, Texas.	ACCT
05/04/12	Training Workshop	Board and CEO Assistants Workshop	ACCT
04/20/12	Training Workshop	AACC 92nd Convention	AACC

### Team Recommendation #1

The college should review existing planning processes in order to establish and implement a shared vision for the future of the college with agreed upon priorities that: (a) develops and implements budgeting and resource allocations guided by institutional needs for human resources and services; (b) includes the two centers on Tinian and Rota in the planning; (c) integrates all aspects of planning, evaluation, and resources allocation; (d) is driven by college mission and goals; (e) relies on faculty and staff participation; (f) is well documented and widely distributed. (Standards I.B.2; I.B.3; I.B.4; I.B.5; I.B.6; II.A.1; II.A.2; II.B.4; II.C; III.A; III.B; III.C; III.D; IV.A; IV.B - including various subsections.)

The redesign of NMC's planning and evaluation processes marks one of the most significant achievements of the last several years. In Fall of 2008 NMC revised its PROA Strategic Plan to articulate four main goals that would carry it through 2012, the time of its next



comprehensive visit. The revised plan integrates annual planning, program review and budget processes that then inform decisions about resource allocation. The plan was developed following a campus-wide “visioning” process and planning workshops during spring and summer of 2008.

While college-level instruction has been suspended at the Tinian and Rota sites, those sites are now represented on the College Council, which is the main shared governance institution of the College. Tinian and Rota employees participate in all campus wide activities either on site or via VTC.

The Program Review and Outcomes Assessment Committee (PROAC) and the College Council ensure faculty and staff participation in the planning and evaluation process, and the program review process itself is carried out by every unit of the College. Furthermore, the planning and program review processes have been codified by two documents: the Institutional Excellence Guide and the Manual for Planning Program Review and Budgeting that have been adopted by the College Council and the Board of Regents. The Institutional Excellence Guide specifies the roles of shared governance entities in the planning and program review processes.

To keep the College’s annual Operational Plan current, and to improve its link to program review, at the 2010 Planning Summit, the entire College community engaged in dialogue about how to link each program’s outcomes (SLOs, PLOs, and AUOs) to the 28 priority initiatives articulated in the PROA-SP. This approach to the Ops Plan directly links the PROA-SP to every program, ensuring fidelity to the goals and priority initiatives in the plans.

With the links between programs’ outcomes and the PROA-SP’s priority initiatives established, the College continues to monitor achievement of those outcomes through annual program assessment (Form 1s), which organizes annual program assessment into the Nichols and Nichols (2000) five column model format for annual program assessment.

On May 17, 2011, the College convened a Strategic Planning Summit, in which the College’s Strategic Planning Task Force launched a year-long collaborative process to develop the next five-year strategic plan for the College. In subsequent meetings, the task force also worked with the new president and the College’s Management Team to develop a set of planning goals and priorities for Fiscal Year 2012. The goals and priorities lift from the current PROA Strategic Plan 2008—2012 (PROA-SP) and include the following goals: improve student success, optimize financial resources, enhance information technology, focus on Commonwealth workforce development needs, and accomplish other distinctive objectives in an environment of continuous quality improvement.

The College’s planning efforts are also being guided by a recent white paper developed by the new president. Drawing from an article published by Dennis Jones in the January/February 2011 issue of AGB Trusteeship entitled “Protecting and Building Your Institution’s Assets”, President Dr. Sharon Hart’s white paper emphasizes that the College’s “approach to resource allocation must be strategic” and “must put the long-term capacity and health of the College at the center of the process”. Laying out five steps for making

intentional decisions about budgeting and resource allocation, the president’s white paper has been integrated into the College’s ongoing dialogue about planning, budgeting, and resource allocation.

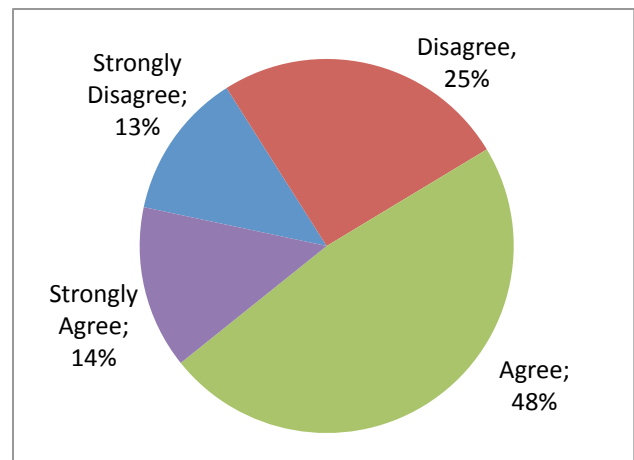
To gauge how effective NMC’s governance model is at structuring self-reflective dialogue towards improving institutional processes, in February of 2011, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness conducted a campus-wide online survey, the Governance Evaluation Survey. The survey had respondents assess five dimensions of governance—democracy, openness and transparency, effectiveness, accountability, and mission—and rate each NMC governance and representative body according to those dimensions.

Survey results suggest that NMC is effectively using its governance model to engage stakeholders in ongoing dialogue about institutional effectiveness. For example, as Figure I.B-2 shows, in response to the statement, “Decisions that affect the entire institution are informed by extensive dialogue with key stakeholders,” 44 respondents, or about 61%, either agreed or strongly agreed.

## Team Recommendation # 2

The team recommends again that the college institutionalize a coordinated, systematic process for evaluating program effectiveness. This process should include definitions of learning outcomes for all programs, a determination of program relationships to labor markets, and objective measures of student performance, which can inform and guide decisions to improve programs. (Standards IB:1; IB:3; IB:4; IB:5; IB:6; IB:7; IIA:1; II:A2; IIB:4; IIC; IIIA; IIIB; IIIC; IIID; IVA; IVB:2a; IVB2b.)

In the summer of 2007, NMC began a serious effort to undertake a coordinated and systematic program review process. Several initial steps were crucial to this effort. First, the Program Review and Outcomes Assessment Committee (PROAC) was established in July 13, 2007. PROAC is the overall assessment guidance and working committee for the institution. 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 represents the different constituencies at the College, including faculty, staff, administrators, and students.



To assist PROAC in fulfilling its mission, the Student Learning Outcomes Comprehensive Implementation Program (SLOCIP) was drafted in late summer 2007 and presented and discussed during Professional Development Days (PDD) prior to the Fall 2007 semester.

With the establishment of PROAC and SLOCIP, the College has institutionalized assessment that is focused and sustained through support and training.

Since Fall of 2010, PROAC has engaged in a dialogue about how to improve the link between program review, planning, and budgeting and resource allocation. Drawing from the program review experience at Drake University in 2000 and 2001, PROAC has assigned a subcommittee, the Form 2 Revision Committee, to revise NMC's program review reporting template, the Form 2, to focus on five criteria by which program review submissions will be evaluated by PROAC:

- Link to NMC's Mission and Strategic Plan
- Performance
- External/Internal Demand
- Cost Effectiveness
- Opportunities

By improving the link between program review, planning, and budgeting and resource allocation, PROAC intends to align these institutional processes to have a more clear, direct, and positive impact on student learning.

Since program review and annual assessment were implemented at the College, participation in program review and annual assessment has improved, to the point that in the most recent cycle of program review, Cycle A 2011, 100% of all programs that were required to complete program review reports (Form 2s) complete and submitted such reports to PROAC.

Based on its evaluation of Cycle 3 of program review, which concluded in the fall of 2010, PROAC identified several recommendations in the 2010 Composite Report to improve future cycles of program review. Based on those recommendations, PROAC took the following actions for the recent cycle of program review, Cycle A 2011:

- PROAC adopted a cyclical program review calendar in which academic programs and non-academic programs alternate every year in submitting program review reports (Form 2s).
- A subcommittee of PROAC refined the Form 2 template for academic programs that participated in the recent cycle of program review. The revised Form 2 template provides for more in-depth analysis and discussion of data and evidence.
- PROAC developed Form 2 rubrics and a Form 2 evaluation sheet to provide both formative and summative assessment of submitted Form 2s in order to help programs improve the quality of Form 2 submissions.
- These rubrics, along with further review and discussion in PROAC meetings, enabled PROAC to prioritize recommendations to the institution.

Cycle A 2011 of program review led to the 2011 Composite Report, which shifted from providing the College with simply a "wish-list" of recommendations to providing a list of prioritized recommendations based on PROAC's evaluation of those recommendations using

the Form 2 rubrics. The resulting list of recommendations has made it clearer and easier to prioritize items for planning, budgeting, and resource allocation.

The 2011 Composite Report also noted the following strengths from Cycle A 2011 of program review:

- PROAC received 100% of all Form 2 submissions from Academic Programs in Cycle A 2011.
- 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.
- The schedule allowed for dialogue between PROAC members and Form 2 authors to work on drafts before final submissions, which improved the quality of submissions.
- PROAC developed rubrics and an evaluation instrument to assess each Form 2 submission.
- The work of reviewing and evaluating Form 2s was evenly assigned to PROAC members working in pairs, making the workload more manageable.
- PROAC adopted a more manageable bi-annual cycle for Form 2 submissions.
- PROAC adopted and used more digital tools, which automated PROAC processes and reduced the amount of paper used.
- PROAC and the College governance bodies successfully developed and implemented the Form 3 process for linking program review, budgeting, and resource allocation to address budget shortfalls.

### **Team Recommendation #3**

The college should provide quality assurance for instructional programs at distant sites and instruction through distance modalities. If alternative means of delivering equitable access to quality instruction is not available when technology fails, the college should suspend distance education at remote centers until new connectivity is established. (Standards II.A.1.b; II.A.2; II.A.2.d; II.C.1; II.C.1.a; II.C.1.b.)

An exhaustive review (conducted by the new president and her Management Team) in summer 2007 concluded that current resources and likely enrollments would not provide sustained, reliable and equivalent instruction at the Tinian and Rota sites. As a result, on October 8, 2007, the NMC Board of Regents suspended instruction at these sites, effective in spring 2008. The College decided to fold the issue of operations at Tinian and Rota into its strategic planning process. The College is mindful that any initiative to revive instruction would place the institution within the ACCJC Policy on Substantive Change.

The College now has in place planning, program review and budget processes that ensure studied consideration of these issues, and the current suspension of college-level instruction at Tinian and Rota was ratified by the Board of Regents.

Furthermore, in July, the Board or Regents underscored its commitment to the Rota and Tinian instructional sites by including the sites in one of the four priority areas in its 2009-2010 Goals and Objectives for the President, the document against which the President's performance will be evaluated. In the document, the Board specifically stated, "The President will expand the services that are offered at the Rota and Tinian Instructional Sites to help meet the professional and educational needs of those respective islands."

#### **Team Recommendation #4**

The team recommends the college complete the cycle of developing, measuring, analyzing, and discussing student learning outcomes, and acting on the findings, as part of a continuous effort of improvement. With regard to Recommendation 4, it is expected that the college will have achieved the Development Level on student learning outcomes as identified in the Commission's Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness by the time of the Progress Report. (Standards I.B.1; II.A.1.a; II.A.1.b; II.A.2; II.A.3; II.A.5; II.A.6; III.A.6; III.B.2.b; III.C.2; III.D.3; IV.A.5; IV.B.2.b.)

To assist the Program Review Outcomes and Assessment Committee (PROAC) in fulfilling its mission, the Student Learning Outcomes Comprehensive Implementation Program (SLOCIP) was drafted in late Summer 2007 and presented and discussed during Professional Development Days (PDD) prior to the Fall 2007 semester. With the establishment of PROAC and SLOCIP, the College institutionalized assessment that is focused and sustained through support and training. Additionally, participation in PROAC activities is listed on all job announcements, position descriptions, employment contracts, and professional services contracts.

Since fall 2007, the College has continually refined its efforts at developing student learning outcomes (SLOs) and program learning outcomes (PLOs), as well as developing appropriate means for measuring student success in achieving these outcomes. This effort marks a pronounced shift in culture at the institution.

As a result of these steps, the College has successfully completed four cycles of program review and is currently closing out the current cycle. The results of program review have consistently been published in Composite Reports, which continue to inform and drive continuous quality improvement in all areas of the College.

A key indicator of successful program review is the fact that all academic programs have developed complete sets of program learning outcomes (PLOs) and all courses have developed complete sets of student learning outcomes (SLOs). The Academic Council continues to review and assess these outcomes and make necessary changes as needed.

#### **Team Recommendation #5**

The team recommends the college implement the employee evaluation processes that are in place in a timely and formal manner in order to assure the effectiveness of its human resources and encourage improvement. (Standards II.A.2.a; III.A.1; III.D; IV.A.1; IV.A.4; IV.B.)

On August 23, 2005, a memorandum from the President announced the implementation of the NMC employee evaluation system, following extensive deliberations by the College community. This employee evaluation system introduced the use of nine different evaluation forms that assess the performance of employees in various categories at NMC. All evaluation instruments are comprehensive, objective and specific enough to meet the needs and goals of the College and its employees. Professionalism and professional growth, service to the students, professional competencies, skills, and service to the College and community, and program implementation are some of the elements included for evaluation in the instruments. Defining activities are outlined below each element and are used to evaluate employees in their areas of concentration and expertise. Each evaluation instrument contains a rating scale used to determine areas to be addressed, especially in connection with the employee's professional development.

The Human Resources Office continues to update its listing of all employees and sends a reminder e-mail about three months prior to the employee's anniversary date to the immediate supervisor with a cc to the President and the appropriate direct report. If the anniversary date includes the renewal of the employee's two year contract, the renewal is not processed until such time that the evaluations are completed and submitted to the Human Resources Office. Overall, all evaluations are up to date and being processed on time.

### **Team Recommendation #6**

The college should pursue funding to renovate or replace aging buildings with facilities that are appropriate to meet the current and future needs of the college. (Standards III.B.1; III.B.1.a; III.B.1.b; III.B.2; III.B.2.a; III.B.2.b; III.D.1.a; III.D.1.B; III.B.1.c.)

Despite limited government funds due to the worsening regional and global economies, since 2007, the College has successfully and resourcefully identified funds to provide long overdue renovations, repairs, and construction for its facilities.

In August 2007, the College's short-term commercial loan application for \$250,000 was approved by the First Hawaiian Bank. This money was used for renovation and repairs of several buildings, including major renovation of Building M that is now the new home for the Language and Humanities Department.

In 2008, the Office of the Governor reprogrammed \$800,000 in Capital Improvement Program funds from the Department of the Interior Office of Insular Affairs for roof and electrical repairs and upgrades on NMC facilities. Additional external funding was also received from the NMC Foundation, federal government, and CNMI Legislature. The College also received \$100,870 from the NMC Foundation to purchase collateral equipment,

including computers and computer-related technology for language labs. This funding need was identified in Cycle 1 Program Review as an institutional priority, and was linked with planning and budgeting for resource allocation in the preparation of the FY 2009 Operations Budget.

In April 2008, the College received \$375,000 for a project entitled NMC Accreditation Reaffirmation Plan. This award includes \$225,000 earmarked for the development of a Facilities Master Plan. In September 2008, the College received \$25,000 from the CNMI Legislature for renovation of the NMC Bookstore, and, through the assistance of the CNMI Washington Representative Office, the College received \$800,000 in federal Capital Improvement funding, for facilities renovation and repair, from the Office of the Governor. The funds were made possible through a reprogramming of existing capital improvement projects by the Governor, and approved by the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Insular Affairs.

In 2008, several new Cooperative Research Extension and Education Services (CREES) structures (Saipan, Tinian, and Rota) for research and extension services were constructed or expanded with funding support received from the US Department of Agriculture. The College also received approximately \$54,000 from the Legislature to pave the gravel road leading from the Water Tank/As Terlaje Road entrance into the campus to the CREES Aquaculture Nursery. The College also received approximately \$30,000 as a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) reimbursement for costs incurred in the repair of the CREES Tinian facility destroyed by a typhoon.

Renovation work on building L was completed towards the end of spring 2008 and now houses the Procurement and Maintenance functions. The project began with funds received from FEMA. The roof sustained heavy damage in a typhoon several years ago. Operations funds were used to complete the renovation, and today Building L has five offices and a large conference room on the second floor. The first floor has a large receiving, processing, and storage area for incoming college purchases. The first floor also provides a small facilities maintenance work area for the maintenance staff. The Procurement staff moved into their new spacious offices in early Summer 2008.

The Library was remodeled in 2007 by breaking down a wall and adding an extra glass door, repainting of the interior and exterior walls of the building, replacing the wooden bookcases with metal ones, and cleaning up the area between the regular library collection and the Pacific collection. A rededication of the Olympio T. Borja Library was held after the renovation in Spring 2008.

Renovations on building S were completed in Fall 2008. The entire building was gutted and the entire roof was replaced, giving the formerly Samoan type dwelling a totally new facelift. Building S is now the new site for the Curriculum Resource Center (CRC). The CRC formerly used one of the classrooms in Building A. Relocating the CRC to Building S added another classroom space in Building A and is being used as a general classroom.

Building Q had serious roof damage caused by termites. In Fall of 2007, the entire roof was removed and replaced with tin materials, and the walls were knocked down and rebuilt. The interior was partitioned to provide 3 new classrooms that are dedicated for the School of Education classes, plus restroom facilities and storage space. The School of Education began to hold classes in Building Q in Spring 2008.

The College commissioned a Restricted Use Appraisal Report that was completed in 2008. This appraisal was a necessary precursor to developing a comprehensive Facilities Master Plan (FMP). A request for proposals (RFP) for a FMP was advertised, and a contractor has been selected, contract signed with Beca International. The FMP completion date is slated for December 2009. The College will use the FMP as a bankable document to seek and secure funding from the Legislature and other sources.

The College also utilized \$220,000 in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grant funds for modernization, repair, and renovation of its facilities, primarily those used for instructional purposes.

Over the summer of 2012, the College also completed several renovations projects and relocations that have provided more centralized instructional space.

### **Team Recommendation #7**

The college should develop and implement a technology plan that evaluates, supports, and plans for the future of instructional, student services and administrative functions across the college's sites. (Standards III.B.1; III.B.1.a; III.B.1.b; III.B.2; III.B.2.a; III.B.2.b; III.D.1.a; III.D.1.B; III.B.1.c.)

The October 16—19, 2006 Team Visit Report noted, “[The College] has made improvements in technology that supports student learning, online instruction, teleconferencing equipment, and operational systems campus-wide. The success enjoyed in this area could be lost if it is not supported by a broader technology plan. The college lacks policies and procedures to guide and monitor computer standards, equipment purchasing, and maintenance cycles. There is also a lack of sufficient technical staff to support all these systems.”

In October 2008, the College completed and adopted its Information Technology (IT) Plan. This comprehensive plan was developed by a representative group of faculty and staff under the direction of Technology in Education Committee. The plan describes the strategic goals, operational direction, and objectives for technology development at the College. The plan was developed to support Goal 4 of the PROA Strategic Plan 2008—2012: To accelerate the upgrade of physical and technology infrastructure.

Furthermore, on September 28, 2009, the IT Department developed and finalized an IT Resource Guide, which was both published and made available online at the College's website. The purpose of the IT Resource Guide is to provide NMC employees an overview of the technology resources available across campus as well as guidelines on how to access



them. Some of technology available to them that are included in the guide: requesting a network ID: using campus email, CommuniGate and Outlook calendars; using Help Desk, accessing web-base software training, web-conferencing; posting courses on NMC Online (MOODLE); authorizing, taking, and analyzing surveys electronically; tracking data electronically for program review and budgeting purposes; and much more. Also included in the guide are brief overviews of each technology and where or who to turn to for more information or training.

The College has invested tremendous resources towards the vision to make the college an IT leader in the region and to provide state of the art services to students and the community. The Information Technology budget shows a pattern of increase between FY2007 to FY2009 from \$923,493.00 to \$3,711,274.17 respectively.

Furthermore, the College assures that any technology support it provides is designed to meet the needs of learning, teaching, college-wide communications, research, and operational systems. This is done by the Information Technology department assigning representatives in all available areas of planning within the institution. These representatives support student learning programs and services, and work to improve institutional effectiveness.

The Strategic Planning Task Force (SPTF) has been assembled to create a Strategic Plan that will include values, a new vision, mission, 3-7 strategic goals, and supporting priority initiatives. The Strategic Plan will serve as a road map for the College in its ongoing efforts to meet accreditation standards of educational quality, address the workforce needs of the CNMI, and focus on continuous quality improvement in areas of primary interest to its stakeholders. The IT Department is represented in this Task Force having a voice college-wide, working first hand in the SPTF's research. In the 2008-2012 Strategic Plan "Goal 4. Accelerate the upgrade of physical and technology infrastructure." and in the FY 2012 Strategic Plan: "Goal 3. Information Technology."

The IT Department also maintains representation on NMC's Planning and Program Review Outcomes and Assessment Committee (PROAC). Through this representation, the IT Department is informed of the technological needs of departments and programs throughout the Institution. Internally within the IT Department, Planning and Program Review through the Records of Dialogue provides a means of open communication, keeping members well informed as well as providing this information to PROAC for college-wide information exchange.

As part of NMC's Shared Governance, the Information Technology Director has been a member of the College Council from 2006-2012 being the primary advisory body to the President on issues related to the ongoing operations of the College. Currently with the restructuring of NMC's Organizational Chart we are represented by our new Dean of Administration in College Council. Representation in Academic Council (AC) assures that the IT Department provides technological support to meet the needs of student learning and teaching. Information gathered from AC along with communication with the Dean of Academic Programs and Services help the IT department to identify the technological needs to provide resources and Professional Development for quality improvements.

The Director of Information Technology is an active member of NMC's Budget and Finance Committee (BAFC). The role of this committee is to align institutional priorities with the allocation of resources; reviewing and adjusting the budget in accordance with present circumstances and future projections to plan and promote the use of technology in support of the educational mission of the College.

NMC also uses a variety of technology resources to support student learning and college-wide communications. NMC Online ([courses.nmcnet.edu](http://courses.nmcnet.edu)) enhance traditional classroom instruction and provide fully online courses. This Moodle-based Learning Management System contains course syllabi and class materials, provides space for department, program and committee information and features for facilitation of online discussion forums. Another resource is the NMC Website [www.nmcnet.edu](http://www.nmcnet.edu), communicates information about NMC, Upcoming Events, Student Resources, and Accreditation Updates.

### **Team Recommendation #8**

The College should develop and implement a governance process that focuses, integrates, and connects the various planning activities into a coherent institutional effort in which dialogue is open and sustained, that focuses on the institutional mission and student learning, and by which there is ongoing assessment of that process. (IB; IB:2:4; IVA:1; IVA:2:a; IVA:3)

Since 2009, the College has shifted towards a more inclusive governance model. In addition to the Board of Regents, College Council, standing committees of College Council, Academic Council, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and the Associated Student of Northern Marianas College, the Management Team has been expanded to include the presidents of the Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and the Associated Students of Northern Marianas College.

In late 2010, a Governance Review Task Force (GRTF) was appointed by the Office of the President to assess the College's governance model, including planning, budgeting, and program review processes, and to develop a mechanism for assessing those processes. Specifically, the task force was tasked with the following:

- Review NMC's current governance structures and processes, identifying strengths and weaknesses.
- Study and explore ways to improve NMC's governance structures and processes.
- Develop draft policies and procedures for regular, systematic review of NMC's governance structures and processes.
- Formulate recommendations to modify NMC's governance structures and processes as laid out in the Institutional Excellence Guide.
- Seek documented input and feedback on its work from ASNMC, Staff Senate, Faculty Senate, the Program Review Outcomes and Assessment Committee (PROAC), the Budget and Finance Committee (BAFC), the Academic Council, and the College Council.

- Provide weekly updates on its work to the Management Team.
- Submit final recommendations to the Office of the President.

The task force thus began meeting regularly to identify how it would fulfill its charge, utilizing Accrediting Commission standards to guide its work. Eventually, the GRTF worked with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to develop and administer a survey that would gauge how effective NMC's governance model is at structuring self-reflective dialogue towards improving institutional processes. The survey had respondents assess five dimensions of governance—democracy, openness and transparency, effectiveness, accountability, and mission—and rate each NMC governance and representative body according to those dimensions. The results of that survey were shared with the Management Team and the College community, and led the task force to recommend the following changes to the College's governance model.

- Encourage more student engagement and participation in the College's shared governance.
- To clarify and uphold the advisory nature of the College's governance bodies, remove the President from all governance bodies.
- To alleviate the overlapping membership of many members of Management Team on governance bodies, and to ensure more balanced representation of the College's various constituent groups, the membership of College Council should be amended as follows: 3 Administrators, 3 Faculty, 3 Staff, and 2 Students.
- To address the current lack of a governance body specifically tasked with developing short-term and long-term planning for the institution, the Office of the President should be tasked with initiating planning efforts, which will then be routed through shared governance for review, discussion, and adoption.

The above recommendations were effectuated by the Office of the President in a college-wide memorandum issued in March of 2012.

### **Team Recommendation #9**

The college is encouraged to establish sustained channels of communication with the legislature in an effort to enhance its operational budget and capital improvement projects. The college should reexamine and align its budget allocation priorities to retain and competitively recruit high quality faculty and staff to ensure the institution's effectiveness. (IIIA:1; IIIB:1; IIIB:2; IIID; IVB:1:c; IVB:2:b; IVB:2:e)

After the challenges it has faced since 2006, the College has significantly improved its relationships with the CNMI legislature, as evidenced by sustained funding in 2008 and 2009. The President has developed strong working relationships with Governor Benigno Fitial, Lieutenant Governor Eloy Inos, CNMI Delegate to the U. S. Congress, Congressman Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan, the mayors of Rota, Tinian, and Saipan, the CNMI Commissioner of the CNMI Public School System, the CNMI Scholarship Board, the

president of Tan Holdings Corporation, the largest private employer in the CNMI, the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, and the Rotary Club, to name just a few. Additionally, the president serves on numerous public and private community organizations across the CNMI.

President Hart has also reached out to regional partners in meetings with the Pacific Post-Secondary Education Council (PPEC), University of Guam President Dr. Robert Underwood, and representatives from the University of Alaska, Fairbanks. In addition, she is spearheading the CNMI's upcoming membership in the Western Interstate Commission of Higher Education (WICHE). The CNMI is expected to become a member at the Fall 2012 Commission Meeting of WICHE.

The President also recognizes the importance of community involvement in long-term planning for the College. As such, the College will be conducting a major long-term strategic planning summit, to be held October 1-3, 2012, and facilitated by Dennis Jones, president of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems. Additionally, this process and involvement of the community will help NMC to invest in and assess the needs and role of the College in the Commonwealth.

With the business community's emphasis on preparing a workforce that will replace the contract workers presently employed in the CNMI, the president has worked diligently with her team to set up a US apprenticeship program. Also, with the fact that the college does not offer credit programs on the islands of both Tinian and Rota, the president has visited these islands and their community leaders to emphasize both the apprenticeship program and Ed2Go offerings available through NMC.





Northern Marianas College | 2012 Self Evaluation Report

# Standard I: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness



## **Standard I: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness**

*The Institution demonstrates strong commitment to a mission that emphasizes achievement of student learning and to communicating the mission internally and externally. The Institution uses analyses of quantitative and qualitative data and analysis in an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, implementation, and re-evaluation to verify and improve the effectiveness by which the mission is accomplished.*

**Standard IA. Mission:** *The institution has a statement of mission that defines the institution's broad educational purposes, its intended student population, and its commitment to achieving student learning.*

### Descriptive Summary

Northern Marianas College's mission statement was established in the Constitution of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) in 1985 by Amendment 38, which states:

*The mission of Northern Marianas College shall be to provide the best quality and meaningful post secondary and adult educational opportunities for the purpose of improving the quality of life for the individual and for the Commonwealth as a whole. The College shall be responsible for providing education in the areas of adult and continuing education, post secondary and adult vocational education and professional development for the people of the Commonwealth.*

The mission establishes the key components of a mission of "Who are we?" and "What are we about?" as identified by Norris & Poulton (2008) in a publication of the Society for College and University Planning. "Who we are" is the only public postsecondary institution within the CNMI. "What we are about" is providing associate-level degrees and certificates, a bachelors degree in education, and a variety of adult and continuing education opportunities to promote student learning for the citizens of the Commonwealth.

The College understands its mission as being two-fold: (1) to provide educational opportunities to students enrolled in its academic programs and services, and (2) to provide educational opportunities to the broader community through programs and services designed to meet certain community needs.

To fulfill the first aspect of its mission, the College offers a Bachelor of Science degree, seven associate degree programs, four certificate programs, and two developmental programs. All programs have complete sets of program learning outcomes (PLOs) that are reviewed on a regular basis as part of the College's ongoing program review and course assessment processes, and all courses have complete sets of student learning outcomes (SLOs).



To fulfill the second part of its mission, the College provides educational opportunities to the broader CNMI community through a variety of continuing and outreach programs spread out throughout the College. Key areas under the Administration Unit that offer such services are the Community Development Institute (CDI), University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD), Area Health Education Center (AHEC) and the U.S. Apprenticeship Program. Positioned under Academic Programs and Services is the Adult Basic Education (ABE) program. The College's major land-grant extension, outreach and research entity is represented by the Cooperative Research, Extension and Education Services (CREES).

The College also fulfills its mission by supporting students with a wide array of student services such as Counseling Programs and Services (CPS), the College Access Challenge Project (CACP), Career Services and Testing, the Office of Admissions and Records (OAR), the Office of Financial Aid (FAO), and the Office of Student Activities and Leadership (OSAL). Furthermore, the College's English Language Lab, the Olympio T. Borja Library, the CNMI Archives, the Curriculum Resource Center (CRC), and the Office of Information Technology (IT) support academic programs, community programs, and student services that enhance student learning.

NMC's institutional mission is a focal point for the Planning, Program Review and Outcomes Assessment (PROAC) Committee and the Budget and Finance Committee (BAFC) during its normal program review and budgeting cycles. Consistent with Shults & Seybert's (2007) principle that the mission must be aligned with stakeholder's needs, the mission is integral to program review and budgetary planning. The mission of the institution, along with specific individual program or service missions aligned with the institutional mission are provided in the biennial program review cycle.

Lucas (2000) warns of rushing headlong into assessment without stopping to ensure what outcomes need to be looked at or if they are aligned with the mission. To ensure appropriateness, all programmatic planning, assessment, and review is based on the mission of the institution in accordance with the Nichols and Nichols (2000) five column model [IA:1], which builds on the combination of the institution's mission and individual program and service Expanded Statements of Institutional Purpose (ESIPs) [IA:2]. The ESIPs have become valuable in Financial Planning as such statements combined with the President's White Paper have been identified as the key documents that describe the College's mid-term planning while linking finances to overall institutional plans.

The College's annual budget-call requires each program to link budget items to priority initiatives within the PROA Strategic Plan 2008—2012 (PROA-SP) [IA:3], as well as program review data. Between the program review and the budgeting process, the College's shared governance model helps ensure that programs, services, and resources uphold the mission.

Program review at Northern Marianas College begins with annual assessment (phase four of the financial planning process) of every program following the Nichols and Nichols (2000) five column model, known at NMC as the Form 1 [IA:1]. In this model, Column 1 lists the

college mission and the program or service. The institutional mission and individual program mission statements that appear in the first column of the model drive all subsequent activity in assessment and program review. The individual program or service missions are seen as Expanded Statements of Institutional Purpose (ESIPs) in the Nichols and Nichols (2000) model and directly support the broader institutional mission. They are reviewed biennially and also updated as needed.

According to Gardiner (1996), linking program missions to institutional missions provides a direct linkage between the institutional mission and the individual program or service work in support of student learning. Column 2 of the model contains a program's intended outcomes that are aligned to that program's mission. Outcomes are either program learning outcomes (PLOs), student learning outcomes (SLOs), or administrative unit outcomes (AUOs). Column 3 establishes the assessment tools to measure those outcomes that support the mission. Column 4 summarizes the current assessment findings and is aligned to the prior three columns to show the lineage back to the mission. Column 5 completes the process with a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the assessment data and mission-based recommendations for program improvement.

The results of annual program assessment inform the program review narrative (Form 2) [IA:4] for each program during each cycle of program review. Like the Form 1 [IA:1], the Form 2 begins with NMC's mission and the program's linked ESIP, which links data and evidence presented in the Form 2 to the mission.

### Self Evaluation

To ensure alignment between the institution's mission and each program's Expanded Statement of Institutional Purpose (ESIPs) [IA:2], at its March 11, 2011 meeting, the Planning, Program Review Outcomes and Assessment Committee (PROAC) reviewed and approved updated ESIPs for all College programs.

The College formed two Form 2 Subcommittees in PROAC to better align the program review with the mission, planning, budgeting and student learning outcomes and assessments. The first subcommittee focused on the Academic Programs and Services of the College, while the second subcommittee focused on non-academic programs and services of the College. In addition, to better align the institutional mission with NMC's program review, planning, and budgeting processes, PROAC created a subcommittee to review and revise the templates for program review narrative (Form 2) [IA:4] as well as a committee to prioritize and rank programs for resource allocation (Form 3) [IA:5]. Form 2 will require that each program explain and justify the link between that program's ESIP and the College's mission. PROAC and the Form 2 subcommittee are also developing criteria for assessing and evaluating the link between a program's ESIP and the College's mission. Form 3 allocates operational finances and other resources of the College based on program review, composite reports, historical data, program performance and institutional priorities.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

None

***Standard I.A1.*** *The institution establishes student learning programs and services aligned with its purposes, its character, and its student population.*

Descriptive Summary:

NMC's mission statement provides a declaration directly related to student learning that NMC "provide the best quality and meaningful postsecondary and adult educational opportunities for the purpose of improving the quality of life for the individual and for the Commonwealth as a whole." The mission statement also states that NMC is "responsible for providing education in the areas of adult and continuing education, postsecondary and adult vocational education and professional development for the people of the Commonwealth". The institutional mission is seen as an overarching espoused mission with broad purposes as discussed by Kuh and his colleagues (2005).

The NMC mission delineates overall educational priorities. There are also Expanded Statements of Institutional Purpose (ESIPs) for each program. These are seen as an enacted mission or what NMC actually does in relation to student learning. Since NMC's programs have ESIPs that are directly related to the institutional mission, NMC has a close match between the espoused and enacted missions. Kuh and his colleagues (2005) suggest this close match is a positive indicator of an institution dedicated to student learning. Kuh (2005) also notes that in his research, institutions do not necessarily have to change their institutional mission over time. The important thing is to have structures in place to meet the "students' educational and social needs, interests, and abilities" Kuh (2005).

The ESIP also allows individual programs in the College an opportunity to make their individual missions alive and able to guide day-to-day activity as suggested by Kuh. The ESIP also provides benchmarks for success as well as a sense of purpose that Morrill (2007) suggests is needed for all faculty and staff to become engaged. A key factor important for financial planning is that the ESIP guides the College with its need for mid-term financing as the ESIP is seen as the main component for personnel funding. Mid-term financial planning involves providing funding for the necessary personnel to carry out the College's mission, short-, mid-, and long-term plans. As noted in Goldstein's (2012) *A Guide to College and University Budgeting*, the link between short and long term planning depends on the employees who will make such plans a reality. Mid-term (one to two years) financial planning is a key element to linking such plans.

To ensure that its mission and efforts to fulfill that mission meet the needs of its student population, NMC includes student representation in governance so that students can voice their concerns and needs. A comprehensive student survey is also provided during each registration to survey student needs, the results of which are used by NMC programs to inform continuous quality improvement efforts.

For example, the fall 2010 Registration Survey revealed that students were generally dissatisfied with the registration process, with many respondents complaining about how long and tedious the process was. In response, NMC's Registration Committee implemented changes for the spring 2011 registration, changes that met with positive student feedback in the spring 2011 Registration Survey.

Many student needs are also addressed through student services provided such as Library Services, the gym, Breakpoint Cafe, Counseling Programs and Services, Career Services, and the CNMI College Access Challenge Project for low-income families, which is an effort to increase the number of students who are Native Pacific Islanders and from low-income families in the Commonwealth to enroll, remain, and succeed in college. Other support services include Information Services such as computer labs, Distance Learning support, Learning Technology Services, On-line Learning support and Media Services.

The primary assessment of institutional effectiveness in meeting NMC's mission is the biennial program review cycle that uses the Nichols and Nichols (2000) five column model [IA:1] and expanded program review narratives known as Form 2s [IA:4]. As part of program review, academic programs measure mission effectiveness by reporting student achievement data such as transfer rates of Associate degree students in Liberal Arts, job placement rates, licensure exam data, and course completion rates.

Program review is ongoing for all units within the institution and the review supports measurement and future resource support of established student learning outcomes, consistent with recommendations provided by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) and the American College Personnel Association (ACPA) and others involved in *Learning Reconsidered 2* (2006). Coupled with strategic planning, the institution positions itself to establish and support the programs and services to meet its students' needs.

### Self Evaluation

To ensure alignment between the institution's mission and each program's Expanded Statement of Institutional Purpose (ESIPs) [IA:2], at its March 11, 2011 meeting, the Planning, Program Review Outcomes and Assessment Committee (PROAC) reviewed and approved updated ESIPs for all College programs.

The College formed two Form 2 Subcommittees in PROAC to better align the program review with the mission, planning, budgeting and student learning outcomes and assessments. The first subcommittee focused on the Academic Programs and Services of the College, while the second subcommittee focused on non-academic programs and services of the College. In addition, to better align the institutional mission with NMC's program review, planning, and budgeting processes, PROAC created a subcommittee to review and revise the templates for program review narrative (Form 2) [IA:4] as well as a committee to allocate resources to the various programs (Form 3) [IA:5]. The Form 2 will require that each program explain and justify the link between that program's ESIP and the College's mission. PROAC and the Form 2 subcommittee are also developing criteria for assessing

and evaluating the link between a program's ESIP and the College's mission. Form 3 allocates operational finances and other resources of the College based on program review, composite reports, historical data, program performance and institutional priorities.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

None

***Standard I.A2. The mission statement is approved by the governing board and published.***

#### Descriptive Summary

NMC's mission statement was established in the Constitution of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) in 1985 by Amendment 38. The Northern Marianas College's Board of Regents recognizes this authority; however, they have requested Legislative Initiative [IA:8] to amend the constitution. The intent of the Legislative Initiative would be to amend amendment 38 of the CNMI Constitution and rephrase the section that labels the College's mission to read as the "Purpose of the College". This would alter its current mission for the first time since 1985.

The Board also charges the President with developing and maintaining an institution that fulfills the mission and achieves the goals of the Northern Marianas College in accordance with the Mission Statement. As part of that process, the President charges the Planning, Program Review Outcomes and Assessment Committee (PROAC) to establish individual program missions that directly support the broader institutional mission. These individual program missions, which serve as Expanded Statements of Institutional Purpose (ESIPs), are reviewed and approved biennially as part of the program review process which is ultimately accepted by the Board.

NMC's mission is widely published in program review documents, the catalog, on the website, in the annual report, CNMI appropriations budget requests, and external publications. It is also prominently displayed in the board room of the Regents and at the main entrance to the institution near the President's office.

#### Self Evaluation

To ensure alignment between the institution's mission and each program's Expanded Statement of Institutional Purpose (ESIPs) [IA:2], at its March 11, 2011 meeting, the Planning, Program Review Outcomes and Assessment Committee (PROAC) reviewed and approved updated ESIPs for all College programs.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Undergo a public awareness campaign aimed at educating registered voters in the CNMI about the legislative initiative that seeks to empower the Board of Regents to establish the mission statement of the College.

***Standard I.A3.** Using the institution's governance and decision-making processes, the institution reviews its mission statement on a regular basis and revises it as necessary.*

### Descriptive Summary

The College mission statement is seen as a shared vision that is used to guide individual unit missions. Nolan, Goodstein, and Pfeiffer (1993) discuss how the widespread understanding of the mission promotes loyalty and commitment to the organization. The mission is written to promote student learning in degree-seeking and non-degree programs throughout the CNMI. The mission is well documented and made available to all stakeholders in the Commonwealth (See Standard IA1).

Mission development and approval is currently a legislative process and the communication of the mission is through the Commonwealth's Constitution and statutes. The Board of Regents has requested Legislative Initiative [IA:8] to amend the constitution. The intent of the Legislative Initiative would be to amend amendment 38 of the CNMI Constitution and rephrase the College's mission to read as the "Purpose of the College." This would allow the College to alter its current mission for the first time since 1985, as well as provide the College the opportunity to diversify its program offerings and serve a more diverse population than it does at present.

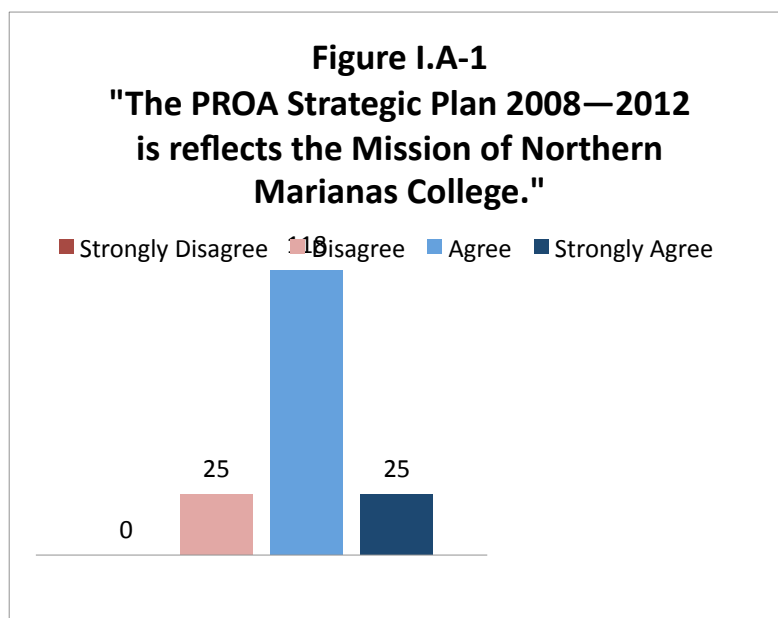
However, the Expanded Statements of Institutional Purpose (ESIP) are developed and approved through individual units and subsequently approved by the PROAC, President, and Board of Regents. They are communicated in the catalog, on the individual program's website, and in program review documents. ESIPs are seen as a working mission and are updated on an ongoing basis as opposed to the more generalized mission statement of the institution. The process for periodic review of the mission statement currently focuses on ESIPs, which are updated and reviewed as part of the biennial program review cycle.

An important feedback mechanism for mission review is the discussion provided by the various Program Advisory Councils. These community-based stakeholders are charged with program evaluation as one of their important roles. Program Advisory Councils help NMC review its mission statement or the more flexible ESIPs on a regular basis by involving representatives from the community to identify where NMC can support community needs to better serve intended student populations. A primary function of these councils is to determine the need for educational programs and continuing education offerings at NMC.

## Self Evaluation

At its Professional Development Days (PDD) from August 10 through August 12, 2010, the College community engaged in discussions in which students, faculty, staff, and administrators reviewed the institutional mission for currency, relevancy, and appropriateness. The Board of Regents held a similar discussion at a boardsmanship training session on September 8, 2010. As demonstrated by notes from both the College's PDD discussions and the Board training discussion, a consensus was reached on the following:

- The mission statement is appropriate and the College's programs and services strive to fulfill that mission.
- The College's shared governance and assessment model helps foster a college-wide commitment to student learning.
- All programs have developed PLOs and administrative unit outcomes (AUOs) that support the mission.



To further review NMC's mission and how the institution fulfills the mission, at its October 1, 2010 Fall Planning Summit, students, faculty, staff, and administrators reflected on and discussed the link between NMC's mission and its PROA-Strategic Plan 2008—2012. As notes from those discussions demonstrate, a majority of the College community believes that the PROA-SP reflects the College mission. In a survey administered at the workshop, participants were asked to respond to the statement, "The PROA Strategic Plan 2008—2012 reflects the Mission of Northern Marianas College" with either "Strongly Disagree," "Disagree", "Agree", or "Strongly Disagree". As Figure I.A-1 reveals, out of 168 respondents, 143 participants, or about 85%, either agreed or strongly agreed that the PROA-SP reflects the College's mission. The College will repeat this process as the College prepares for and writes its new Strategic Plan scheduled to begin in the Fall of 2012.

NMC has also taken steps to ensure regular review of its mission statement by its stakeholders.

The College formed two Form 2 Subcommittees in PROAC to better align the program review with the mission, planning, budgeting and student learning outcomes and assessments. The first subcommittee focused on the Academic Programs and Services of the College, while the second subcommittee focused on non-academic programs and services of the College. In addition, to better align the institutional mission with NMC's program

review, planning, and budgeting processes, PROAC created a subcommittee to review and revise the templates for program review narrative (Form 2) [IA:4] as well as a committee to allocate resources to the various programs (Form 3) [IA:5]. The Form 2 will require that each program explain and justify the link between that program's ESIP and the College's mission. PROAC and the Form 2 subcommittee are also developing criteria for assessing and evaluating the link between a program's ESIP and the College's mission. Form 3 allocates operational finances and other resources of the College based on program review, composite reports, historical data, program performance and institutional priorities.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

None

***Standard I.A4.*** *The institution's mission is central to institutional planning and decision making.*

### Descriptive Summary

The College's mission is central to the strategic planning process and program review process. It is also included as part of the budgeting and resource allocation process at the institution.

To effectuate its mission, on September 25, 2008, Northern Marianas College's Board of Regents adopted a five year institution-wide strategic plan, the PROA Strategic Plan 2008—2012 (PROA-SP) [IA:3]. The plan identified four strategic goals:

1. Promote student learning and success.
2. Respond to the professional development, continuing education, and personal enrichment needs of the Commonwealth.
3. Optimize financial and human resources.
4. Accelerate the upgrade of physical and technology infrastructure.

To further define these goals and reinforce the focus of the plan, several priority initiatives were identified for each strategic goal. The following lists some sample priority initiatives linked to each of the four goals:

#### *Goal 1: Promote student learning and success.*

- Priority Initiative 1.1: Improve the literacy and analytical problem-solving skills of students and strengthen student services.



- Priority Initiative 1.2: Strengthen student services and assess their effectiveness in meeting defined outcomes.
- Priority Initiative 1.5: Assist students in establishing and realizing their educational goals.
- Priority Initiative 1.6: Serve as a bridge to higher educational opportunities.

*Goal 2: Respond to the professional development, continuing education, and personal enrichment needs of the Commonwealth.*

- Priority Initiative 2.1: Build basic skills for personal enrichment and prepare individuals for rewarding careers.
- Priority Initiative 2.2: Enrich workforce skills by providing quality training and learning opportunities.
- Priority Initiative 2.4: Provide broad access to NMC programs through various community outreach services.

*Goal 3: Optimize financial and human resources*

- Priority Initiative 3.2: Implement campus-wide customer service principles.

*Goal 4: Accelerate the upgrade of physical and technology infrastructure*

- Priority Initiative 4.6: Enhance technology support of teaching and student learning.

### Self Evaluation

As the current PROA Strategic Plan 2008—2012 (PROA-SP) [IA:3] is set to expire in the fall of 2012, the Office of the President has schedule a strategic planning kickoff event set for October 01 – 03, 2012. Mr. Dennis Jones of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) was contracted to help the College with its Strategic Planning Process as well as the development of the College’s next Strategic Plan. This planning process will make possible an analysis of the College’s current data and activities as well as the data presented in the anticipated August 31, 2012 release of the 2010 U.S. Census data for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The Strategic Planning activities will convene the Board of Regents, College stakeholders—students, faculty, staff, and administrators—and community stakeholders—business leaders, elected officials, and community representatives—to develop a new five year strategic plan. The College’s mission will be central to all summit discussion as participants explore how the College can best fulfill its mission and meet the evolving needs of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. If the Legislative Initiative is approved in November, the results of the summit will be used as a framework to build the new mission statement for the College.

Actionable Improvement Plans:

None

**Standard IB: Improving Institutional Effectiveness**

*The institution demonstrates a conscious effort to produce and support student learning, measures that learning, assesses how well learning is occurring, and makes changes to improve student learning. The institution also organizes its key processes and allocates its resources to effectively support student learning. The institution demonstrates its effectiveness by providing 1) evidence of the achievement of student learning outcomes and 2) evidence of institution and program performance. The institution uses ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning to refine its key processes and improve student learning.*

***Standard I.B1.*** *The institution maintains an ongoing, collegial, self-reflective dialogue about the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes.*

Descriptive Summary

Board of Regents Policy 201, *Monitoring Institutional Effectiveness* [IB:1], establishes the framework for the College's use of quantitative and qualitative data and analysis in an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, implementation, and re-evaluation to verify and improve the effectiveness by which the mission is accomplished. The policy states:

The Board of Regents shall monitor College effectiveness in meeting Board policies. Monitoring will be done in a way to permit the Board to focus on planning the future direction of the college, its campuses, and its programs. The Board will be provided with annual reports on each of the identified data sources that will be benchmarked against regional and national data, as well as against data from comparable and peer institutions.

BOR Policy 201 has been implemented at the College through a shared governance model and manuals and guides that promote a collegiate culture of data-driven, evidence-based decision-making for continuous quality improvement. As defined in the College's Institutional Excellence Guide [IB:2], shared governance is "the process of consulting with and enabling various constituencies within the College community to be informed and to provide input that affects decisions made at the Northern Marianas College."

Dialogue at NMC is structured through a shared governance model, program review processes, administrative channels, College assemblies, and various forms of print and digital communication.

This recognition of shared governance as a structure for dialogue is reinforced by NMC's Institutional Excellence Guide [IB:2], which states, "Shared governance is meant to foster a sense of empowerment, equal partnership and a vested interest in successful outcomes of institutional policy and implementation decisions. The collegial model proposes a community of scholars, with consensual decision making processes involving all constituencies affected by the decisions."

NMC's shared governance model routes dialogue through the following governance bodies: The Management Team, the College Council, the Budget and Finance Committee (BAFC), the Planning, Program Review Outcomes and Assessment Committee (PROAC), and the Academic Council.

The Management Team serves as the primary advisory body to the President on all matters pertaining to the college. Composed mostly of deans, directors, and managers that report directly to the president, the Management Team executes decisions and procedures issued by the President.

The College Council was created to ensure that appropriate members of the College community participate in the development of annual budgets, annual strategic plans, new programs and services, and major facilities planning prior to adoption by college officials; and to ensure that all members of the college community have access to information regarding ongoing developments and issues and that there is an open forum for full participation in decision-making of areas defined under the Board and CNMI policy, as well as administratively and mutually agreed shared governance matters.

BAFC is responsible for reviewing, approving and advising the President on all financial matters. It is charged with aligning institutional priorities with the allocation of resources; reviewing and adjusting the budget in accordance with present circumstances and future projections; and for producing reports required of it by the membership.

PROAC is tasked with building and sustaining a campus-wide culture of evidence and shall concern itself with matters relative to accreditation, assessment and with monitoring the fidelity of initiatives and other actions being implemented as recommended through program review, and other means of assessment.

The Academic Council assists the Dean of Academic Programs and Services on all matters related to instructional programs and academic regulations. It reviews and offers advice on the quality of and continued need for various instructional programs, and, as appropriate, offers advice on the deletion of academic programs. It facilitates assessment of student learning outcomes at the course level, and works closely with PROAC on all assessment and program review activities. In particular, the Academic Council and the Dean of Academic Programs and Services facilitate and oversee annual course assessment and instructor evaluations in all academic programs

NMC's shared governance model also routes self-reflective dialogue through the following representative bodies: the Associated Students of NMC (ASNMC), the Faculty Senate, and the Staff Senate.

The ASNMC serves as the representative body of all students enrolled at the College and acts on behalf of and serves as a forum of the student assembly. ASNMC is directly involved in shared governance and participatory decision-making through voting membership on the College Council. The President of the ASNMC also sits on the Board of Regents as a non-voting, advisory honorary member.

The Faculty Senate is the official representative body and legislative body of the Faculty Assembly of NMC. The Faculty Senate participates in shared governance at NMC by initiating, developing, and reviewing policies on academic and administrative matters of NMC; providing advisory comments on proposed Board of Regents policies on academic and administrative matters prior to their adoption by the Board of Regents; and participating in maintaining the integrity of the academic processes of NMC. In participating in the governance process of NMC, the Faculty Senate has voting representation on the College Council, and the Faculty Senate President serves as a nonvoting honorary advisory member of the Board of Regents.

The Staff Senate serves as the official representative body of the Staff Assembly. The Staff Senate provides an open forum for the concerns brought to it by the Assembly and directly participates in the governance of the college by assisting in determining the need for, initiating and developing, and reviewing policies on administrative matters affecting the welfare of the College. The Staff Senate is directly involved in shared governance and participatory decision-making through voting membership on the College Council. The President of the Staff Senate also sits on the Board of Regents as a non-voting, advisory honorary member.

In addition to NMC's shared governance model, self-reflective dialogue is also structured through NMC's program review processes. As stated in the "Institutional Excellence Guide," "Each academic, student services, and administrative programs uses the Nichols and Nichols (2000) Five-Column Model (Form 1) [IB:3] to identify student learning outcomes (SLOs) and/or administrative unit outcomes (AUOs). Programs develop specific measures and criteria for determining success for each outcome. Data are gathered and analyzed to determine if the outcomes are being met or if curricular/administrative processes need change. A program's Form 1 is incorporated into its Program Review Report (Form 2) [IB:4], which provides a comprehensive analysis of the program's effectiveness and presents recommendations for the program and the institution based on a thorough analysis of data."

Dialogue at NMC is also structured through the administrative hierarchy of the college. Employees in each division and department communicate ideas and concerns through their respective supervisors who, in turn, route those ideas and concerns up the hierarchy.

Dialogue is also structured through assemblies held throughout the academic year, including semester Professional Development Days (PDD), and various workshops.

Dialogue is also structured through various communication media, including email, the College's website, and internal memoranda.

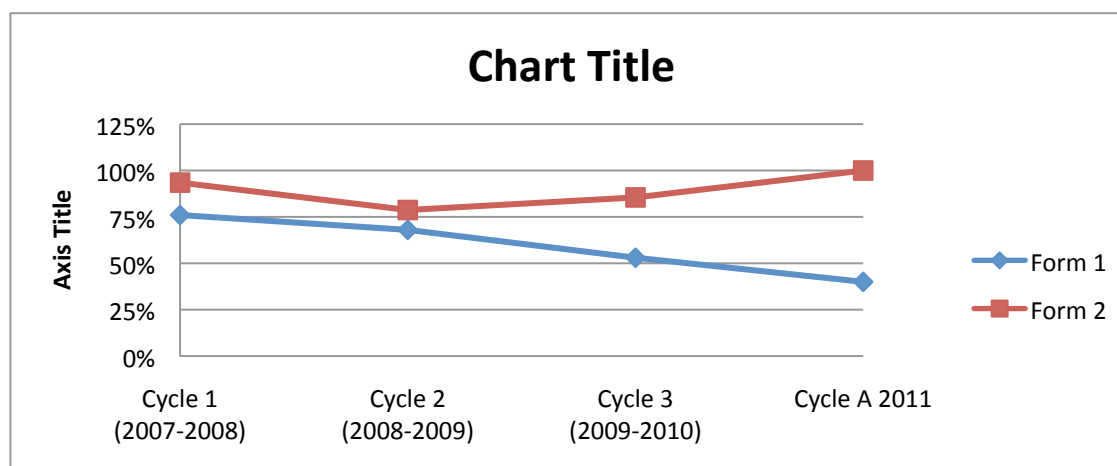
### Self Evaluation

In addition to overseeing NMC's program review processes, since fall of 2010, the Planning, Program Review Outcomes and Assessment Committee (PROAC) has engaged in a dialogue about how to improve the link between program review, planning, and budgeting and resource allocation, using a Record of Dialogue [IB:5]. Drawing from the program review experience at Drake University in 2000 and 2001, PROAC has assigned a subcommittee, the Form 2 Revision

Committee, to revise NMC's program review reporting template, the Form 2, to focus on five criteria by which program review submissions will be evaluated by PROAC:

- Link to NMC's Mission and Strategic Plan
- Performance
- External/Internal Demand
- Cost Effectiveness
- Opportunities

By improving the link between program review, planning, and budgeting and resource



allocation, PROAC intends to align these institutional processes to have a more clear, direct, and positive impact on student learning.

Since program review and annual assessment were implemented at the College, participation in program review and annual assessment has improved, to the point that in the most recent cycle of program review, Cycle A 2011, 100% of all programs that were required to complete program review reports (Form 2s) [IB:4] completed and submitted such reports to PROAC. However, the figure also reveals the submission rates for annual program assessment (Form 1) [IB:3] has declined. (Note that program review submission rates for the current cycle are not available as such documents are due at the end of the cycle, in September.)

Based on its evaluation of Cycle 3 of program review, which concluded in the Fall of 2010, PROAC identified several recommendations in the 2010 Composite Report to improve future cycles of program review. Based on those recommendations, PROAC took the following actions for the recent cycle of program review, Cycle A 2011:

- PROAC adopted a cyclical program review calendar [IB:6] in which academic programs and non-academic programs alternate every year in submitting program review reports (Form 2s).
- A subcommittee of PROAC refined the Form 2 template for academic programs that participated in the recent cycle of program review. The revised Form 2 template provides for more in-depth analysis and discussion of data and evidence.
- PROAC developed Form 2 rubrics and evaluation sheet [IB:7] to provide both formative and summative assessment of submitted Form 2s in order to help programs improve the quality of Form 2 submissions.
- These rubrics, along with further review and discussion in PROAC meetings, enabled PROAC to prioritize recommendations to the institution.

Cycle A 2011 of program review led to the 2011 Composite Report [IB:8], which shifted from providing the College with simply a “wish-list” of recommendations to providing a list of prioritized recommendations based on PROAC’s evaluation of those recommendations using the Form 2 rubrics. The resulting list of recommendations has made it clearer and easier to prioritize items for planning, budgeting, and resource allocation.

The 2011 Composite Report [IB:8] also noted the following strengths and weaknesses from Cycle A 2011 of program review:

#### Strengths:

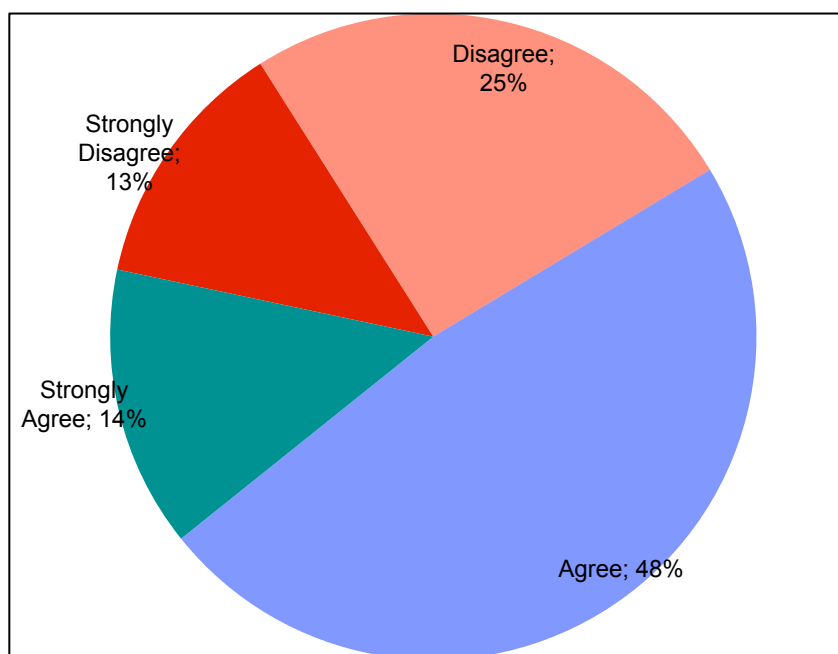
- PROAC received 100 percent of all Form 2 submissions from Academic Programs in Cycle A 2011.
- The Form 2 template was revised to include more substantial data, evidence, and analysis and required programs to link recommendations directly to data, evidence, and analysis included in the Form 2.
- The schedule allowed for dialogue between PROAC members and Form 2 authors to work on drafts before final submissions, which improved the quality of submissions.
- PROAC developed rubrics and an evaluation instrument to assess each Form 2 submission.
- The work of reviewing and evaluating Form 2s was evenly assigned to PROAC members working in pairs, making the workload more manageable.
- PROAC adopted a more manageable bi-annual cycle for Form 2 submissions.
- PROAC adopted and used more digital tools, which automated PROAC processes and reduced the amount of paper used.
- PROAC and the College governance bodies successfully developed and implemented the Form 3 process for linking program review, budgeting, and resource allocation to address budget shortfalls.

Weaknesses and areas for improvement:

- Due to a one-month extension given to programs for Form 2 submissions, PROAC members were crunched for time in reading and evaluating Form 2 submissions.
- Work was difficult to complete during the summer while faculty were away.
- Student achievement data took longer than expected to reach programs for review and analysis in Form 2s.
- Attendance at and participation in PROAC meetings declined from December 2011 through January 2012.

Since the Fall semester of 2010, in addition to ongoing dialogue and decision-making about NMC's courses and curriculum, the Academic Council has engaged in dialogue about improving instructional quality by modifying course assessment and enhancing NMC's instructor evaluation process. In the Fall of 2010, the council decided to revise the College's course assessment processes into a more manageable staggered schedule. However, the schedule proved to be too overwhelming with too many courses being assessed in a short span of time.

Building on the resources and insights gained at the recent September 23—24, 2010 WASC Level I Retreat on Student Learning and Assessment, the Dean of Academic Programs and Services and members of Academic Council have also begun expanding the current evaluation practices at the College into a comprehensive instructor evaluation system that will integrate student evaluations, supervisory evaluations, peer evaluations, and course assessment data into instructor portfolios.



To gauge how effective NMC's governance model is at structuring self-reflective dialogue towards improving institutional processes, in February of 2011, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness conducted a campus-wide online survey, the Governance Evaluation Survey [IB:9]. The survey had respondents assess five dimensions of governance—democracy, openness and transparency, effectiveness, accountability, and mission—and rate each NMC governance and representative body according to those dimensions.

Survey results suggest that NMC is effectively using its governance model to engage stakeholders in ongoing dialogue about institutional effectiveness. For example, as Figure I.B-2 shows, in response to the statement, “Decisions that affect the entire institution are informed by extensive dialogue with key stakeholders,” 44 respondents, or about 62%, either agreed or strongly agreed.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Follow the 2011 Composite Report recommendations to improve program review, annual assessment, and overall planning and budgeting: Invite external reviewers, such as program advisory councils (PACs), to serve as third-party evaluators in program review; enhance the College’s student information management system (SIMS) to more quickly and efficiently provide access to student achievement data; provide training on the use of the student information management system (SIMS) in order to enable programs to access and utilize student achievement data; align the program review schedule with the academic calendar in order to allow faculty to participate more in the process and to ensure student achievement data is available to academic programs when needed; records of Dialogue should allow programs to document developments and/or progress not necessarily linked to recommendations from previous program review cycles; enforce deadlines for program review and assessment submissions; provide Form 2 training to Form 2 authors; the Form 2 should be further simplified; explore ways to engage more participation in PROAC and program review, with a particular emphasis on using various electronic media to facilitate participation.

***Standard I.B2.*** *The institution sets goals to improve its effectiveness consistent with its stated purposes. The institution articulates its goals and states the objectives derived from them in measurable terms so that the degree to which they are achieved can be determined and widely discussed. The institutional members understand these goals and work collaboratively toward their achievement.*

### Descriptive Summary

The PROA Strategic Plan 2008—2012 (PROA-SP) [IB:10] lays out four goals and 28 priority initiatives that serve as general criteria for determining institutional priorities. The PROA-SP was developed following a campus-wide “visioning” process and planning workshops during spring and summer of 2008. The Operational Plan (Ops Plan) [IB:11] supplements the PROA Strategic Plan 2008—2012 (PROA-SP)[IB:10]. It organizes actionable items in support of the priority initiatives in addition to identifying responsible parties, establishing implementation timelines, and specifying resources needed for each of those actions.



## Self Evaluation

To keep the Ops Plan current, and to improve its link to program review, at the 2010 Planning Summit, the entire College community engaged in dialogue about how to link each program's outcomes (SLOs, PLOs, and AUOs) to the 28 priority initiatives articulated in the PROA-SP. This approach to the Ops Plan directly links the PROA-SP to every program, ensuring fidelity to the goals and priority initiatives in the plans.

With the links between programs' outcomes and the PROA-SP's priority initiatives established, the College continues to monitor achievement of those outcomes through annual program assessment (Form 1s), which organizes annual program assessment into the Nichols and Nichols (2000) Five-Column Model [IB:3] format for annual program assessment.

On May 17, 2011, the College convened a Strategic Planning Summit, in which the College's Strategic Planning Task Force launched a year-long collaborative process to develop the next five-year strategic plan for the College. In subsequent meetings, the task force also worked with the new President and the College's Management Team to develop a set of planning goals and priorities for Fiscal Year 2012 [IB:12]. The goals and priorities, lifted from the current PROA Strategic Plan 2008—2012 (PROA-SP)[IB:10], include the following goals: improve student success, optimize financial resources, enhance information technology, focus on Commonwealth workforce development needs, and accomplish other distinctive objectives in an environment of continuous quality improvement.

The College's planning efforts are also being guided by a recent white paper [IB:13] developed by the new president. Drawing from an article published by Dennis Jones in the January/February 2011 issue of AGB Trusteeship entitled "Protecting and Building Your Institution's Assets," President Dr. Sharon Hart's white paper emphasizes that the College's "approach to resource allocation must be strategic" and "must put the long-term capacity and health of the College at the center of the process." Laying out five steps for making intentional decisions about budgeting and resource allocation, the President's white paper has been integrated into the College's ongoing dialogue about planning, budgeting, and resource allocation.

Furthermore, anticipating budget cuts for Fiscal Year 2012 and the expiration of ARRA/SFSF funding, in the fall of 2010, the College began revisiting its planning, program review, and budgeting processes to make more efficient use of limited resources. The Board of Regents Fiscal and Legislative Committee, the College Council, the Budget and Finance Committee (BAFC), and the Program Review Outcomes and Assessment Committee (PROAC) drew from the experience of Drake University in 2000 to improve the link between program review, planning, and budgeting and resource allocation. The result was the development of a piloted project dubbed the "Form 3" process.

The Form 3 timeline [IB:14] and template [IB:15] facilitated a process by which planning and program review informed budgeting and resource allocation decisions for FY 2012. As the timeline reflects, this process allowed the College to use the results of program review to make strategic budget and resource allocation decisions that directly link to the College's

current strategic plan. PROAC also adopted procedures [IB:16] to guide its work in reviewing Form 3 submissions. These developments not only improved the College's program review and planning processes, but they also helped the College prepare for anticipated budget cuts for FY 2012 as well as the expiration of funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF).

As a result of the Form 3 project, the development of the FY 2012 Operations Budget was modified to reflect Form 3 funding levels and incorporate narratives from the Form 3 process [IB:17]. Moreover, BAFC is also requiring programs to provide quarterly updates on their progress in meeting goals and objectives that programs submitted to BAFC as part of the budget development process. BAFC will use these updates to hold programs accountable to effective use of allocated funds.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Develop a new long-term strategic plan based on institutional, regional, national, and peer data, utilizing the leadership of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS).

***Standard I.B3.*** *The institution assesses progress toward achieving its stated goals and makes decisions regarding the improvement of institutional effectiveness in an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and reevaluation. Evaluation is based on analyses of both quantitative and qualitative data.*

### Descriptive Summary

As explained in the Institutional Excellence Guide [IB:2], NMC's governance model structures the dialogue and processes for ongoing systematic evaluation, planning, resource allocation, and reevaluation of planning efforts. Through annual program assessment and cyclical program review, NMC evaluates institutional effectiveness through analyses of quantitative and qualitative data.

Planning at the institutional level is articulated in the PROA Strategic Plan 2008—2012 (PROA-SP) [IB:10], which lays out the five year strategic plan for the College. The Operational Plan (Ops Plan) supplements the PROA Strategic Plan 2008—2012 (PROA-SP). It organizes actionable items in support of the priority initiatives in addition to identifying responsible parties, establishing implementation timelines, and specifying resources needed for each of those actions.

Program review is a college-wide activity that presents findings and recommendations unique to each program with the clear intent of facilitating both improvement and accountability as they relate to program effectiveness. The direct result of the institutional program review process is to meaningfully inform the College's decision-making, planning, and budgeting processes, particularly with regard to making improvements at the course,

program, and institutional levels. It is a coordinated systematic process for evaluating program effectiveness.

The Office of Institutional Effectives (OIE) also provides quantitative and qualitative data to the institution to assist in planning, evaluation, and institutional dialogue. For program review, OIE provides academic departments with student achievement data that will be integrated into each department's program review submissions. OIE also compiles institutional data into various reports, including the 5-32/10-66 Annual Report to the Legislature, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) updates, and the 2009 Update to the Key Performance Indicators.

OIE also works with programs, committees, and governance bodies to facilitate campus surveys to gather data on the opinions, knowledge, and satisfaction of stakeholders about various aspects of the College. For example, OIE facilitates the Registration Survey at the beginning of every semester and presents the survey data to the Registration Committee which, in turn, uses the data to inform decisions and planning for future registration processes.

### Self Evaluation

The current approach of linking program outcomes to priority initiatives from the PROA Strategic Plan 2008—2012 (PROA-SP) [IB:10] will update the Operational Plan (Ops Plan) and demonstrate ongoing planning at the program level. With the links between programs' outcomes and the PROA-SP's priority initiatives established, the College continues to monitor achievement of those outcomes via Form 1 submissions, which organizes annual program assessment into the Nichols and Nichols (2000) Five-Column Model format [IB:3] for annual program assessment. At the conclusion of the current cycle of program review, when programs report progress on achieving their respective program outcomes, the College will measure the extent to which it is achieving and implementing the goals and priority initiatives of the PROA-SP.

As NMC entered the current cycle of program review, the Planning, Program Review Outcomes and Assessment Committee (PROAC) modified the Record of Dialogue template and took action to require programs to submit quarterly Records of Dialogue. The Record of Dialogue allows the program to report on the progress of approved recommendations from the 2010 Composite Report, both to the program and the institution.

In spring 2011, PROAC also took action to shift the College's program review processes into two-year program review cycles, with academic programs and non-academic programs participating in full program review on alternating years.

At the beginning of the Fall 2011 term, the President began working with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) and the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) to identify peer institutions against which NMC would compare and benchmark itself for planning, budgeting, resource allocation, and performance purposes.

OIE worked with the Comparison Group Selection Service (CGIS) of NCHEMS to sift through data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) using data from Academic Year 2008—2009 to generate a list of over 300 institutions which, in turn, was narrowed down to a list of 84 institutions. OIE then reviewed the 84 institutions with the President and, based on program mix, student enrollment, and other considerations, selected the following peer institutions:

- Chipola College in Marianna, Florida
- Great Basin College in Elko, Nevada
- Northern New Mexico College in Espanola, New Mexico
- Edison State Community College in Piqua, Ohio
- Kent State University Salem Campus in Salem, Ohio
- Guam Community College in Mangilao, Guam

The President then contacted the chief executive officers of each peer institution to inform them of their selection for the peer comparison study. OIE also prepared staffing pattern comparison analysis of NMC and its peer institutions and shared and fine-tuned preliminary findings with the College's Management Team. These findings were also shared with the Board and the College community to inform decision-making about budgeting and resource allocation.

OIE also completed administration of the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory for Spring 2012. This survey is designed to gather information on student satisfaction and the importance students place on various services and programs. OIE has begun sharing the results with the College community as soon as the results become available.

OIE completed administration of the Community College Learning Assessment (CCLA). This online assessment measures students' demonstrated ability in critical thinking, analytic reasoning, and written communication. This standardized assessment will provide the college with valuable information about our students' abilities when they arrive at the college, and how the College contributes to their development in these areas. The results of this assessment will help the College improve its programs and services to students.

OIE is also preparing longitudinal student achievement data from the past five years to present to the Academic Council and the Management Team for discussion, as well as for inclusion in the forthcoming NMC Annual Report. Discussion and analysis of this data will help the College identify areas for growth and improvement, including enrollment and retention rates.

Although much work has been completed by OIE to facilitate program review, assessment, and data collection and analysis, the office has experienced recent staffing challenges that threaten to hamper these essential services for the College. In addition to the office downsizing from four employees to two, the previous Director of the office recently resigned, leaving the office with just one employee.

Furthermore, the allocation of financial resources has been fairly consistent with the College's Goals, Objectives, and Mission from fiscal years 2007 through 2011. Emphasis of the funding revolved around maintaining and supporting existing programs and services and the resources needed to effectively run the College. The College's budgetary processes have served as the key driver to integrate and link financial planning to institutional plans as the College has organized its institutional and financial planning into four phases, the creation of resource allocation processes as described in Form 3s and planned budget analysis forms, as well as using results from Composite Reports and other assessment data to inform planning, budgeting, and resource allocation.

In addition, the College, working in an environment of continuous improvement, is working to even better strengthen its Financial Plan. The NMC Financial Plan will incorporate the existing four phases of institutional and financial planning and strengthen the College's ability to better measure short and long term financial impacts on institutional planning and the College as a whole. Some of the components of this NMC Financial Plan include the improved identification of financial resources essential to fund existing institutional plans; transform funding allocation from what is currently practiced and considered as the "natural" allocation method (salaries, benefits, travel, etc.) to a more strategic "functional" method of allocation (instructional, student support, administration, strategic initiatives, etc). The NMC Financial Plan will then allow NMC to assign funding percentages to each function that could be clearly linked to measurable goals and objectives of each short-term, medium term, and long term plans. NMC will also be more able to clearly evaluate and assess its institutional plans in terms of the amount of funds allocated to goals and objectives.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Move forward to work with the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), especially engaging all stakeholders in the development of a new long-term strategic plan based on institutional, regional, national, and peer data.
2. Hire a new OIE Director to be in place by late September 2012.
3. Test a new DRAFT Financial Plan in fiscal 2013 to focus on the integration of financial planning to institutional plans such as short-term operational plans, medium-term President's White Paper, and the first phase of the Facilities Master Plan. Reveal the new and improved Financial Plan in fiscal year 2014, linking it to NMC's new Long-Term Strategic Plan.

***Standard I.B4.*** *The institution provides evidence that the planning process is broad-based, offers opportunities for input by appropriate constituencies, allocates necessary resources, and leads to improvement of institutional effectiveness.*

### Descriptive Summary

The shared governance model of the College provides mechanisms for stakeholders to participate in planning through governance and representative bodies: College Council, the Budget and Finance Committee (BAFC), the Planning, Program Review Outcomes and Assessment Committee (PROAC), the Academic Council, the Faculty Senate, the Staff Senate, and the Associated Students of NMC (ASNMC). All constituents are represented adequately on the following governance bodies, which each play a role in planning.

Regular and special assemblies are held throughout the year to allow stakeholders to participate in the dialogue for planning. These assemblies include General Assemblies, Faculty Assemblies, Staff Assemblies, semester Professional Development Days (PDD), the annual Planning Summit, and various workshops. These assemblies are often scheduled to accommodate maximum participation. In some cases, such as the 2010 Planning Summit, classes are suspended and offices are close to enforce mandatory attendance at assemblies. Attendance is documented at all assemblies to monitor participation and video teleconferencing (VTC) is enabled for each assembly and governance body meeting to ensure participation from Rota and Tinian stakeholders. Moreover, information about assembly meetings and governance body meetings are circulated via email to all employees.

At the program level, programs participate in planning by identifying outcomes to focus on during each cycle of program review. Progress on such plans is reflected in each program's annual assessment and program review reports. Participation in program review, as a component of planning, is required of every employee and embedded into each employee's contract and annual evaluation.

Each cycle of program review results in an annual Composite Report, which lists recommendations for resource allocation that in turn inform decisions about budgeting and resource allocation.

### Self Evaluation

In January 2010, the Planning, Program Review Outcomes and Assessment Committee (PROAC) used the results of Cycle 2 of program review to generate a list of 10 Institutional Priorities that were lifted from priority initiatives set forth in the PROA-SP. That list of priorities was, in turn, submitted to the Budget and Finance Committee (BAFC) to inform decisions about budgeting and resource allocation in the FY 2011 Budget Call. BAFC continued using those same priorities for its deliberations on the FY 2012 Budget Call.

Many positive changes that have occurred as a result of these planning, budgeting, and program review processes, including the launch of the Learning in Communities (LinC) initiative; the English Language Institute (ELI) English Labs; enhanced Individual Degree

Plans (IDPs) in the School of Education; laptops for instructors from the Information Technology (IT) Plan; improved registration processes from the Registration Committee; and other improvements at the program level as a result of plans that have emerged from program review.

NMC recognizes, however, that successful implementation of its plans requires financial resources. In this era of fiscal austerity, NMC has thus taken steps to identify and follow strategies to increase its capacity. Of the four main goals in the PROA Strategic Plan 2008—2012 (PROA-SP)[IB:10], Goal # 3 is to “Optimize financial resources.” Under that goal, seven priority initiatives are listed to help the College identify and follow strategies to increase its financial resources.

In 2008, NMC secured funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) for two years to provide resources in order to fulfill goals and priority initiatives in the PROA-SP. The College’s Foundation also continually works to identify strategies to increase the College’s financial capacity, holding an annual golf tournament, sponsoring fundraising events, and soliciting financial contributions such as the Education Tax Credit. In addition, BAFC recently formed a committee that is exploring ways to reduce spending and increase revenue.

Since 2010, the Board of Regents and the College Leadership worked aggressively to lobby against budget cuts and other actions from the central government that would have threatened the College’s limited financial resources. These efforts resulted in the College from being spared from a recent government shut down.

With budget cuts anticipated for Fiscal Year 2012 and the expiration of ARRA/SFSF funding, NMC has begun revisiting its planning, program review, and budgeting processes to make more efficient use of limited resources. The Board of Regents Fiscal and Legislative Committee, the College Council, BAFC, and PROAC are drawing from the experience of Drake University in 2000 to improve the link between program review, planning, and budgeting and resource allocation. The result was the development of a piloted project dubbed the “Form 3” process.

The Form 3 timeline [IB:14] and template [IB:15] facilitated a process by which planning and program review informed budgeting and resource allocation decisions for FY 2012. As the timeline reflects, this process allowed the College to use the results of program review to make strategic budget and resource allocation decisions that directly link to the College’s current strategic plan. PROAC also adopted procedures [IB:16] to guide its work in reviewing Form 3 submissions. These developments not only improved the College’s program review and planning processes, but they also helped the College prepare for anticipated budget cuts for FY 2012 as well as the expiration of funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF).

As a result of the Form 3 project, the development of the FY 2012 Operations Budget was modified to reflect Form 3 funding levels and incorporate narratives from the Form 3 process [IB:17]. Moreover, BAFC is also requiring programs to provide quarterly updates on their

progress in meeting goals and objectives that programs submitted to BAFC as part of the budget development process. BAFC will use these updates to hold programs accountable to effective use of allocated funds.

As engaged as the entire College community has been in broad-based planning, the arrival of a new President has led to several changes in planning, budgeting, and resource allocation. While these changes have been made to improve the alignment between planning and budgeting and resource allocation, the manual that guides these processes, the Institutional Excellence Guide [IB:2], has yet to be revised.

Furthermore, the College uses its four phase financial management process to guide financial planning and budget development, and allows for all constituencies to have appropriate opportunities to participate in the development of institutional plans and budgets. Each phase contains important processes and tools that help link plans to each other and the funds needed to execute such plans. The four phases of the financial management process are: Phase 1: Planning and Interlinking of Plans; Phase 2: Resource Allocation; Phase 3: Program and Service Delivery; and Phase 4: Assessment and Evaluation.

The College has also instituted measures to address declining revenue from government appropriations while increasing input from appropriate constituencies. The President shifted the responsibility of planning and monitoring of Personnel financing to the Management Team. With this shift, each department reviews its personnel needs, prioritizes such position based around NMC's institutional goals/priorities, and submits such requests to their respective Deans for continued funding. Priority goes to those positions already being funded followed by a list of prioritized positions as identified by the respective departments, divisions, or units. These lists are then brought forth to the Management Team for further review, compared to peers, priorities and then organized into institution wide prioritization as fit with the College's overall Priority Initiatives. The institution-wide priority lists are further reviewed for organizational and functional changes as needed.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Continue the Governance Review Task Force (GRTF) in its role to revise the Institutional Excellence Guide to reflect changes to planning, budgeting, and resource allocation at the College and to suggest improvements to these processes.

***Standard I.B5.*** *The institution uses documented assessment results to communicate matters of quality assurance to appropriate constituencies.*

#### Descriptive Summary

Each program at NMC collects its own unique set of assessment data as part of the program review process. Data, such as market demand, student profiles, and student enrollment is documented in each program's annual assessment and further examined in the program's program review reports. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) works with



academic programs to integrate student achievement data into program review reports. Student achievement data include:

- Course Completion Data
- Retention Term-to-Term
- Progression to next course/level
- Program Completion
- Degree/Certificate Completion Rates
- Transfer rates to four-year institutions
- Scores on licensure exams
- Job-placement/post training
- Direct Evidence of Student Learning

OIE also works with various programs to administer and compile and analyze results for a number of surveys including the registration survey, the graduation survey, the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE) and the Community Colleges Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE).

OIE also prepares a number of institutional reports for internal and external use, including the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) Update, the NMC Fact Book, and the 5-32/10-66 Annual Report to the Legislature of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). The Budget and Finance Office also compiles and provides financial data to programs, the institution, and agencies outside the College. The Office of Institutional Advancement assists in preparing and distributing reports to the public, making all public reports available on NMC's website. NMC also communicates information about institutional quality to the public through reports, press releases, and presentations.

### Self Evaluation

Recent reports from OIE include the 2010 NMC Fact Book and the 2010 5-32/10-66 Annual Report to the Legislature. OIE is currently preparing data for the 2011 Update to the Key Performance Indicators.

OIE is also working with the Office of Admissions and Records (OAR) to improve data collection from NMC's student database software, PowerCampus. Improved data collection mechanisms from PowerCampus will allow OIE, programs, and the institution to more easily access and compile student achievement data for program review and institutional reporting.

At the beginning of the fall 2011 term, the President began working with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) and the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) to identify peer institutions against which NMC would compare and benchmark itself for planning, budgeting, resource allocation, and performance purposes.

OIE worked with the Comparison Group Selection Service (CGIS) of NCHEMS to sift through data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) using data from Academic Year 2008—2009 to generate a list of over 300 institutions which, in turn, was narrowed down to a list of 84 institutions. OIE then reviewed the 84 institutions with Dr. Hart and, based on program mix, student enrollment, and other considerations, selected the following peer institutions:

- Chipola College in Marianna, Florida
- Great Basin College in Elko, Nevada
- Northern New Mexico College in Espanalo, New Mexico
- Edison State Community College in Piqua, Ohio
- Kent State University Salem Campus in Salem, Ohio
- Guam Community College in Mangilao, Guam

Dr. Hart then contacted the chief executive officers of each peer institution to inform them of their selection for the peer comparison study. OIE also prepared staffing pattern comparison

analysis of NMC and its peer institutions and shared and fine-tuned preliminary findings with the College's Management Team. These findings were also shared with the Board and the College community to inform decision-making about budgeting and resource allocation.

OIE also completed administration of the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory for Spring 2012. This survey is designed to gather information on student satisfaction and the importance students place on various services and programs. OIE has begun sharing the results with the College community as soon as the results become available.

Although much work as has been completed by OIE to facilitate program review, assessment, and data collection and analysis, the office has experienced recent staffing challenges that threaten to hamper these essential services for the College. In addition to the office downsizing from four employees to two, the previous Director of the office recently resigned, leaving the office with just one employee.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Complete the hiring process for a new OIE Director. The Director will be in place by late September 2012.

***Standard I.B6.*** *The institution assures the effectiveness of its ongoing planning and resource allocation processes by systematically reviewing and modifying, as appropriate, all parts of the cycle, including institutional and other research efforts.*

#### Descriptive Summary

As part of NMC's program review processes, each program completes Records of Dialogue that document and track the impact of planning, budgeting, and program review on that program. Each program's program review report also includes a discussion of the impact that program review has had on the program.

Each cycle of program review results in an annual Composite Report, which lists recommendations for resource allocation that in turn inform decisions about budgeting and resource allocation. The Composite Report also includes a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of that cycle of program review and makes recommendations to improve the next cycle of program review.

#### Self Evaluation

The 2010 Composite Report included 15 recommendations to improve the next cycle of program review, which PROAC and the institution have begun implementing. One recommendation that has been implemented is that the program review calendar has shifted into two-year program review cycles, with academic programs and non-academic programs participating in full program review on alternating years.

As NMC entered the current cycle of program review, the Program Review Outcomes and Assessment Committee (PROAC) modified the Record of Dialogue template to require programs to submit quarterly Records of Dialogue. The Record of Dialogue allows the program to report on the progress of approved recommendations from the 2010 Composite Report, both to the program and the institution.

To systematically evaluate NMC's planning, program review, and budgeting processes, a Governance Review Task Force (GRTF) was appointed by the Office of the President to assess the College's governance model, including planning, budgeting, and program review processes, and to develop a mechanism for assessing those processes.

The GRTF worked with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to develop and administer a survey that would gauge how effective NMC's governance model is at structuring self-reflective dialogue towards improving institutional processes. The survey had respondents assess five dimensions of governance—democracy, openness and transparency, effectiveness, accountability, and mission—and rate each NMC governance and representative body according to those dimensions.

Survey results suggest that NMC is effectively using its governance model to engage stakeholders in ongoing dialogue about institutional effectiveness. For example, as Figure I.B-3 shows, in response to the statement, "Decisions that affect the entire institution are informed by extensive dialogue with key stakeholders," 44 respondents, or about 62%, either agreed or strongly agreed.

The GRTF used the results of this survey to develop recommendations to improve the College's governance structure. The task force issued recommendations to the College Council on March 4 and has also developed an evaluation instrument [IB:18] that can be used for regular, systematic review of NMC's governance structures and processes.

The arrival of a new president has led to several changes in planning, budgeting, and resource allocation. While these changes have been made to improve the alignment between planning and budgeting and resource allocation, the manual that guides these processes, the Institutional Excellence Guide [IB:2], has yet to be revised.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Continue the Governance Review Task Force (GRTF) in its role to revise the Institutional Excellence Guide to reflect changes to planning, budgeting, and resource allocation at the College and to suggest improvements to these processes.

***Standard I.B7.*** *The institution assesses its evaluation mechanisms through a systematic review of their effectiveness in improving instructional programs, student support services, and library and other learning support services.*

### Descriptive Summary

Each cycle of program review results in an annual Composite Report, which lists recommendations for resource allocation that in turn inform decisions about budgeting and resource allocation. The Composite Report also includes a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of that cycle of program review and makes recommendations to improve the next cycle of program review. The Planning, Program Review Outcomes and Assessment Committee (PROAC) facilitates the implementation and evaluation of each recommendation in subsequent cycles of program review.

### Self Evaluation

Based on its evaluation of Cycle 3 of program review, which concluded in the fall of 2010, PROAC identified several recommendations in the 2010 Composite Report to improve future cycles of program review. Based on those recommendations, PROAC took the following actions for the recent cycle of program review, Cycle A 2011:

- PROAC adopted a cyclical program review calendar in which academic programs and non-academic programs alternate every year in submitting program review reports (Form 2s).
- A subcommittee of PROAC refined the Form 2 template for academic programs that participated in the recent cycle of program review. The revised Form 2 template provides for more in-depth analysis and discussion of data and evidence.
- PROAC developed Form 2 rubrics and a Form 2 evaluation sheet [IB:7] to provide both formative and summative assessment of submitted Form 2s in order to help programs improve the quality of Form 2 submissions.
- These rubrics, along with further review and discussion in PROAC meetings, enabled PROAC to prioritize recommendations to the institution.

Cycle A 2011 of program review led to the 2011 Composite Report [IB:8], which noted the following strengths and weaknesses from Cycle A 2011 of program review:

#### Strengths:

- PROAC received 100% of all Form 2 submissions from Academic Programs in Cycle A 2011.
- 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.

- The schedule allowed for dialogue between PROAC members and Form 2 authors to work on drafts before final submissions, which improved the quality of submissions.
- PROAC developed rubrics and an evaluation instrument to assess each Form 2 submission.
- The work of reviewing and evaluating Form 2s was evenly assigned to PROAC members working in pairs, making the workload more manageable.
- PROAC adopted a more manageable bi-annual cycle for Form 2 submissions.
- PROAC adopted and used more digital tools, which automated PROAC processes and reduced the amount of paper used.
- PROAC and the College governance bodies successfully developed and implemented the Form 3 process for linking program review, budgeting, and resource allocation to address budget shortfalls.

Weaknesses and areas for improvement:

- Due to a one-month extension given to programs for Form 2 submissions, PROAC members were crunched for time in reading and evaluating Form 2 submissions.
- Work was difficult to complete during the summer while faculty were away.
- Student achievement data took longer than expected to reach programs for review and analysis in Form 2s.
- Attendance at and participation in PROAC meetings declined from December 2011 through January 2012.

Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Follow the 2011 Composite Report recommendations to improve program review, annual assessment, and overall planning and budgeting: Invite external reviewers, such as program advisory councils (PACs), to serve as third-party evaluators in program review; enhance the College's student information management system (SIMS) to more quickly and efficiently provide access to student achievement data; provide training on the use of the student information management system (SIMS) in order to enable programs to access and utilize student achievement data; align the program review schedule with the academic calendar in order to allow faculty to participate more in the process and to ensure student achievement data is available to academic programs when needed; Records of Dialogue should allow programs to document developments and/or progress not necessarily linked to recommendations from previous program review cycles; enforce deadlines for program review and assessment submissions; provide Form 2 training to Form 2 authors; the Form 2 should be further simplified; explore ways to engage more participation in PROAC and program review, with a particular emphasis on using various electronic media to facilitate participation.





Northern Marianas College | 2012 Self Evaluation Report  
**Standard II: Student Learning  
Programs and Services**





## **Standard IIA: Student Learning Programs and Services**

*The institution offers high-quality instructional programs, student support services, and library and learning support services that facilitate and demonstrate the achievement of stated student learning outcomes. The institution provides an environment that supports learning, enhances student understanding and appreciation of diversity, and encourages personal and civic responsibility as well as intellectual, aesthetic, and personal development for all of its students.*

### ***Standard II.A. Instructional Programs***

*The institution offers high-quality instructional programs in recognized and emerging fields of study that culminate in identified student outcomes leading to degrees, certificates, employment, or transfer to other higher education institutions or programs consistent with its mission. Instructional programs are systematically assessed in order to assure currency, improve teaching and learning strategies, and achieve stated Student Learning Outcomes. The provisions of this standard are broadly applicable to all instructional activities offered in the name of the institution.*

#### Descriptive Summary

As stated in the CNMI Constitution, “The mission of Northern Marianas College shall be to provide the best quality and meaningful postsecondary and adult education opportunities for the purpose of improving the quality of life for the individual and for the Commonwealth as a whole. The College shall be responsible for providing education in the areas of adult and continuing education, postsecondary and adult vocational education and professional development for the people of the Commonwealth” [IIA:1]. The institution ensures that all academic instructional offerings fit the mission of the College and evaluated through the Program Review Process under the PROAC and Institutional Effectiveness Office as laid out in the “Institutional Excellence Guide” [IIA: 2].

The College currently offers the following degree programs: Bachelor of Science degree in Education, with concentrations in: Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, Rehabilitation and Human Services, and Special Education; Associate in Arts in Business and Liberal Arts; Associate in Science in Natural Resources Management and Nursing; and Associate in Applied Science in Criminal Justice, Hospitality Management, Business Administration with emphasis in Accounting, Business Management, and Computer Applications [IIA: 3].

The College also serves the CNMI community through a variety of continuing education and short-term training programs. NMC Community Programs facilitates lifelong learning by providing educational services, quality workforce education and adult training opportunities for government, business and industry, and other community organizations. The Community Programs under the leadership of the Dean of Administration oversees the following programs: the Community Development Institute (CDI), the University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD), the Apprenticeship Program, the

Community Service and Personal Enrichment Program (CSPE), the Extended Degrees and University Partnerships Program (EDUP), and the Workforce Development and Certificate Training Programs (WDCT) (College Catalog, pages 20-22).

Cooperative Research, Extension and Education Service (CREES) at the Northern Marianas College provides federally funded assistance and appropriate technical information in the fields of animal, plant, family, and consumer sciences that is locally sustainable, environmentally safe, and economically feasible, in order to enhance the well-being and improve the quality of life of the people living in the CNMI. The two major components at CREES are the Agriculture Research and Extension Services (ARE) and Consumer and Family Sciences (CFS). These programs are supported by federal funds received from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). To obtain federal funds, CREES is required to submit a five-year State Plan that must be approved by USDA. CREES also applies for competitive grants to support primarily research projects (College Catalog page 23). The following are facilitated by CREES: Livestock Improvement Program, Plant Protection Program, Crop Production Improvement Program, Soil and Water Management Program, Aquaculture and Fishery Development Programs; and under the Consumer and Family Education Services, the Community Resource Development Program, Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (NFNEP), Diet, Physical Activity, and Health Program, Food Safety program and Quality Program, and the 4-H Youth Development Program. (College Catalog, pages 23-24)

The Adult Basic Education Program (ABE) is currently housed under the Dean of Academic Programs and Services. The mission of the Adult Basic Education Program is to assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to obtain a job or improve in their present jobs, to assist parents to be more involved with the educational development of their children, and to provide the opportunity for educationally disadvantaged adults to complete a secondary degree program. The NMC Adult Basic Education Program receives an annual grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The statutory authority for this program is the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy (College Catalog, pages 24-25).

The Distance Learning Education was recently expanded in May 2012. Previously, Distance Learning was positioned under the Department of Information Technology, but has since been moved to Academic Programs and Services (APS), by the president in the reorganization of NMC, which was ultimately approved by the Board of Regents. [IIA: 4]. The restructuring of Distance Learning to APS better aligns the offerings of online courses, trainings, and learning technologies to instructional faculty under APS. There is currently a Distance Learning Education Director, who oversees the entire program, both management and development of distance learning activities. [IIA: 5]

### Self-Evaluation

The institution ensures that its programs and services are high quality and appropriate to an institution of higher learning through the program review process, the Academic Council and the Dean of APS, Administration and Students Program and Services established an on-going

Program Review process utilizes the Nichols and Nichols-Five-Column Model (Form I) [IIA: 6] to identify Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and/or Administrative Unit Outcomes (AUOs) that are consistent with the College's mission. A program's Form I is incorporated in its Program Review Report (Form 2), which provides a comprehensive analysis of the program's effectiveness and presents recommendations for the program and the institution based on a thorough analysis of data.

In addition to program review, the Academic Council and the Dean of Academic Programs and Services also facilitates and oversees annual course assessment and instructor evaluations [IIA: 7] in all academic programs. Each faculty member within the Department conducts course assessment by analyzing student achievement data such as course completion rates and progression to subsequent courses.

Furthermore, student achievement data such as course completion rates and progression to subsequent courses demonstrate the student's ability to: a) successfully transfer to Universities; b) pass the statewide exams e.g. as in the Allied Health professions; c) meet the minimum qualifications for employment upon program completion; and d) meet regional employment opportunities and demand.

The institution chooses the field of study which it offers programs and are determined by: a) needs assessment of the community being served; b) Program Advisory Councils in place; c) networks of regional Community College groups; d) courses and programs required for transfer to other Colleges and universities; e) the geographic area demand from neighboring Asia-Pacific Countries; and, f) the economic climate e.g. economic downturn that dictates updating skills in order to obtain or re-enter the workforce.

The institution ensures the programs and curricula are current through the following: a) expert knowledge of the faculty, both full-time and adjunct, who stay up to date with trends in their field; b) Program Advisory Councils that links the College to the community and local industries; c) the continuous changes in programs and updates to courses aligned to universities that have an articulation agreement with the College; d) special accreditation required for programs, such as Nursing; e) the trends in the economy e.g. training need demands to re-enter the workforce; and f) a mission statement for each program and department.

The means used to assess programs for currency are based on research and other related information that provide longitudinal data on institutional/student outcomes and follow-up surveys to find out whether programs goals are being realized.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

None

***Standard II.A1a.** The institution identifies and seeks to meet the varied educational needs of its students through programs consistent with their educational preparation and the diversity, demographics, and economy of its communities. The institution relies upon research and analysis to identify student learning needs and to assess progress toward achieving stated learning outcomes.*

### Descriptive Summary

The College offers a variety of degree and certificate programs in areas that meet a broad range of student needs, such as Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degree programs for both terminal and transfer students. There are also Certificate of Achievement and Certificate of Completion programs for students seeking a shorter-term program to gain knowledge and skills for specific employment purposes by way of CDI, CREES, ABE, and Apprenticeships.

Northern Marianas College was constitutionally established to serve the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Its diverse population is demonstrated by its demographics, its culture, and education. A majority of the College's population falls into five ethnic groups as reported by the demographics and achievement data as reported by the Office of Admissions and Records at NMC: Asian, Pacific Islander, White Non-Hispanic, Two or More, and Other\* (\*includes Black, Hispanic, American Indian or Alaska Native) [IIA: 8].

The College also offers a diverse range of community development workshops and training. Added also to its traditional post-secondary instructional programs and training, the College strives to meet the needs of its students by providing support related to admissions, financial aid, advising, counseling, tutoring, accommodations for students with disabilities, library use, technology use, and academic support services.

In areas such as placement, advising, scheduling of classes and actual classroom instruction and evaluation, the College seeks to identify and meet the needs of its diverse student body. Placement tests are designed to properly assess the skill levels of all students regardless of origin. The 2011-12 Registration Surveys [IIA:9] also helped the College continue to identify, improve, and meet the diverse needs of its student population.

### Self Evaluation

The College uses English and Math placement tests to place students in the correct English and Math course and prior to enrollment in any courses. Depending on the student's test results, he or she would be placed in the English and Math developmental courses or College level English and Math courses. Placement test results are not used for any other purposes.

Pre- tests in each course are used to assess prior knowledge of students about the course being taken and how the instructor might have to adjust the delivery or teach the course content based on the pre-test results. Post-tests are used to assess student learning

achievement and how the instructor might have to improve his instructional methods the next time the course is offered again.

The College has institutionalized the use of course syllabi for all courses offered each semester to include Student Learning Outcomes of the course. A syllabus is communicated to all the students on the first day of instruction to make them aware of the expectations. End-of-Course assessment is used to obtain general student feedback about the course itself and the instructor that taught the course. This helps in trying to meet the varied educational needs of students and how instructors can improve themselves for students to achieve stated learning outcomes.

All Department Chairs submit their Program Review and Records of Dialogue to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness as scheduled. This is one mechanism that Departments identify achievement of their program outcomes which relate to Student Learning Outcomes and remain focus in continuing to promote student learning and success.

The College makes an analysis of course completion rates and student progression through subsequent courses as ways of determining if students achieved stated learning outcomes. For example, the Nursing faculty brought up the issue of student admission into the Nursing program. It was discovered that some students in the past were admitted into the program, but could not speak or understand English well, even though these students had high GPAs. This factor was a concern because students need to be able to effectively communicate with their patients, families, nursing staff and physicians during clinical/practicum experience. Therefore, it was agreed by all Nursing faculty and the Department Chair to institute a “pre-admission, in-person interview” for each prospective student, that included an English proficiency element in the process. This is now considered a Departmental requirement, instituted in fall 2011 as part of admission into the nursing program. The student must pass the interview process, complete all pre-requisite course requirements and meet the required GPA in order to be accepted into the program. If the student is applying from off-island, a telephone or videoconference interview can be substituted in place of an in-person interview. The Department hopes to institutionalize this interview process through Academic Council and further revise admission criteria into the Nursing program.

In 2012, the School of Education offered summer classes for the first time to accommodate the needs of the local Public School System (PSS). Classes were specifically held to address the PSS certification needs of the Head Start program. A total of 14 course sections were taught during summer 2012.

Effective fall semester 2012, most course caps were increased according to the capacity of a classroom. Keeping in mind the integrity of the program and attention to quality instruction without compromising the post-secondary requirements of the credit-hour and concepts of the course, the Dean of Academic Programs and Services (APS) and APS Leadership Team worked together to identify which course caps to raise as reviewed by the respective programs. In reviewing the institution’s data on course enrollment per semester for the last five years, the department s have some course sections at 20 to 60 students per class time as detailed in the 2012 fall semester schedule.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

None

***Standard II.A1b.** The institution utilizes delivery systems and modes of instruction compatible with the objectives of the curriculum and appropriate to the current and future needs of its students.*

### Descriptive Summary

At NMC, instruction incorporates a variety of modes of instruction, including but not limited to; traditional classroom-based lecture, discussion, cooperative work, audio/visual, guest speakers, field-trips, clinical, internships, practicum, student teaching on-site, and laboratories. Instructional styles and delivery systems, including methods of student assessment and evaluation, continue to be instructor created and driven.

### Self Evaluation

Department faculty members determine what types of delivery is appropriate for each course to meet the current and future needs of NMC students. Faculty members prepare and submit course guides, which include a section on course objectives and methods of instruction, to the Academic Council for review and approval.

The Academic Council, in collaboration with the respective departments, oversees curriculum guides and course syllabi, ensuring that delivery of instruction fits the objectives and content of its courses. Discussion and approval of course guides are documented in the Academic Council meeting minutes.

Recently, certain Individualized Degree Plans (IDPs) – Nursing, Liberal Arts, School of Education, and Criminal Justice - have been revised to include BE111 (College Success) [IIA: 10]. This is a recently approved NMC core requirement that every student has to take upon admission to the College. The course is designed to help students achieve positive learning outcomes as they progress in their higher education [IIA: 11].

At the faculty level, examinations, quizzes, written assignments or oral presentations are used as forms of evaluations to assess student learning. Students who need tutoring are referred to the appropriate areas, such as the Math Tutorial Lab, English Learning Center, Computer Lab, and Child Development Lab. Or faculty will set up a one-on-one tutorial if need be to help their students.

End-of-course assessment is used to obtain the general student feedback about the course itself and the instructor teaching the course. This helps to meet the varied educational needs of students and how the instructor can improve himself or herself for students to achieve stated learning outcomes [IIA: 12].

The End-of-course assessment results are given to Department Chairs who discusses results with individual faculty. In general, each course evaluation results are to be shared with the rest of the faculty where feedback is sought on how to improve the course or how faculty can improve professionally.

The Nursing department has mid-term evaluations for clinicals in which each student rates himself or herself under each evaluation criteria prior to meeting with an instructor. Their rating and the instructor's rating are discussed with them, reasons from both sides are heard and then a final mid-term evaluation rating is given upon which both the student and the instructor agree. This procedure provides a chance for both the student and the instructor to improve themselves before the end of the course and the final grade for the course.

Each Program Advisory Council also provides information to the faculty to ensure that their programs are updated and meeting the needs of the community [IIA: 13].

Through the process of program review and Staggered Course Assessments, the College ensures that delivery systems and modes of instruction facilitate student learning and the overall student performance.

The institution's results of nursing student graduates' performance in passing the NCLEX-RN exam on first try and NMC's School of Education graduates' performance in passing PRAXIS I & II provide evidence that the delivery systems and modes of instruction in these degree programs are achieving quality end results. [IIA: 14]

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Revise the Staggered Course Assessment so that it identifies program and student learning outcomes.
2. Incorporate the use of comparable national data to institutional data when evaluating program plans and student achievement.

***Standard II.A1c.** The institution identifies Student Learning Outcomes for courses, certificates, and degrees; assesses student achievement of those outcomes; and uses assessment results to make improvements.*

#### Descriptive Summary

Since 2004, the NMC Academic Council has required that all course guides contain specific and measurable Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) (IIA16) Additionally, through the efforts of individual faculty, Department Chairs, the Academic Council, the Accreditation Review Team, College Council, Management Team, and Program Advisory Councils (PAC), Program Learning Outcomes have been developed for all academic degree programs [IIA: 17]. Program Learning Outcomes (PLO) and Administrative Unit Outcomes (AUO) have also been developed for both instructional and administrative programs.



The School of Education (SOE) program offers the Bachelor of Science degree in Education, with concentrations in Early Childhood Education, Special Education, Rehabilitation and Human Services, and Elementary Education. Since its initial and follow-up full-study report, the SOE has been accredited by the Senior Commission of WASC [IIA: 18]. The SOE has developed its own PLOs and SLOs [IIA: 19].

Student achievement in associate degree programs is currently measured informally by student success in course completion, program completion, and graduation [IIA: 20]. Assessment and evaluation results are informally used as part of the program improvement plan and institutional budget planning process. Program Learning Outcomes and Student Learning Outcomes are also assessed formally and informally, using both authentic assessment activities and standardized testing tools.

### Self Evaluation

The College has identified General Education Learning Outcomes that are in line with Program Learning Outcomes. [IIA: 22] These General Education Learning Outcomes are written in each Course Syllabus and instructors are expected to distribute the course syllabus to the students in their classes on the first day of instruction.

Each course being taught by a faculty member has Student Learning Outcomes written in each course syllabus. This advises students of requirements established by the instructor or Department for meeting course objectives and informs the students of other information pertinent to College standards and/or policies and procedures.

Department Chairs and instructional faculty work together to create Student Learning Outcomes and strategies for attaining them. This is in reference to the textbook approved for use in the course and the Program Learning Outcomes.

Student Learning Outcomes and Program Learning Outcomes are assessed through end-of-course assessment done by students. In Nursing, mid-term evaluations of students are done by both students and instructors for their clinical experience to assess how far their learning has been and how to improve themselves before the end of the course.

Feedback from staff in the clinical sites (i.e.: hospital, public health, clinics) where students are placed for hands on experience, is another form of assessing Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) and Program Learning Outcomes (PLO). These types of feedback are welcome and included in the overall evaluation of the program.

Job placement rates of student graduates are another form of assessing Student Learning Outcomes and program outcomes. Recently, the Commonwealth Health Corporation (CHC) hired four NMC May 2010 graduates. Three of them were hired as Registered Nurses because they passed the NCELX-RN exam soon after graduation on first try and one was hired as a Graduate Nurse for one year pending passage of the NCLEX-RN exam within this one year period. Another one of our graduate left to Honolulu, Hawaii for employment as a

Registered Nurse in one of the healthcare agencies there. Actual nursing graduate data for NMC for the last five years is at 75 graduates with 60 students tracked, of the 60 students, 41 students are employed, a total of 68% of our nursing students being currently employed since being graduated from NMC.

All College assessment tools have been consistent throughout the academic year. Results of these assessments (Staggered Course Assessment, end-of-course assessment, class observations, etc.) and program reviews are communicated as appropriate. Academic Council meetings serve as an avenue to discuss these results with the Academic Dean and Department Chairs of each program [IIA: 23]. Departmental meetings serve as another avenue to discuss these results between Department Chairs and faculty [IIA: 24]. There are also various College committees that get this information and institutional-wide as appropriate to students, faculty and staff. Recommendations for actions are taken and presented to appropriate levels, including the Management Team for action. Included also as part of program planning is the NMC PROA Strategic Plan 2008-2012.

From these assessment results, improvements have been made to courses and programs. The College implemented Learning in Communities (LinC) for some courses. Evaluations from students in LinC courses have been very positive [IIA: 24]. Professional Development sessions for faculty and staff are on schedule and faculty assembly and/or College General Assembly are also on schedule.

Continuous improvement is part of NMC's good practice towards sustainable and measureable student learning outcomes. Included also is the College's drive to meet the need of the community and for greater student success, is the use of assessment data for planning. All programs have included both internal and external data to drive program planning. Because of NMC's accreditation status over time, and the uncertainty of its accreditation status, the College has been unable to add new degree offerings to meet the growing needs of our community, or to provide its current programs 100% online offerings. This has been severely hampering the linkage and commitment of the College to address community workforce needs. In the past years since being taken off full accreditation status, the College has been affected by outside institutions at the post-secondary level competing with its current resources and students. It is with great vigor and determination that all academic programs and community-based programs continue to execute its current policies and procedures always keeping in the current accreditation status.

#### Actionable Improvement Items

1. Plan a Math and English refresher course or seminar to be offered in the summer before students take the placement tests.
2. Make NMC policies and procedures clearer and aligned with Board of Regents functions and responsibilities.
3. Appoint a coordinator to manage the LinC Program under the Dean of Student Services.

4. Work closely with all programs in getting off of the College's accreditation status of probation and collaborate collegially at maintaining a full accreditation status for NMC.
5. Identify and plan new degree programs to match workforce demands.

***Standard II.A2.*** *The institution assures the quality and improvement of all instructional courses and programs offered in the name of the institution, including collegiate, developmental, and pre-collegiate courses and programs, continuing and community education, study abroad, short-term training courses and programs, programs for international students, and contract or other special programs, regardless of type of credit awarded, delivery mode, or location.*

#### Descriptive Summary

The institutional criteria and processes by which the College decides to offer instructional courses and programs are student driven. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are written by faculty within the appropriate Department and subject to change upon approval of Academic Council each time a course guide is updated. The governance group that reviews and oversees all academic degrees and certificates, to include program development and evaluation, is the Academic Council. The Academic Council, as indicated in BOR Policy 3009 (attached), is made up of Department representatives from each degree program and one from counseling, who are voting members on the council. The Council oversees the establishment of programs following the "Procedure for Proposing a New Program or Course." Student Learning Outcomes are evaluated through periodic course assessment and program review, the results of which are discussed at the Department level and Academic Council. All Academic Council meetings are open to the members of the College community.

#### Self Evaluation

The following are the degree programs offered at NMC: Bachelor of Science in Education; concentration in Elementary Education, Early Childhood Education, Rehabilitation and Human Services, and Special Education; Associate of Arts (AA) degrees in Business and Liberal Arts; Associate in Science (AS) degrees in Nursing and Natural Resources Management (NRM); and, Associate in Applied Science (AAS) Business Administration - Accounting Emphasis; Business Management Emphasis ; Computer Applications Emphasis; AAS degree in Hospitality Management; and, AAS degree in Criminal Justice (see IDP attachments) Included also under the Academic Programs and Services Division, is the Adult Basic Education (ABE) program. The ABE program offers an Adult School (AS) Diploma and a General Educational Development (GED) Diploma. The College recently hired a Distance Learning Education Director who oversees all distance learning education components, and is directly under the Dean of Academic Programs and Services. The

Distance Learning Education Office, through NMC Online – MOODLE, offers students a convenient way to take classes.

The College also serves the Northern Marianas Island (NMI) community through a variety of continuing and outreach programs in addition to its traditional academic degree and certificate programs. The Community Development Institute (CDI) strives to make NMC a center of learning through a variety of educational programs and services that respond to the needs of the local community through collaboration and partnerships with both internal and external, non-collegiate organizations/entities. CDI also facilitates the offering of postsecondary education programs leading to degrees beyond the Associates or Bachelor of Science in Education through partnerships with U.S. accredited institutions of higher education that offers classes on-site and/or via distance education.

The following are a few of the U.S. accredited institutions managed by CDI: partnership with Framingham State University, University of Guam U.S. Army Senior Reserve Officers Training Corp. , University of Hawaii – University of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities and the Area Health Education Center, and Education to Go (ed2go) Online Programs. Additionally, CDI is also charged with the U.S. Apprenticeship Program for the Northern Mariana Islands.

The institution also provides free assistance and appropriate technical information via the Cooperative Research, Extension and Education Service (CREES), in fields of animal, plant, family, and consumer sciences that is locally sustainable, environmentally safe, and economically feasible, in order to enhance the well-being and improve the quality of life of the people living in the Northern Mariana Islands. The two major components in CREES are the Agriculture Research and Extension Services (ARE) and consumer and Family Sciences (CFS). These programs are supported by federal funds received from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The institution has an ongoing program review process that measures the effectiveness of all courses and programs. It is an ongoing process that allows programs to reflect and measure the initial goals and objectives for improvement as well as accountability. All courses at the College are reviewed at the program level. Once a course has been taught, evidence provided by the instructor may be used in course assessment and program review, both of which are conducted by faculty. The College continues to value faculty feedback outside of formal course assessment and program review that may affect changes in textbooks and materials, methods used, Student Learning Outcomes, and types of course assessment used. All changes and updates for all academic degrees and certificates are channeled through the Academic Council for review and evaluation by a voting panel of council members. All courses are held to the same standards in higher education as established by the College or by national standards.

The results of Math and English Placement Tests aid the College in determining how many students qualify for courses offered in their chosen degree plan. The Math Department continues to responsibly manage the institutional-made placement test for all incoming students. The English Department continues to responsibly manage the English placement tests by using a standardized testing model called Accuplacer.

The institution continues to administer at the end of every semester the “Student Appraisal of Course and Instructor”(attached) and all instructors are provided a summary as a means to aid professional growth and reflection on courses taught. For the past two-years at NMC, Academic Programs and Services (APS) adopted to use a Staggered Course Assessment tool that was used to evaluate the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) at the course level. A Review Team called the ECAC – Evaluation Committee for Academic Council, made up of appointed faculty and Department Chairs reviewed and provided feedback to the respective Departments and Academic Council. After two years of looking at the product and procedure of the 2-year Staggered Course Assessment, the ECAC recommended to AC (AC Minutes) that the process needs to be returned back to the Department for greater input, so that feedback will be more conducive to the teaching-learning process as it applies to both instructor and program. Academic Council has now accepted to continue with Staggered Course Assessment, but at the program level, with summary reports from the program to Academic Council at the end of each semester.

The Adult Secondary Education and Adult Basic Education (ABE), ensure continued quality application and evaluation of its diploma program by using the following assessment tools: Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS); GED Battery Tests; Academic Skills Unit Tests; Academic Skills Mastery Tests; and, Career Skills Tests. Distance Learning Education courses offer the same quality of instruction and rigor as traditional classes. Registration, course content, and course credit hours are the same as equivalent courses held face-to-face. An online end-of-semester course and instructor evaluation is also provided to students online. The College continues to offer; developmental, pre-collegiate, continuing and community education, short term trainings, adult secondary education, and contracted education programs. The evidence includes: Memorandum of Agreements / Understanding (MOA/MOU), Articulation Agreements, Sister-School Agreements, and Class Schedules. Copies of these can be found in the President’s office, the office of the Dean of Academic Programs and Services, and Community Development Institute (CDI).

HR Policy 4467, adopted on November 18, 1994, ensures the institution’s stance on the quality of instruction of all classes remaining uniformly high across all programs whether it is taught by a full-time or adjunct instructor. In regards to that matter, the institution has several systematic processes of reviewing its program and services. Through program review, all programs are evaluated by the Planning Review and Outcomes Assessment Committee (PROAC). Furthermore, all employees are accountable in carrying out these processes for they are explicitly embedded in all employee contracts and employee evaluations. Human Resources have a crucial role in ensuring that all instructional faculties are qualified beginning with the application process. For each instructional position only qualified candidates are interviewed. Human Resources reference the “Qualification Evaluation Worksheet Form”(attached) as a guideline to determine eligibility criteria and must abide by all applicable local and federal mandates. Further, all adjunct faculty members are certified by the appropriate Department Chair and the Dean of Academic Programs and Services. Overall, qualifications are measured by degrees held and the level of experiences held as well as training, specialization, and other credentials (see attached HR Evaluation Worksheet, Adjunct Certification Worksheet, Staff and Faculty Contracts). Background checks and personnel reference checks are made for all employees. Moreover, it is for all employees to be provided a copy of all policies and procedures and orientated on where to

find them. Employee evaluations are also administered annually. In addition, “Student Appraisal of Course and Instructor”(attached) continues to be administered at the end of every semester. Full-time and adjunct faculty, are assessed by Department Chairs or Department designee at least once or twice a year. Programs may also use an assessment tool that evaluates specifically identified Student Learning Outcomes as it applies to the degree program. Evaluations, both faculty or staff are provided professional development every semester to ensure the quality of the degree programs are truly in the hands of the faculty and are linked to competencies in keeping with the institutional mission, philosophy, program and student learning outcomes of the College.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Obtain certification in DACUMs or related career and curriculum programs with involvement and input from the business community by program as it relates to competencies and related outcomes.

***Standard II.A2a.** The institution uses established procedures to design, identify learning outcomes for, approve, administer, deliver, and evaluate courses and programs. The institution recognizes the central role of its faculty for establishing quality and improving instructional courses and programs.*

### Descriptive Summary

Cyclical program and course development and evaluation are part of an ongoing process of adjusting and maintaining institutional homeostasis: evaluations follow course offerings; evaluation data fuels program analysis; program analysis drives course modifications, removal, and creation. The development of courses comes from student and community requests and needs, local and global demands, and professional and certification needs. Schedules and guidelines direct the process every step of the way. Faculty is central to the process at the course and program level and instrumental in assisting program and senior management in all aspects of course and program development and assessment.

### Self Evaluation

Course and program level Student Learning Outcomes are identified by faculty and program directors working in team-oriented and collegial work groups. Program level changes to course guides are periodically reviewed and approved by a cross-Department Academic Council and later approved by the College’s governing board. Course evaluation is linked to the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs); student progress is considered and courses modified according to identified needs.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are established and formalized for each course and program. SLOs are established by faculty and program management with the consideration of current offerings, academic and certification needs, and local and global demands. Academic Council also reviews and suggests revision to SLOs.

Programs and Departments determine changes needed; new program or course guides are created and sent to Academic Council for consideration; if approved, these courses and programs are offered. Administration of new and ongoing programs occurs according to established management flow charts and defined job duties. Faculty members, current in their academic fields, are given a prime role in all program and course development.

Courses and instructors are formally evaluated every semester. Program evaluations formally take place every year for specific courses and course assessment evaluations occur every two years, but are actually ongoing; every semester faculty read course evaluation data, discuss needs, and adjust courses and program offerings accordingly. Evaluation results indicate consistent progress towards graduation for students.

The College assures that it can rely upon faculty expertise at all levels of course and program creation, deliverance, evaluation, and modification through both a contractual agreement and an academic culture committed to professional integrity, pride, achievement, and growth. Among the improvements to courses and programs that have occurred include evaluations and improvement of instructional materials for developmental courses, periodic revision of course guides' emphasis on implementing SLOs at instructional levels, peer observations, course linking, changes in course requirement prerequisites, and on-going staff development trainings.

Evidence includes course guides and Academic Council minutes which can be found in the office of the Dean of Academic Programs and Services. Individual course syllabi and course guides can be found in the administrative office of each academic Department.

In October 2010, the Dean of Academic Programs and Services along with all six of the Department Chairs for the degree programs at NMC, traveled to California to attend a WASC ACCJC meeting. It was at this meeting that the academic Dean and Chairs worked with Dr. Fred Thompson to provide feedback on the two-year NMC Staggered Course Assessment schedule that was formulated by each Department [IIA: 25]. This assessment tool has since been used to assess program courses as it addresses the individual course Student Learning Outcomes. In spring 2011, the Academic Council appointed a group of faculty and Department Chairs, once from each program, to form what was called the ECAC aka Evaluation Committee of Academic Council. The purpose of the ECAC was to specifically review and evaluate the two-year Staggered Course Assessment [IIA: 26]. In spring 2012, a recommendation was made by the Chair of ECAC by consensus of the ECAC members to return the two-year Staggered Course Assessment schedule back to the Departments and Academic Council for more meaningful evaluation and immediate feedback to the respective programs and institution regarding student learning as it happens in the classroom. With this recommendation, Academic Council has accepted the recommendation from the ECAC Chair, and now plans for a two-year Staggered Course Assessment, as revised and managed at the programs level and presented as a summary report by Departments to Academic Council.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Work collaboratively with the APS leadership, faculty and Academic Council to update the two-year Staggered Course Assessment Schedule.
2. Increase business industry input in program planning and development.

***Standard II.A2b.** The institution relies on faculty expertise and the assistance of advisory committees when appropriate to identify competency levels and measurable Student Learning Outcomes for courses, certificates, programs including general and vocational education, and degrees. The institution regularly assesses student progress towards achieving those outcomes.*

### Descriptive Summary

Faculty develops Program Learning Outcomes and course-level outcomes aka Student Learning Outcomes. The programs that currently have advisory committees are Education, Natural Resource Management, Liberal Arts, Apprenticeship, AHEC, UCEDD and CREES. Other programs are in the process of formulating their respective program advisory councils.

When Student Learning Outcomes are assessed at NMC, the tool used to evaluate student performance is based primarily on a grade point average for all classes. A written statement of this grading procedure for NMC is clearly communicated in the current College general catalog 2012-2013, pages 68-71, and reiterated throughout course syllabus given to each student in all course sections being taught at NMC.

Each course syllabus includes a list of the Program Learning Outcomes and Student Learning Outcomes and discussed with students at the beginning of each semester. Faculty continues to align PLOs with SLOs as members review and evaluate the course guides for each academic program. All course guides are evaluated every three-years on the anniversary date of their review. Faculty and Department Chairs of the respective programs are responsible to review and make recommendations to Academic Council for approval. Academic Council (AC) meeting minutes are uploaded to the website and are available to all for viewing. Part of the minutes include the specific course guides that are up for review, modifications, introduction (new), move to cancellation (stop-out) or cancellation, as they are presented to AC by the respective faculty or Department head.

### Self Evaluation

Programs and courses are faculty developed as faculty members work cooperatively with their respective Department Chairs, and have set in motion the inclusion for input from the community by setting up Program Advisory Councils (PAC) [IIA: 27] in their respective programs.

Competency levels and measurable Student Learning Outcomes for a course are determined by the faculty member teaching the course. Changes are discussed by instructors of the



course and other interested faculty within the Department. The advisory committee is Academic Council, which must approve all changes to the SLOs as they appear in the course guides.

The College has structured the relationship between Student Learning Outcomes, competency levels for degrees, certificates, programs, and courses through periodic review by both faculty and Academic Council. Student Learning Outcomes for individual courses are examined: 1) by faculty within the relevant Department; and 2) as part of the periodic review of course guides for both existing and new courses undertaken for approval by Academic Council (AC). Competency levels for degrees and certificates are examined as part of AC's review of Individualized Degree Plans and Individualized Certificate Plans, respectively. Competency levels for programs are determined by the relevant Department and published beginning in fall 2009 under the heading of Program SLOs.

Students have a clear path to achieving Student Learning Outcomes, as documented in each course syllabus. The path to obtaining a degree and certificate is made explicit in the one-page Individualized Degree Plan (IDP) and the one-page Individualized Certificate Plan (ICP). The institution does a thorough job of evaluating the effectiveness of learning at each level through course and program review.

Evidence for course guides and Academic Council minutes can be found in the Office of the Dean of Academic Programs and Services. Individual course syllabi can be found in the academic offices of each academic Department. Individual Degree Plans (IDPs) and Individual Certificate Plans (ICPs) can be found in the individual Departments.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Communicate clearly, Student Learning Outcomes beginning in fall 2012.
2. Evaluate the alignment between stated learning outcomes in the course guides and actual classroom instruction and evaluation.
3. Identify faculty for DACUM certification.

***Standar II.A2c.** High-quality instruction and appropriate breadth, depth, rigor, sequencing, time to completion, and synthesis of learning characterize all programs.*

#### Descriptive Summary

Established procedures for proposing, developing, reviewing, and approving new degree and certificate programs are performed by Academic Council, which is also responsible for ensuring the appropriate breadth, depth, rigor, sequencing, time to completion, and synthesis of learning that should characterize all programs. Program goals and objectives are also periodically reviewed by AC to ensure that they adhere to NMC's education mission, Board of Regent's Policy and Procedures, and National Standards that are integral components of all programs as it facilitates successful completion of courses by students.

Academic Programs and Services (APS) Division meets regularly with the Dean of APS to discuss, assess, evaluate, and make changes as necessary, on all matters regarding instruction and programs. A semester schedule of the APS Leadership Team meetings has consistently been developed according to the available times of Department Chairs, who also teach classes.

As part of NMC's effort to offer its student population high quality instruction, proposals for new programs as well as current degree and certificate programs are required to include evidence of coherent and relevant design; in addition, all course guides are required to be updated every three-years. As stated earlier, NMC's continued accreditation sanctions has stagnated its efforts to develop new degree programs to meet workforce demands.

Any proposals for new programs in the future, will be reviewed and approved at the Departmental, divisional, Academic Council, Executive Levels, and by the Board of Regents [IIA: 28], and must include information demonstrating consistency with comparable programs offered at other accredited institutions, including data.

Individual course guides for each program's curriculum, as approved by the Department Chair, the Dean of Academic Programs and Services, and the Academic Council, attest to the appropriateness of course content and scope, and contain outlines of instructional goals and Student Learning Outcomes (IIA29).

#### Self Evaluation

HR Board Policy 4467 adopted on November 18, 1994, ensures the institution's stance on the quality of instruction of all classes remaining uniformly high across all programs whether it is taught by a full time or adjunct faculty. The policy states that the instruction shall be provided in accordance with the stated philosophy and objectives of NMC:

"Excellence of education is the prime function of the College, and all instruction shall conform to approved course outlines and in accordance with descriptions in the College catalogue."

The institution ensures high quality of instructional faculty based on degree, experience, and other credentials deemed qualified through Human Resources Office, informal interviews with Department Chairs, and a formal interview with the interviewing committee.

The quality of instruction is continuously evaluated through student appraisal of course and instructor evaluation at the end of each term (BOR Policy 3001), annual evaluations, classroom observations by Department Chairs and program coordinators, through the Program Review process (Nichols and Nichols 5-column Model), and Professional Development Days (PDDs) offered every semester to ensure high quality to equip its faculty and staff in meeting the institutional mission. Aggregated program course completion rates are also compiled and presented to prompt Departmental dialogue for quality improvement of instruction and professional growth.

Other means of assessment are several standardized surveys and assessments conducted throughout the academic year of student learning: Noel-Levitz Satisfaction Inventory, Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), Community College Learning Assessment (CCLA), and the Washington Center's online student survey, Students' Experience of Learning in Learning Communities.

Course syllabi use the language of Bloom's Taxonomy in all lists of Student Learning Outcomes. Appropriate breadth, depth, rigor, sequencing, time to completion, and synthesis of learning breadth of each program are ensured by Academic Council's review of the course guides. Some programs collect samples of students work at the beginning and end of each semester to show progress of Student Learning Outcomes.

Dialogue occurs at every level including Department, Academic Council Chaired by the Dean and PROAC.

To decide on the breadth, depth, rigor, sequencing, time to completion, and synthesis of learning, the College uses existing course guides, request for proposals, and memorandum of agreement/understanding (MOA/MOU), sister-school agreements, and articulation agreements.

The faculty plays an integral role in these decisions. Faculty members are represented by Department Chairs at Academic Council Meetings. Department Chairs discuss the proceedings of Academic Council with their faculty. Faculty members are encouraged to share ideas and are welcome to attend Academic Council meetings.

Evidenced by Instructor Observations, Noel-Levitz Survey results, CCLA results, LinC survey results, Liberal Arts Course Completion rates, Course Syllabi, AC minutes, Department minutes, PROAC minutes.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Align all program and student learning outcomes with the Program Review process.
2. Continue to monitor and review the goals and objectives, Program Learning Outcomes and Student Learning Outcomes.

***Standard II.A2d*** *The institution uses delivery modes and teaching methodologies that reflect the diverse needs and learning styles of its students.*

#### Descriptive Summary

All academic courses and programs at NMC, both degree and non-degree credits, whether offered on or off campus, online or as a hybrid class, accelerated or as a traditional semester-long class, are subject to the same established institutional procedures, regardless of delivery mode. The procedures for creating, modifying, deleting, approving, and revising educational programs and courses are stated in BOR Policy 3008 and BOR Procedures 3009, both of

which are under revision, and detailed in the Academic Council's "Guide to Preparing Course Guides" with details that describe the steps necessary for establishing a new course or program, or a review and evaluation of a course. The guide shows the involvement of faculty, Department Chairs, other members of the College, and the Dean of Academic Programs and Services in these processes, that is facilitated and is the full responsibility of Academic Council. Specifically, for new programs, the involvement of the President and Management Team, College Council, and the Board of Regents is required in the approval process.

### Self Evaluation

The College demonstrates that it is meeting the needs and learning styles of its students by means of the instructor evaluations performed by all students in all classes at the end of each term. Deficiencies become readily apparent and are discussed by the instructor and Department Chair.

Building on the resources and insights gained at the recent September 23-24, 2010 WASC Level 1 Retreat on Student Learning and Assessment, the Dean of Academic Programs and Services and members of Academic Council have begun expanding the current evaluation practices at the College into a comprehensive instructor evaluation system that will integrate student evaluations, supervisory evaluations, peer evaluations, and course assessment data into instructor portfolios.

This more comprehensive approach will help the council and the Dean more clearly and thoroughly assess the effectiveness of instructors' delivery modes and instructional methodologies.

Systematic application of the theory of the seven learning styles has not been embraced College-wide and is limited to the School of Education (SOE). Information and material in SOE courses are presented and examined from a variety of perspectives to include all types of learners.

Many of the faculty, particularly in the Department of Languages and Humanities (L&H), have had extensive international teaching experience and thus are aware of a wide variety of culturally determined learning styles. In addition, all L&H faculty have some form of TESOL training, culminating in either TESOL certification or a Master's degree in TESOL, which requires that culturally determined learning styles, as well as culturally determined student expectations, be studied in depth at the graduate level. L&H faculty must draw on this experience and training daily because international students at NMC have never been "double-tracked," but instead study in the same classes as native English speakers at all levels except for the very beginning ESL level.

The Educational Enrichment Center, in the new lab that opened in February 2009, provides ESL students opportunities to improve their English Language skills through tutoring and a variety of materials. Funds were made available in April 2012 to purchase more materials.

Courses, seminars, and workshops offered by Community Development Institute (CDI), for continuing education units (CEU) or for no credit are designed, approved, administered, and evaluated by program staffers at CDI according to procedures [IIA: 30].

Courses, seminars, and workshops offered by Cooperative Research, Extension and Education Services (CREES) are skills-based and community needs driven, and are designed, approved, administered, and evaluated by program staffers at CREES according to procedures [IIA: 31].

Instructors at NMC employ multiple ways of assessing student learning, but are not limited to the following, such as tests, quizzes, personal essays such as reaction papers, essays based on outside sources, research papers, portfolios, group projects, examinations, practicum, and presentations.

These assessment methods are selected at the program level and approved by Academic Council in course guides.

The institution uses delivery modes and teaching methodologies that reflect the diverse needs and learning styles of its students. Assessments of student learning styles are administered in BE 111 College Success, which for two years has been a prerequisite for all non-degree unit Math courses. Beginning fall 2012, BE 111 will be required of all degree-seeking students at NMC. The Kuder Assessment is required of all students in BE 111 to evaluate their skills, interests, and values. These learning styles are also addressed in each course syllabus. The College determines modes of delivery on a course-by-course basis, in accordance with Academic Council approved course guides. Commonly used teaching methodologies include: lecture, reading assignments, audio-visual materials, research assignments, oral presentations. These methods are selected at the program level and approved by Academic Council in course guides.

Faculty discusses the relationship between teaching methodologies and student performance as part of program review, annual program assessment, and course assessment. Training sessions have also been offered by School of Education faculty to match methodologies with individual student learning styles by employing adult learning theory, multiple intelligences, differentiated instruction and a wide variety of other teaching strategies.

Evidence of teaching methodologies and faculty lesson plans can be found in the administrative offices of each academic Department. Form II also includes information regarding teaching methodologies and records of faculty degrees.

In the fall semester, the department chairs worked closely with the dean of APS, the Human Resources Office, the President, and the Management Team, to look at comparable national and institutional data in prioritizing program needs when hiring highly trained content specialists, both full-time and adjunct. In the spring 2012 semester, some College personnel volunteered to assist with teaching course sections that matched their field of study, expertise, and experience. A Total of nineteen college personnel volunteered to teach and was identified as Additional Duty (AD) instructors. Towards the end of spring 2012, the

APS began the task of hiring to fill its vacant positions for the fall 2012 semester. Although, vacant positions are still present, the College continues to work towards filling the positions as needed for full-time and adjunct positions.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Make available webinars and the Magna Publications subscription throughout the year.
2. Fill vacant full-time or adjunct instructor positions as recommended by the program, based against institutional priorities, peer analysis, and program review.

***Standard II.A2e.** The institution evaluates all courses and programs through an ongoing systematic review of their relevance, appropriateness, achievement of learning outcomes, currency, and future needs and plans.*

#### Descriptive Summary

The Academic Council (AC) is responsible for periodically reviewing courses and programs. AC mandates course guide updates every three years, thus ensuring that NMC courses are evaluated through an ongoing, systematic review for their relevance, appropriateness, achievement of learning outcomes, currency, and future needs and plans.

Faculty members in collaboration with Department Chairs have the primary role in the design and development of NMC's education programs. The procedures for program proposals are similarly outlined and systematically described in NMC's "Academic Council's Guide to Preparing Course Guides." Program proposals are to be developed by faculty, beginning with a written presentation of the program concept by the proposer to the Department Chair, which is then reviewed at the Department level for relevance, appropriateness, statement of need, goals and objectives, resources and costs, evaluation plan, and implementation schedule before approval. When the draft is finalized, it is then forwarded to the Dean of Academic Program and Services (APS) for review and approval. If approved by the Dean of APS, the draft is forwarded to the AC, which meets to hear a presentation by the proposer and/or the Department Chair and systematically assesses the proposal for its relevance, appropriateness, achievement of learning outcomes, currency, associated costs and future needs and plans. The AC then makes formal recommendations regarding curriculum decisions to the Dean of APS, who grants final approval for all new and revised courses. Upon approval, a curriculum action request is signed and dated and sent to the AC archivist, who is the administrative manager for the APS office, for document filing.

New program proposals are also channeled through the same AC procedures, but includes the following steps: All new programs must be submitted by the Dean of APS to the President for review; upon approval by the President, the proposer and/or Department Chair makes a presentation to the Board of Regents (BOR); new program proposals approved by the BOR are then sent back to the AC for final review and archival. NMC continues to practice at all

levels, course content relevancy, meaningful activities, purposeful institutional methods, and consistent sequential alignment of courses for optimal student learning.

### Self Evaluation

Evaluation at NMC is both micro and macro. Course evaluation takes place every semester with every course. Program evaluation takes place at the Department and senior management level. This evaluation is inclusive of all stakeholders: Students in courses evaluate teaching methodologies and teaching effectiveness, faculty at the Department level both respond to student evaluations and conduct their own reviews of courses and programs, and senior managers, along with faculty and students, evaluate and modify programs and courses within programs to ensure that courses and programs are effective, that courses and programs reflect real world needs and fit student needs, both local and global.

Criteria used in course and program review are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time bound. Student Learning Outcomes are written for every course guide, lessons are planned with those outcomes in mind, and assessment and evaluation are guided by the same. Faculty and management stay current through on-going professional development, through professional membership and participation in professional organizations, and through daily interactions, both formal and informal, within and across programs and Departments.

Course level curricular review is at the core of program evaluation; this course level review is complemented by program level review that considers local and global needs, student levels and needs, and Department level fit within overall program and degree focused need. Primary data includes both quantitative information, in the form of course evaluation data, and qualitative information, in the form of analytic anecdotal information. Evaluation of the overall College curriculum takes place at the senior management level with backward and forward input from stakeholders at all levels, from student to the governing board.

Program relevancy is determined by student, local, and global demands and by management and faculty examination and analysis of professional expectations, standards, and benchmarks. Student learning for all programs and courses are identified and approved by an academic council committee of the whole and formalized in the College catalog and in individual course guides. As can be seen in course pass and graduation rates, students make steady progress in achieving these outcomes and objectives.

Program evaluations promote changes at the course level, such as re-evaluation of instructional focus, changes in approaches, changes in evaluation and assessment methods, and changes in curricular materials used. This course level evaluation both feeds and is reflective of program level assessment and program level assessment and evaluation drives institutional planning and budget goals and objectives at the senior management level. NMC's Form 3 is used to link program review to planning, budgeting, and resource allocation. One improvement which can be linked to program review is the construction of a new office building and lab for the Languages and Humanities Department. First cycle program evaluation of the English Language Institute stressed the need for new facilities. As a result, the decision was made to construct Building M. Another improvement linked to

assessment was made by the General Education Committee. The Gen Ed Committee's evaluation of EN 094 Writing and Grammar Study III found that there was a need to increase the critical thinking aspect of this course. As a result, ELI instructors agreed to place more emphasis on critical thinking in this course.

Evidence: General Education assessment evidence can be found in the Office of the Liberal Arts Coordinator. Program assessment, post graduate survey, and retention rate studies evidence can be found in the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. Course assessment evidence can be found in the Office of the Dean of Academic Programs and Services, and in the administrative offices of each academic Department.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Formalize the next 2-year Staggered Course Assessment schedule for reviewing courses in all academic degree programs, to include the attainment of proficiency of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) according to the WASC Rubric for Evaluating Instructional Effectiveness – Part III: Student Learning Outcomes.
2. Re-evaluate the need to offer or develop new programs with emphasis on engaging targeted business sectors.

***Standard II.A2f.** The institution engages in ongoing, systematic evaluation and integrated planning to assure currency and measure achievement of its stated Student Learning Outcomes for courses, certificates, programs including general and vocational education, and degrees. The institution systematically strives to improve those outcomes and makes the results available to appropriate constituencies.*

### Descriptive Summary

Faculty members develop courses, but at the present time not programs in collaboration with their Department Chairs. These courses and programs must be reviewed by the Academic Council and the Dean of Academic Programs and Services. The Dean of Administration, the Dean of Student Services, Management Team (MT), the President, the Board of Regents, and program advisory committees will also examine their feasibility to assure that the course or program meets the needs of the community. Included in all course guides and syllabus are Student Learning Outcomes that are clearly written and communicated to all stakeholders accordingly.

NMC continues to facilitate an effective system for assessing Student Learning Outcomes. Under the guidance of the director of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, the Dean of Academic Programs and Services, and the Academic Council, faculty continue to improve course guides by including more specific and measurable Student Learning Outcomes using Bloom's Taxonomy. Program Learning Outcomes that map to the individual courses in an instructional program have been developed and are published in the NMC General Catalog 2012-2013. Also included in the Catalog are the mission statements of support units of the



College. Through regular meetings, memos and discussion, NMC continues to raise awareness among faculty and staff of the importance of explicitly stating and measuring learning outcomes as part of a comprehensive assessment program. The Dean of Academic Programs and Services, the Academic Council, Department Chairs and the faculty continue to work together collegially and coordinate efforts to ensure alignment between course-level Student Learning Outcomes and Program Learning Outcomes. These types of discussions and work are evidenced in program or Department level meetings, Academic Council meetings, or Academic Program and Services (APS) Leadership Team meetings.

### Self Evaluation

The notion of ongoing, systematic evaluation and integrated planning is firmly established at NMC as evidenced by regular interdepartmental and intradepartmental meetings as well as professional development workshops.

The College has an established planning process in place which is cyclical and incorporates systematic evaluation of programs and services, improvement planning, implementation, and re-evaluation. This is evidenced by the operational plan which is reviewed by Academic Programs and Services and updated every semester. College budgeting of operational resources is linked with Form 3 which links program review to earmark planning, budgeting, and resource needs. Allocations of personnel are decided at Management Team.

The institutional data is available on PowerCAMPUS (Student Informational System), student records (Office of Admissions and Records), Institutional N-Drive, and archived in Department administrative management office, and with the Dean of Academic Programs and Services. This data is used to plan semester course schedules, changes in course offerings, advising students, program review, and budgeting. Although much of the institutional data is available to the community, FAFSA regulations are followed strictly to protect student privacy.

Evidence of various meetings such as professional development days, Departmental meetings, Academic Council meetings, and PROAC meetings can be found in the minutes taken at each of these meetings.

The College continues to implement comprehensive, formal, systematic and ongoing assessment methods for programs and courses based on Student Learning Outcomes as well as other standard measures. To continue its process of valid and reliable assessment of student success, the instructional management programs must be part of an overall institutional assessment with an annual review process. All organizational activities currently complete the establishment of quantitative and qualitative performance indicators. These indicators taken collectively, and with the measurement data from indicators and the channels for organizational response to the data, will constitute a comprehensive system that will hold the College as a true learning organization.

More specifically, with regard to instruction, Department Chairs and faculty continue to work collegially to ensure that course guides embody the necessary content and rigor, that there are

an adequate number of clearly stated and measurable Student Learning Outcomes, and that classroom instruction and evaluation are vertically and horizontally aligned. The type of alignment that require course Student Learning Outcomes be linked to the College mission statement are program driven and evidenced to student learning.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

None

***Standard II.A2g.** If an institution uses Departmental course and/or program examinations, it validates their effectiveness in measuring student learning and minimizes test biases.*

#### Descriptive Summary

NMC currently uses College program generated Math placement and exit tests with plans to pilot the COMPASS test instrument for spring semester 2013. Other types of examinations include standardized assessment tools reviewed and adopted by individual programs to test abilities and skills as aligned by program and Student Learning Outcomes.

#### Self Evaluation

NMC employs a variety of assessments to ensure non-biased valid measures of student learning. In one of its developmental programs, the English Language Institute (ELI) in particular, administers the use of Accuplacer. It is a web-based Adaptive Standardized Test NMC uses to place students in English courses. The Adult Basic Education Program uses the paper version of Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS). CASAS is a standardized test used to measure reading, Mathematics, listening, writing, speaking, critical thinking and problem solving skills. It includes an appraisal, pretest, and post-test. It is used to measure student learning as students enter into the program, and to measure their progress in the program.

Aside from the use of Accuplacer and CASAS given at the Departmental level, all programs employ a variety of assessments issued at the program level and course level depending on their program needs. To name a few assessments measures include, NCLEX, PRAXIS, Unit Test, Mastery Test, National Test Batteries, Portfolios, research papers, group projects, examinations, practicums, and presentations. The additional assessments validate the student's actual competency skills to ensure non-biased valid measures of student learning.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Implement in the spring 2013 semester, a standardized test tool in accordance with Academic Council for Math placement and exit examinations.

***Standard II.A2h.*** *The institution awards credit based on student achievement of the course's stated learning outcomes. Units of credit awarded are consistent with institutional policies that reflect generally accepted norms or equivalencies in higher education.*

#### Descriptive Summary

Classroom instruction, evaluation and results of student grades are based on approved course guides that clearly state specific and measureable Student Learning Outcomes [IIA: 33]. The units of credit awarded reflect the academic norms of higher education as is evidenced by the transferability and employability of graduates and by specific articulation agreements [IIA: 34]. To ensure consistency, grading information is included in the General College Catalog 2012-2013, in all course guides and distributed to all students in the individual syllabi at the beginning of each semester or course.

#### Self Evaluation

The institution awards credit based on student achievement of the course's stated learning outcomes and the number of contact hours needed to satisfy the course requirement. Units of credit awarded are consistent with institutional policies that reflect generally accepted norms or equivalencies in higher education.

Credits are determined by the course content based upon Student Learning Outcomes and the number of contact hours needed to satisfy the course requirement. Credits awarded are consistent with accepted norms in higher education: one credit = 15 contact hours per credit. Each credit = 55 minutes of class instruction.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Discuss and review the current federal definition of credit hour as it relates to post-secondary institutions.

***Standard II.A2i.*** *The institution awards degrees and certificates based on student achievement of a program's stated learning outcomes.*

#### Descriptive Summary

Program Learning Outcomes are aligned with the course level Student Learning Outcomes. Programs map Student Learning Outcomes to the required courses and the institutional learning outcomes. Full responsibility of program stated outcomes are developed and reviewed by faculty members in cooperation with program managers, to include feedback from other stakeholders.

#### Self Evaluation

The institution awards degrees and certificates based on student achievement of a program's stated learning outcomes. The institution ensures that achievement of stated Program

Learning Outcomes, listed in the course syllabi, is the basis for awarding degrees and certificates. The College has a systemic process for all newly proposed courses as outlined in the “Procedure for Proposing a New Program or Course.” This collaborative process involves the proposer of the course, the Department Chair, Academic Council, the Dean of Academic Programs and Services, College Council, the President, and the Board of Regents and involves several stages: The Program Concept Stage, The Development Stage, The Implementation Stage, and Evaluation Stage.

The institutional level dialogue about expectations of students earning a degree or certificate is conducted in Academic Council, and results in changes to the catalog, IDPs, ICPs. Dialogue also occurs during academic advising. All students have a clear path in achieving Student Learning Outcomes as explicitly stated in the relevant course syllabus, individual degree plan, individual certificate plan and the College catalog. The effectiveness of learning at each level is evaluated through program review across all programs.

The institution uses established procedures to design and identify Student Learning Outcomes and Program Learning Outcomes as explicitly stated in its “Guide to Preparing Proposals and Course Guides.” The Academic Council is the governing body that oversees the delivery, administration and evaluation of all programs.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Review and update the “Procedure for Proposing a New Program or Course.”

***Standard II.A3.*** *The institution requires of all academic and vocational degree programs a component of general education based on a carefully considered philosophy that is clearly stated in its catalog. The institution, relying on the expertise of its faculty, determines the appropriateness of each course for inclusion in the general education curriculum by examining the stated learning outcomes for the course.*

#### Descriptive Summary

The College publishes a general catalog that outlines the general requirements for all programs both academic and community based. It launched the first annual catalog this fall with the College’s General Catalog 2012-2013, a great leap from previous practice of publishing a catalog every three years. Included in the current catalog, is a detailed degree credential of all full-time faculty at NMC. The programs, in collaboration with faculty, staff, and students, continue to formulate, review, evaluate, and modify measurable Student Learning Outcomes as they align to the general education curriculum. The current IDPs [IIA: 35] have been updated to reflect the alignment between general education and program requirements.

The appointment of a Liberal Arts Coordinator in July 2011, and subsequent hiring recently of this same position for more permanency, has demonstrated more stability in the articulation and facilitation of general education requirements with program requirements at NMC [IIA: 36].

### Self Evaluation

The General Education courses are those selected by faculty and subsequently submitted to Academic Council through the respective Departments of said faculty. These courses have been approved by Academic Council and, as such, represent the philosophy and goals of General Education, as stated in the NMC Catalog: “The goals of NMC’s General Education Program are for students to acquire important general knowledge, develop basic academic skills, develop critical thinking skills, and be able to integrate their knowledge and skills so as to promote the capacity for life-long learning” (p. 96).

Student Learning Outcomes are used in that outcomes guide faculty decisions to propose courses that are subsequently submitted to Academic Council. These courses are approved by Academic Council only when said learning outcomes are deemed to meet the requirements within the framework of General Education.

The rationale for General Education is communicated to all stakeholders through a variety of means, not limited to the following: course syllabi, NMC Catalog, postings in classrooms (and other student venues), NMC website, as well as at meetings open to the community and during student advising by counselors and faculties.

The general Education philosophy is reflected in the degree requirements in that students must demonstrate having achieved comprehensive learning outcomes in relation to a variety of disciplines within the areas of languages, humanities, sciences and mathematics. According to the NMC Catalog: “The goal of the College’s *General Education Program* is for students to acquire important general knowledge, develop basic academic skills, develop critical thinking skills, and be able to integrate their knowledge and skills so as to promote the capacity for life-long learning” (2010-2012).

The degree requirements are made available to all stakeholders so they are able to make more informed decisions in regards to their program and or degree choices.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Use measurable student learning outcomes to ensure the alignment between general education and program requirements.
2. Review and evaluate student learning outcomes in Non-Degree Units in Mathematics.

***Standard II.A3a.*** *An understanding of the basic content and methodology of the major areas of knowledge: areas include the humanities and fine arts, the natural sciences, and the social sciences.*

### Descriptive Summary

The College has formulated specific and measureable general education Program Learning Outcomes over the last two academic years in the areas of language arts, Mathematics,

natural sciences and the social sciences, as detailed through actions at Academic Council meetings and as published recently in the College General Catalog 2012-2013.

### Self Evaluation

The basic content and methodology of traditional areas of knowledge are reviewed by the General Education Assessment Committee, whose responsibility is to verify that individual courses support one or more of the General Education Outcomes and to recommend changes to these courses.

Once the General Education Assessment Committee (GEAC) has verified the content-related appropriateness of courses and made recommendations, these findings are presented to academic Departments and subsequently are reviewed and approved by Academic Council with a view to ensuring the inclusion of any agreed-upon changes in course guides and syllabi. The GEAC is responsible for assessing courses for alignment with NMC's 14 Gen Ed learning outcomes.

Students demonstrate achievement of General Education learning outcomes. The level of student achievement is measured through course assessment. The first round of Gen Ed course assessment examined 10 courses and found each of the assessed courses to be in alignment with at least one Gen Ed outcome. Recommendations were made and submitted to PROAC.

Periodic review of course guides and syllabi (by instructors, Department Chairs and Academic Council) ensures there is a consistent process for verifying the inclusion of Gen Ed-appropriate content and methodology. Placed in all syllabi are not only the course-specific SLOs but also the Gen Ed learning outcomes, which are all communicated to students both orally and in writing.

The degree to which students are able to apply their understanding to subsequent coursework is demonstrated through their progression in their respective programs. Also NMC has put into effect a Program Guarantee Policy (11/28/11) which states: "Northern Marianas College (NMC) offers education and training designed to enable students to acquire the entry-level vocational/technical competencies necessary to enter the workforce. NMC stands behind the training provided and will guarantee tuition free to provide up to eight credits of retraining under the condition that the employer certifies that the student lacks the target job competencies normally expected of an entry-level employee who has graduated from an equivalent vocational/technical program. To be eligible for retraining, a student must have graduated from NMC with an associate in science or associate in applied science degree, or baccalaureate degree in education."

### Actionable Improvement Plans

None

***Standard II.A3b.** A capability to be a productive individual and lifelong learner: skills include oral and written communication, information competency, computer literacy, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis/logical thinking, and the ability to acquire knowledge through a variety of means.*

### Descriptive Summary

The College has formulated specific and measureable general education Program Learning Outcomes over the last two academic years to demonstrate a student's "capability to be a productive individual and lifelong learner that are more skills based and more specific to the following areas: oral and written communication, information competency, computer literacy, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis/logical thinking, and the ability to acquire knowledge through a variety of means," as detailed in course guides and course syllabi and as published recently in the College General Catalog 2012-2013.

The Liberal Arts Coordinator has formulated a general education matrix reviewed and adopted by the Academic Council that clearly communicates an articulation of general education courses as it aligns to course requirements. Adopted also for implementation in the fall 2012 semester is the core requirement course called BE111 College Success, for all academic degree programs and is updated in all current Individual Degree Plans at NMC.

### Self Evaluation

The General Education Assessment Committee examines courses and verifies their alignment with General Education SLOs. Each Gen Ed course must be in alignment with at least one Gen Ed SLO. To date, the College's focus on ensuring a productive individual and lifelong learner: skills include oral and written communication, information competency, computer literacy, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis/logical thinking, and the ability to acquire knowledge through a variety of means, is accomplished via the General Education courses.

The criteria the College uses to assure the required level of skills meets collegiate standards includes Academic Council review and approval of all course guides and their respective courses. The degree to which the College is satisfied that these measures are effective is determined through the results of various student surveys, completed prior to, and upon, graduation.

The degree to which students are able to apply their understanding to subsequent coursework is demonstrated through their progression in their respective programs. Also NMC has put into effect a Program Guarantee Policy (11/28/11) which states: "Northern Marianas College (NMC) offers education and training designed to enable students to acquire the entry-level vocational/technical competencies necessary to enter the workforce. NMC stands behind the training provided and will guarantee tuition free to provide up to eight credits of retraining under the condition that the employer certifies that the student lacks the target job competencies normally expected of an entry-level employee who has graduated from an equivalent vocational/technical program. To be eligible for retraining, a student must have

graduated from NMC with an associate in science or associate in applied science degree, or baccalaureate degree in education.”

Based on the data collected, the use of placement tests ensures that students are enrolled in classes that reflect their skill levels. Students do not progress to the next College level course unless they pass with a C or better grade. This method has proven very effective. It is the same as when seeking employment, where an applicant is hired once he or she has met the qualifications.

### Actionable Improvements Plans

1. Monitor the success of the BE111 College Success course as a core requirement.
2. Refocus the College’s attention in ensuring that capabilities of a productive individual and lifelong learner is accomplished in the General Education and in all College courses by benchmarking the following as a checklist: skills that include oral and written communication, information competency, computer literacy, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis/logical thinking, and the ability to acquire knowledge through a variety of means.

***Standard II.A3c.** Recognition of what it means to be an ethical human being and effective citizen: qualities include an appreciation of ethical principles; civility and interpersonal skills; respect for cultural diversity; historical and aesthetic sensitivity; and the willingness to assume civic, political, and social responsibilities locally, nationally, and globally.*

### Descriptive Summary

General Education requirements and specific course content in humanities and fine arts assist in the development of historical and aesthetic sensitivity. Included also are social and service-oriented clubs that include a variety of student-led and student member clubs. Cohesively, these club activities demonstrate authentic learning outcomes in the areas of civic involvement and meaningful social interaction and cooperation between ethnically and culturally diverse groups of people at NMC.

### Self Evaluation

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are developed to address concerns about ethics and effective citizenship. These concerns are derived from the NMC Mission and Philosophy, which state that NMC “is dedicated to helping its students actualize their potentials for the enhancement of their individual lives as well as, for the improvement of the Commonwealth as a whole.” Additionally, these ethics- and citizenship-related learning outcomes are addressed in General Education SLOs (e.g., #5 Enables the individuals to understand and appreciate their culture; and #7 Apply a system of personal values based on accepted ethics that lead to civic and social responsibility).

The General Education Outcomes are designed to help students to develop academic and



critical thinking skills, as well as their ability to share their knowledge and skills while promoting the importance of lifelong learning. These outcomes are included in all of the College course syllabi and are prominently posted throughout the campus.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Include the meaning of an ethical human being and effective citizen: qualities that include an appreciation of ethical principles; civility and interpersonal skills; respect for cultural diversity; historical and aesthetic sensitivity; and the willingness to assume civic, political, and social responsibilities locally, nationally, and globally, in non-General Education courses.

***Standard II.A4.*** All degree programs include focused study in at least one area of inquiry or in an established interdisciplinary core.

#### Descriptive Summary

The College offers seven programs of study leading to an Associate in Arts or Associate in Science or Associate in Applied Science degree, and one Bachelor of Science degree.

#### Self-Evaluation

All degree programs offered in the name of the institution include an area of focused study. Under the Associate in Arts degree program, the institution offers a focused study in Liberal Arts and in Business. Under the Associate of Applied Science in Business Administration degree program, the institution offers an emphasis in Accounting, Business Management, and Computer Application. In addition, the institution offers an Associate in Applied Science in Hospitality Management as well as Criminal Justice, an Associate in Science degree in Nursing as well as Natural Resource Management, and a Bachelor of Science in Education with a concentration in Elementary Education, Special Education, Early Childhood, and Rehabilitation & Human Services.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

None

***Standard II.A5.*** Students completing vocational and occupational certificates and degrees demonstrate technical and professional competencies that meet employment and other applicable standards and are prepared for external licensure and certification.

#### Descriptive Summary

The College is the sole public institution of higher education in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). As part of its mission statement, “The College shall be responsible for providing education in the areas of adult and continuing education, post-secondary and adult vocational education and professional development for the people of the Commonwealth.” Included also in each NMC program mission is an attention to the

expected technical and professional competencies that meet employer expectations and standards that prepare students for their chosen career.

### Self Evaluation

NMC offers a limited number of vocational and occupational degrees. Statistical data is maintained by the Office of Admissions and Records as well as individual Departments. The School of Education maintains records of its students as they pass the licensure examination (PRAXIS) and the Nursing Department maintains records of its students who have graduated and passed the licensure examination NCLEX. Articles appearing in local newspapers highlight Nursing students who have passed the NCLEX on their first attempt. Students are also prepared for certification through the testing center which has administered several national tests. All Degree and Certificate programs undergo course assessment and program review which is evident in the Form 1s and Form 2s. Form 2 specifically identifies the number of students who have graduated and passed the licensure examinations (i.e. NCLEX and PRAXIS I). Form 2 also has statistical data on job placement of students after graduation.

NMC has entered into an agreement with the U.S. Department of Labor in regards to an apprenticeship program. This agreement was lead by the Dean of Community Programs and Services (COMPASS). The initial CNMI Apprenticeship Coordinator, Ms. Geri Willis, recently retired, and her successor has yet to be named. While she was acting CNMI Apprenticeship Coordinator, Ms. Willis worked to lay a framework to implement the U.S. Apprenticeship program in the CNMI, integrating apprenticeship and workforce development, maximizing and leveraging resources, and strengthening linkages with workforce investment and education systems to increase the quality of the College programs. Ms. Willis maintained contact with Mr. Al Valles of the Office of Apprenticeship, U.S. Department of Labor to communicate workforce needs of the CNMI. Ms. Willis also communicated with Mr. Valles to ensure compliance with U.S. Department of Labor guidelines regarding recognized apprenticeable programs, templates for sponsors, affirmative action plans, qualifications and selection procedures, sponsorship registration information, U.S. Immigration Form I-9 issues, employment verification, and guidelines for veterans who enter the apprenticeship program. Ms. Willis also met with local business community representatives and governmental agencies to assess their apprenticeship needs. She also met with NMC Department representatives, such as the director of Adult Basic Education, the Chair of the Nursing Department, and the program coordinator of the Criminal Justice Program to assess possible apprenticeship needs. In addition, Ms. Willis approached members of the CNMI legislature to ascertain status of the Contract Workers funding program.

BOR Policy 303.1 Program Guarantee, which became effective November 28, 2011, guarantees to provide up to eight credits, tuition free, of retraining under the condition that an employer certifies that a student lacks the target job competencies normally expected of an entry-level employee who has graduated from an equivalent vocational/technical program. To be eligible for retraining, a student must have graduated from NMC with an Associate in Science or Associate in Applied Science degree, or Baccalaureate degree in Education.

NMC recognizes that it offers a limited number of vocational and occupational degree programs and has goals to expand to meet the local CNMI needs.

NMC maintains records of all students' progress and academic achievements. Individualized Degree Plans (IDPs) and Individualized Certificate Plans (ICPs) are used to guide students to complete their prospective programs in order to graduate (NMC Catalog). Course assessments and evaluations help determine if Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are met. The evaluation process allows the program to develop methods on how best to meet student needs to accomplish program requirements.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Support of the Apprenticeship Program.
2. Track graduates from academic degree programs in Nursing, Business and Education.
3. Examine local market data to determine new vocational and occupational needs and expectations.

***Standard II.A6.** The institution assures that students and prospective students receive clear and accurate information about educational courses and programs and transfer policies. The institution describes its degrees and certificates in terms of their purpose, content, course requirements, and expected Student Learning Outcomes. In every class section students receive a course syllabus that specifies learning outcomes consistent with those in the institutions' officially approved course outline.*

#### Descriptive Summary

The Northern Marianas College General Catalog 2012-2013 describes all degree programs and transferability of credits to other institutions. The catalog is also available online in its entirety. The NMC College catalog and website lists course descriptions, some course guides are also available on the website, and a schedule of courses is compiled and made available to the public every semester and for the summer sessions. Updates to the semester or summer schedule are made regularly as the need arises, keeping constituencies abreast of changes as needed. At the beginning of each semester, a printed syllabi is given to students and reviewed in class.

#### Self Evaluation

In accordance with BOR Policy 3008, the Academic Council (AC) [IIIA: 37] is the governing body that oversees and ensures accuracy of information in all academic programs offered. Degree and certificate requirements are clearly described in IDPs, ICPs, course guides, and course syllabi. AC ensures that Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are included in the description of courses and used to improve programs.

BOR Policy 3002 [IIA: 38] mandates that instructors provide a course syllabus to students on the first day of instruction, and instructors as part of their profession must ensure that all students receive a course syllabus that includes SLOs. Evidence can be measured through course assessments and course evaluation where Form 1 provides data as supporting evidence.

NMC verifies that individual sections of courses adhere to the course objectives/learning outcomes through course observations, review of course syllabi and course evaluation by Department Chairs, and course assessment.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

None.

***Standard II.A6a.** The institution makes available to its students clearly stated transfer-of-credit policies in order to facilitate the mobility of students without penalty. In accepting transfer credits to fulfill degree requirements, the institution certifies that the expected learning outcomes for transferred courses are comparable to the learning outcomes of its own courses. Where patterns of student enrollment between institutions are identified, the institution develops articulation agreements as appropriate to its mission.*

#### Descriptive Summary

The College provides information about transfer of credit in its current general catalog in sections entitled “Transferability of Credit to Other Institutions” and “Admission with Transfer Credit.” The NMC Registrar is responsible for transferability of credit coursework. In accepting credits from an accredited College or university to satisfy degree requirements, assessment of course equivalency is carried out by the Registrar when formal articulation agreements between institutions are in effect. When no articulation agreement exists, the Department Chair and faculty of the appropriate program or Department are consulted for a determination as to whether the course in question covers content and achieves educational objectives comparable to those of a similar NMC course.

#### Self Evaluation

BOR Policy 8000.01 addresses the transfer of coursework in and out of the institution. The transfer of coursework is also addressed in the NMC General Catalog 2009-2012, March 2011 Update and in the current College General Catalog 2012-13. The policy is communicated to students during student orientation and academic advising. Students may also obtain information of the transferability of courses from the Office of Admissions and Records (OAR) and Counseling Programs and Services.

There is a seven-year master calendar for policy review, which documents the date each policy is reviewed by a governance body, the legal counsel, and the board. The calendar also documents each policy’s board approval date and the seventh year cycle review date.

The Dean of Academic Programs and Services (APS) has taken the lead to renew articulation agreements with other institutions. A General Education articulation matrix and a course articulation matrix (Non-Gen. Ed.) were given to the Dean of APS by Dr. Julie Ulloa-Heath of the University of Guam (UOG) to input NMC courses equivalent to UOG courses and courses from other Pacific region Colleges [IIA: 39] such as Guam Community College (GCC), College of the Marshall Islands (CMI), College of Micronesia – Federated States of Micronesia (COM-FSM), and Palau Community College (PCC).

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Submit to UOG course outlines and syllabi to start the review process and articulation.

***Standard II.A6b.** When programs are eliminated or program requirements are significantly changed, the institution makes appropriate arrangements so that enrolled students may complete their education in a timely manner with a minimum of disruption.*

#### Descriptive Summary

The College recognizes that the curriculum must be responsive to the needs of the students and the community. As those needs change, the content and organization of the educational programs must also undergo regular review for appropriateness and efficiency including both quantitative and qualitative measures. In addition, the procedures for phasing out programs as well as the existing curriculum review process serve to ensure responsive quality educational programs at NMC.

#### Self-Evaluation

BOR Policy 3009 addresses the need for programs to create, modify or eliminate degree and/or certificate programs [IIA: 40].

BOR Policy 3008 enables the Academic Council (AC) to advise Departments regarding the creation, modification or elimination of degree and/or certificate programs [IIA: 41].

In accordance with BOR Policy 3009, the appropriate Department submits a recommendation to the AC to eliminate or modify programs, and considers in the review and recommendation process the evaluation reports of relevant programs, the number of students remaining enrolled in the affected programs, and the number of terms anticipated for these students to complete their programs.

The College is committed to ensuring that students actively enrolled in a degree program are able to complete their education in a timely fashion. When any change in program requirements are made, students are given the option to complete their degree studies under the requirements established at the time of entrance to the program. These requirements are set forth in the Individual Degree Plan (IDP) for each degree program.

When degree programs are eliminated, the College maintains its commitment to students actively pursuing a degree by ensuring that required courses continue to be offered and scheduled so that students may complete their studies within a reasonable period of time. Academic advisers work closely with such students to inform them of the status of the program, the anticipated date of discontinuation, and the arrangements being made to ensure that courses and any other degree requirements can be completed in the interim.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

None.

***Standard II.A6c.** The institution represents itself clearly, accurately, and consistently to prospective and current students, the public, and its personnel through its catalogs, statements, and publications, including those presented in electronic formats. It regularly reviews institutional policies, procedures, and publications to assure integrity in all representations about its mission, programs, and services.*

#### Descriptive Summary

The NMC communicates with its personnel, prospective students, current students, and the general public through print, electronic archives and online sites.

#### Self Evaluation

The NMC General Catalog, website, and Department brochures are updated as needed. The General Catalog is distributed by the office of the Dean of Student Services to academic Departments and student services Departments. The NMC Fact Book which contains student achievement data is made readily available on the NMC website under Resource Documents.

Policies are currently being reviewed and a seven-year master calendar for policy review has been created to ensure all policies are reviewed and updated within the next seven years.

The print material includes the NMC General Catalog 2012-2013, the Schedule of Courses, and various reports both annual and periodic. The College also communicates electronically via the following: the NMC Website, NMC courses online; in addition, an electronic archive on the local area network, known as the N-drive, holds a collection of electronic documents primarily for College personnel. For daily communications, NMC has an email system for both employees and students. The College also utilizes the two local newspapers, the local KSPN TV station, and local radio stations to disseminate information.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

None

***Standard II.A7.** In order to assure the academic integrity of the teaching-learning process, the institution uses and makes public governing board adopted policies on academic freedom and responsibility, student academic honesty, and specific institutional beliefs or world views. These policies make clear the institution's commitment to the free pursuit and dissemination of knowledge.*

### Descriptive Summary

NMC makes available to the College and the public accessible sections as they pertain to public information regarding policies and procedures of the College on the N-drive. Policies and Procedures governing the teaching-learning process are reviewed and approved by the Board of Regents (BOR), in collaboration with the President, Management Team, College Council, and Academic Council. The President works collectively with the College to ensure that all constituencies of the College are represented on Management Team and other governance councils.

The College General Catalog 2012-13 clearly states under Institutional Policies (pages 73-78), Student Regulations, Student Responsibilities, class attendance, student rights regarding records, student conduct, academic dishonesty, academic probation and suspension, readmission after suspension, academic dismissal, student appeal and grievances, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), non-discrimination, and sexual harassment. Additionally, the catalog included under the Degree and Certificate Programs section (page 79-81), educational philosophy and learning outcomes, General Education at NMC, academic freedom and responsibility, and School of Education policy information.

Board of Regents policy 3010 [IIA: 42] addresses academic dishonesty including cheating and plagiarism.

### Self Evaluation

Board-approved policies on academic freedom are made public on the institution's N-drive, institution catalogue, and faculty contracts. The policy on student academic honesty is stated in the catalog and course syllabi, and is also discussed at the beginning of each semester by faculty in class with students. The Dean of Academic Programs and Services (APS) is currently working closely with Academic Council, APS Leadership Team, College Council, and Management Team in reviewing and updating all academic policies for the next five years (BOR Seven-Year Calendar of Institutional Policies and Procedures).

All full-time faculty sign two-year contracts that clearly state the duties and responsibilities as an instructor at the NMC in assuring educational integrity regarding the teaching-learning process. Faculty members are represented by Faculty Senate, and have representatives on Management Team, College Council, and as a non-voting member of the Board of Regents.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Update all the academic policies.

***Standard II.A7a.** Faculty distinguishes between personal conviction and professionally accepted views in a discipline. They present data and information fairly and objectively.*

### Descriptive Summary

A number of Board of Regents (BOR) policies demonstrate Northern Marianas College's institutional commitment to the free and pursuit and dissemination of knowledge with the expectation that faculty members balance their academic freedom with the responsibility to distinguish between personal conviction and professionally accepted views in a discipline.

### Self Evaluation

BOR Policy 3001, "Professional Ethics," states, "In recognizing a special responsibility to their disciplines to seek the truth and to state it as they see it, instructors practice intellectual honesty." The policy further states, "Instructors encourage in their students the active pursuit of learning and honest academic achievement." To that end, the policy notes that instructors "adhere strictly to their proper role as intellectual guides and academic counselors...[and] present in their actions and in their person examples of the highest standards of professional discipline."

In upholding the highest standards of professional discipline, BOR Policy 3001 recognizes that instructors "measure the use of these rights and the urgency of these obligations in light of their responsibilities to their students, to the College, and to their profession." The policy further states, "When [instructors] speak or act as private persons, they avoid giving any impression that they speak or act for the College." This policy is reinforced by College procedure 4069, "Code of Ethics," which requires that faculty members "take adequate precautions to distinguish between his/her personal views and those of the College."

BOR Policy 3001 is reinforced by BOR Policy 3004, "Academic Freedom and Responsibility," which states, "Academic freedom is the right of members of the academic community to conduct research, to teach and to communicate knowledge in their fields of expertise, openly and without influence by individuals with a particular bias." The policy also requires that such academic freedom be exercised responsibly, stating that instructors "should also take care to distinguish between personal conviction and proven conclusions and to present relevant data fairly and objectively." The policy is reinforced by College procedure 4069, "Code of Ethics," which states that instructors "shall promote the student's independent action in his/her pursuit of knowledge and shall not prevent the student access to varying points of view [and] shall present the subject matter for which he/she bears responsibility."

These policies and procedures are embedded into the contracts of faculty according to BOR Policy 4020, which reiterates, "Faculty shall be guided by a deep conviction of the worth and dignity of the advancement of knowledge, recognize a special responsibility to their disciplines to seek the truth and to state it as they see it -- they practice intellectual honesty." In accordance with this policy, faculty contracts also state, "Instructors encourage the active pursuit of learning and honest academic achievement in their students...[and] present in their actions as in their persons examples of the highest standards of scholarly discipline."



Communication to faculty regarding distinguishing between personal conviction and professionally accepted views are discussed through Department meetings as recorded in a monthly report to the Dean of Academic Programs and Services, bi-annually, at Professional Development Workshops held once a semester. As recommended by Standard II Committee in 2010, Professional Development Workshop for faculty continues to be held at the end of the semester. The policy on academic freedom can also be found in the College catalogue, faculty contracts, the faculty handbook, and in NMC Board of Regents policies. The question of whether faculties distinguish between personal conviction and professionally accepted views is contained in the End-of-the-Semester Course and Instructor Evaluations completed by students in every class held every semester. This question is also included in the Institution's assessment tool that Department Chairs/peers use to evaluate faculty performance annually.

Board Educational Program Policy 3004 was recently revised and evaluated through the NMC governance process, and adopted by the Board of Regents as BOR Policy 301.1 Academic Freedom on May 21, 2012 [IIA: 43]. Approved by the BOR on August 17, 2012, after review and evaluation through the NMC governance process was the BOR Policy 906 Integrity and Ethics [IIA: 44].

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Develop procedures for Board of Regents Policy 301.1 Academic Freedom.

***Standard II.A7b.*** *The institution establishes and publishes clear expectations concerning student academic honesty and consequences for dishonesty.*

#### Descriptive Summary

As an academic community, the College places emphasis on individual responsibility. The NMC has a well-established policy regarding student academic honesty and the consequences of dishonesty, and can be found in the College General Catalog 2012-13, pages 73-78, under Institutional Policies, SOE Policy Information, page 111, SOE Student Handbook, in all course syllabi, and in the Board of Regents Educational Program Policy 3010, adopted on January 31, 1996.

#### Self Evaluation

The Institutional catalogue states the expectations regarding academic honesty. Program expectations are clearly communicated also through course syllabi that are given to every student and discussed in every class at the beginning of every semester. The Dean of Student Services has also made available a brochure outlining the consequences if policies of academic honesty are violated. All instructional and non-instructional faculties, both full-time and adjunct, are informed of these policies in Department meetings. Violations of this policy on the part of the students are discussed and documented by the appropriate Department Chairs on a case-by-case basis, and included in the instructor's personnel file as needed. The Dean of Academic Programs and Services also works closely with program and Department Chairs to enforce academic honesty procedures with students. The NMC Human

Resource Office (HRO) assists in the procedural handlings of academic honesty for employees with the employees' respective supervisors [IIA: 45].

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

None

***Standard II.A7c.** Institutions that require conformity to specific codes of conduct of staff, faculty, administrators, or students, or that seek to instill specific beliefs or world views, give clear prior notice of such policies, including statements in the catalog and /or appropriate faculty or student handbooks.*

#### Descriptive Summary

The Northern Marianas College is dedicated to Student Learning Outcomes and success as defined by the missions of the College, Department, or Program. Codes of Conduct are clearly communicated in personnel contracts [IIA: 46], program student handbooks such as the one used by the School of Education [IIA: 47], BOR Policy 906 Integrity and Ethics [IIA: 44] for all personnel at the College, and as detailed in the College General Catalog 2012-13.

#### Self Evaluation

The requirements of conformity to codes of conduct are communicated through Department meetings, the institution's N-Drive, NMC Website, NMC Catalogue, student and employee orientations, course syllabi, executive directives, institution emails, one-on-one conferencing between managers and subordinates, Board policies and at professional development workshops, and in employee contracts. NMC has the following BOR Policies: BOR Policy 3001, BOR Procedure 4069, BOR 3004, BOR 4020, BOR 3033, BOR 3011, BOR 4352, BOR Procedure 4352, BOR 3010, BOR 4020a, BOR 4212, BOR 4425, BOR 4365, BOR 3008.

The institutional beliefs are also instilled in the statements of the College Mission, Educational Philosophy, and Goals. The policies are communicated through meetings of Governance groups: Management Team, Academic Council, Faculty Senate, ASNMC, Staff Senate, College Council, and APS Leadership, as well as on the NMC N-Drive and NMC Website.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Develop and distribute a code of conduct handbook.

***Standard II.A8.** Institutions offering curricula in foreign locations to students other than U.S. nationals operate in conformity with standards and applicable Commission policies.*

Descriptive Summary

Northern Marianas College does not offer curricula in foreign locations. Although NMC does not have foreign locations, the College is an overseas education program located in the Pacific offering quality education to U.S. and Non-U.S. Nationals in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), U.S.A.

Self-Evaluation

None

Actionable Improvement Plans

None

## **Standard IIB. Student Support Services**

*The institution recruits and admits diverse students who are able to benefit from its programs, consistent with its mission. Student support services address the identified needs of students and enhance a supportive learning environment. The entire student pathway through the institutional experience is characterized by a concern for student access, progress, learning, and success. The institution systematically assesses student support services using student learning outcomes, faculty and staff input, and other appropriate measures in order to improve the effectiveness of these services.*

### Descriptive Summary

The Northern Marianas College (NMC) actively recruits and admits diverse students who are able to benefit from its academic programs. The division of student services coordinates most support services that address Standard II.B, both face-to-face and online. Services provided to students include: college preparatory activities, assistance with admissions, transfer credit evaluation, placement assessment, orientation, advising, academic tutorials, counseling, early intervention, disability support, assistance with financial aid, student leadership and civic engagement, library services, student employment and assistance with career placement.

The College facilitates events and activities each month to prepare students for college and to help them to attain their educational goals.

College departments and programs organized in support of Standard II.B are:

#### Office of Admission and Records (OAR)

OAR is the main office for admitting students, maintaining student records, providing Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) training, maintaining student enrollment data, articulating course credits, and coordinating registration and graduation events. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) obtains student enrollment data from OAR, and OIE is in charge of managing official reports for the College.

#### Financial Aid Office (FAO)

FAO administers grants and scholarships to provide financial aid to students who demonstrate financial need. FAO also reviews student academic standing, provides information on financial aid options, and reviews eligibility requirements for student employment. FAO provides financial counseling in collaboration with other outreach staff. FAO is directly responsible for administering U.S. Department of Education Title IV funds, including other federal grants and scholarships awarded to students. FAO also works collaboratively with private businesses, as well as local and regional scholarship programs that provide some form of financial aid to students. FAO staff work closely with active U.S. military personnel and veterans for assistance with accessing other forms of federal financial support.

### Library Programs and Services (LPS)

LPS provides both resources and an environment that enhances and supports the college's academic and community-based programs. LPS supports the instructional curriculum and academic research for students in their respective areas of study. LPS offers a wide range of resources to NMC students, staff, and faculty by providing a collection of monographs, serials, audio-visual materials, and access to electronic materials that reflect the information needs of the College. LPS promotes information literacy through ongoing instruction and outreach efforts, and strives to continually improve access to in-print and online resources, such as electronic journal databases. These services are also provided in fulfillment of Accreditation Standard IIC.

### Counseling Programs and Services (CPS)

CPS works to empower students to achieve educational, personal and career goals. Counselors provide academic and life skills development and crises intervention, as well as address academic and personal issues that may hamper student success. CPS also facilitates the Student Success Series, a collection of skill-building seminars, throughout the academic year. CPS provides tutorial services to assist students who struggle in, particularly in developmental English and math courses.

Counselors assist the College in recruiting and retaining students, as well as provide specialized services, including accommodations for students with disabilities.

### Disabilities Support Services (DSS)

DSS functions as the focal point for coordination of services and auxiliary aids for students with disabilities. DSS works to assist students with permanent or temporary disabilities so they can receive reasonable accommodations to fully participate in academic and non-academic programs. DSS also seeks to increase awareness among NMC staff, faculty, and students of disability-related issues. Students with a documented disability are eligible for services from DSS, which may include but are not limited to: assistive technology and/or devices, alternative testing services, early/priority registration, sign language interpreters, note-taking assistance, readers, and tutors.

### International Student Services (ISS)

ISS assists prospective international students in the processing of their US I-20 immigration forms for purposes of applying for visas to attend the College. ISS maintains the College's relationship with the US Student Exchange and Visitor Program (SEVP) and coordinates activities to meet SEVP reporting requirements. ISS assists international students with their transitioning needs with orientation, counseling, referral, and social activities. ISS is actively engaged in translating documents into other languages to better inform non-English speaking students of College requirements, procedures, and deadlines. ISS also assists in identifying academic tutorial and peer mentoring support for students.

### Career Services

Career Services helps students identify their career interests and skills and locate training possibilities (e.g., internships) for specific academic or vocational interests. Career Services offers career guidance and self-assessment tests, as well as help in identifying career choices and employment opportunities. Career Services has a comprehensive collection of audiovisual career materials including video tapes on career exploration, job searches, and personal development for use by both students and faculty. Career Services also organizes career fairs and workshops to prepare students accordingly.

#### Upward Bound Program (UBP)

UBP is a federally funded program, sponsored by the US Department of Education. It is designed to help high school students prepare for college and ultimately attain a bachelor's degree. UBP serves 120 high school students from low-income families along with high school students from families in which neither parent holds a bachelor's degree. UBP offers the following services and activities:

Instruction in reading, writing, study skills, and other subjects necessary for success in education beyond high school; academic, financial, and personal counseling; exposure to academic programs and cultural events; tutorial and mentoring services; information on post secondary education opportunities; assistance in completing college admissions and financial aid application; assistance with college placement tests; a six-week summer enrichment program or a math and science summer program; recreational activities (swimming, baseball, basketball, table tennis, volleyball, etc.); career exploration activities (mentoring, guest speakers, workshops, and business tours); seminars (college information and orientation, study skills development, drug awareness and prevention); field trips and cultural awareness activities.

#### Office of Student Activities & Leadership (OSAL)

OSAL is dedicated to enriching the student learning experience by providing activities that develop leadership qualities, character, responsibility, positive work ethics, and teamwork. OSAL supports the Associated Students of Northern Marianas College (ASNMC) along with registered clubs and other student organizations on campus.

OSAL manages the Service Learning Program, a grant-funded program that offers students the opportunity to enrich their classroom learning through the experience of service in the community, thereby promoting civic engagement and responsibility. The Services Learning Program engages faculty in integrating service learning projects into their curriculum, as well as partner with government and non-profit agencies in service learning activities.

#### Testing Center

Northern Marianas College (NMC) serves as the official testing center in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands for a range of national testing programs. Examples of tests administered through the Testing Center are the ACT, GRE General and Subject Tests, LSAT, MPRE, Praxis I & II, SAT I & II, SSAT, TOEFL, and PAN (TSA). The Testing Center works collaboratively with test proctors on the Tinian and Rota Instructional Sites to

administer tests to community members on these islands. Test information and registration bulletins are available for pick up anytime at the Testing Center or otherwise posted online on both the NMC and national testing center websites.

### Self Evaluation

The institution recruits and admits diverse students who are able to benefit from its programs, which is consistent with its mission.

The College increased its annual enrollment (unduplicated headcount) by 12 percent between 2006-2011 with an average of 1,305 students enrolled each year during this period [IIB:1]. During the fall 2011 term, the College enrolled 1,123 students from twelve countries. 82 percent were from the US and 18 percent from the Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Palau, Korea, China, Philippines, Japan, Thailand, Mongolia, Nepal, and the Netherlands [IIB:2]. The high proportion of students enrolled with US citizenship is consistent with the College's mission as the vast majority of these students are classified as residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and/or residents for tuition paying purposes.

Low-income students benefit from financial aid programs that provide financial resources to support their enrollment and student learning. Of the 1,224 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) applications received for the 2010-2011 school year, 75 percent were eligible for a need-based federal Pell Grant award. 79 percent of all federal Pell Grant award recipients received the maximum award [IIB:3].

With a few exceptions to requirements for admission to the School of Education and Nursing Programs, the College maintains an open admission policy to ensure the recruitment of diverse students into its academic programs. At the start of the spring 2012 term, 95 percent of all students were enrolled in one of 13 degree programs with the largest enrollments in Liberal Arts (23 percent), Elementary Education (18 percent), and Nursing (14 percent) [IIB:2].

Through innovative and progressive outreach programs, students are made aware of the College's services and resources through multiple outlets, e.g., student email announcements, the College website, the College catalog, the College student handbook, student orientations, student workshops, and brochures.

The College ensures the efficacy of its student support services through an integrated program review process that engages program staff in self-reflective dialogue and assessment to measure how well the College is meeting student needs. In particular, all programs organized under the division of student services participate in a year-round program review and assessment schedule characterized by the identification and assessment of student learning outcomes, and the collection and evaluation of data through tutoring/mentoring logs,

student surveys, event evaluations, and institutional reports extracted from PowerCampus. Results are analyzed and acted upon either by College management or program staff as part of the College's ongoing effort in the context of continuous quality improvement. To this end, student support services are mission-driven with established goals, outcomes, and measurements.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Evaluate the needs of the "non-traditional" student population.

***Standard II.B1.*** *The institution assures the quality of student support services and demonstrates that these services, regardless of location or means of delivery, support student learning and enhance achievement of the mission of the institution.*

### Descriptive Summary

The College measures the quality of its student support services through a variety of means, including: student feedback, usage rates, enrollment trends, retention rates, graduation rates, and the accomplishment of student learning and administrative unit outcomes. The College ensures the quality of its student support services by evaluating these measures and taking decisive action to better serve the needs and interests of students. College decisions and actions are made in an environment of continuous quality improvement and are often linked to one or more strategic goals in support of the mission of the College.

The College carries out strategic recruitment activities (e.g., NMC Information Sessions, Start Smart Seminars, Cash For College, etc.) to showcase educational opportunities at the College with the primary goal of increasing enrollment. Recruitment activities are coordinated between several offices within the Division of Student Services and the Office of External Relations. Major recruitment activities are evaluated by students through event evaluation surveys [IIB:4]. The results of these surveys are compiled by staff and used to identify suggestions for improvement and satisfaction levels of students on specific services provided at such events. The quantitative results of these surveys are also used for program (e.g., College Access Challenge Grant) assessment of student learning or administrative unit outcomes. Student enrollment each year, in many respects, is a reflection of the quality of the College's recruitment efforts and interactions between staff and students. Promoting an awareness of the College's resources and programs and ensuring the quality of such efforts enhance achievement of the mission of the institution.

Student support services are guided by Expanded Statements of Institutional Purpose (ESIP) [IIB:5], program-specific mission statements that align with the mission of the College. Each program ESIP forms the basis for the programs' development of student learning or administrative unit outcomes. These statements are characterized by a concern for the success and well-being of all students, which includes specialized services to support and address student needs. Collectively, student support services organized under the Division of



Student Services work together to impact recruitment, retention, graduation, and career placement rates.

Program review cycles, student learning outcomes assessments, surveys and evaluations developed by programs within the Division of Student Services provide important student feedback to impact decision-making at the College. The following is a sample of the different types of instruments and methods utilized at both the institution and program level to compile student feedback:

- Student Registration Survey [IIB:6]
- Admission Process Survey [IIB:7]
- Graduation Survey [IIB:8]
- Student Advising Survey [IIB:9]
- Kuder Career Assessments [IIB:10]
- Noelle-Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey
- Work Study Evaluation Form [IIB:11]
- Event Evaluations (Start Smart, Cash for College, NMC's Information Sessions, Student Success Series Workshop, and Career Fair) [IIB:4]
- International Student Services Focus Groups [IIB:12].

The Division of Student Services provides a quarterly in-service training to division staff to promote awareness of division priorities, policy and procedure changes, upcoming events, any changes to service offerings, cultural sensitivity training, and other topics that are deemed relevant to the professional development of student support services staff. The in-service training provides opportunities for program level staff to showcase their respective areas and division-wide accomplishments in identifying and meeting the needs of students.

### Self Evaluation

The College increased its annual enrollment (unduplicated headcount) by 12 percent between 2006-2011 with an average of 1,305 students enrolled each year during this period [IIB:1]. As the only public, postsecondary educational institution in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), the College focuses its recruitment efforts on graduating seniors from all CNMI public high schools. As a result, the percentage of graduates from all public high schools who enrolled at NMC within a year of graduating increased over a five-year period between 2006-2010 (see Table 1) [IIB:13].

Table 1

CNMI Public High School Graduate Enrollment at NMC			
High School Graduation Year	Total Grads	Total Students Enrolled	Percentage of Total Grads Enrolled
June 2006	671	120	17.88
June 2007	757	181	23.91
June 2008	543	92	16.94
June 2009	512	209	40.82
June 2010	617	268	43.44

Having experienced success increasing enrollment among the number of traditional, college-going students from CNMI public high schools, the College is now focusing on addressing the decrease in enrollment among the non-traditional, adult student population. The College experienced a drop in enrollment from students between the ages of 26 to 80 by about four percent each year from 2010 to 2012 [IIB:107]. The college, in response, had initiated the Climb Higher Initiative during the spring 2012 term to mobilize a campus-wide effort to investigate and provide for the needs of the adult student population.

Retention rates, the percentage of NMC new degree-seeking students who enrolled in the fall term and continued their enrollment in the spring term increased by an average of 2.5 percent each year for the five-year period between academic years 2005-2009 [IIB:14]. This steady success is attributed, in part, to the efficacy of student support services. Counseling Programs & Services (CPS), for example, plays a major role in preventing students from stopping out prior to completion of a degree. An Early Intervention Program (EIP) counselor with CPS works closely with instructional faculty to identify students who perform poorly in class, are observed to have excessive tardiness or absences, or behave inappropriately – students at-risk of stopping out. These students are referred to the EIP counselor for intervention. Student referrals are contacted by the EIP counselor to identify issues and to help students in overcoming barriers to success. The EIP counselor also reaches out to students on academic probation at the end of each term and actively formulates an academic plan for students who re-enroll after being placed on academic suspension. During the fall 2010 term, the EIP counselor received 55 referrals and assisted 13 students with the official withdrawal process [IIB:2].

Eligibility for federal financial aid is a contributing factor to students' decisions to remain enrolled from term to term. This is significant as 75 percent of the College's student population receive some form of need-based, federal financial aid [IIB:2]. In order for a student to remain eligible for federal student aid, the student must maintain satisfactory academic progress. Financial Aid Office (FAO) staff outreach efforts, in concert with the EIP counselor's efforts with student referrals and students on academic probation, has recently produced a measurable impact on the number of students that remain eligible for student financial aid. During the 2011-2012 school year, 54 students were deemed ineligible for federal student aid as compared to 310 students during the previous school year – a 83 decrease from one school year to the next [IIB:2].

The College launched the Learning in Communities (LinC) initiative to integrate multidisciplinary courses into LinC courses. LinC is characterized by progressive modes of instruction and a team approach to supporting a cohort of students concurrently enrolled in two or more courses. The pairing of courses is designed to increase the success rates of students who enroll in developmental English or math courses. Through the support of the College Access Challenge Grant (CACG), a dedicated counselor and a team of mentors provided academic advising, tutoring and mentoring to students enrolled in LinC courses. At the end of the spring 2011 term, 62 percent of students enrolled in a MA 089 LinC (pre-algebra) passed the course as compared to only 43 percent from the same non-LinC courses. In the EN 094 LinC course (writing and grammar study III), a total of 92 percent passed the course compared to only 60 percent from the same non-LinC courses [IIB:15].

The College has been embarking in offering online courses. As this grows, the institution needs to provide student support services to online participants.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Implement a calendar of events to promote inter-divisional collaboration, better planning and organization.
2. Develop a plan for recruiting, enrolling, and retaining adult students.
3. Develop a plan to provide student services to potential online participants.

**Standard II.B2.** *The institution provides a catalog for its constituencies with precise, accurate, and current information concerning the following:*

#### *a. General Information*

*Official Name, Address(es), Telephone Number(s), and Web Site Address of the Institution, Educational Mission, Course, Program, and Degree Offerings, Academic Calendar and Program Length, Academic Freedom Statement, Available Student Financial Aid, Available Learning Resources, Names and Degrees of Administrators and Faculty, Names of Governing Board Members*

#### *b. Requirements*

*Admissions, Student Fees and Other Financial Obligations, Degrees, Certificates, Graduation and Transfer*

#### *c. Major Policies Affecting Students*

*Academic Regulations, including Academic Honesty, Nondiscrimination, Acceptance of Transfer Credits, Grievance and Complaint Procedures,*

*Sexual Harassment, Refund of Fees*

*d. Locations or publications where other policies may be found.*

Descriptive Summary

NMC's General Catalog is a major publication of the college made available in print and digital form with updates provided in digital form at least once annually to provide precise, accurate, and current information. The General Catalog provides information about the College's programs, courses, services, admission and enrollment requirements, policies and procedures affecting students, and important characteristics unique to the institution.

Print copies of the catalog are distributed free of charge to students who participate in orientation events and to all full-time faculty and staff of the college. The College also provides print copies to local public high schools for recruitment and outreach purposes and to four-year institutions to support student transfers and course and program articulation processes. Digital copies are available for download on the college's website and distributed on compact disks upon request through the Office of Admissions and Records (OAR).

The Dean of Student Services is responsible for coordinating a campus-wide effort to review and update each section of the catalog to ensure content accuracy and compliance with internal deadlines for publication of printed materials, as well as subsequent updates made to digital copies of each catalog series.

The NMC General Catalog is organized thematically with each major section referenced with page numbers in the Table of Contents. Individual digital files containing each major section of the catalog are posted on the NMC website as distinct hyperlinks with headers to promote easy download, access and viewing of the catalog's contents.

The institution provides a catalog for its constituencies with precise, accurate, and current information concerning the following:

a. General Information

*Official Name, Address(es), Telephone Number(s), and Web Site Address of the Institution*

The official name of the college is Northern Marianas College. The official name, address, telephone numbers and college web site address are clearly stated on the first page in the college catalog.

The *mission* [IIB:16] of the college is stated in the catalog: "The mission of Northern Marianas College shall be to provide the best quality and meaningful postsecondary and adult educational opportunities for the purpose of improving the quality of life for the individual and for the Commonwealth as a whole. The College shall be responsible for

providing education in the areas of adult and continuing education, postsecondary and adult vocational education and professional development for the people of the Commonwealth.”

All active *academic courses* [IIB:17] offered at the college are listed in the catalog. Each course listed is accompanied by descriptions, including the course code, credit hours, prerequisites, and the term in which the course is normally offered. A complete listing of academic programs offered at the college can be found in the *Degree and Certificate Programs* [IIB:18] section of the catalog. The description of each program leading to a certificate or degree listed in this section of the catalog includes the program mission statements, learning outcomes, course requirements, and other elements required of the major.

A description of the academic terms and a listing of important academic activities and dates that occur during each term are provided in the *Academic Calendar* [IIB:19] section of the catalog. The academic calendar in the current catalog lists schedules for each activity for each academic term between Fall 2012 through Fall 2015. The academic calendar is organized with significant input from the college community and reviewed and approved by the Academic Council. The *Course Load and Academic Work Load* [IIB:20] sections of the catalog provide information related to the duration of study for academic programs. The *Degree and Certificate Programs* [IIB:21] section of the catalog indicates total credit hours required for graduation in each program.

The College’s statements of value, philosophy, and expectations with regard to academic freedom are derived by college policy established by Board of Regents Policy 3004 and reiterated in the *Academic Freedom and Responsibility* [IIB:22] section of the catalog.

The *Financial Aid Information* [IIB:23] section of the college catalog lists the types of financial aid available to students, including federally funded financial aid programs, government, and private scholarships. Information regarding the purpose of each type of financial aid, eligibility and application requirements, and contact information are included for most financial aid programs. The function and role of the Financial Aid Office in administering federally funded financial aid programs is provided in this section, including information about its services to students.

The College’s *learning resources* [IIB:24] are described across multiple sections in the college catalog. Information describing campus facilities and campus safety is noted in the *College Profile* section of the catalog. A description of student support programs and services provided by the Division of Student Services is provided in the *Student Services* section of the catalog. Resources available at the NMC Bookstore, including service hours, are located in the *Auxiliary Services* section of the catalog. Access to and responsibilities for use of student email as a communication tool is provided in the college catalog under the heading Student Email. The availability of technological support, training, services, and

tools is outlined in the *Information Technology* section of the catalog.

A current listing of all full-time faculty and staff of the college is provided in the *Faculty & Staff Directory* [IIB:25] section. The list is arranged in alphabetical order by last name and includes employees' first name, middle initial, telephone extension number, the acronym of the employee's highest degree earned, and the name of the school where such degree was earned.

The college is governed by a seven-member *Board of Regents* appointed by the Governor for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The names of individuals appointed to the Board of Regents, including honorary members, are listed in the *College Profile* [IIB:26] section of the catalog.

#### b. Requirements

The college's admissions policies and procedures are described in the *Enrollment Information* [IIB:27] section of the catalog. The college offers eight admission programs, each of which with its own requirements. Requirements and procedures for course registration, placement testing, and the awarding of transfer credit or credit for advanced placement is located in this section.

The college provides eligibility requirements in the catalog for the *Adult Basic Education program* [IIB:28] a federally funded program which confers Adult Secondary Education (ASE) and General Educational Development (GED) diplomas. Both credentials demonstrate that students meet the equivalent of a high school diploma.

An itemized tuition and fee schedule for both resident and non-resident students is published in the *Tuition and Fees* [IIB:29] section of the catalog. This section includes itemized administrative fees for services (e.g., transcript requests), fees associated with enrollment, and a consolidated flat fee schedule based on the number of credits students enroll in. The flat fee provides funding for technology access, labs, and all instructional materials.

Consequences for non-payment of financial obligations are noted in the *Tuition and Fees* section of the catalog. A refund rate for tuition, the consolidated fee, and other refundable fees for withdrawal from courses are clearly stated in the *Refund Policies* [IIB:30] section of the catalog.

All course and credit-hour requirements for both degrees and certificates are located in the *Degree and Certificate Programs* [IIB:31] section of the catalog. The Degree Requirements section of the catalog contains a list of requirements for the Associate in Arts, Associate in Science and Associate in Applied Science degrees and the Bachelor of Science degree, as well as Certificate requirements.

A comprehensive list of graduation requirements is located in the *Graduation Requirements* [IIB:32] section of the catalog. A policy statement in the Degree Requirements section entitled, *Determining Applicable Catalog* [IIB:33] provides information to assist students and advisors in determining the appropriate requirements that apply to students. With a few exceptions to this rule, students are expected to meet requirements published in the catalog in effect during their initial term of enrollment.

The College's policies and procedures for the acceptance and application of transfer credits awarded by other accredited colleges and universities are clearly outlined in the *Admission with Transfer Credit* [IIB:34] section of the catalog. Information to assist students in planning for transferring out of the college, including references to articulation agreements with regional colleges, is located in the *Transferability of Credit* [IIB:35] section of the catalog.

### c. Major Policies Affecting Students

The *Institutional Policies* [IIB:36] section of the college catalog includes key Board of Regents policies for easy reference while communicating expectations in relation to the institution, faculty, staff, and students. This section also includes statements and procedures as appropriate, as well as major policies affecting students: Student Responsibilities, Class Attendance, Student Rights Regarding Records, Student Conduct, Academic Honesty, Academic Probation and Suspension, Readmission After Suspension, Academic Dismissal, Student Appeal, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Confidentiality of Academic Records, Policy on Nondiscrimination, Policy on Sexual Harassment.

Board of Regents Policy No. 3010, *Academic Dishonesty* [IIB:37], is contained in the catalog under the same title and includes definitions and consequences for cheating and plagiarism. Other important academic regulations affecting students are described in detail in the *Academic Information* [IIB:38] section of the catalog. The *Time Limit for Coursework* [IIB:39] policy statement in this section, for example, establishes an eight-year limit on the applicability of coursework to completion of degree requirements.

A statement of commitment to equal employment opportunities, nondiscrimination in employment and activities that demonstrate the College's compliance with federal regulations is found in the *Policy on Non-Discrimination* [IIB:40] section of the catalog. The policy pertains to questions involving admission, access and treatment in NMC programs and activities.

The College's policies and procedures in relation to transfer credits awarded by other accredited colleges and universities are clearly outlined in the *Admission with Transfer Credit* [IIB:41] section of the catalog. Information to assist students in planning for transferring out of the college, including references to articulation agreements with regional colleges, is located in the *Transferability of Credit* [IIB:42] section of the catalog.

Procedures for students to express concerns, grievances, or complaints are outlined in the *Student Appeal and Grievances* [IIB:43] section of the college catalog. The procedures provided are intended for students who have a complaint about campus conditions, facilities, policies, rules, or academic matters. The procedures outline steps students are expected to take prior to the college convening a Grievance Fairness Committee to hear the student's appeal.

The policy on *Grade Appeals* [IIB:44] provides another avenue for students to express complaints with regard to grades. The Grade Appeals procedure is stated in the college catalog and is intended for students who disagree with an assigned grade.

The Dean of Student Services maintains student grievances and complaints records. The records are stored available for review by authorized individuals.

The College's policy prohibiting unwanted and unlawful sexual conduct in employment, educational programs and services is clearly stated in the *Policy on Sexual Harassment* [IIB:45] section of the college catalog.

A refund rate schedule for tuition, the consolidated fee, and other refundable fees for withdrawal from courses are clearly stated in the *Refund Policies* [IIB:46] section of the catalog. The refund policy for courses, trainings, and other non-credit programs offered by the Community Development Institute or its partners through Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and Memoranda of Agreement (MOA) is noted under the Community Programs and Services Courses and Workshops section of the college catalog.

#### d. Locations or Publications Where Other Policies May be Found

NMC policies stem primarily from policies adopted by the Board of Regents with each policy attributed to a policy series from one of five overarching areas of the college's operations: Board Operations, Finance & Procurement, Educational Programs, Human Resources, and Student Development. The Board of Regents Policies are found on the College's network server (N Drive) and accessible through the individual workstations of all full-time employees on the As Terlaje Campus. Copies of current Board of Regents Policies are kept in the Office of the President, Office of Institutional Advancement, Office of the Dean of Student Services, Office of the Dean of Academic Programs & Services, and the Office of the Dean of Administration. College departments and programs generally keep printed copies of sections of Board Policies that are most relevant to the function of their respective units or staff.

The policy on Academic Freedom is found in the Conditions of Employment section of the College's *Faculty Employment Contract* [IIB:47]. Signed copies are distributed to employees for reference upon hiring with the original maintained in the employee's personnel jacket in the Human Resources Office.



The web pages on the *College's website* [IIB:48] featuring programs and services include Board of Regents policies where appropriate. For example, the web pages maintained by the Office of Admissions provide information on the following *admission requirements*: Admission for Residents, Non-Residents, Early/Special Admissions, Admission with Transfer Credit, and Readmission of former students. Criteria for admissions to the college are provided in the NMC Admissions Application [IIB:49]. A copy of the NMC Admissions Application is available at the Office of Admissions & Records, Counseling Center, and on the NMC website.

### Self Evaluation

The College distributed the *Student Appeal & Grievances Procedures brochure* [IIB:50] beginning with the fall 2010 term in an effort to communicate its grievance and complaint procedures in a more clear, concise, and student-friendly manner.

A workgroup was organized in 2010 to publish a student handbook for distribution to its students in lieu of the college catalog. The workgroup published the 2011-2012 NMC Student Handbook with important policies and procedures affecting students, including topics describing student life and useful tips to promote student success. This version is currently being updated to reflect changes to policies and services at the College and will be posted on the website.

Available on NMC's website, the NMC 2012-2013 Catalog provides updates on general information, requirements, major policies affecting students, and locations where other policies may be found. Over 300 print copies have been distributed to students who attended the fall 2012 New & Returning Student Orientation sessions.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Publish a flow chart and timeline to describe the development of the college catalog to improve work processes and publication.

***Standard II.B3.*** *The institution researches and identifies the learning support needs of its student population and provides appropriate services and programs to address those needs.*

### Descriptive Summary

NMC researches and identifies the learning support needs of its student population through the institution's Program Review process, student satisfaction and feedback surveys, student learning outcomes assessments, interactions with students throughout the matriculation process and by sharing information obtained by studying peer colleges and through participation in national professional conferences and training. Data presented on learning

support needs are discussed at the program level through departmental staff meetings as well as at management team meetings. Programs organized under the Division of Student Services host numerous functions where students are given the opportunity to make suggestions and recommendations for improving services and programs.

The *Admission Process Survey* [IIB:7] informs the institution of student interest in recruitment programs and familiarity with resources available. The Office of Admissions & Records (OAR) uses feedback from the Admissions Process Survey, and other data collected, to improve its core function of admitting students, maintaining student records, providing Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) training, maintaining student enrollment data, articulating course credits, and coordinating registration and graduation events.

*English and math placement test results* [IIB:51] identify the students' course placement needs and academic preparedness for college-level study. This information is used in conjunction with counseling or academic advising as students develop a sequential plan for course enrollment. Each student reviews an Individualized Degree/Certificate Plan with an academic advisor for academic planning and to identify a timeline and schedule for completion of a degree program. Students enrolled in developmental math or English courses are visited each term in the classroom by a team of Student Ambassadors, high achieving student tutors and mentors, who provide information about tutorial schedules and encourage students to avail themselves of tutorial and other support services.

Event evaluation forms collected at the end of each college-preparatory event (e.g., Start Smart Seminar [IIB:4]) or educational workshop (e.g., Student Success Series [IIB:52]) are evaluated by future event planning committees to make changes to facilitators, topic/content, location, or some other element of the event based on feedback from students, participants and the planning committees themselves. College-preparatory events sponsored by the College Access Challenge Grant and Upward Bound Program are measured against federal grant-specific objectives, as well as student learning outcomes assessed as part of Program Review.

The Office of Financial Aid evaluates information provided on the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)* [IIB:53] to determine the financial need of students. Students deemed eligible for financial aid receive a combination of one or more of the following: Federal Pell Grant, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG), Federal Work-Study, and the College Access Challenge Grant Scholarship to support their educational expenses.

The *Disability Support Services Application Form* [IIB:54] provides the Disabilities Services Coordinator/Counselor with information identifying a student's short- or long-term disability. The Disability Services Coordinator/Counselor evaluates documentation required as part of the application process and assists students in identifying and achieving educational goals;

assesses students for assertive technology needs; determines “reasonable accommodations”; and coordinates services for student support. Students who have a documented disability which substantially limits one or more major life activities are eligible for services from DSS which may include but are not limited to: assistive technology and/or devices, alternative testing services, early/priority registration, sign language interpreters, note-taking assistance, readers, and tutors.

The College completes a thorough assessment of student support services by gathering and analyzing program- and institution-level data as part of Program Review. Facilitated by the Planning, Program Review Outcomes and Assessment Committee (PROAC), the Program Review process of assessment includes the Nichols and Nichols Five-Column Model (*Form 1*) [IIB:55] to identify and assess program learning outcomes (PLOs), student learning outcomes (SLOs), and/or administrative unit outcomes (AUOs) that are consistent with the College’s mission. Data are gathered and analyzed to determine if the outcomes are being met or if program or institutional changes are needed to improve services. A program’s Form 1 is incorporated into its Program Review report (*Form 2*), [IIB:56] which provides a comprehensive analysis of the program’s effectiveness and presents recommendations for the program and the institution based on a thorough analysis of data.

Student support services maintain an ongoing dialogue with students through student assemblies, counseling, advising, outreach, and workshops. These events allow students to freely bring attention to their concerns and recommendations. Student representation on College committees, including College Council, the Management Team, and the Board of Regents also ensure student feedback at key decision-making forums.

### Self Evaluation

The College continues to align its student support services with the learning and support needs of its students. Feedback and results from surveys, evaluations, assessments and Program Review guide the improvement of student support services. Department and division meetings are held frequently to discuss any ideas, issues and concerns that arise as a result of recommendations.

Through financial literacy outreach, financial aid counseling, and follow-up with individual student needs through the process of completing the FAFSA, the Office of Financial Aid reduced the number of ineligible applicants by as much as 83 percent in 2011-2012 as compared to the year before. FAFSA applicants identified as “ineligible” do not receive an award due to: (1) completion of a bachelor’s degree or higher; (2) an EFC higher than the threshold required for aid; (3) failure to provide evidence of satisfactory academic progress [IIB:2].

The five-year average enrollment (fall 2005-spring 2010) in developmental English and math was 37 and 24 percent, respectively of the total student population. According to an analysis

presented by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness in 2010, the average course completion rates for developmental math courses during that same period was 38 percent [IIB:57]. New high school graduates from public high schools continue to place at a high rate in developmental math courses. In academic year 2011-2012, 81 percent of Public School System class of 2011 graduates who took the math placement test placed in a developmental math course [IIB108]. The numbers of students starting college in developmental courses as well as low completion rates have prompted the College to support academically under-prepared students in new ways. During the summer 2010, a team of faculty and staff participated in the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual National Summer Institute on Learning Communities [IIB:58]. Participation in the Institute served as a catalyst for change and under the leadership of the First Year Experiences, Student Engagement Manager, the College proceeded with plans to create the Learning in Communities (LinC) initiative.

LinC is characterized by progressive modes of instruction and a team approach to supporting a cohort of students concurrently enrolled in two or more courses. The pairing of courses is designed to increase the success rates of students who enroll in developmental English or math courses. Through the support of the College Access Challenge Grant (CACG), a dedicated counselor and a team of mentors provided academic advising, tutoring and mentoring to students enrolled in LinC courses. At the end of the spring 2011 term, 62 percent of students enrolled in a MA 089 LinC (pre-algebra) passed the course as compared to only 43 percent from the same non-LinC courses. In the EN 094 LinC course (writing and grammar study III), a total of 92 percent passed the course compared to only 60 percent from the same non-LinC courses [IIB:15].

Although the LinC program was deemed successful in enhancing achievement among a small cohort of students since spring 2011, the College is currently reassessing support for this program given the recent retirement of its lead coordinator and budget constraints.

In an effort to identify and provide for the needs of international students, the College adopted *BOR Policy No. 704.601 International Student Fee* [IIB:59] to increase College resources for the purposes of providing specialized services to and increasing enrollment and retention among international students. The movement toward securing additional resources to serve this student population stemmed from feedback from the International Student Counselor/Coordinator, results from the *International Student Questionnaire administered between October 10-21, 2011* [IIB:60] and the College's interest in taking action toward addressing Goal One of the FY2012 Goals & Priorities – "Increase Student Recruitment & Retention".

On March 7, 2012, the Dean of Student Services established International Student Services as a distinct operational unit at the College reporting directly to the Dean's Office [IIB:61]. A budget was established for International Student Services in June 2012 and efforts are underway to renovate space in building I to provide counseling, advising, computing, translation, tutorial, and other support services for international students.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Support the Learning in Communities (LinC) to enhance student learning and achievement.

***Standard II.B3a.** The institution assures equitable access to all its students by providing appropriate, comprehensive, and reliable services to students regardless of service location or delivery method.*

### Descriptive Summary

The College provides appropriate support services to all its students. Student support services are assessed through a biennial Program Review cycle focused on continuous quality improvement. Individuals employed to provide direct services to students or support one or more functions of the academic mission of the College meet minimum qualifications to do so [IIB:62]. Program staffing patterns are compared to those of peer colleges to evaluate the appropriateness of human resources dedicated to service areas [IIB:65]. In the initial stages of program development, major functions of student support programs are aligned with national standards (e.g., with those of the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education).

The College provides technology services to address the learning support needs of all its students. NMC has approximately 200 computers designated for student use in various labs and classrooms. In the spring 2011, the College adopted the new Student Email powered by Google Apps for Education to support communication between students and the institution. The Millennium integrated library system was fully implemented in the spring 2012 which enabled *web-based access* [IIB:67] to the Library's catalog and other learning support resources. Student access to the internet is supported through wireless routers strategically placed throughout campus and powered through multiple DSL lines and two T1 high-speed lines. The College utilizes video-conferences (VTC), the NMC website, email communication, and other tools to facilitate communication between its constituents and connect the College to all communities within the CNMI.

Programs organized under the Division of Student Services serve the basic and diverse learning support needs of both prospective and current students. These programs include the following – all listed in the College Catalog with a concise description of comprehensive services provided to students: Library Services, Counseling Programs & Services, Career Services, Testing Services, College Access Challenge Grant, Service Learning Program, Student Activities & Leadership [IIB:68]. Credit evaluation, placement testing, registration, admission, and enrollment services [IIB:69] are coordinated between the Office of Admissions & Records, the Languages & Humanities Department, and the Registration

Committee. Services provided by the Financial Aid Office [IIB:70] ensure the provision of financial aid for students who demonstrate financial need. Disability Support Services [IIB:71] promotes awareness of the needs of students with disabilities and coordinates activities with faculty to ensure students with disabilities receive reasonable accommodations in all programs. International Student Services assesses the needs of students enrolled with F or M status/visas and provides specialized support to this student population. Academic advising [IIB:72] is coordinated so that all students are linked to at least one full-time faculty member with the option of also seeking advising services from a counselor. Funding made possible by the US Department of Education, College Access Challenge Grant [IIB:73] allows the College to provide college outreach services to low-income high school and middle school students. The Career Center [IIB:74] prepares students to enter the workforce through student employment opportunities and career guidance.

All departments and programs operate Monday through Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The Library and Break Point Café operate on Saturdays to accommodate students enrolled in courses on the weekend. Early registration dates are scheduled to accommodate the needs of select groups of students and key offices, including the Office of Admissions & Records, Counseling Programs & Services, Financial Aid Office; additionally, the Office of the Dean of Student Services remains open up to 6:00 p.m. during the registration period. New & Returning Student Orientations [IIB:75] are scheduled from 4:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. to accommodate students employed in full-time jobs.

### Self Evaluation

The institution's strength in supporting this standard is attributed to adherence to Program Review schedules, inter-departmental dialogue, and review of data collected that ultimately inform decision-making processes to address student needs.

The Registration Survey [IIB:76] has been an effective tool for assessing how well the College meets student needs for services. Students' satisfaction with the availability of courses, bookstore services, academic advising, student orientation, placement testing, and registration information are all measured by this instrument. Each student support services program also administers a survey or uses a log to assess the effectiveness of its services. The analysis of these surveys, as well as systematic and ongoing evaluation of programs and services, is critical in ensuring that students are provided with relevant, adequate, and effective services. The College is always actively engaged in soliciting input and feedback regarding its programs and services utilizing both formal and informal means.

The College has initiated efforts to increase services through online or digital means in preparation for student enrollment in online courses. The Director for Distance Learning published a video orientation for new and returning students on August 10, 2012 and is engaged in orienting both faculty and staff in the use of distance learning tools.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Continue efforts to provide online information and services for all current and prospective students.
2. Implement a web-based course registration process to improve access to courses and remove barriers to student success.

***Standard II.B3b.*** *The institution provides an environment that encourages personal and civic responsibility, as well as intellectual, aesthetic, and personal development for all its students.*

### Descriptive Summary

The institution's ability to provide an environment that encourages personal and civic responsibility, as well as intellectual, aesthetic, and personal development for all of its students is demonstrated through the college's policies and programs.

Policies and procedures to enhance student personal development and outline student responsibilities and expectations are communicated to the students from top to bottom—from the Board of Regents down to instructors. The Board of Regents (BOR) has several policies regarding student conduct and student responsibilities. For example, BOR Policies 8003-8003.6 [IIB:77] establish development programs in Counseling, Academic Advisement, Career Services, and Student Employment Training that complement the college's instructional programs. BOR Policy 8004 [IIB:78], Student Affairs, directs the college to "provide a diverse program of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities that support student learning outcomes." BOR Policy 8004.1 [IIB:79] establishes the College's student government body—the Associated Students of the Northern Marianas College (ASNMC)—to provide a representative voice for students and to support programs and activities sponsored by student organizations on campus. These responsibilities and expectations are communicated to students during student orientation, counseling and advising sessions, general assemblies, and can be found in the NMC 2012-2013 Catalog and in the 2011-2012 NMC Student Handbook. Responsibilities and expectations are also communicated to students in the classroom through course syllabi that are reviewed before instruction begins. For example, the Nursing Department and the School of Education each have a code of conduct for the classroom that students must review and agree to. The code of conduct also extends far beyond the college classroom—to school classrooms and clinics—because students model the expectations they learned at the College when they become teachers and nurses.

In order to further promote this standard, the college includes students in staff and faculty professional development workshops to promote awareness of the unique roles and responsibilities of students in supporting their educational endeavors at the College. The College also creates opportunities for student development through student-centered workshops. For example, in Spring 2010, the college provided financial support for its student government officers to attend the National Conference on Student Leadership in Atlanta, Georgia. And in March 2012, the College through the Office of Student Activities and Leadership (OSAL) and ASNMC facilitated a Student Leadership Summit [IIB:80] for students to engage in dialogue about campus and community issues. Students are also included in accreditation workshops and meetings in order to solicit their valuable input. Furthermore, the Upward Bound Program selects program participants to attend the Monterey Peninsula College's Upward Bound Math and Science Summer Program in California as well as the Leeward Community College's math summer program in Hawaii.

The Office of Student Leadership and Activities facilitates student leadership and student participation in activities on campus. OSAL and ASNMC leaders collaborate to develop and execute campus-wide events that help students develop personal and civic pride, as well as allow them to develop intellectually and aesthetically. Under the Inter College Council (ICC), which is led by the ASNMC vice-president, student clubs collaborate to achieve mutual goals despite their diversity and different organizational missions. The ICC allows student groups and their representatives to come together, work together, and struggle collectively, and this allows them to develop and utilize their leadership skill sets. An example of the ICC's collaborative effort is the annual International Week, which promotes student interaction within the college's diverse student body and encourages students to showcase their unique cultural heritages and artistic talents. The center, which houses OSAL and ASNMC offices and is managed by the Student Activities Manager, provides a space for group or individual study, student organization meetings, educational workshops and activities, and a safe environment for students to socialize and enjoy recreational games and activities.

Students also enhance their leadership skills by actively participating in college governance bodies and committees. The student body has voting representatives on the Academic Council, the College Council, the Budget and Finance Committee, the Planning, Program and Review Outcomes and Assessment Committee, the Accreditation Reaffirmation Team, the Governance Review Task Force, and the Tuition Fee Task Force to ensure that students are included in key decision-making bodies. The college values student input at every level, including the highest, so much so that students are included in its Management Team, which is comprised of the college president, deans, directors and key staff members. Students also play a vital role on the Graduation, Recruitment, and Registration Committees. The Registration Committee, for example, regularly enlists as many as fifty student volunteers to assist with student orientation, with students serving as facilitators and mentors. Students are



also included on accreditation committees in order to solicit their valuable input. The ASNMC president also serves as an honorary board member and is present at BOR meetings, and is invited to attend directors' meetings under the Student Services Division.

Students further enhance their leadership skills and fulfill their civic responsibilities through organizations that they organize and lead by themselves. Students that meet the eligibility requirements and are selected to be members of Phi Theta Kappa (PTK), the national community/junior college honor society demonstrate civic leadership and responsibility through the events they sponsor, which benefit the college and the community at large. An annual initiative nationally known by PTK is "Project Graduation," which is aimed at helping alleviate hunger and illiteracy. Over the past years, the chapter has donated cases of food and boxes of books to non-profit organizations like Guma Esperansa and Karidat.

The Proa Rhetoric Circle, formed in 2011, was established for students to engage in civil discourse and debate. The group sponsors student forums at the college canteen that cover college and community issues as well as student debates. Discussions and debates about civic responsibility are also highlighted in SO 297 (Current Issues in Education), which is a core course required for all NMC degrees. In this class, students are assisted in becoming active, competent, and effective citizens. For example, the students from the Current Issues in the CNMI class held a non-binding referendum for registered voters on whether to legalize a casino on the island.

Student civic responsibility is further enhanced at the college through several academic programs and initiatives. The college's Service Learning Program helps students participate in community-based projects to gain meaningful volunteer experiences while providing valuable volunteer service to the community. The program also facilitates collaboration between instructors and students on course-affiliated community projects. The college's General Education Program, which was designed to provide students with knowledge and skills to fulfill their educational and occupational goals and to become better prepared to function effectively as citizens in a democratic society, established the following student learning outcome to further emphasize the value it places on promoting good citizenship: students will "act responsibly as a member of a diverse community, and interact effectively in both local and global environments." The School of Education (SOE) offers courses that require their students to volunteer as teacher aides and academic tutors at the public schools. The Nursing Program as well as the Nursing Club have community service hour requirements that let the students practice the skills they have learned in the classroom. A graduate of the Liberal Arts Program must participate in courses that "engage students with community issues and civic responsibilities." The Learning in Communities (LinC) program empowers students by having them become student mentors directly in the classroom setting. This allows for the development of closer social relationships between the mentors and students while having the extra guidance to ensure academic success and an easier transition to college level learning. The personal experience, confidence, and individuality gained by

LinC mentors and students help shape their identities setting a more positive foundation for their future.

Student personal development is enhanced at the college through a series of educational and life-skills workshops sponsored by Counseling Programs and Services every semester called the Student Success Series. These workshops are created to engage students on important topics that support student academic, career, and personal development and success. Workshop topic examples include *Study Skills and Time Management*, *Feeling Down? We Can Help!*, *Time Management—Have Time For It All!*, *Managing Stress for Success*, *Choosing a Major and Career*, *Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships: Knowing the Difference*, and *Know Your Personality*. The Upward Bound Program regularly offers academic workshops to its program participants that cover topics such as study skills, test taking anxiety reduction, conflict resolution and financial literacy. Student personal development is also enhanced through BE 111 (College Success), a course designed to help students become successful in college by developing and practicing academic skills in reading, writing, listening, critical thinking, note taking, studying, memorizing, and test taking, and time management, and by promoting personal responsibility, self-confidence, and awareness of self and others, should be made mandatory for all students.

Students are given incentives to excel academically, personally, and civically by the awards given to students at the college's annual commencement exercises and Charter Day. The graduates that have excelled academically are given academic achievement awards and while the students that have displayed top leadership and were active on campus are given separate awards for those as well. During Charter Day, a Student of the Year award is given to the student that demonstrates great leadership and devotes the most time and effort to the college while excelling academically.

Students are also very involved in the planning and execution of Charter Day. Through this annual event, the entire island community converges on the campus to enjoy the musical and artistic talents of its students. Other organizations that help enhance the students aesthetically are the Proa Music Society, a club for students to showcase their musical talents, and the Proa Rhetoric Circle, where students can enhance their public speaking and debate skills. Another example of the college's role in developing its students aesthetically is the acting workshops sponsored by OSAL in Fall 2011; and in the summer of 2011, OSAL also enlisted students to display their artistic skills by having them paint a large mural on the Student Center wall. Student musical and artistic talents are also enhanced through the college's art and music programs.

### Self Evaluation

After a review of all of the programs and activities that the College has established “to provide an environment that encourages personal and civic responsibility, as well as intellectual, aesthetic, and personal development for all its students,” it can be concluded that the College is performing well with regards to this Standard. However, there is always room for an improved dissemination of information to students and college employees about these programs and services and special events. While the External Relations Office (ERO, formerly the Marketing Department) and OSAL do routinely publicize events with color posters and fliers, as well as utilize social media sites such as Facebook, there needs to be more student bulletin boards and areas for such information. A positive step was taken towards greater dissemination of information by the creation of a “Today at NMC” e-mail [IIB:81] that sends daily reminder of campus events and meetings. Unfortunately, this was recently discontinued. The website is also a way the College disseminates information, but it is often not updated on an efficient and timely manner.

Another way the college needs to improve its implementation of this standard is to have more outdoor study and recreational space for the students. Currently, there are only a few picnic tables in student common areas, but these tables are always occupied. The student quad is unbearable for students during the day because of the island’s hot climate. The Student Center also has to ask students to relocate when events are scheduled in this space. More student space was identified in the Master Facilities Plan, but due to a lack of funding, this plan has yet to be implemented by the college. The college is not taking advantage of its unique location upon a hill (the college has a view of the ocean) and free spaces around campus.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Create more outdoor study and recreational space for the students, including having more durable picnic tables around campus and more outdoor pavilions.

***Standard II.B3c.*** *The institution designs, maintains, and evaluates counseling and/or academic advising programs to support student development and success and prepares faculty and other personnel responsible for the advising function.*

The College provides counseling and advising services to meet the varied needs of students. There is a vast array of counseling services available to students to assist with educational planning in meeting career and transfer goals. Additional consideration is provided to meet cultural, disability and personal health needs. For example, Counseling Programs and Services offers Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, domestic and sexual violence, and eating disorders counseling.

The overall goal for all programs is to provide an avenue for students to succeed. Counselors

meet on a daily basis to keep up-to-date with the necessary information to successfully perform their duties.

Counseling programs provide individual and group counseling during the day and evening to assist students. Services are advertised in the general catalog, by a distribution of flyers, campus-wide activities, NMC's web site, and at new student orientation.

The Student Orientations for new and returning students provide information regarding various instructional programs and available support services that allow the student and academic advisor/counselor to work together in developing a student educational plan.

In order to promote the attainment of students' personal and educational goals, the College implements a monitored matriculation program. Students are informed of the matriculation process in the Registration Information booklet [IIB:82], as well as personal growth courses and new student orientation workshops. The matriculation process is accomplished through the provision of: individual and group academic, personal, and career counseling; student orientation meetings; transition workshops (special education); Student Success Series workshops and; skills building workshops.

A critical component of the counseling and advising function is referral to resources both on and off-campus. Referral information is available to students through counseling appointments, workshops, student orientations, and campus publications, including the Northern Marianas College website, the College catalog, and various program publications. On-campus referrals are made to all student service areas in addition to academic departments and co-curricular programs.

Student support services such as Disability Support Services (DSS), International Student Services, English Language Institute (ELI) Lab, Career Services, College Access Challenge Grant, as well as programs offered through Counseling Programs & Services, provide support to students experiencing personal or academic barriers to their success.

Every student at NMC is assigned an academic advisor who works with the student throughout his/her college career. Degree-seeking students are assigned to full-time instructional faculty who teach in the department that houses the student's program of study. Students in the Liberal Arts program are initially assigned to meet with the Liberal Arts Coordinator. Thereafter, non-degree students and students intending to transfer with a Liberal Arts degree are assigned to an advisor/counselor from Counseling Programs & Services [IIB:83]. Advisor assignment is coordinated between the Dean of Academic Programs & Services, the Office of Admissions & Records, and Counseling Programs & Services. Additionally, the Academic Advising & Retention Committee was organized in

2011 to make recommendations for improving advising services and increasing student retention.

Counseling Programs & Services staff lead biennial academic advising workshops to prepare new and ongoing academic advisors for upcoming terms in conjunction with professional development activities planned for faculty. A student receives a full academic evaluation on request or during the term immediately preceding their scheduled graduation date by the Registrar in consultation with academic advisors.

All academic advisors maintain regular office hours and are also available by appointment or via email. Students must meet with their academic advisors prior to and/or during the advising and registration periods.

Counseling and advising services are evaluated primarily through assessment of student learning outcomes, the Registration Survey [IIB:76], and institutional dialogue at events such as Faculty Professional Development Day.

#### Self Evaluation

The Academic Advising & Retention Committee was formed in 2011, but has not met regularly to adequately evaluate the provision of academic advising services or recommendations for improving retention and graduation. Discussion by this group during the year on the importance of student email use and new student orientations have resulted in enhanced institutional efforts to establish email accounts for all students and encourage each student to engage in communication with each other, their instructors, and advisors through email. During spring 2011, NMC created over 1,250 email accounts for students and more is expected with account creation services set-up as part of the registration process. In an effort to assist students navigate college resources effectively, the New & Returning (Re-Admit) Student Orientation was made mandatory for all new and returning students to the College beginning with the fall 2012 semester.

The Spring 2011 Registration Survey noted the following positive themes based on student feedback: “Great Advising” and “Advisors Were Prepared”. The same instrument, however, highlighted the following themes of concern: “Advisor Availability”, “Advisors Need to Be More Informative”, “Advisors Not Providing Accurate Information”, and “Advisors Need to Be More Active”. Although 47 percent of respondents indicated being satisfied with academic advising, these themes should be investigated and used to support professional development for academic advisors [IIB:76].

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Assess academic advising services to further coordinate and improve advising services.
2. Provide counseling and academic advising services in a format accessible to online students.

***Standard II.B3d.** The institution designs and maintains appropriate programs, practices, and services that support and enhance student understanding and appreciation of diversity.*

#### Descriptive Summary

The College promotes and supports events and activities that enhance student understanding and appreciation of diversity. The Office of Student Activities and Leadership (OSAL) and the Associated Students of Northern Marianas College (ASNMC) work collaboratively to support the social and cultural interests and needs of the student body, including a diverse group of student organizations under ASNMC and the Inter Club Council (ICC)

Annual College events that promote diversity include Charter Day, International Cultural Week, NMC Information Sessions, Start Smart Seminars, Cash for College, Health Awareness Fair, as well as sponsored activities at the Flame Tree Festival and Autism Society events. Charter Day showcases the College's accomplishments and promotes the diversity of student life through student cultural performances, demonstrations, music and dance competitions, and other forms of artistic expression. During International Cultural Week, students are encouraged to wear cultural regalia and present information to fellow students on their respective cultures. The Week is celebrated with a culminating event featuring food from different cultures. Translation services are offered at outreach events such as Cash for College and Start Smart Seminars, to help non-English speaking students to access important information about programs, requirements, deadlines, procedures and opportunities.

Academic tutorial sessions provide opportunities for students to gain an appreciation of one's cultural background. These sessions are often intimate, one-on-one peer meetings focused on understanding and overcoming academic challenges. The diverse student population at NMC (representing 11 countries) can receive support from an equally diverse group of academic tutors. This past year, academic tutors represented a wide range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, which included students from the Chamorro, Carolinian, Chinese, Filipino, Indian and Korean communities.

The College collaborates with private companies, government and non-profit agencies to expose students to educational experiences and knowledge unattainable through College resources alone. For example, ASNMC collaborated with the CNMI Humanities Council and

the African American community in the CNMI to have Dr. Amos Brown, a Baptist minister and proponent of civil rights, provide a keynote address to students during a student assembly organized at the start of the spring 2012 semester [IIB:86]. Dr. Brown spoke of the struggle of under-represented ethnic minority groups in the U.S. Mainland and provided students with a deeper understanding of the importance of the life and philosophy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Disability Support Services works closely with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and other community service providers to equip students with assistive technology and for assistance with financial aid. The Community Development Institute and Office of Student Activities & Leadership facilitate campus tours and educational interactions between visiting students from Taiwan and Japan. Each year, a class from Nihon University visits the CNMI and spends a day at NMC to learn more about life in the Mariana Islands during WWII and during periods of Japan's occupation. [IIB:87].

Academic coursework introduce and reinforce concepts that promote an awareness of diversity through the study of art, world languages and history, as well as social issues. The following courses promote diversity in academic programs:

- Art (AR 101 & 135)
- Music (MU 106)
- Drama (DR 120)
- Multicultural Foundations (ED 282)
- Language (CM 101/201, JA 101/102/201, SP 101/102, SL 101/102)
- Introduction to Exceptional Individuals (ED 215)
- Introduction to Sociology (SO 101)
- Current Issues in the CNMI (SO 297)
- College Success (BE 111)

Students enrolled in the Current Issues in the CNMI course collaborate with the Saipan Chamber of Commerce with their special events such as political debates or topics that concern the covenant of the CNMI.

At its October 3, 2011 meeting, the Academic Council approved the College Success (BE 111) course to be a required part of all degree programs [IIB:88]. The College Success course covers topics that promote awareness of the needs of different segments of a college student population and teaches strategies for communicating effectively with individuals and groups of diverse backgrounds. All degree-seeking students are also required to enroll in at least one language course and a fine/performing arts course.

OSAL and ASNMC help student groups become registered clubs, engage in leadership development, and facilitate student activities. Participation in student organizations and sponsored activities provide a rich, multi-cultural dimension to college life. The following

organizations were registered with the College during the 2011-2012 academic year: Proa Music Society, Micronesian Club, Student Achieving for Excellence, Environmental & Natural Resources Organization, Saipan Gospel Fellowship, Nursing Club, and Phi Theta Kappa. All registered groups are prohibited from restricting student membership [IIB:90]. Faculty and staff serve on a voluntary basis as academic advisors to student officers in each student club. Student-sponsored events and other activities at the College are communicated via the College's website, PROA Newsletter, and student email.

### Self Evaluation

There are multiple opportunities for students to enhance their understanding and appreciation of diversity at NMC. Close collaboration exists among departments, students and staff, which bring multiple voices and perspectives to bear on student activities. In addition, several academic courses required for graduation are courses with topics and learning outcomes that promote diversity.

The College's relatively small student population allows staff, advisors, and instructors more opportunities for frequent interaction, allowing the specific needs and concerns of individual students to be addressed. For example, in response to requests from students enrolled in the School of Education, the Library extended its hours of operation to include Saturday.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Encourage more student activities, membership in registered student organizations, participation on college committees and greater involvement in shared governance groups.
2. Develop more cultural exchange programs and multicultural courses to better promote an understanding and appreciation for diversity.
3. Create an annual, college-wide cultural sensitivity training for faculty and staff to better promote the value of diversity.

***Standard II.B3e.*** *The institution regularly evaluates admissions and placement instruments and practices to validate their effectiveness while minimizing biases.*

### Descriptive Summary

The Northern Marianas College (NMC) is charged with providing the very best vocational and postsecondary educational programs for the people of the Commonwealth. As the only public, US accredited postsecondary institution in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), NMC has a special responsibility in promoting access to its programs. The College has a set of non-competitive, open admissions policies to facilitate



student access to the College and its programs. It is also a matter of policy that no one shall be denied admission or readmission on the basis of race, gender, creed, color, religion, sexual preference, national origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, veteran's status, disability, or genetic information (GINA), and that qualifications for admission include academic performance and conduct in accordance with local laws and regulations and College rules as well as, policies, and procedures applicable to student conduct [IIB:91].

The requirements for admissions to the College include the submission of an Admissions Application with student demographic data and enrollment interests; proof of a high school diploma or its equivalent; submission of immunization records, and a copy of a valid photo identification card.

The College facilitates the enrollment of international students by providing them with US Immigration Form I-20 and by helping them to complete pertinent documents in order to comply with the reporting requirements of the Student and Exchange Visitor Program . The International Student Services Coordinator meets regularly with both prospective and current international students to review alternative documentation to meet admission requirements and/or to advocate for a review of procedures that negatively impact international student enrollment.

The College is cognizant of student health conditions that may prevent students from complying with immunization requirements. In such instances, the College will accept a bona fide statement signed by a physician licensed to practice medicine within the US or the CNMI verifying that the physical condition of the person seeking admission makes the required immunization unsafe and indicating the specific nature and probable duration of the condition. Additionally, a person qualifies for a religious exemption when the person files a notarized affidavit on an approved form that immunization is contrary to the religious tenets and practices of the signer.

The College updated its admission policies during the previous academic year (March 2011) and regularly reviews procedures, including standard operating procedures in the Office of Admissions & Records (OAR) in response to student needs, to improve the matriculation process, and comply with industry and legal standards. OAR staff participates in training to effectively navigate Power Campus (Student Information Management System) and implement best practices and new initiatives through membership and participation in meetings sponsored by the American Association of College Registrars and Admission Officers (AACRAO).

The College acknowledges the importance of meeting the cultural and linguistic needs of its community. Through its English Language Institute (ELI), the College offers preparatory and developmental English courses for all learners whose levels of proficiency are lower than those required college level study. Thus, all English Language Learners benefit from the ELI . The College also acknowledges and reports the number of years it takes to complete a degree or certificate program taking into consideration the English placement levels of its diverse student body . With a view to promoting this diversity and meeting the language needs of the community, ; the College also offers courses in , Chamorro, Japanese,

Spanish, and American Sign Language (ASL). Each of these courses is offered at two levels, elementary I and elementary II.

The College administers English and math placement tests both of which use multiple measures to assess and determine student placement levels.

The English placement test has two parts, a series of three computerized Accuplacer English/ESL placement tests and an essay-writing component, developed and graded by instructors of the Languages & Humanities Department (L&H). The Accuplacer English/ESL placement test measures listening and reading comprehension, as well as grammar skills in several categories including narration, sentence relationships, and construction shifts [IIB:92]. The College utilizes the essay-writing component to measure writing skills and to determine placement levels in the College's writing courses. The instructors work hard to choose essay topics for which most students have enough background knowledge to write a five-paragraph essay. To ensure accuracy and minimize scorer bias, each essay is evaluated by three L&H instructors.

The College's language instructors continue to be the leads in the selection and assignment of essay topics to ensure that students have a familiarity and possess background knowledge of topics they must write about. These same instructors continue to review and score these essays to confirm accuracy while reducing the chances of bias from scorers. The College continues to review and validate cut-off score data from each administration of the test, as well as the success rates of students at different placement levels [IIB:93].

The math placement test is a department-developed test that measures the skills and knowledge of test takers in the areas of basic math, beginning algebra, and intermediate algebra to determine a student's placement into a range of classes, from developmental to upper level math classes. The test was developed using specific math skills that were aligned with Math SLOs to ensure that these were consistent with the requirements of courses offered at the College.

The math placement test assesses specific learning outcomes that are intended SLOs in the non-degree math courses. The math placement test is a paper-based test, so test-takers are allowed to go back to previous test items and answer missed questions or review answers to questions or items. In addition, the test does not require participants to possess technical computer skills to take the test. Math terms used in the math placement test are Standard English words also used course textbooks. Math signs and symbols used are the same regardless of culture or language. The College continues to collect and assess math placement data to review and validate its correlation to student success rates in math classes.

OAR continues to monitor and review the Registration Survey results to determine possible changes to processes or procedures to better serve our students. OAR also participates in the review of institutional policies for admission to ensure validity and consistency between policies and procedures and relative legislation and regulations that the institution and its students must comply with, specifically U.S. Immigration and SEVP/SEVIS regulations.

Additionally, OAR staff participates in campus-wide discussions that involve admissions processes.

OAR shares the Registration survey results with the Academic Council, the Registration Committee, the Recruitment Committee, and other faculty, staff and students through dialogues at committee meetings, staff meetings and various governance body assemblies to engage all stakeholders in the process of improvement.

### Self Evaluation

The College maintains focus on the learning needs of its students and will continue to align placement test instruments with its Student Learning Outcomes, Program Learning Outcomes, and pedagogical best practices. The College's Board of Regents, faculty and staff recognize through policy, procedures, program assessment, and continuous improvement actions indicated in this report, the diverse cultural, linguistic, and intellectual composition of its students and will continue to integrate research-based best practices and approaches to promote learning for all of its students.

The College responded appropriately to maintain compliance with new US Immigration Policies that impacted the CNMI and enrollment of international students through the passage of the Consolidated and Natural Resources Act of 2008. Admissions policies and procedures for International Students have been updated to ensure compliance with the requirements of the U.S. Immigration laws governing student and exchange visitor visas.

The Registration Survey and recruitment event surveys are administered to students every semester and at recruitment events to gather input on the admissions processes. These survey results are analyzed and discussed by admission personnel, faculty and staff. Dialogue between these groups include action plans to improve admission services and occur regularly during Registration Committee meetings and OAR staff meetings. The same surveys are administered each semester and results are measured between semesters, and with improvement actions taken to measure their effectiveness in addressing identified concerns.

The most recent evaluation of admissions practices for effectiveness is noted from the NMC Registration Survey–Longitudinal Analysis, Fall 2008-Spring 2012 preliminary data results. These results indicate an increase of over 11 percent between spring 2012 and fall 2011 in the number of respondents who believed the admissions/application process was “excellent.” The College has also noted a seven percent increase in the number of respondents who rated the same item as “good” between the two semesters and a decline of over seven percent in the number of survey respondents who rated this item “poor.” The admissions/application process also received an increase of over 18 percent in respondents who believed the process to be “excellent” in spring 2012 semester when compared to the report’s opening semester of fall 2008 [IIB:76].

The Accuplacer English/ESL placement test results provide information on student skills and needs immediately. Accuplacer English/ESL placement tests are internet-based, computer-

adaptive placement instruments, so changes are not made to the test format or the administration of the tests between participants.

The College community continues to engage in dialogue with regards to moving the admissions, registration, and placement testing into online formats. The Information Technology Department recently evaluated options for migrating institutional data and matriculation workflow processes into alternative Student Information Management Systems. The College has begun implementing additional modules for its current Power CAMPUS system to make it possible for prospective and current students to login, apply, and register all on-line.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Create a central coordinating office for all placements exams.
2. Administer a computer-based math placement test and explore moving responsibilities of placement tests under a centralized office.
3. Evaluate placement tests annually to remove bias and improve score alignment with course placement levels.

***Standard II.B3f.*** *The institution maintains student records permanently, securely, and confidentially, with provisions for secure backup of all files, regardless of the form in which those files are maintained. The institution publishes and follows established policies for release of student records.*

#### Descriptive Summary

The Office of Admissions and Record (OAR) is the custodian of records for the institution. The President, the Dean of Student Services, and Director of the Office of Admissions and Records hold the duty to ensure compliance by all College employees with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations and Board of Regents policies that pertain to the maintenance, security, and release of student records.

NMC continues to employ two fundamental methods of maintaining student records permanently, securely, and confidentially – in electronic and hard copy form. Student information recorded prior to 2003 is maintained in the Champlain system, while information recorded after 2003 to the present is maintained in the PowerCAMPUS database system. The Information Technology (IT) department is responsible for ensuring that both database systems are backed-up regularly and the information is stored separately on a dedicated hard-drive. Hard copy records are stored securely in a file room adjacent to the Office of

Admissions and Records. Back-up files, live electronic files, and hard copy files are currently retained for a lifetime.

Removal of student hard copy records in OAR continues to be restricted to OAR staff and only for the purposes of providing a given student or his or her advisor requested information, or for the purposes of auditing and updating information. Access to both the electronic files and hard copy files are also restricted to College employees with specific designations within their duties and responsibilities to work with student records.

Employee access to students' electronic files is authorized by the Human Resources Office and user names and passwords are issued by the IT department. Upon creation of user names and password, the IT and OAR provide user training to ensure employees are made aware of record confidentiality, system usage protocols, and receive FERPA training. All employees, including limited term appointments and student work-studies assigned to work with student records are required to participate in the FERPA training and sign a Confidentiality of Records Agreement [IIB:95] form that is made available at the OAR.

NMC and students are assigned unique identification numbers, PowerCAMPUS Ids (PC ID), which are used to record academic information in the database. With the implementation PowerCAMPUS in 2003, all students and employees of the Northern Marianas College are assigned a PowerCAMPUS Identification Number (PC ID). The PC IDs are unique numbers that are used in lieu of the student Social Security Number that had been formerly used in the Champlain system. PC IDs are used for student services academic and financial account information as well as for access to Library services and materials, student governance body activities (i.e. elections), and for access to computer and language laboratories.

NMC complies with FERPA regulations. Students are informed of their rights, the privacy of their records, and FERPA at the time of their application for admission. Additionally, the FERPA general statement is published on the Directory Information form [IIB:96] and is provided to all new applicants and returning applicants. NMC also publishes its Student Privacy of Records [IIB:97] information in the College catalog. During registration periods, the Directory Information form is made available to students for updating, should they opt to. The Directory Information form is maintained in the students' hard copy file and updates are recorded in each student's electronic file.

All student requests for records must be accompanied with valid and verifiable photo identification. Students may also opt to authorize the release of their information to a second party; however, the authorization from the student must include the student's signature and valid and verifiable photo identifications of both the student and the authorized party. All off-island authorizations must also include a notary of the form to ensure authenticity of information and applicant's signature.

Board of Regents (BOR) policies that pertain to the confidentiality of student records were updated in March 2011 [IIB:98][IIB:99] and currently being reviewed again as the institution moves towards a newly adopted policy series and refinement of procedures.

The current policies and procedures continue to be published in the General Catalog and made available to students in the Dean of Student Services' Office, the NMC website, and in the advisors' offices. Moreover, College policies pertaining to the maintenance, security, and release of student records are made available to Saipan campus employees via the network server (N-Drive).

OAR's Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) [IIB:100] outline admission and enrollment requirements and internal procedures handling students' record requests. The OAR SOPs also detail the procedures and requirements for the submission of Official Grade Rosters, grade memorandums, and change of grade forms for faculty and other academic department personnel.

### Self Evaluation

The OAR continues to lead training on FERPA and NMC policies concerning student records. OAR staff facilitated a total of fifteen (15) FERPA training sessions between 2010-2012 and recorded a total of two hundred seventy-six (276) participants that included new employees, adjunct faculty, work-study students, and volunteers [IIB:101].

As the methods of management of electronic academic records dramatically evolves to incorporate online transcripts and student access to previously restricted enrollment information, OAR anticipates a need for the institution to support its staff in acquiring continuous professional development to keep them current in their field of work and to address the ever-shifting work of records management and maintenance. Additionally, instructors and advisors need to receive comprehensive training, compatible hardware and software to enable them to report students' grades electronically and effortlessly.

The Records Management Plan, which identifies the retention period for specific records maintained by the College, is currently being updated and reviewed by the Management Team. This proposed Board Policy will also ensure the institution's compliance with both federal and state level record retention regulations while addressing the need to remove old records that are no longer required to be maintained.

The College distributed print copies of the College catalog to all new and returning students during a series of mandatory student orientations during the month of August 2012. This is significant for students who may not have the means by which to access electronic information via the web.

Other areas of improvement include the need to dedicate a larger, secured space for records and the need to purchase additional fire-proof file cabinets for storage of records.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Implement a Records Management Plan.

***Standard II.B4.*** *The institution evaluates student support services to assure their adequacy in meeting identified student needs. Evaluation of these services provides evidence that they contribute to the achievement of student learning outcomes. The institution uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.*

### Descriptive Summary

All student support programs participate in *Program Review*, a coordinated, institution-wide assessment program focused on continuous quality improvement of courses and programs. Program Review is the college's vehicle for executing the Student Learning Outcomes Comprehensive Implementation Program (SLOCIP) adopted by the college in September 2007 [IIB:102]. SLOCIP provides an outline for a comprehensive institutional assessment plan for the Northern Marianas College (NMC) and addresses the requirements of the 2007 ACCJC template for Annual Reporting of Student Learning Outcomes.

Oversight for Program Review is the primary responsibility of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) with support from the Planning, Program Review and Assessment Committee (PROAC). PROAC reviews assessment plans and reports from college departments and units, evaluates the quality of such submissions, provides feedback for improvement, and ultimately approves and prioritizes recommendations for improvement. PROAC and OIE work cooperatively to set each cycle of Program Review in motion by establishing timelines for action, facilitating dialogue on assessment within programs and across the institution, and scheduling training and technical support as needed.

The following student support programs participate in Program Review: Counseling Programs & Services, Career Services, Testing Services, Service Learning Program, Library Programs & Services, Office of Student Activities & Leadership, Office of Financial Aid, Office of Admissions & Records, and Upward Bound Program.

Each Program Review cycle is aligned with the college's fiscal year. The annual cycle begins with an assessment of a program's Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and/or Administrative Unit Outcomes (AUOs). SLOs are clear and concise statements of what students will be able to know, do, think or value as a result of a given educational experience. AUOs are statements that express what programs do with regard to the services it provides. Programs select a combination of at least three of its established SLOs and/or AUOs to assess throughout the academic year. The Nichols and Nichols' "Five-Column Model" is used as a framework for designing and reporting assessment of SLOs and/or AUOs at the program level. Column 1 of the Five-Column Model identifies the college mission as the foundation for which all established SLOs and/or AUOs must align with. Column 2 lists the SLOs and/or AUOs to be assessed throughout the Program Review cycle. Column 3 identifies and defines specific assessment tools that will measure each stated outcome, as well as criteria for success. Column 4 summarizes assessment findings and measures the extent to which the program had met its established success criteria for each of the stated outcomes. Column 5 discusses the use of results and evaluates the assessment process to identify action plans for improving certain aspects of the program or its approach to assessment [IIB:55].

Each element of the Five-Column Model as reported by each program is entered and compiled in the college's TracDat system. TracDat, an assessment management tool, was implemented during the third cycle of Program Review to streamline the process of collecting and analyzing data submitted by programs. A program's submission of Column 5 data in TracDat completes a program's assessment of its stated outcomes in each cycle. The data entered into TracDat is compiled and distributed to each program via TracDat's *Unit Assessment Report – Five Column Model* to demonstrate work completed throughout the cycle and to assist programs prepare and plan for assessment of SLOs and/or AUOs in subsequent cycles. The aggregate data compiled in TracDat of all outcomes measured across all college programs is reviewed at PROAC and shared at institutional planning, assessment, and/or accreditation events to promote dialogue and assess the strength of linkages between individual program outcomes and the institution's priority initiatives.

On January 28, 2011, PROAC voted to approve staggering the comprehensive review of college programs into two biennial cycles – Cycle A and Cycle B [IIB:103]. Cycle A encompasses fiscal year 2011 and outlines the complete review of all academic programs. Cycle B outlines assessment activities for fiscal year 2012 and mandates a comprehensive review of all non-academic programs. Programs identified as meeting compliance with Accreditation Standard II.B.4 are scheduled to complete a comprehensive review toward the end of Cycle B in September 2012. Additionally, staff members of each program are asked to meet at least once every quarter to track progress toward achieving program outcomes and to document these discussions through the Record of Dialogue form.

Prior to the adoption of a biennial cycle for Program Review, all programs were required to participate fully in all elements of assessment and were required to submit a comprehensive Program Review report, Form 2, at the end of each year. Form 2 is a summative narrative of each program, which includes the following data as reported by each program: college and program mission statement; establishment of the program; program milestones; evaluations of the impact of the previous cycle of Program Review on the program; program services; analysis of data and evidence collected; human resources; physical resources; technological resources; a listing of agreements/partnerships with campus and external groups; a listing of a program advisory council (if applicable); a discussion of strategic and annual implementation planning and; recommendations to the program and institution.

With the implementation of a biennial Program Review schedule, each student support services program now submits a Form 2 [IIB:56] to PROAC at the end of Cycle B. The aggregate of recommendations generated by each program in its Form 2 submission is evaluated by PROAC for approval and published in the institution's Program Review Composite Report [IIB:103]. The Program Review Composite Report is disseminated to college governance groups to promote dialogue and for use in establishing institutional priorities and allocating resources.

The College's student support services include the administration of federally funded grants and student financial aid that serve both prospective and current students. These programs must meet specific objectives approved by the grantor and demonstrate success at addressing



the needs of the student population targeted to benefit from such programs. During the process of obtaining a new grant or vying for the continuation of an existing grant program, the College embarks on a data collection effort that includes an analysis of the needs of students throughout the K-12 educational continuum and characteristics of the CNMI economy, population, and social structures. This information is presented to grantors to justify implementation of a grant by the College and usually contains sections that identify the needs of our prospective and/or current student population. During implementation, the grantor monitors the college's progress toward meeting approved goals, objectives, activities, and services.

The Upward Bound Program, for example, is required to submit an annual performance report to the US Department of Education at the end of each award year to report the program's success at achieving outcomes relating to student academic performance and college-going rates. Upward Bound operates within the Division of Student Services to address the needs of high school students who meet low-income, first-generation, and disability eligibility requirements. The Director of the Upward Bound Program is responsible for evaluating the program's effectiveness at accomplishing approved objectives of the grant. The Director reviews activity reports, student academic performance data, and evaluates feedback from staff and others to make adjustments or improvements to service delivery in order to maximize the likelihood of achievement of program outcomes and objectives.

The college currently administers the following grant programs covered by this standard, each with distinct methods for evaluating its objectives and the evidence available to support actions for improvement: Service Learning Program, College Access Challenge Grant Program, Upward Bound Program, and Title IV – Student Financial Aid.

These grant programs also participate in Program Review either as distinct programs subjected to a comprehensive evaluation or as a major component of a program on the College's current assessment taxonomy (i.e. Financial Aid Office).

On August 31, 2012, the College will cease administering the Upward Bound Program (UBP) grant. UBP is a five-year grant that was awarded to the College in 2007 to 2012. The College submitted an application to the US Department of Education on February 1, 2012 for continued funding under this grant program and received notice on May 14, 2012 that the College's application was not recommended for continued funding. The College has made efforts to transition students served by UBP into other support programs offered by the College, including the College Access Challenge Grant and the Adult Basic Education program.

The College utilizes a number of assessment tools and sources of data to identify student needs and make improvements to programs in connection to the fulfillment of these needs. Implementing changes to the *Registration Process* illustrates how the College makes improvements to its services as a result of an evaluation of its impact on identified student needs.

The College's course registration process is a campus-wide event supported by a large number of college staff and faculty and a series of sequential activities performed by students themselves as well as multiple programs and departments. Whereas other colleges have made the shift to the use of web-based registration systems, the college continues to rely on a manual process. The current course registration process demands an inordinate amount of time and effort of all involved to communicate accurate information and work through necessary steps for students to develop a course schedule. Close coordination between departments is needed to handle the logistics of routing numerous forms on behalf of each student. Registration is one of the largest events that, for a number of reasons inherent to the nature of the existing infrastructure, draws a large number of students to campus. These students are then asked to engage in a number of activities (advising, fee clearance, financial aid review, orientation, instructor approval, arrange for payment, etc.) that is both time intensive and requiring a substantial amount of time in individual meetings with multiple people.

In its evaluation of the institution's registration process, for example, the Office of Admissions & Records (OAR) developed the following recommendation which was subsequently approved by PROAC and included in the 2010 Composite Report:

*“Recommend to the Registration Committee that course registration be scheduled for students according to each students' academic standing (seniors and by total credits) to ensure a more efficient, and less congested registration experience for students.” [IIB:104]*

An evaluation of OAR's Form 2 submission to PROAC demonstrates that the program's published data extracted from the Fall 2009 and Spring 2010 Registration Survey [IIB:76] results provide justification for this recommendation. This recommendation was subsequently adopted by the Registration Committee in addition to a series of actions implemented by this committee to improve the registration process for the Spring 2011 term. The changes to NMC's registration procedures were announced on the college website, via student email accounts, as press releases to local media outlets, on posters pasted on campus buildings, during student orientation, and included in the Spring 2011 Class Schedule booklet [IIB:105]. The results of the Spring 2011 Registration survey demonstrates that these actions formed the basis of improving the institution's registration process

### Self Evaluation

In its March 15, 2011 Show Cause Report, the College reported the results of the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE), a national assessment tool used to provide a clear picture of student behaviors in the earliest weeks of college and the institutional practices that affect students during this critical time. The results of this survey were disseminating to key managers for use as reference when reviewing and discussing institutional practices. The value of the SENSE data assisted academic program evaluation when addressing teaching practices as it applies to student learning, specifically in the following areas:

Item 18d: *Able to meet with an academic advisor at times convenient to me*

Item 18o: *I knew how to get in touch with my instructor outside of class*

Item 19l: (Frequency) *Used an electronic tool to communicate with an instructor about coursework during the first three weeks of your first SEMESTER/QUARTER.*

Item 19q: (Frequency) *Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with instructors outside of class during the first three weeks of your first SEMESTER/QUARTER.*

Item 20d2: (Frequency) *Used face-to-face tutoring.* [IIB:106]

Although the College has taken steps to improve services that promote student engagement and student success, there is a limited and isolated use of the SENSE data by the College in effectively linking institutional plans or actions with results. Clearly, SENSE had provided institutional data to position the College to focus on areas that need improvement. The College continues to recognize the responsibility of including national assessment tools like SENSE in its evaluation process as it aligns Program and Student Learning Outcomes to student success.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Integrate results of peer comparison reviews and national assessment tools with institutional planning, setting institutional priorities and processes to better fine-tune the allocation of resources.

## **Standard II.C. Library and Learning Support Services**

*Library and other learning support services for students are sufficient to support the institution's instructional programs and intellectual, aesthetic, and cultural activities in whatever format and wherever they are offered. Such services include library services and collections, tutoring, learning centers, computer laboratories, and learning technology development and training. The institution provides access and training to students so that library and other learning support services may be used effectively and efficiently. The institution systematically assesses these services using student learning outcomes, faculty input, and other appropriate measures in order to improve the effectiveness of the services.*

***Standard II.C1.*** *The institution supports the quality of its instructional programs by providing library and other learning support services that are sufficient in quantity, currency, depth, and variety to facilitate educational offerings, regardless of location or means of delivery.*

### Descriptive Summary

The Department of Library Programs and Services consists of Olympio T. Borja Library, Curriculum Resource Center (CRC), CNMI Archives and Pacific Collection. Northern Marianas College's library collection consists of more than 40,000 books, 50 periodical subscriptions, and access to over 8,000 full-text journals accessed through online subscription-based article databases. The Pacific Collection is housed in the CNMI Archives and is composed of over 7,000 books specifically on the Pacific region, oral history of the Marianas Islands, and historical maps; this is in addition to the archival collection [IIC:1]. There are small collections at the campuses on Tinian and Rota. At the main library, there is ready reference help at the circulation desk and staff that provide classroom instruction on information literacy and introduction to library resources sessions. There is a continual review of services along with the resources department provided through library surveys and feedback. Collection development is a regular occurrence in the library with the acquisition lists based on our instructional programs. Faculty input is sought on a regular basis through emails and surveys to ensure their information needs are being met. Purchase requests can be submitted at any time by students, staff or faculty, which are then reviewed by the librarian. Weeding of the collection must also be done periodically due to space constraints on the collections. The library keeps licensure books such as PRAXIS, NCLEX and ASVAB up to date. The library houses an audiovisual collection of over 1,000 items, many of which are on VHS tapes, although the library is focusing on acquiring more DVDs in future purchases. Materials are constantly being added to the collection, with an emphasis on supporting the academic programs offered at NMC. The library's website, course guides and online library catalog, <http://library.nmcnet.edu>, are also available for students to use. The amount of information available to students online has grown over the years with a wide scope and depth of coverage offered in the EBSCO databases covering academic journals, magazines, encyclopedias and newspapers which are linked from the library website. These online databases are available 24/7 from any computer connected to the Internet, and are a great

resource for those looking to take non-credit and/or credit classes on the islands of Tinian and Rota via distance learning. Currently, Saipan is the only location where instructional, degree earning classes are taught at. The library has been reviewing ways to provide the same service levels and resources to students on all three main islands if the college decides to expand its instructional programs back to Tinian and Rota. The library would have students able to request items through the online catalog and send them to Tinian or Rota via the air pouches the college uses through Freedom Air, receiving their library materials in a timely manner.

The library also has special collections in Education and on the Pacific region at its main location. The Education collection directly supports the School of Education programs offered at the college and is considered part of the Curriculum Resource Center (CRC). The Pacific Collection has developed over the last couple of decades into one of the strongest special collections in the Western Pacific with over 7,000 books and numerous other items of cultural significance. This is utilized internally by Instructors, students and staff of NMC as well as the people of the Commonwealth for in-depth information on the Pacific-region and especially research on the Mariana Islands. The archives was previously used to house the documents of the UN Trust Territory government before a closer alliance was formed with the United States, making the Northern Mariana Islands an unincorporated territory of the United States. Renamed the CNMI Archives, this is part of NMC's Department of Library Programs and Services. There has been some preliminary dialog with the public library, to possibly shift the archival collection there.

Tutoring services or referrals are also provided in the library for students that may need additional assistance. The majority of tutoring is done through the counseling department which has a large area with tables set up specifically for that purpose and a staff of student ambassadors who are there to help when students are struggling. The library keeps a schedule of tutoring hours available and sends students to the appropriate place when necessary. The library does have individual and group study areas, which can completely fill up at peak times.

### Self Evaluation

Library surveys are an integral part of assessing the quality of the library's services and resources. This is done either by semester or annually to help gauge the effectiveness of the department, solicit feedback and engage the library's patrons. A sample size of 10 percent of the students officially enrolled is sought for more valid results. Some semesters the number of surveys received was fairly low so staff members would solicit participation from students in the library. Since a library instruction component is now included in the BE111, College Success Skills class, a larger number of library surveys have been distributed through these classes resulting in a much higher submission rate of completed surveys. The number of surveys collected in the Spring 2012 semester totaled 377, or approximately 25 percent of the student population. The results of the surveys are used in our Form 1, program review reports to the college along with helping guide changes within this department.

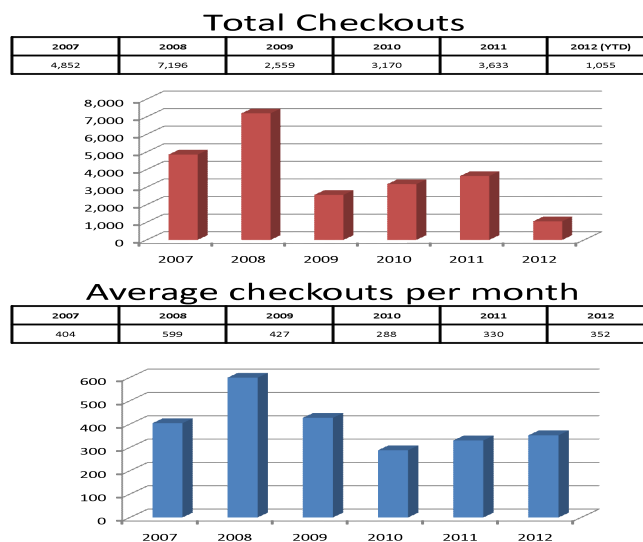
Library surveys for the Spring 2012 semester showed 63% of students visiting the library are “Frequently” to “Always” able to satisfy their information needs. There was a much higher percentage of patrons that marked they were “seldom” able to satisfy their information needs at the library this year which could be attributed to the number of non-library users surveyed as part of their classes. A closer look at the survey results is needed to implement corrective measures. Students and faculty are encouraged to submit purchase requests for the library in areas they feel the collection is weak to assist the librarian in the collection development process. Students are told of about purchase requests at new student orientation and during library introduction sessions. Faculty are made aware at faculty assemblies and via work email to submit purchase requests. There has been a steadily growing number of survey results showing patrons are “seldom” able to find what they are looking for, which is a concern for the library. More information needs to be collected to determine where the exact deficiencies are. A question requesting subject areas that students are having difficulty finding information on would be helpful.

Library survey results showed:

When you visit the library, are you able to find what you are looking for?

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
Always	14 (23%)	15 (18%)	15 (18%)	69 (18%)
Frequently	31 (51%)	45 (55%)	47 (55%)	169 (45%)
Seldom	14 (23%)	20 (24%)	23 (27%)	122 (32%)
First Time	2 (3%)	2 (2%)	0	17 (5%)

A number of changes have been implemented to ensure the library’s success and the library’s commitment to the continual improvement of services over the past few years. The library was remodeled by adding an extra glass door to designate a quiet study area. The project also involve repainting of the interior and exterior walls of the building, replacing the wooden bookcases with metal ones, and cleaning up the area between the regular library collection and the Pacific collection. These updates were made possible through a \$25,000 donation from Mobil Oil Company. A rededication of the Olympio T. Borja Library was held after the renovation in Spring 2008. Since then, additional seating, study spaces and tables have been added as well to maximize the space. Statistics show the library is being used by many of the students at the college. There was a noticeable drop in checkouts after 2008 which could be attributed to the frequent Integrated Library System (ILS) outages that started to be experienced after that time. The new ILS system went live in January 2012, so an end-of-year comparison will be most accurate to previous years circulation statistics. The year to date circulation statistics are up to May 1, 2012.



The college programmed a significant amount of money for the library from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grant funds that were to be used for modernization and professional development. The two main components of these funders were to purchase a new server to be housed at the college for the ILS system and the upgrade of the actual ILS software. Prior to this upgrade, the current setup had the server owned and housed at the public library to share on costs. Unfortunately, that resulted in numerous outages and downtime of the system at the college due to poor broadband connections, lack of technical expertise and outdated technology. The remainder of the ARRA funds were used for professional development purposes. The upgrade of the library's ILS was completed at the beginning of 2012 and has also improved our service level; updates and maintenance for the new system are on-going. This has brought the library catalog back online at <http://library.nmcnet.edu>. Patrons can limit their search to a number of different collections and easily find relevant items for research, assignments or leisure activities.

In 2011, the library undertook a comprehensive serials review and weeding of the various collections. The serials review compared the print serial titles to those accessible in full-text online through the databases in order to cut the print subscriptions down. This made space available for new titles while saving the college thousands of dollars in annual subscription costs. The result was a consolidation of in-print serials subscriptions, saving the college thousands of dollars, while offering a larger selection in titles to faculty, students and staff. This was one of many cost saving measures put into place by the Department of Library Programs and Services. Feedback has been solicited from students and instructional staff on the quality of services and resources the library provides through library surveys. Numerous purchase suggestions have resulted in more effective purchases when acquiring new materials with a limited budget.

The library has expanded its shelving space through a generous donation from the University of Hawaii, in coordination with Hawaii State Representative, Glenn Wakai. These were installed by the college's maintenance staff at a minimal cost to the department. Shelves now wrap almost completely around the walls in the main collection area of the library. This allowed the library system to shift the education collections into the main library,

consolidating a service desk, reducing overhead expenses, while providing students with access to more resources in one location. The School of Education's CRC was integrated into the main library location for accessibility, security and staffing concerns. Some storage space was provided from the CNMI Archives to the CRC and a partition added so walk-through access is possible between the main library, CRC and CNMI Archives for the first time. These three major components of the library system are now all located in the same building with students able to go to any of these spaces without having to exit the building. The library was closed from July 5 to July 29 2011, for shelving installation and the shifting of the CRC collection into the main library building. A decision was made to close during this time since all summer classes that semester ended on July 1, 2011, so the closure had a minimal impact on students. Overall, there have been numerous improvements to the library system during this six year cycle including a new ILS system, security gate installation, security tags added to all collections, consolidation of service desks for centralized services, increase in resources and increased number of patrons using the library.

The library has continually provided support for instructional programs through the array of resources in the collection along with in-class workshops and presentations. Emails soliciting purchase requests and feedback are sent out at the beginning of the semester. The library has been able to deliver quality services to its students and faculty over the years which can be seen from the results of the surveys that are distributed, collected and analyzed to look at ways of improvement. The comments area at the end of the survey can be extremely valuable in getting an idea on what patrons want regarding the library, its services and resources. The library and its staff have been very active in the program review process, serving on numerous committees and accreditation review teams. Overall, the library has been successful in meeting the information needs of the academic programs offered through the college and has received good reviews from the library's annual surveys.

The library is dedicated to providing quality services in support of the instructional programs of the college, in compliance with the Standards of Accreditation, and through continual assessment and improvements. The library will continue to collect vital statistics and actively participate in the program review process.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Modify the library survey to request specific information on deficiencies in the library collection to better determine customer concerns.



***Standard II.C1a.** Relying on appropriate expertise of faculty, including librarians and other learning support services professionals, the institution selects and maintains educational equipment and materials to support student learning and enhance the achievement of the mission of the institution.*

### Descriptive Summary

Staff at the Northern Marianas College's library have built a collection of more than 40,000 books, 50 periodical subscriptions, and access to dozens of online databases over the years. These are scoped toward college-level information covering subject areas relevant to the instructional programs at the college. There is ready reference help at the circulation desk and library staff that are available for classroom instruction on information literacy or sessions on how to use the library's resources effectively. The college values professional development and has been able to send some of its staff to off-island training and conferences, while others have attended on-island sessions [IIC:2]. Library surveys have shown user satisfaction with the services they provide.

The library provides access to PC workstations, loans out netbooks for in-library use and has wireless broadband internet access throughout the library. This allows students to access the online library catalog, article databases, email or the web for general research. There are plans to install an additional Internet workstation that complies with ADA guidelines with screen reader technology for students with special needs. The library also provides access to computers that are dedicated to the online catalog.

The director, a qualified librarian, has been weeding various collections to ensure alignment with academic programs and to make space for the numerous titles continually being added to the collection. Feedback has been solicited from students and instructional staff on the quality of services and resources the library provides. Numerous purchase suggestions have resulted in more effective purchases when acquiring new materials within a limited budget. The library is involved in the program review process with a number of staff on accreditation review teams and other committees.

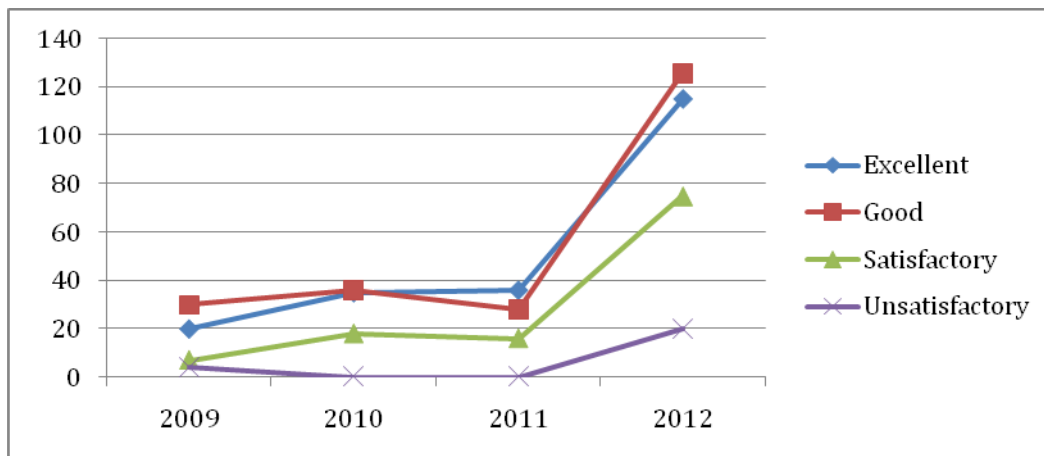
### Self Evaluation

The library's mission is to provide an environment that encourages learning and scholarship [IIC.1]. Surveying students in the library about their perceptions on staff and services will help determine this goal is being met. As shown in the longitudinal library survey data, the library staff have consistently performed well in providing professional and student-friendly services to library patrons, which is reflected in the library's Form 1 submissions.

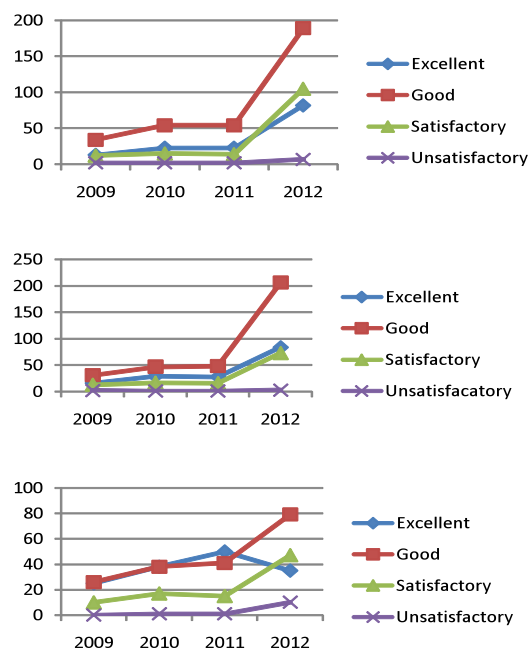
Library survey data collected over the past few years shows the following:

<b>How helpful is our staff?</b>				
	2009	2010	2011	2012
Excellent	20 (32%)	35 (39%)	36 (45%)	115 (34%)
Good	30 (48%)	36 (40%)	28 (35%)	126 (38%)
Satisfactory	7 (13%)	18 (21%)	16 (20%)	75 (22%)
Unsatisfactory	4 (7%)	0	0	20 (6%)

### How helpful is our staff?



Please rate your satisfaction with each of the following services provided by the Library				
	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Collection</b>				
Excellent	13	23	23	82
Good	34	54	54	189
Satisfactory	12	15	14	105
Unsatisfactory	2	2	2	7
	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Reference</b>				
Excellent	16	29	28	84
Good	31	47	48	206
Satisfactory	13	17	16	73
Unsatisfactory	2	1	1	3
	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Magazines</b>				
Excellent	25	38	50	35
Good	26	38	41	79
Satisfactory	10	17	15	47
Unsatisfactory	0	1	1	10



The results of the 2012 Spring student library survey shows the library is complying with accreditation standards. Input from faculty helps ensure the resources and equipment satisfy the academic needs of the students. Book purchase requests are received throughout the year from faculty and students. Many instructors utilize the library's A/V equipment by assigning students to view certain A/V materials kept on course reserve, teaching videos that require students to write reflection papers, or students coming into the library for make-up viewings. The updated collections and equipment enhance the access to the resources through the online library catalog and increased number of online databases. As the online class offerings expand at NMC, the library will follow the ACCJC's "Guide to Evaluating Distance Education and Correspondence Education" to ensure the library meets those students' needs. The library periodically displays books, clothing and other artifacts in display cases to promote cultural awareness, even hosting local authors to speak about the topic of their books to the students and members of the community.

The library hosted information sessions on a scholarship opportunity for Pacific Islanders to complete their Master's of Library and Information Science (MLIS) through the University of North Texas (UNT). There are five successful applicants from the CNMI currently enrolled at UNT as part of this grant-funded program for a Pacific Islander cohort. An application to extend the program has already been submitted to the funding organization, the Institute of Museum and Library Services with the decision to be made by September 2012. The website where the successful applicants can be viewed is

<http://www.lis.unt.edu/leap/scholarships.php>. The library was very successful in promoting this and other scholarship opportunities for students.

Despite a decrease in the number of its personnel and budgetary constraints that have been experienced by NMC, just like other colleges across the U.S., the Department of Library Programs and Services is committed to supporting student learning through its operations, resources and involvement in program review. The program review process includes membership on Program Review Outcome Assessment Committee (PROAC), Accreditation Reaffirmation Team (ART), Academic Council, College Council, Budget and Finance Committee (BAFC), Faculty and Staff Senate. Library surveys, Student Learning Outcomes (SLO), Administrative Unit Outcomes (AUO) and departmental statistics all play a role in this process. The library also collaborates through professional associations such as the Commonwealth Association of Archives, Libraries and Museums (CAALM), Pacific Islands Association of Libraries, Archives and Museums (PIALA), and the American Library Association (ALA).

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Review the current staffing levels and compare with peer review staffing analysis to determine the best course of action when vacancy requests are submitted.

***Standard II.C1b.** The institution provides ongoing instruction for users of library and other learning support services so that students are able to develop skills in information competency.*

#### Descriptive Summary

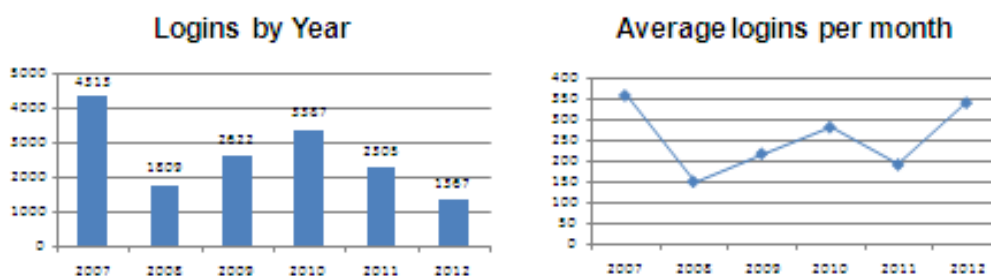
The library promotes its resources to students, staff, and faculty through instruction, Library orientations, in-service presentations, database searching skills and information literacy workshops that are provided throughout the academic year. There are a number of these requests throughout each semester with the most activity at the beginning. There are many resources specific to the School of Education now housed in the main library such as the cut machine and large laminator. There are information sessions requests for the Curriculum Resource Center's Program Coordinator to cover, along with providing a library introduction focusing on the education collection. Instructors in the Introduction to Teaching class, ED200, also provide students with a checklist of actions that need to be done inside the library to better familiarize them with the resources necessary to complete the course. Instructors have come up with scavenger hunts or library-specific assignments that must be completed immediately after an orientation is given. Library surveys are starting to be distributed to classes that receive library instructions. The library survey covers different aspects of a student's expectations and abilities in the library which is also reported on.

The library has been promoting access to the online article databases since the beginning of 2011. This was included in the Form 1 submission for Library Programs and Services, with statistics showing an increase in usage. Statistics have been compiled over the last five years

to show the access rates to these databases with the year-to-date number of logins as of May 1, 2012 at 1,367. The average logins per month had decreased from 2007 levels only to bounce back to 341.75 average logins per month in 2012.

**Online database logins from 2007 to Present**

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Jan	420	217	223	165	148	134
Feb	550	145	318	330	257	415
Mar	713	139	187	272	336	512
Apr	578	200	590	540	254	306
May	306	126	137	357	410	
Jun	132	36	81	63	169	
Jul	186	80	69	49	82	
Aug	148	131	166	258	85	
Sept	368	227	254	593	205	
Oct	333	263	237	216	158	
Nov	364	183	277	336	147	
Dec	215	62	83	208	54	
<b>Total</b>	<b>4313</b>	<b>1809</b>	<b>2622</b>	<b>3387</b>	<b>2305</b>	<b>1367</b>
<b>Average per month</b>	<b>359.41</b>	<b>150.75</b>	<b>218.5</b>	<b>282.25</b>	<b>192.08</b>	<b>341.75</b>



Faculty and students are utilizing the electronic resources, as evidenced by increased usage statistics per month. The 2012 total login amount of 1,367 is year-to-date as of May 1, 2012 and should not be interpreted as a decline in usage from 2010 numbers.

### Self Evaluation

The library has been proactive over the last few years in promoting its services and resources. There has been a number of library introduction sessions provided to new student orientations and more in-depth coverage to various classes by request. All BE111, College Success Skills classes were given a library resource instruction session in the Fall of 2010 and 2011. As of the Spring 2012 semester, there is a library component included in the course guide for the BE111. That class will become a requirement for all degrees at NMC starting in the Fall 2012 semester, so the library is well placed to integrate information literacy instruction to all first year students from the Fall semester onwards. Hundreds of students will be introduced to scholarly journals and search strategies for the article databases, along with finding information in the library. This should result in all NMC students getting at least some basic instruction on the library's resources in an effort to promote information literacy and lifelong learning. These developments have been seen as

very positive for the library system and college as a whole, but there is still room for improvement.

The decrease in the number of librarians at the college has been steady over the years until only the director is responsible for all duties associated with the lost positions. A hiring freeze had limited the ability of the library to hire an Academic Librarian, which has been vacant since May 15, 2010 and there have been discussions whether that position should remain at the college. Data collection and outreach in this area has been lacking mainly due to staff shortages and a lack of emphasis on having qualified librarians in the library.

The library staff actively participates in department, program, and institutional assessment efforts. One of the major challenges of the library system is the number of job cuts experienced in this six year cycle. The number of librarians employed at the college has continually decreased from five (Academic Librarian, Public Services Librarian, Special Collection Librarian, CRC Librarian and Technical Services Librarian) to only the Academic Librarian position in Saipan which is currently vacant and not being filled due to a hiring freeze. There has been a push to restructure the college in response to budgetary shortfalls from government funding cuts and economic decline. This has left many positions vacant until the president and management team prioritize every position and implement the restructuring. The director has been taking up the responsibilities of the Academic Librarian, while being very vocal at directors' meetings and assemblies on the important role librarians play at the college. The president has requested a thorough peer analysis on the staffing needs of the library. NMC's peer colleges have been identified and the statistics are being put together to determine the best course of action for the college.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Review the current staffing levels and compare with peer review staffing analysis to determine the best course of action when vacancy requests are submitted.

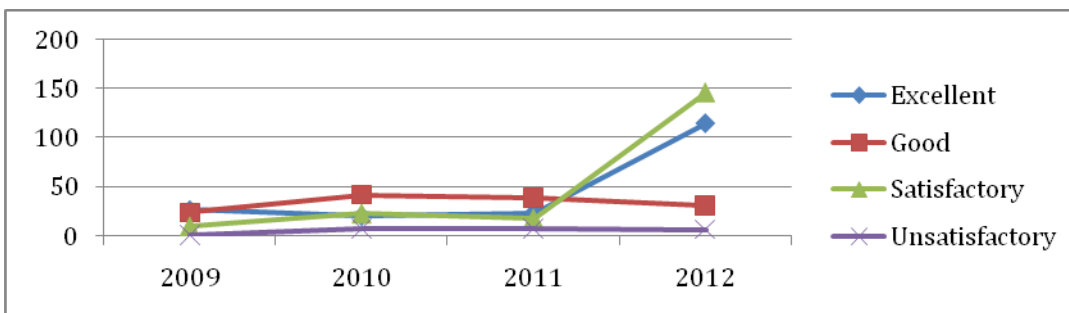
***Standard IIC1c.*** *The institution provides students and personnel responsible for student learning programs and services adequate access to the library and other learning support services, regardless of their location or means of delivery.*

#### Descriptive Summary

The library is open Monday through Friday, with some weekend hours. The library implemented Saturday hours from 10am-5pm for the Fall semester 2011, although usage statistics recorded by staff was exceptionally low. As a result of this, along with meeting with the department chair of the School of Education, whose program provides most of the weekend instruction, a decision was made to reduce the Saturday hours from 12-4pm for the Spring 2012 semester. Extra hours for study week and during finals for the Spring 2012 semester was provided by the library as a result of a request from the president of the Associated Students of NMC (ASNMC) the student organization here. The library accommodates requests from instructors to stay open later for specific classes or functions.

There is a variety of online resources provided by the library that are accessible anytime to students connected to the Internet.

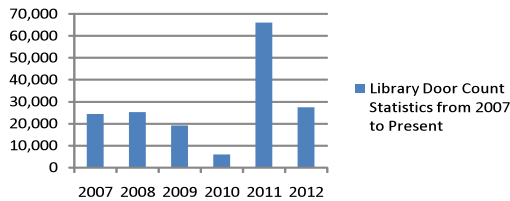
	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Hours of Operation</b>				
Excellent	27 (44%)	21 (18%)	24 (27%)	115 (38%)
Good	24 (39%)	42 (37%)	39 (44%)	31 (10%)
Satisfactory	10 (16%)	23 (20%)	18 (20%)	146 (49%)
Unsatisfactory	1 (2%)	8 (7%)	8 (9%)	7 (2%)



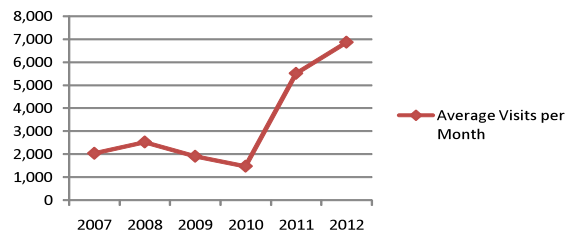
Door count statistics has also shown that usage is up in the library.

Library Door Count Statistics from 2007 to Present						
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Jan	2,024	1,961	1,542	N/A	4,245	6,340
Feb	3,012	3,310	2,628	963	6,086	7,276
Mar	2,808	2,510	2,345	2,142	9,240	7,340
Apr	2,151	3,316	1,905	2,067	6,426	6,414
May	1,271	1,859	1,157	737	3,777	
Jun	264	2,712	1,173	N/A	2,245	
Jul	1,249	2,719	1,127	N/A	511	
Aug	2,135	2,525	1,527	N/A	6,926	
Sept	2,967	4,377	3,324	N/A	9,287	
Oct	2,705	N/A	2,358	N/A	8,406	
Nov	2,465	N/A	N/A	N/A	7,610	
Dec	1,403	N/A	N/A	N/A	1,405	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24,454</b>	<b>25,289</b>	<b>19,086</b>	<b>5,909</b>	<b>66,164</b>	<b>27,470</b>
Average Visits per Month	2,038	2,529	1,909	1,477	5,514	6,868

**Library Door Count Statistics from 2007 to Present**



**Average Visits per Month**



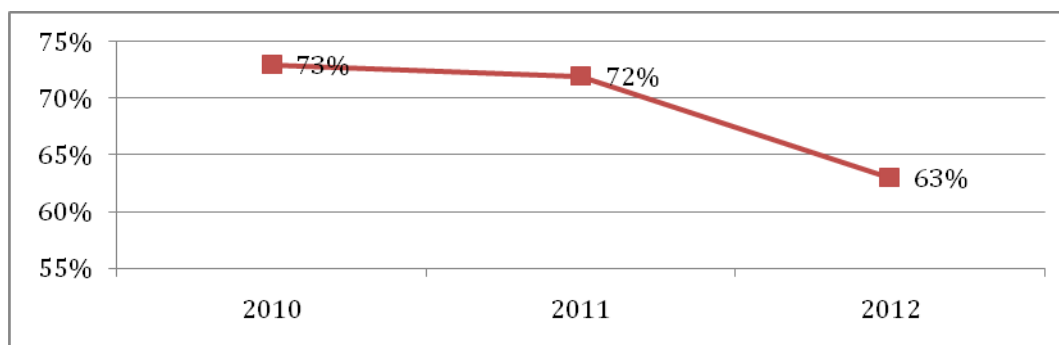
### Self Evaluation

Results from the library survey and data collection over the past few years have mostly been positive for the library. User satisfaction was on the rise along with library usage. The most recent survey however shows a drop in the number of students that stated they were able to find what they were looking for, however satisfaction with the various collections was high. Reading the feedback from many of the negative surveys showed the students were critical of the shift of Curriculum Resource Center into the main Olympio T. Borja library.

<b>When you visit the Library, are you “frequently to always” able to find what you are looking for?</b>				
	2009	2010	2011	2012
Always	n/a	15 (21%)	16 (22%)	69 (18%)
Frequently	n/a	45 (62%)	47 (65%)	169 (44%)
Seldom	n/a	20 (37%)	23 (32%)	122 (32%)
Never	n/a	2 (3%)	2 (3%)	17 (22%)
Total %	-	60 out of 82 73%	63 out of 88 72%	238 out of 377 63%

**When you visit the Library, are you “frequently to always” able to find what you are looking for?**





The library has been collecting a wide range of data for assessing the resources and services the department provides. This plays an integral role in the program review process and is vital for determining the effectiveness of the numerous changes implemented in the library over the years. Feedback through surveys and faculty interaction is key to the library being able to satisfy the information needs of the students. The library strives to provide the resources to support the instructional programs in a fiscally responsible manner.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Assess the library needs of the students, staff and faculty and modify operations accordingly while working within budgetary constraints. Purchase materials in areas the collection is weakest in as a top priority. Solicit feedback from faculty for purchase requests and review survey comments to improve the collections.

***Standard II.C1d.*** *The institution provides effective maintenance and security for its library and other learning support services.*

#### Descriptive Summary

In 2010 a major security review was carried out in the library system resulting in the purchase of 3M security gates for the main library and CNMI Archives. Two sets of security gates were installed, one at each entrance/exit, to ensure items do not leave the library without being properly issued to a patron. All library materials now have electronic security strips for loss prevention. The alarm will sound if items are not deactivated at the circulation desk which ensures the security of the collection. In 2009 a building alarm system was added to the library. This has sensors installed on each door and is set so that an alarm will sound if anyone opens the emergency doors, even during daytime operating hours. That means that library patrons must enter and exit through the security gates. There was a grant funded project to add security cameras throughout the campus which began in 2011 and was

completed in 2012; this was made possible through ARRA grant funding. The security cameras include coverage in the areas around the library building.

### Self Evaluation

This area was in much need of attention and immediately taken up by the director on his appointment in August of 2010. There were no security gates installed at any of the library locations and the integrated library system was often down, making keeping track of the resources troublesome at best. There were reports of books being left in classrooms which had not been checked out by the library; this was most often reported for materials from the School of Education, before that collection was integrated into the main library. A comprehensive overview of security procedures in the library system was undertaken, and as a result, two sets of 3M security gates with door count capability were purchased. These resulted in multi-month project with all library materials being security striped to ensure items in the collection are only removed when properly issued to a patron. The installation of the gates and security strips were to better align the library with the Standards of Accreditation and help safeguard sensitive materials such as those often housed in the CNMI Archives. To date all books in the main collection, CRC education collection and CNMI Archives Pacific Collection have all been security striped. The gates have succeeded in stopping numerous items from leaving the library before being issued, whether intentional or not. In 2012, security cameras were installed and provide good coverage in the areas around the library. These cameras are fed into the security office which is located next to the library building.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Continue to install security strips on the Archival collection, keeping in mind the delicacy of some materials. Continue to have security strips installed on new items for the library.

***Standard II.C1e.** When the institution relies on or collaborates with other institutions or other sources for library and other learning support services for its instructional programs, it documents that formal agreements exist and that such resources and services are adequate for the institution's intended purposes, are easily accessible, and utilized. The performance of these services is evaluated on a regular basis. The institution takes responsibility for and assures the reliability of all services provided either directly or through contractual arrangement.*

### Descriptive Summary

Northern Marianas College does not currently have any formal agreements for collaboration regarding its instructional programs, so this does not impact the library system. If any agreements are entered into, the library will review the contractual partner's library resources and learning services to ensure the standards of accreditation are met.

### Self Evaluation

The college has no formal agreements in place for collaboration on its instructional programs.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

None.

***Standard II.C2.** The institution evaluates library and other learning support services to assure their adequacy in meeting identified student needs. Evaluation of these services provides evidence that they contribute to the achievement of student learning outcomes. The institution uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.*

### Descriptive Summary

The Department of Library Programs and Services actively participates in program review to continually improve its resources and services. There is a Records of Dialogue that must be submitted on a quarterly basis. The library is responsible for submitting a Form I as part of the annual program review process. In addition to the Form I, which consists of administrative unit outcomes (AUO) or student learning outcomes (SLO), the library must also submit a Form II bi-annually to provide a more detailed report on the department.

The library's mission was reaffirmed by the Accreditation Review Team of Standard IA during a process where the mission of each department was reviewed and aligned with the college's mission. The backbone of the library's assessment practices are the surveys that are distributed by semester or on an annual basis. Numerous statistics are collected for the library system including door counts, checkouts, and various sign-in sheets. The library collects usage statistics and compiles these for monthly and other reports. These help give a baseline of quality and usage over a long period of time. The library incorporates the data into the decision making processes before implementing changes. There are some gaps in the data from the past due to system outages or administrative staff turnover, but overall the library has done a very good job in organizing the information for a holistic view of the library's operations. The library's mission was reaffirmed and forms the basis for assessment practices that gauge how effective the library is doing. Library staff regularly evaluates the library and learning resources in the collections.

### Self Evaluation

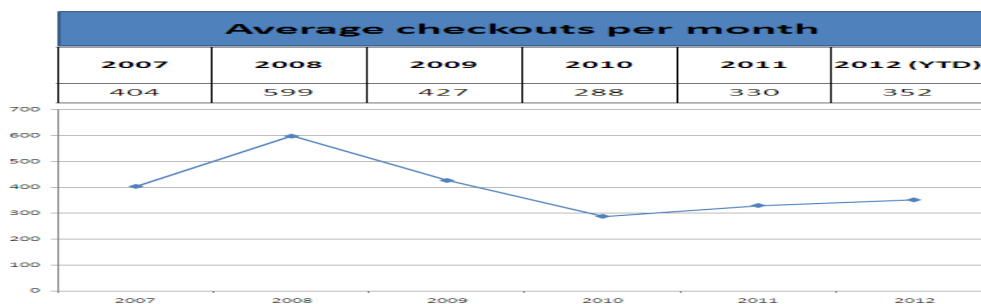
The library evaluates its information and learning resources in a variety of ways that result in overall program improvement. The core of the department's evaluation process are the statistics collected in the library, as well as feedback received from students, faculty and staff. Face-to-face interactions are important in running an effective, relevant, customer-friendly service to the college and community. Since 2010, there has been more of an

outreach effort to the faculty members and students through assemblies, mass emails and library instruction. The more exposure the students have to the library and how to use the resources effectively, the more likely they will become more information literate individuals.

Looking back on the 2006 Self Study showed a lack of emphasis placed on the library and its resources. There was only a very small section included in the report that did not demonstrate commitment to the quality of resources and services that can be provided to our students. Compiling this report with the Accreditation Reaffirmation Team, showed there were many gaps in the reporting process for statistics and not enough analysis of the data occurring. As mentioned previously, that was most often due to administrative staff turnover (the various procedural changes that occur as a result) and ILS system outages.

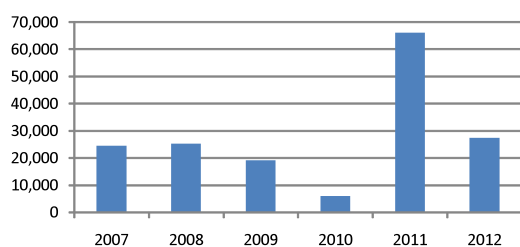
The Department of Library Programs and Services has put many corrective measures in place as a direct result of an evaluation. In some cases, it was the lack of data that resulted in changes being made in order to correct the gaps, such as implementing tally sheets at the circulation desk to collect more information on the services the library provides to students. The department looked at the amount of manual data collection being done, such as patron count statistics and all checkout activity when the previous ILS system was down on a regular basis. The library implemented the 3M security gates, which allowed our department to track the number of visitors to the library automatically (this was previously recorded on paper) lessening the workload on staff, while providing consistent reporting of visits along with improved security measures for the collections. The ILS system was upgraded and went live in January 2012.

Printing services are now offered in the library for students based on surveys and feedback from students. The library conducted a printing survey to all departments in the college to determine the accessibility students have to printing and sought feedback from students with very positive results. Now there is a dedicated printing station next to the circulation desk for students with a sign-in sheet to track printer usage. Looking at the numbers from circulation statistics and door counts show the library is constantly being used.

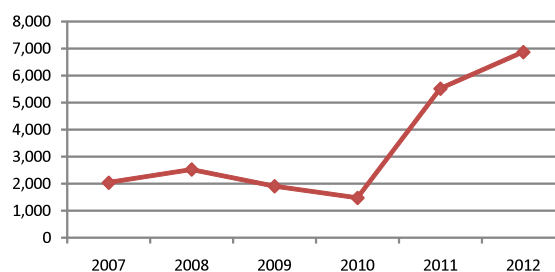


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Average Visits per Month	2,038	2,529	1,909	1,477	5,514	6,868

**Library Door Count Statistics  
from 2007 to Present**



**Average Visits per Month**



The Department of Library Programs and Services actively participates in the college's program review process. The majority of library staff serves on more than one committee involving program review. All library staff, along with some faculty members are on the Standard IIC team that is reviewing this portion of the self-study. The library's data collection efforts allows administrators to look at patterns over a long period of time and gauge how effective the services are and determine if corrective measures are needed. Overall, the library is well placed to meet our students' needs by providing the resources and services to help ensure their success. The goal is to have a systematic and ongoing evaluation process in place, regardless of staff turnover, that will help facilitate continual improvements for our department.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Continue to collect vital statistics through the new Integrated Library System, information desk statistics, library introduction sessions and door count data. Particular attention will be on evaluating services for the online students.



Northern Marianas College | 2012 Self Evaluation Report  
**Standard III: Resources**



### **Standard III: Resources**

*The institution effectively uses its human, physical technology, and financial resources to achieve its broad purposes, including stated student learning outcomes, and to improve institutional effectiveness.*

#### **A. Human Resources**

*The institution employs qualified personnel to support student learning programs and services wherever offered and by whatever means delivered, and to improve institutional effectiveness. Personnel are treated equitably, are evaluated regularly and systematically, and are provided opportunities for professional development. Consistent with its mission, the institution demonstrates its commitment to the significant educational role played by persons of diverse backgrounds by making positive efforts to encourage such diversity. Human resource planning is integrated with institutional planning.*

**Standard III.A1.** *The institution assures the integrity and quality of its programs and services by employing personnel who are qualified by appropriate education, training, and experience to provide and support these programs and services.*

#### Descriptive Summary

The Human Resources Office (HRO) is responsible for determining the eligibility of employment for all applicants for positions of the agency. This responsibility includes, but is not limited to, developing and implementing job related minimum qualification standards and determining acceptable qualifying experience and education criteria in accordance with labor laws, established professional standards and best practices. The selection process for staff, faculty, administrators, and limited term employees encompasses a well-monitored process that ensures the selection of an individual that fits best into the College. Minimum qualifications for faculty are developed with the involvement of the respective department faculty, department chair, and the confirmation by the Dean of Academic Programs and Services [III.A:1] [III.A:2]. In addition, the College assures the integrity and quality of its programs and services by requiring all applicants to submit a standardized Northern Marianas College Employment Application that includes supporting documents on professional and academic credentials such as degrees, certificates and college transcripts [III.A:3].

#### Self Evaluation

NMC hires qualified personnel with the appropriate education, training, and experience to carry out the integrity and quality of its programs and services and meets the needs of students enrolled in its educational programs. Experience and qualification equivalence in position openings are clearly and publicly stated in job announcements for staff, faculty, administrators, and limited term positions. Job descriptions are directly related to institutional mission and goals and accurately reflect position duties and responsibilities [III.A:4].



The Human Resources Office (HRO) follows Board of Regents (BOR) Human Resource Policy Part III.C Recruitment and Hiring Practices to recruit and hire qualified personnel who have the required education, training and experience to effectively support student learning programs and services [IIIA:1] [IIIA:2]. Prioritization and identifying of positions necessary to meet the department's needs and the mission of the College occur during Management Team discussions. Positions are justified through its linkage with institutional goals, and peer analysis with similar institutions that are in comparison with NMC, and Form 3 of Program Review [IIIA:5] [IIIA:6] [IIIA:7] [IIIA:8] [IIIA:9] [IIIA:10] [IIIA:11].

Criteria for selection of faculty include knowledge of the subject matter or service to be performed, effective teaching, scholarly activities, and potential to contribute to the mission of the institution. The department chair or the hiring administrator of the respective position vacancy assembles an interview panel consisting of an odd-numbered group with a minimum of three individuals. Members of the panel are selected from within the college based on their area of expertise. An Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) representative is included in the interview panel to ensure that EEO regulations are followed during the interview process [IIIA:12]. From this initial interview the committee recommends an unranked slate of candidates for a final interview with the Dean or the division head. During the final interview for faculty positions, applicants must demonstrate teaching methodology, instructional assessment and evaluation, and effective teaching principles [IIIA:13]. The Dean or the division head is the final hiring authority. [IIIA:14] [IIIA:15].

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Revise and adopt procedures to support Board Policy 501.2 Recruitment and Hiring Practices.

***Standard III.A1a.** Criteria, qualifications, and procedures for selection of personnel are clearly and publicly stated. Job descriptions accurately reflect position duties, responsibilities, and authority. Criteria for selection of faculty include knowledge of the subject matter or service to be performed (as determined by individuals with discipline expertise), effective teaching, scholarly activities, and potential to contribute to the mission of the institution. Institutional faculty play a significant role in selection of new faculty. Degrees held by faculty and administrators are from institutions accredited by recognized U.S. accrediting agencies. Degrees from non- U.S. institutions are recognized only if equivalence has been established.*

#### Descriptive Summary

Job vacancies for approved and funded positions are widely and publicly announced through the college web site, E-mail list serve, on-island government agencies i.e. Office of Personnel Management, private agencies i.e. Gold's Gym, and off-island media i.e. HigherEd Jobs.com. These job vacancy announcements specify required minimum education and

experience to recruit qualified applicants [III A:16]. Limited Term Appointment positions are announced within the college community first. If no one is selected, the announcement is made externally [III A:14]. The HRO is responsible for overseeing the process for hiring personnel who are qualified by appropriate education, training, and experience in the respective job vacancy being filled.

### Self Evaluation

Employment applications are screened by HRO to confirm if the applicant met the required minimum education and experience of the job vacancy announcement i.e. Qualification Evaluation Worksheet (QEW). Applicants with degrees from non-U.S. accredited institutions are certified using credential evaluators who are members of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES) to validate its equivalency to that of a U.S. accredited institution.

Application packages of qualified candidates are then provided to each member of the interview committee. The interview committees may consist of administrators, staff, and/or faculty who represent the various divisions in the College. Faculty members play a role in the interviewing of candidates. Candidates that apply for faculty positions must demonstrate or describe a lesson plan developed from an academic topic given by the interview committee. This process helps the hiring authority to review a candidate's knowledge of and application within a classroom environment [III A:13]. At least thirty to forty minutes before the interview begins, each of the interview committee members must create and submit interview questions, which are then reviewed by HRO to comply with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) standards, and are approved by the entire interview committee.

Qualified applicants are asked the same set of questions pertaining to the job vacancy announcement, and each interview committee member scores each candidate [III A:17]. After the initial interview, the committee recommends an unranked slate of candidates for a final interview with the Dean or the division head. During the final interview for faculty positions, applicants must demonstrate teaching methodology, instructional assessment and evaluation, and effective teaching principles [III A:13].

To determine the validity of credentials reflected in the job application form, the HRO staff conducts research on all schools listed on the employment application, particularly regarding degrees and credits earned. In addition, the HR office requires a copy of the applicants' high school diploma, general education development (GED) certificate or college transcripts to be included in all application packets submitted [III A:3].

HRO personnel are required to determine if the credentials claimed are acceptable to the following accrediting bodies: Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC), the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), or credentials acceptable by the US Department of Education [III A:18]. HRO requires that degrees or transcripts received from schools or

colleges outside the U.S. should be evaluated by a member agency of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES). NACES is an association of private foreign educational credential evaluation services recognized by CHEA [IIIA:19].

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Revise and adopt procedures to support Board Policy 501.2 Recruitment and Hiring Practices.
2. Create a post-interview survey to improve the recruitment and hiring process.
3. Review and modify the NMC employment application to be more user friendly.

***Standard III.A1b.** The institution assures the effectiveness of its human resources by evaluating all personnel systematically and at stated intervals. The institution establishes written criteria for evaluating all personnel, including performance of assigned duties and participation in institutional responsibilities and other activities appropriate to their expertise. Evaluation processes seek to assess effectiveness of personnel and encourage improvement. Actions taken following evaluations are formal, timely, and documented.*

### Descriptive Summary

The College's full-time staff, faculty, and administrators are evaluated annually through a systematic formal written process using established evaluation forms provided by the HRO [IIIA:20] Evaluation forms i.e. Instructional Faculty Evaluation, are given to the immediate supervisor of an employee. An employee is rated as Excellent (E), Satisfactory (S), Needs Improvement (N), or Unsatisfactory (U) on areas that relate to the employee's general performance of assigned employment duties and participation in program review [IIIA:21]. Supervisor and employees list and discuss recommendations for professional development or improvement in job performance.

### Self Evaluation

The procedures for all evaluation processes are designed to encourage improvement by giving faculty, staff, and administrators' meaningful feedback on the established criteria of the positions they hold and against the established institutional goals. The evaluation tools for staff and administrators utilizes a formal instrument which covers specific performance factors that fall under the headings of professional competencies, interpersonal skills, service to college and community, professionalism and professional growth, and program review and outcomes assessment.

The evaluation tool for instructional faculty utilizes a formal instrument which covers specific performance factors that fall under the headings of instruction, service to students, service to college and community, professionalism and professional growth, and program review and outcomes assessment. The evaluation process for faculty also involves their

ability to demonstrate proficiency in classroom teaching. Part of this evaluation process looks at the faculty members' ability to clearly state, define and communicate lesson objectives to students, as well as their ability to use a variety of teaching methods and the appropriate use of assessment methods.

Outside the classroom, the evaluation process looks at the faculty's ability to be involved in areas such as to advise student interest groups, assist students in program planning, provide information on career goals, help students with academic and personal adjustments to college, and participate in the College advising system [IIIA:22] [IIIA:23].

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Review and revise the established performance evaluation tools to improve and enhance the performance evaluation process, specifically addressing measurable institutional goals and priorities.

***Standard III.A1c.** Faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes have, as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes.*

### Descriptive Summary

By its mission, the institution as a whole is directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes. The institution currently has a five year strategic plan entitled the "PROA Strategic Plan 2008-2012" that identifies "promoting student learning and success" as a strategic goal of the college. The institution offers degree programs, certificate programs, and developmental programs that either have complete sets of program learning outcomes (PLOs) or complete sets of student learning outcomes (SLOs) that are reviewed on a regular basis through program review [IIIA:24].

### Self Evaluation

The quality of instruction is assured through the evaluation of instructional faculty and adjuncts that are directly responsible in producing student learning outcomes in courses offered at the institution. The instructional faculty and adjuncts must promote student learning and success through instruction that are aligned with the College's mission and its program review process that will link instruction to the College's mission [IIIA:25]. Effective instructional techniques and tools such as group projects, hands-on, interactive activities, audio/visual media, guest speakers, field trips, or classroom discussions are components that are evaluated to measure the ability of instructional faculty and adjuncts ability to align and link instruction, students learning outcomes, and the mission of the College [IIIA:26].

The College supports faculty performance in satisfactory development and assessment of student learning outcomes through providing adequate administrative support. Evidence can be found in the compilation of student course evaluation results, the preparation of course

material copies for instruction, communication between staff and faculty in governance bodies such as PROAC to support faculty needs in funding program development [IIIA:27] [IIIA:28]. Staff members in the academic division are involved in program review discussions with the respective departments. Staff members are often students and provide constructive input and feedback in assessment of faculty performance and student learning outcomes [IIIA:29] [IIIA:23]

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

None

***Standard III.A1d. The institution upholds a written code of professional ethics for all of its personnel.***

#### Descriptive Summary

In support of its mission, the College promotes and sustains a professional atmosphere of openness, trust, and collaboration. The College upholds a written code of professional ethics for all of its personnel concerning ethics and professional ethics. In addition, the Board of Regents created its own Code of Conduct Policy in its commitment to uphold professionalism and code of conduct to its highest level [IIIA: 30] [IIIA:31] [IIIA:32] [IIIA:33].

Unethical behavior is dealt through the enforcement of BOR Human Resource Policy and Administrative Procedure 4352 concerning suspension and termination of employment as well as BOR Human Resource Policy Part VII.B relating to employee discipline [IIIA:34] [IIIA:35]. The College continues to provide a safe, secure, professional and ethical learning and working environment for its students and employees.

#### Self Evaluation

The College requires all personnel to abide by and uphold professional ethics to its highest standard. The College has a written code of professional ethics for all its personnel as stated in respective Board of Regents Policies and Faculty Conditions of employment.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. None

***Standard III.A2. The institution maintains a sufficient number of qualified faculty with full-time responsibility to the institution. The institution has a sufficient number of staff and administrators with appropriate preparation and experience to provide the administrative services necessary to support the institution's mission and purposes.***

### Descriptive Summary

The College continues to maintain a sufficient number of qualified faculty and staff to carry out the mission of the institution. The hiring of faculty, administrators, and staff continues to be in direct response to program review and the continuous growth in enrollment numbers. The organizational structure of the College is grouped by instructional divisions and administrative support units. Administrative and support staff are employed to support these divisions and departments. The College ensures that sufficient staff are hired to keep up with increasing operational demands and to provide support to the institution's mission and purpose. The determination for appropriate staffing levels begins at each program or department and is then prioritized. The College continuously evaluates the effectiveness of the number and organization of its faculty, administrators, and staff to support its programs and services via its institutional assessment process and program review. The College has recently been utilizing peer data to benchmark departments and staffing needs against its peers of similar staffing composition and needs.

### Self Evaluation

The College employs full-time employees composing of administration, instructional and non-instructional faculty, and administrative staff. In addition to full-time employees, NMC recruits adjunct instructors that are certified for instruction [III.A:36]. NMC has a President whose full-time responsibility is to the institution in full capacity. NMC has executive positions that report directly to the President which include one Dean of Academic Programs and Services, one Dean of Student Services, one Dean/Director of Cooperative Research Extension and Education Services (CREES), one Director of External Relations, one Interim Human Resource Manager, and one Dean of Administration.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Hire a Director of Institutional Effectiveness by late September of 2012.
2. Utilize the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) Peer Study on staffing created for NMC. The NCHEMS Peer data will then aide in the prioritization of essential personnel.
3. Establish and effectively execute a recruitment plan for the hiring of faculty positions in a more timely manner.

***Standard III.A3.*** *The institution systematically develops personnel policies and procedures that are available for information and review. Such policies and procedures are equitably and consistently administered.*

### Descriptive Summary

The College assesses its personnel policies and procedures periodically for currency and adherence to local and federal laws governing personnel matters. The College has developed a wide range of policies, rules and procedures which provide a clear set of guidelines for the fair and impartial treatment of faculty, administrators, and staff [IIIA:37] [IIIA:38]. Through shared governance between the Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, College Council, and the Management Team, the Human Resource policies and procedures are reviewed and developed for Board approval.

### Self Evaluation

The College systematically develops personnel policies and procedures that are reviewed and approved by the Board. All new policies being developed are circulated to the College community for feedback and comments via shared governance [IIIA:39]. Feedback and comments received from the College community are reviewed, considered, and incorporated into the draft policy where appropriate [IIIA:40]. Such policies and procedures are equitably and consistently administered. The College's personnel rules and procedures are available for information and review through the Human Resources Office. The institution also establishes and adheres to written policies ensuring fairness in all employment procedures.

All new employees must attend a one on one new employee orientation with an HR representative where policies and procedures are discussed, employee benefits and job expectations are clearly explained, and mandatory sexual harassment training is completed within the initial employment period of the new employee [IIIA:41] [IIIA:42] [IIIA:43] [IIIA:44]. The Board of Regents (BOR) Human Resource Policies and Procedures are available electronically to all college personnel on the college network drive (N-Drive) within a public folder. Employees are encouraged to visit the Human Resource Office if they are unable to access the BOR Human Resource Policies and Procedures [IIIA:45].

### Actionable Improvement Plans

None

***Standard III.A3a. The institution establishes and adheres to written policies ensuring fairness in all employment procedures.***

### Descriptive Summary

The College complies with all CNMI and Federal Statutes, Rules, and Regulations which prohibit discrimination and adheres to policies of equal opportunity and affirmative action in education, training, and employment for all persons regardless of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, or veteran's status. The College demonstrates through its policies and practices the understanding of and concern for issues regarding equity and diversity through established Board Policies and Procedures that make certain that fairness is kept in all employment procedures; for example BOR Human Resource Policies and Procedures 4072 concerning Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action promotes equity,

fairness, and diversity in employment opportunities and commitment to hiring persons of diverse backgrounds.

The College conducts EEO training for all its employees on an annual basis, covering EEO policies and procedures during HRO's designated mandatory training sessions. The College's employment policies and procedures ensuring fairness in employment procedures are stated in the following documents: Job Vacancy Announcements, Northern Marianas College Employment Application Form, and the Employment Opportunities section in the College Website [IIIA:46].

#### Self Evaluation

The College demonstrates through policies and practices the understanding of and concern for issues regarding equity and diversity. The College provides annual EEO training on EEO policies and procedures during faculty professional development days, sexual harassment training, and supervisor training.

The College fills vacancies from the best-qualified candidates without regard to race, religion, color, sex, national origin, or veteran's status. All job applications submitted to the College are rated for eligibility and required qualifications for the vacant position by the Human Resources Office. Job candidates rated eligible and qualified for the position vacancy must go through a job interview process by an interview panel. Accompanying the interview panel is a certified EEO representative to ensure that the interview process is conducted in a non-discriminatory manner [IIIA:12].

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

None

***Standard III.A3b.** The institution makes provision for the security and confidentiality of personnel records. Each employee has access to his/her personnel records in accordance with the law.*

#### Descriptive Summary

The College keeps all personnel records within the Human Resources Office and follows BOR Human Resource Policy Part II.A Personnel Files in regards to the handling, security, and maintenance of personnel files. The College has provided support to HRO in the security and confidentiality of personnel records by enclosing an open area of the Human Resource Office with a service window. Personnel files are kept in a secured, locked area within the HR Office. Employees can access and review their personnel records after signing a login book maintained by HRO. The Human Resources Office follows all applicable federal laws such as FERPA in the access of personnel records by employees.

#### Self Evaluation



The College is committed to maintaining a standard of record keeping which is secure, confidential, accurate, complete and permanent. All employees are given the right to review their employee record. Access to their personnel record is requested through the Human Resources Office during normal business hours. An authorized staff member of the Human Resources Office must be present to ensure that the security of the records is not compromised and to assist employees in making copies of certain files that they may need.

The HRO has begun to electronically backup inactive personnel records that have been stored for many years.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Continue to electronically back up all active and inactive employee records.
2. Purchase a fireproof and heavy duty safe for additional security.

***Standard III.A4.*** *The institution demonstrates through policies and practices an appropriate understanding of and concern for issues of equity and diversity.*

#### Descriptive Summary

The College demonstrates an understanding of and concern for issues of equity and diversity by following its current Board of Regents policies that address issues of equity and diversity in various services such as employment, grievance, or its registration process [III:47] [IIIA:48] [IIIA:49]. This can be manifested through college sanctioned procedures, programs and services, or events. The institution knows these policies and practices are effective through continued application of college policies or meetings by college groups such as the Interclub council by students or NMC Coffee Connection by NMC employees [IIIA:50] [IIIA:51].

Besides established college policies and procedures such as BOR Human Resource Policies and Procedures 4072 concerning Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action that promotes equity, fairness, and diversity in its employment opportunities and commitment to hiring persons of diverse backgrounds, NMC has various programs and services or events that foster an appreciation for diversity and equity. Examples of such programs and services or events are the College Access Challenge Grant (CACG), International Education Week, NMC Charter Day, or the Associated Students of the Northern Marianas College (ASNMC) organized events which facilitates an appreciation for diversity within NMC through events such as NMC Welcome Week or Interclub Council meetings [IIIA:52] [IIIA:53]. Guided by policy, the College promotes academic freedom to all constituents in the realm of academia, equity, and diversity [IIIA:54].

#### Self Evaluation

The College determines the kinds of support its personnel needs through the employment annual evaluation professional development plan, professional development days planning initiated by the Dean of Academic Programs and Services, and needs assessment through annual program assessment and program review. Through planning sessions and meetings conducted at each respective program or service, professional development programs and services are designed to provide and cater to diverse personnel [IIIA:55]

The institution has an array of programs and services sponsored by various departments such as its Counseling Office or Human Resources Office to support its personnel. Through required college events such as professional development activities, college assemblies, or a college social event called the NMC Coffee Connection, personnel are provided the support to develop professionally as well as personally. These programs are effective as the number in attendance reflect interest in topics from the attendance sheets for professional development days or photos of the NMC Coffee Connection event [IIIA:56] [IIIA:52].

The College tracks and analyzes its employment equity record by participating with the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) that provides data on the institution's race and ethnicity composition [IIIA:57]. The institution uses this data to help promote employment equity in developing interview committee compositions or determining salary equity with employees. Employment equity is tracked and analyzed through the number of employment grievances filed by employees. The institution uses this information to determine if improvements in policies and procedures or more training and support for employees and supervisors are needed.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

None

***Standard III.A4b.*** *The institution regularly assesses its record in employment equity and diversity consistent with its mission.*

#### Descriptive Summary

NMC regularly assesses its equity and diversity, consistent with its mission, through annual program assessment and biannual program review processes. At the program level, departments utilize these processes to periodically evaluate its personnel and staffing. At the institutional level, information and data are aggregated and discussed at the College's governance and representative bodies.

#### Self Evaluation

The College tracks and analyzes its employment equity record by participating with the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) that provides data on the institution's race and ethnicity composition. Furthermore, the institution uses an excel sheet that tracks employee data such as salary and ethnicity. The institution uses this data to help

promote employment equity in developing interview committee compositions or determining salary equity with employees. The Human Resources Office compiles this data and ensures that employment recruitment efforts are reaching populations that are underrepresented in the College's employee listing [III.A:58]

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

None

***Standard III.A4c. The institution subscribes to, advocates, and demonstrates integrity in the treatment of its administration, faculty, staff and students.***

#### Descriptive Summary

The College subscribes to, advocates, and demonstrates integrity in the treatment of its administration, faculty, staff, and students through the application of established board policies, procedures, and governance bodies. Through these means stakeholders are able to encourage integrity and equity by being represented in the decision-making process of College matters through meeting minutes in governance bodies such as College Council or Board of Regents.

#### Self Evaluation

The College demonstrates integrity in the treatment of its administrators, faculty, staff, and students by abiding with its policies and procedures covering the fair treatment of its members and students. Complaints or grievances are taken seriously and investigated thoroughly, especially if the complaint or grievance involves sexual harassment or Equal Employment Opportunity issues.

The College takes pride in recognizing its employees for their achievements and celebrating their accomplishments. Each year the College recognizes and honors its employees who have performed above and beyond the scope of their duties and responsibilities. This is known as the Annual Employee Recognition: PROA Award Program which is presented during the College's Charter Day celebration.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

None

***Standard III.A5. The institution provides all personnel with appropriate opportunities for continued professional development, consistent with the institutional mission and based on identified teaching and learning needs.***

#### Descriptive Summary

The College is committed to improving the professional growth of its faculty, staff, and administrators by offering a wide variety of professional opportunities that support both the institution's strategic goals and the personal and professional goals of its employees. The ultimate goal is to retain a competent workforce within the College by encouraging and facilitating the training and education of employees to provide the community with a responsive educational environment that empowers learners to develop skills and knowledge to be responsible and productive individuals [IIIA:59] [IIIA:60].

### Self Evaluation

The College allows full-time employees to pursue their studies at the Northern Marianas College educational and/or training programs. The goal is to provide financial support through tuition waivers to eligible employees who desire to pursue academic opportunities in areas related to their job occupation or as determined beneficial to the College in order to maximize their skills, abilities, and the needs of the College [IIIA:61] [IIIA:62].

Professional development travel and conference awards are subject to the College's travel guidelines policy. Recipients are required to share information gained as a result of the conference attendance through at minimum, a trip report.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

None

*III.A5a. The institution plans professional development activities to meet the needs of its personnel.*

### Descriptive Summary

The institution plans professional development activities for all personnel at the beginning of and during fall and spring semesters of every year. NMC's Management Team assists the Office of the President and the Division of Academic Programs and Services in planning and preparing each term's Professional Development Days (PDDs) to continuously meet the needs of its personnel.

Many units within the College provide ongoing and in-service professional development on and off-island throughout the year on a wide range of topics and issues. Employees can also take advantage of tuition assistance for enrolling in appropriate courses at the College. The Community Development Institute also offers continuing education opportunities for NMC employees, including the Framingham University Masters in International Education program.

### Self Evaluation

Teaching and learning needs of faculty, administrators, and staff are identified through the performance evaluation process. Training needs are also identified through the College's institutional assessment process and program review. All employees identify professional development goals through the performance evaluation process. Presenters for the different professional development topics include in-house faculty and administrators and invited guests from businesses and local/federal organizations. Professional development topics include cultural diversity, sexual harassment, educational technology, and sexual harassment.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

None

***Standard III.A5b.*** *With the assistance of the participants, the institution systematically evaluates professional development programs and uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.*

### Descriptive Summary

The College engages in regular assessment of professional development activities through its institutional assessment and program review process to ensure that the needs of faculty, staff, and administrators are met. Professional development workshops conducted within the College require an evaluation instrument. Participants of the workshop are requested to fill out the evaluation tool with their honest opinions on the effectiveness of the workshop. Comments and feedback from participants are used to make improvements in the contents and delivery of the workshop.

### Self Evaluation

The College disseminates an evaluation tool after professional development sessions are completed to gather feedback from employees about the execution of the professional development topic. The results are used to improve materials, presenters, and overall topic of discussion. Furthermore, these results help the institution retain and continue professional development programs that are both required and of interest to all personnel [IIIA:63] [IIIA:64]. For example, evaluations from 2008 and 2009 Profession Development Days led NMC to offer additional training on program review and accreditation. These trainings were embedded into the fall 2009 PDDs, the spring 2010 PDDs, and the fall 2010 PDDs.

The College supports professional development programs in topics for all personnel that include but are not limited to FERPA, College Registration Assessment, Program Review, Equal Employment Opportunity, Sexual Harassment, Supervisory Training, and Learning Technologies. Evidence of such support can be found in E-mail announcements and employee attendance sheets to these professional development programs [IIIA:65] [IIIA:66].

Actionable Improvement Plans

None.

***Standard III.A6.** Human resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of human resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.*

Descriptive Summary

The College assesses the use of its human resources through its planning, performance budgeting, assessment process and program review. Human resources planning is systematically linked to institutional planning through these elements. The effective use of human resources is systemically assessed for continuous improvement through each unit/department assessment plan and report. The strategic framework for institutional effectiveness requires that the Human Resources Office indicate its relationship to the institutional mission and institutional goals in the planning and assessment process. Budget requests and resource needs are based on documented, data-driven evidence.

Self Evaluation

Through the Planning Program Review and Outcomes Assessment Committee (PROAC), Budget and Finance Committee (BAFC) and College Council, the College determines the appropriate staffing levels for each program and service. The College employs full-time employees composing of administration, instructional and non-instructional faculty, and administrative staff.

Annual budget requests for needed positions are presented to the Budget and Finance Committee (BAFC) for review and deliberation. After discussion and deliberation, personnel budget requests are submitted to the College Council and BOR for approval and adoption. Personnel budgets are contingent on the availability of funds appropriated by both the local government or grants obtained from federal sources.

Actionable Improvement Plans

None

### III B. Physical Resources

*Physical Resources, which include facilities, equipment, land and other assets, support student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness. Physical resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. (SCS 3.5)*

***Standard III.B1*** *The institution provides safe and sufficient physical resources that support and assure the integrity and quality of its programs and services regardless of location or means of delivery. (SCS 3.6)*

#### Descriptive Summary

The Northern Marianas College was established in 1981 and our main campus is located atop of As Terlaje Hill in Saipan overlooking the Great Pacific Ocean. The community takes pride in the College's logo of the PROA (the signature sailing canoe of the Marianas) as it symbolizes the College's mission. The PROA's purpose of leading or navigating the way for students to improve the quality of life for themselves, as well as for the Commonwealth as a whole.

The College maintains our main Campus in As Terlaje, Saipan and two instructional sites: one on the island of Tinian and the other on the island of Rota. The Tinian and Rota sites, both built 2000, continue to provide and maintain adequate physical resources to support their programs and services.

The College remains committed to providing all its students with the same level of service and attention no matter the site at which they receive their instruction and assures that physical resources are safe, protected and healthful.

The Northern Marianas College As Terlaje campus was built in 1960, and originally served as served as the first major health facility in the Commonwealth. Dr. Torres Hospital as it was once known as, was designed specifically to facilitate the safe and efficient hospice care for the Commonwealth people.

The As Terlaje campus today consists of 31 buildings and is situated on 6.3 hectares, encompassing approximately 125,000 square feet. The College until this day, strives to provide safe and adequate physical resources to support its programs and services. The Administrative Services plans are well underway to address minor repairs of building structures and roofs. Most structures on the As Terlaje campus are made of concrete block and remain relatively sturdy. The college has one canteen for the students and employees and one student center for their convenience. The canteen and student center provides a safe, and welcoming social environment for the students. The College's outside environment has been recently enhanced with additional picnic tables and shade structures that allow for more studying, meeting and comfort.

The college continues to provide and maintain adequate physical resources and aims to ensure that the working and learning environment is accessible, healthy and safe. Periodic

inspections are conducted on a monthly basis to ensure that local and federal health and safety regulations are being adhered to. Board of Regents (BOR) Policy 6008.01 requires that all college activities, educational and research programs, and work areas shall be designed, conducted, and/or maintained in a manner that protects the safety of all employees, students and the public. Working conditions and equipment shall be maintained in compliance with standards prescribed by federal and local laws and regulations.

As of Academic Year 2012-2013, the College offers the following programs and services:

Academic Programs and Services program and faculty offices for Adult Basic Education, Business, Distance Education, Nursing, Languages and Humanities, Sciences, Math, Health & Athletics, and Social Sciences and Fine Arts are located in different buildings across campus (T, V, P, K, C, M, P and the Gym). Instructional space consisting of a combined total of 48 classrooms and various labs located throughout the campus (A, B, C, D, G, I, J, K, M, Q, R, S, T, V, W and the Gym).

Student Services program offices for Office of Admissions and Records, Associated Students of Northern Marianas College, Office of Student Activities and Leadership, Career Services, Testing Services, Counseling Programs and Services, International Student Services, Library Programs and Services, Financial Aid Office and Upward Bound are located in different buildings across campus (I, J, N, O and S).

USDA Land grant, Cooperative Research Extension and Education Services (CREES)  
The College's research department (CREES) provides instructional, practical demonstration, publications in agriculture, aquaculture, home economics and small businesses, in addition to a youth development program known as 4-H, which extends and engages youths in a lifelong learning for self-improvement.

CREES occupies buildings F, G, a portion of D, and a nursery and aquaculture facility on the As Terlaje campus. CREES also maintains the Community Resource Development Office in Garapan and a 6.2 hectare Agriculture Experiment Station in As Perdido.

Building F houses administrative staff as well as program coordinators and a conference room. Building G houses a kitchen for cooking demonstrations, a food science laboratory, the 4-H Program, the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) and a soil and water laboratory. Building D-2 contains the CREES entomology laboratory. The NMC-CREES features a 200' x 60' aquaculture demonstration facility and a 60' x 40' parking area for office vehicles. The Community Resource Development (CRD) Office in Garapan houses the CREES Sewing Program. NMC-CREES maintain offices on three islands in the CNMI. The Saipan office has 15 vehicles; the Tinian office has six vehicles, while the Rota office has five vehicles.

Administrative offices and departments including Administrative Services, Admissions and Records, Book Store, Community Development Institute, the Executive Offices, External Relations, Finance and Budget, Financial Aid, Human Resources, Institutional Effectiveness and Information Systems are located in typhoon-resistant buildings (N, O and P).



Procurement and Property Management and the Facilities Maintenance Shop are both located in a semi concrete structure that was re-roofed in 2007 (L).

The gymnasium, also called the Saipan Recreational Facility at NMC, includes storage, office, toilet and shower facilities, and a main court area that can accommodate basketball, volleyball, soccer, tennis, and aerobics. An adjacent field provides practice grounds for baseball, softball, soccer, and football. In addition, free community facilities are used for tennis and walking, jogging, and running classes.

#### Tinian Instructional Site

The Tinian instructional site consists of two areas with four buildings. Building A contains the administrative offices, a computer lab, a distance education classroom, and a regular classroom. Building B contains a library, two small classrooms, and an office for the Upward Bound Program.

The main office of CREES is located in a building on college-owned land in a separate location where CREES also has a nursery, aquaculture facility, orchard and a pig farm. The CREES building also includes a kitchen for home economics classes, the 4-H program, Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) and the Community Resource Development (CRD).

#### Rota Instructional Site

The facility is a sizable, typhoon-proof, single-story building that provides adequate space for the campus administration and its programs and services. Currently the facility houses the Upward Bound program, a distance education video tele-conference classroom and CREES. The CREES programs housed at the Rota instructional site are as follows: Aquaculture, Plant Pathology, Community Resource Development (CRD), Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), Food Science, and Entomology. Also on site is a plant nursery and plant trial plot.

#### Self Evaluation

Adequate funding is provided to ensure that each of our locations support institutional functions and Mission fulfillment.

Preventive maintenance, as specified in the *Operations and Maintenance Manual [IIIB:1]* is being conducted as scheduled. Currently the college out sources labor for building maintenance, janitorial services, grounds keeping, pest control, and air conditioning preventative maintenance with direct over sight of these services provided through the Administrative Services Office.

Currently the college utilizes an electronic helpdesk program that allows for reports and requests to be made across campus as well as manual trouble tickets for reporting maintenance and operational issues from staff.

An ongoing challenge for the College has been the lack of funding for improvements of its physical facilities, particularly on the as Terlaje campus. The facilities that the College occupies on Saipan originally housed a hospital and were donated to the institution approximately 25 years ago. Historically, funding for renovation of these buildings and/or construction of new facilities has not materialized. More recently, the college has been able to realize the relocation of several programs into more centralized locations. This includes the movement of the School of Education, the Adult Basic Education program and the Upward Bound Program all into spaces that better suit their needs. With these moves, the college has also been able to create additional classroom spaces that accommodate more students per class as per increased student enrollment trends.

In 2009, NMC contracted the services of BECA International Consultants Ltd. to develop a new Facilities Master Plan (FMP) [IIIB:2], which was delivered along with a Building Condition Assessment [IIIB:3] and a Capital Cost Plan [IIIB:4] in 2010. The most recent improvements have been in line with the recommendations put forth by BECA.

In 2010, the college realized additional grant funding thru the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) and was able to upgrade existing CCTV security system with an additional 33 cameras, two 16 channel multiplexers and DVRs inclusive of cabling ancillary equipment and installation. The college purchased a 350KVA backup generator and underwent a power system upgrade by removing all overhead high tension wires and connecting all buildings to back up power except for Buildings T, Q, R, S and the Gym.

Now the college is in the process of expending \$800,000.00 in CNMI Capital Improvement Project (CIP) funding on roof repairs and insulation on building A, which houses the majority of classrooms, and a full renovation of Building K which houses the Social Sciences and Fine Arts Department and the Sciences, Math, Health and Athletics Department faculty offices as well as two classrooms. The campus was honored to recently have Mr. Tony Babauta, Assistant Secretary to the Office of Insular Affairs, on campus to review the conditions of both of these buildings.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Continue to work on identifying funding to undergo major planned CIP projects as identified in the Facilities Master Plan [III.B 2] as per the NMC PROA Strategic Plan 2008-2012 [III.B 6].

***Standard III.B1a.*** *The institution plans, builds, maintains, and upgrades or replaces its physical resources in a manner that assures effective utilization and the continuing quality necessary to support its programs and services.*

#### Descriptive Summary

The Administrative Services office ensures proper facilities maintenance for the institution. The office is composed of the Facilities Manager, the Maintenance Manager, an Administrative Manager and an Administrative Assistant that are tasked with managing service contracts for maintenance, grounds, and janitorial services personnel. The college

currently utilizes a helpdesk maintenance management system to schedule and track all work orders. The process is automated and capable of online work orders.

Preventive maintenance is specified in the *Operations and Maintenance Manual* [IIIB:1] and has been completed as scheduled by the Administrative Services Office. The College has contracted the services of a private janitorial services company to maintain all areas utilized by students. These employees work under the direct supervision of the College's Facilities Manager. Employees of the College have proactively assisted in the College's cost saving efforts by taking on the additional responsibility of cleaning their office areas. The preventive maintenance program includes most of the major pieces of equipment that support college operations, such as back-up generators and air conditioning systems as well as the buildings themselves. This program is continually reviewed and expanded to include other equipment as the need arises.

Administrative Services plays a unique and important role in providing a wide variety of support services for departments and programs throughout the College. Administrative, logistical, security, lost and found, telephone communications, grounds maintenance, refuse disposal, custodial, and messenger services are all included among its responsibilities. Often called on, and responding almost instantaneously, this office provides just about any type of related service that can be imagined in support of NMC's mission.

Two standby generators provide emergency back-up power to all but five buildings on the Saipan Campus. Building J was renovated to house the School of Education offices along with two classrooms expressly for that program. A large portion of Building T was renovated to house the Adult Basic Education program offices as well as three classrooms for its exclusive use. The Upward Bound program was relocated to building S to allow for ample space for them to run their program. The results of these moves not only provided each of the programs adequate usable space but also added two additional large classrooms for use by Academic Programs and Services. The college is now in the process of expending \$800,000.00 in CNMI CIP funding on roof repairs and insulation on building A, which houses the majority of classrooms, and a full renovation of Building K which houses the Social Sciences and Fine Arts Department and the Sciences, Math, Health and Athletics Department faculty offices as well as two classrooms.

The college has implemented Presidential Directive 24 to help support utility and energy conservation in order to further ensure effective operation of its physical and budget resources. The first step was securing a grant from the US Department of the Interior and undergoing Technical Assistance for Conservation and Energy Maintenance Assessment and Training [IIIB:7]. The Assessment Report [IIIB:8] and staff training provided a detailed listing of problem issues on the As Terlaje Campus. This process was completed between 2011 and 2012. Conservation Work performed includes: replacing air conditioning units with higher energy efficiency rated units; repairing and replacing plumbing fixtures with more efficient units; repairing building envelopes; and, repairing window and door seals.

Additionally, the college is in the process of revising its emergency preparedness plan with an updated all hazards model ranging from natural disasters to active shooter situations. This

Emergency Preparedness/Response Plan has been designed as a contingency plan for College administrators in order to plan for campus emergencies. While this guide does not cover every conceivable situation, it does supply the basic administrative guidelines necessary to cope with most campus emergencies.

### Self Evaluation

Physical resources are sufficient in quantity and quality and appropriately managed to support institutional functions and Mission fulfillment.

Administrative Services has the primary responsibility for keeping the College operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In addition to administrative, logistical, security, lost and found, telephone communications, grounds maintenance, refuse disposal, custodial, messenger services and regular preventive maintenance, it oversees the renovation of existing facilities. The maintenance department is dedicated to maintaining and improving the NMC Campus facilities by coordinating the care of the facilities through the hiring of private companies on an annual basis for maintenance projects. The primary goal is to provide the students, faculty, staff, and visitors with safe and dependable facilities to accomplish the academic mission of the College. All facilities are built or remodeled to meet the Tropical Energy Code, CNMI Building Code, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and other relevant regulations. Some necessary maintenance of facilities, specifically roof repairs, have been delayed due to insufficient funding, and unfortunately, this trend is likely to continue until the CNMI economy improves and/or the College identifies alternative sources of funding.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Secure funding to begin the implementation of The Facilities Master Plan [III.B 2]. This includes a ten-phase plan to be accomplished according to a set schedule.

***Standard III.B1b.** The institution assures that physical resources at all locations where it offers courses, programs, and services are constructed and maintained to assure access, safety, security, and a healthful learning and working environment.*

### Descriptive Summary

The As Terlaje campus and the Tinian and Rota instructional sites provide access, safety, security and a healthful learning and working environment. As mentioned above, the As Terlaje campus was originally designed to assure maximum public access, and the relatively new Tinian and Rota sites are well laid out and solidly constructed. The Facilities Manager works closely with the disabilities counselor to ensure Federal and State laws and regulations that guarantee students with disabilities equal access and equal opportunity at the college is adhered to.

To further enhance security measures for the Saipan campus, ARRA funding was expended to upgrade camera surveillance that increased the number of cameras to 33, and provided for two 16 channel multiplexers and DVRs. This equipment was added to the existing closed

circuit television CCTV system which monitors and records activities in various locations around campus. With the installation of the equipment, security officers and personnel can keep a watchful eye on a majority of developed portions on campus to ensure campus activities are well under control.

The Tinian campus has an eight camera CCTV system and DVR that monitors the two buildings that offer programs and services to students and the community. The Rota campus is not equipped with cameras but is patrolled during working hours by support staff. Additionally, all windows on the Rota campus are equipped with typhoon shutters which are closed during no working hours to provide for additional property safety.

On the As Terlaje campus, the Safety and Security Office is located in the Administrative Services Office in building O-1. It has manned security on campus 24 hours a day with one guard between the hours of 07:00-19:00 and two guards from 19:00-07:00. In addition, during regular working hours, Administrative Services employees patrol the campus at random intervals during working hours. With the implementation of the Safety Committee, members of this working group will be tasked to work closely with the Administrative office to conduct WATCH (Walk Abouts to Catch Hazards). These walk abouts will consist of additional College employees voluntarily walking about the campus to take notes and promptly report unsafe conditions.

The Safety and Security Office may be contacted by dialing extension 1911 from any telephone in the NMC system or by dialing 234-5498 extension 1911 from any other telephone on or off campus and by cellular no. 888-1911. Dialing 911 is the emergency number for the CNMI Department of Public Safety for police, fire, and medical emergencies.

Security escorts to vehicles are provided upon request. Students, employees or visitors may request such services by calling or visiting the Safety and Security Office. Employees and students who witness criminal activities are requested to report incidents immediately to the Safety and Security Office. The NMC Catalog [IIIB:12] states, “Any activity observed that could result in harm to an individual/s, or medical emergencies, or fires should be reported directly to DPS then to the Safety and Security Office. If you have witnessed a crime it is your civic duty to provide all the information you have that may lead to solving the crime.”

NMC participates in the online Campus Safety and Security Survey as required by the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act and the Higher Education Opportunity Act and has not had a reportable crime committed over the past three years on any NMC property [IIIB:10].

### Self Evaluation

All facilities are built or remodeled to meet the Tropical Energy Code, CNMI Building Code, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and other relevant regulations. Additionally, *The Operations and Maintenance Plan* [IIIB:1] describes the work and lays out the schedules for many day-to-day activities carried out by maintenance and custodial personnel.

Administrative Services is tasked with a very broad range of responsibilities that support the mission of the College including planning new construction and the renovation of existing facilities. Responsibilities of the office include facilities and equipment maintenance, ADA compliance, disaster preparedness and recovery, custodial and grounds keeping services, security services, telephone services and facilities master planning

The Facilities Master Plan is the college's road map to alter the physical environment that can continually respond to the changing needs. This road map tells the college where it is, where it wants to go, and how it we get there. These three basic questions will inventory current positions, provide vision and values, and layout the strategies to get where the college wants to go.

The Facilities Master Plan [IIIB:2] points out that the majority of NMC facilities on the As Terlaje campus are faced with age-related problems. While the College has made every effort to prioritize projects and stretch every dollar, there is simply not enough funding to address current needs. Funding for most recent projects has come from ARRA in the form of an electrical upgrade and backup generator installation and CNMI CIP funding in the form of roof repairs at building A as well as an upcoming full renovation of building K. In addition, the college is currently working with US DOI and UD DOE on securing funding for 2012 energy efficiency projects [IIIB:11].

On the As Terlaje campus, most facilities are over 50 years old and were designed for a hospital environment with natural ventilation and minimal equipment. The addition of hundreds of computers, air conditioning systems and other equipment, plus of course students and NMC personnel, has required an upgrade our electrical system which has been completed for the majority of the buildings via funding thru ARRA for an electrical upgrade at buildings: J, M, L, V, W, D, E and I.

The College has also opened additional parking adjacent to the main lot located between buildings A and D to alleviate parking issues during peak class times.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

None.

***Standard III.B2.*** *To assure the feasibility and effectiveness of physical resources in supporting institutional programs and services, the institution plans and evaluates its facilities and equipment on a regular basis, taking utilization and other relevant data into account.*

***Standard III.B2a.*** *Long-range capital plans support institutional improvement goals and reflect projections of the total cost of ownership of new facilities and equipment.*

#### Descriptive Summary

*The Operations and Maintenance Plan [IIIB:1]* documents the work and schedules of many day-to-day activities of the maintenance and custodial personnel in providing direct support to institutional programs and services. In addition to the regularly scheduled activities it also reacts within a two hour window to minor issues and within two days for issues requiring additional substantial manpower. Administrative Services is also responsible for the selection and maintenance of air conditioners, water pumps, classroom furniture, the telephone system and other items utilized by the college community.

In 2010 the *Facilities Master Plan [IIIB:2]* was completed. The plan describes a 10 phase approach over a 10 year period. Phase one will begin with the design and construction of a new School of Education, Library and Student Center at an estimated cost of \$27million dollars. Although NMC lacks the necessary funding to proceed with this project at this juncture, it has utilized the information provided in the Plan to begin to renovate existing space on campus based on the physical needs of programs and services. With the relocation of several programs including the School of Education, the Adult Basic Education program and the Upward Bound Program all into better suited spaces, it is effectively utilizing resources in support of programs and services. With these moves, it has been able to create additional classroom spaces that accommodate more students per class. Additionally, the Board is currently working with Management Team on the feasibility of as well as funding options for the Plan.

### Self Evaluation

The Board of Regents has reviewed *The Facilities Master Plan [IIIB:2]* for the Northern Marianas College and priorities remain essentially the same as they were in 2006, with the express need of a modern facility to accommodate programs and offerings. The plan is currently unfunded and therefore, projects may be addressed out of order as funding becomes available per program or as prioritized by Management Team. While the College has made every effort to prioritize projects and stretch every dollar received to maximize its potential there is simply not enough funding to address current needs. The College has allocated resources wherever possible through the annual operations budget for various repair and maintenance projects. Progress is being made to address program needs as funding becomes available.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Secure funding to begin the implementation of The Facilities Master Plan [III.B 2], which encompasses additional classrooms, administrative and faculty offices, laboratory facilities, etc., to encourage and support increasing enrollment of students.
2. Retain an architectural firm to assist with new construction and renovation projects as necessary. As funding becomes available, the College will acquire additional contract personnel to carry out activities called for in the Operations and Maintenance Manual [III.B 2] and to assist with the current maintenance workload. The cost of collateral

equipment will be included in construction budgets. The College will continue to secure funding to maintain, repair, renovate, and/or replace facilities, equipment, and fixtures and work to correct deficiencies and make further improvements.

***Standard III.B2b.** Physical resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of physical resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.*

#### Descriptive Summary

The NMC PROA Strategic Plan for 2008-2012 [III.B:6] sets forth the institution's overall physical resource goals and objectives and clearly integrates its physical resource planning into institutional planning. Administrative Services also utilizes the annual Composite Report [III.B:5] to tie in to institutional goals of providing adequate facilities and equipment for the different programs across Campus.

Based upon the Facilities Master Plan [III.B:2], there is currently not enough usable square footage on campus, however, the same report also states that several classrooms are under-utilized. Academic Programs and Services has made an effort to increase class sizes for the fall semester in order to be able to run classes more efficiently and reduce overall operating costs and Administrative Services has worked to make that happen for the Fall 2012 Semester. Classroom space is currently utilized Monday through Thursday from approximately 8:00am through 9:00pm. However, there are fewer classes scheduled on Fridays and Saturdays.

#### Self Evaluation

Northern Marianas College meets this standard. NMC's current PROA Strategic Plan 2008-2012 [III.B:6] includes goals and priority initiatives related to physical resources and the 2010 Facilities Master Plan [III.B:2] addresses existing and future facility needs for the institution. Together these plans, which provide an institutional model for planning linkage, adequately addresses the institution's need for physical resource planning.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

Review and revise by department annual plans for the replacement of equipment which will be compiled in NMC's Annual Composite Report [III.B 5]. Prior to any project implementation, all projects will be taken through the shared governance process, allowing for input from all areas on campus, utilizing information from the PROA Strategic Plan 2008-2012 [III.B 6] and the Annual Composite Report [III.B 5].

### **Standard IIIC. Technology Resources**

*Technology resources are used to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning.*



***Standard III.C1.*** *The institution assures that technology support it provides is designed to meet the needs of learning, teaching, college-wide communications, research, and operational systems.*

### Descriptive Summary

NMC assures that any technology support it provides is designed to meet the needs of learning, teaching, college-wide communications, research, and operational systems. The Information Technology (IT) Department assigns representatives in all available areas of planning within the institution to meet the College's learning and planning needs. These representatives support student learning programs and services, and work to improve institutional effectiveness.

The Strategic Planning Task Force (SPTF) was assembled and it will now work with The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) to create a Strategic Plan that will include values, a new vision, mission, three to seven strategic goals, and support for priority initiatives. The Strategic Plan will serve as a road map for the College in its ongoing efforts to meet accreditation standards, address the workforce needs of the CNMI, and focus on continuous quality improvement in areas of primary interest to its stakeholders. The IT Department has been represented in the SPTF and has worked first hand in the SPTF's research on determining the strategic plan for the institution. Furthermore, in previous and current strategic plans, technology planning has been integrated with institutional planning. These include "Goal 4. Accelerate the upgrade of physical and technology infrastructure" in the 2008-2012 Strategic Plan [IIC:2] and "Goal 3. Information Technology" in the Fiscal Year 2012 Operation Plan Goals and Priorities [IIC:3].

Currently, the NMC IT Department's goals are to improve the utility of information technology, implement the Student Information Management System, launch the online learning center, and continue to integrate technology with student learning.

### Self Evaluation

The IT Department has historically had representation on NMC's Planning and Program Review Outcomes and Assessment Committee (PROAC). Through this representation, the IT Department has been kept informed of the technological needs of departments and programs throughout the institution. Internally within the IT Department, planning and program review through the submission of "Records of Dialogue" provides a means of open communication, which keeps members of the IT Department well-informed of the department's needs as a whole as well as a channel to direct this information to PROAC for college-wide information exchange.

Program Review is one way that the institution evaluates how well it's current technologies meet the needs of it's programs and services. If a department concludes that there is an unmet technological need it will make a recommendation to the institution through the Program Review Process.

As part of NMC's shared governance, the Director of Information Technology was a member of College Council, the primary advisory body to the President on issues related to the ongoing operations of the College, during this reporting period through 2012.

With the recent restructuring of NMC, the IT Department is represented by the newly created position of the Dean of Administration. The Dean of Administration is a direct report to the President and, accordingly, serves as a member of the President's Management Team (MT). While the Director of Information Technology was previously a direct report to the President and MT member, the IT Department is now represented on Management Team by the Dean of Administration.

The Director of IT serves as a non-voting member of Academic Council. Membership on AC assures that the IT Department provides technological support that meets the needs of student learning and teaching. Information gathered from AC along with communication with the Dean of Academic Programs and Services helps the IT department identify the learning technology needs of NMC so that the IT Department can provide resources and professional development in furtherance quality improvement at the College.

The past Director of Information Technology was a member of NMC's Budget and Finance Committee (BAFC). The Director's role as a member of this committee has been to align institutional priorities with the allocation of resources, to review and adjust the budget in accordance with present circumstances and future projections, and to plan and promote the use of technology in support of the educational mission of the College. The vacancy in the Director of Information Technology position has been temporarily filled by Acting Directors, but the appointment of a permanent Director is important for the successful fulfillment of the Director's committee roles.

NMC also uses a variety of technology resources to support student learning and college-wide communication. NMC Online ([courses.nmcnet.edu](http://courses.nmcnet.edu))<sup>[IIC:6]</sup> enhances traditional classroom instruction and provides fully online and hybrid courses. This Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment (MOODLE)-based Learning Management System contains course syllabi and class materials, provides space for department and program information, and features the facilitation of online discussion forums. Another resource is the NMC website [www.nmcnet.edu](http://www.nmcnet.edu)<sup>[IIC:7]</sup>, which communicates information about NMC, upcoming events, student resources, and accreditation updates.

There are three video teleconferencing (VTC) rooms and equipment on the NMC Main Campus in Saipan and one on each outreach site on Tinian and Rota. NMC, through collaborative efforts of NMC's Cooperative Research, Extension and Education Service (CREES) under the Distance Education Grant, has procured three new high definition VTC units for the Saipan, Tinian and Rota sites. This technology is used to bridge the physical gap between the three sites and is used beyond the NMC community to foster communication throughout the CNMI for institutional and community events.

NMC has approximately 165 computers designated for student use in various labs and classrooms. In addition to computers available for student use, all faculty and staff are provided either a desktop or laptop computer, if needed, to meet the technological needs of their jobs. The IT Department provides computer access to all students in Building W and the Open Student Computer Lab located in building V.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Hire a permanent Director of Information Technology.

***Standard III.C1a.** Technology services, professional support, facilities, hardware, and software are designed to enhance the operation and effectiveness of the institution.*

### Descriptive Summary

The Information Technology Department offers a variety of technological services, computer hardware, and software that are necessary in support of learning. These services along with the professional support and current facilities are designed to enhance the operation and effectiveness of the institution. Continued Professional Development /Trainings for IT Staff helps ensure professional support to the institution.

Program Review is one way that the institution makes decision about technology services, facilities, hardware, and software. If a department concludes that there is an unmet technological need it will make a recommendation to the institution through the Program Review Process. In the Academic Programs' Form 2 each department under the section "Technology Resources" listed all existing technologies. This included technology by employee position and by course for each program. This was used to evaluate the technology by the year of purchase as well as evaluation of "Adequate" or "Needs Improvement."

Over the past couple years NMC has began offering a limited number of distance education courses under the Division of Academic Programs and Services. NMC plans to offer up to 50 percent of a program's credits via online courses for degree students. Currently less than 15 percent of active program courses are currently offered as online courses. Student needs drive the demand for online courses and NMC's academic departments and faculty members formally request that courses be made available online. Online course requests go to the Office of Distance Learning Education, where instructors are trained and assisted in the development of online, hybrid, and web-enhanced courses. The Academic Council has approved definitions for these course delivery types. Such course offerings especially aid in meeting the needs of NMC's non-traditional and working students, while also enhancing the operation and effectiveness of the institution by making courses more accessible. This accessibility benefits the students of Tinian and Rota who are place bound.

NMC has a contractual agreement with MoodleRooms to host the MOODLE Learning Management System on a robust platform of tools and features that help deliver engaging online, hybrid and web-enhanced courses. This support and service provides sound

reliability, maintenance, off-site hosting, disaster recovery, privacy, and security for our distance learning courses.

### Self Evaluation

In 2009, all personnel in the IT Department were provided training in fiber optics and cable splicing training with certification. IT subscription training through CBT-Nuggets[IIIC:8], an IT online video training for IT professionals for all NMC IT personnel, provided continuing education in 2011-2012. Additional IT staff trainings and certifications have included Microsoft, Cisco, CompTIA, Linux, Data Cabling, ETA, Lilly, Fiber Optics, VMWare, MOODLE, Flashlight 2.0, PowerCampus, SAGE, and Xerox DocuShare. Training have been listed in the IT Staff Professional Trainings[IIIC:9].

Although training has been provided to the current IT staff, as mentioned previously there is still a need to fill several vacant IT positions. With the multiple vacancies within the IT Department, especially IT Director's position, technology services and professional support are spread very thin. Full departmental staffing will enhance the overall quality of technology services, and shorten the time needed for services to be completed.

IT updated the new library cataloging system for students and staff, which required training from the system vendors for IT personnel as well as pertinent library personnel. The new Integrated Library System (ILS) is now housed on the NMC Saipan site and is maintained by IT personnel. This increases the uptime and response time, which are important factors for the effectiveness of the system.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Make request to Management Team in order to hire qualified IT professionals to fill crucial vacant IT positions, mainly the IT Director's position. These positions with justification being linked to strategic planning and comparison to peer institutions.
2. Provide more direction on the formality and legal issues with offering online distance education courses. Assign this task directly to legal counsel for the College.

***Standard III.C1b. The institution provides quality training in the effective application of its information technology to students and personnel.***

### Descriptive Summary

NMC provides regular training in all areas of information technology to students, faculty, and staff. In addition to training on NMC's standard campus systems, the IT Department provides professional development training, workshops, webinars, as well as training on specific computer applications. The assessment for information technology trainings result from internal surveys, request and referral from students, faculty, and staff.

One way NMC strives to meet the needs for technology literacy is through Atomic Learning[IIC:10]. NMC continues its subscription to Atomic Learning for students, faculty, and staff to use to update their skills thorough online training video tutorials and technology integration resources. Training is provided for the NMC Online-Moodle Learning Management System, student email, and, periodically and where applicable, on various Web 2.0 technologies for faculty and staff.

### Self Evaluation

From 2008-2012, professional development has been provided each semester by the Distance Learning Coordinator, a non-instructional faculty member in the IT Department. In May 2012, the institution created the Office of Distance Learning Education (DLE) under the Division of Academic Programs and Services. This office is headed by the Director of Distance Learning Education. This new position eliminated the need for a Distance Learning Coordinator within the IT Department. Current training and professional development in online technology is now the responsibility of the Director of Distance Learning Education. While some faculty members are proficient integrating technology with teaching, others are hesitant to do so. The ever changing field of technology causes some instructors' to be apprehensive in learning new technologies. This is an ongoing challenge for the Director of the Office of DLE and more training of multiple levels of technology skills need to be offered to these instructors.

The NMC Database Administrator maintains system updates and provides regular trainings in the use of PowerCAMPUS, student records software, and training that is necessary after each system update. Procurement and Property Management personnel were provided training in the use of the FASGov software [IIC:11] to manage inventory and procurement. As part of its mission to provide support and additional technical assistance to all faculty and staff when needed, the IT Department also has provided assistance with FASGov.

Furthermore, in the Spring of 2011, NMC piloted a new student email system powered by Google Apps for Education. By the Spring of 2012, NMC had created over 1,250 email accounts for students. Orientation to the new email system is provided at the beginning of each semester, in addition to one-to-one training sessions for students who need additional assistance. Students have 25 gigabytes of storage space, easy online access to other students, the ability to create documents and collaborate on assignments through the use of their student email.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Assess faculty competence in technology through a required and routine skills assessment mechanism. The results of this assessment will be used to provide the needed training in technology skills.

***Standard III.C1c.*** *The institution systematically plans, acquires, maintains, and upgrades or replaces technology infrastructure and equipment to meet institutional needs.*

### Descriptive Summary

In October 2008, the IT Department began the process of implementing its plan (the “IT Plan”) to systematically maintain and improve the technology needs of the campus based on feedback from the 2008-2012 PROA Strategic Plan and the IT Resource Guide [IIIC:12]. This guide was made available on the institution’s website for review by faculty and staff, so that faculty and staff could be educated on the current technologies existing at NMC.

The College has worked towards maintaining its existing systems through technical maintenance of server systems and client workstations. The Help Desk staff works at the request of any member of faculty and staff to ensure the reliability and functionality of their computer system [IIIC:13].

The IT Department has worked towards upgrading the following existing systems and applications: the student email system was upgraded to Google Apps for Education, and the Barracuda Firewall, Storage and Spam Filter was added. Two additional T1 lines were also acquired to increase system bandwidth.

Existing emergency back-up power sources for Buildings V, W, N, and L have been upgraded. Institutional data from the college community saved on NMC Network Drive has daily backups on campus. In addition to these daily backups, this data is backed up monthly, secured off campus in a safety deposit box for reliability and disaster recovery. In order to improve this current practice discussion of cloud storage integration for disaster recovery of data is ongoing.

NMC provided technology system upgrades for the NMC Bookstore from the old Point of Sale (POS) to Intuit Quickbooks. In addition, the College has acquired several different system upgrades for faculty and staff.

### Self Evaluation:

The IT Department acquired an additional 20 licenses for Power Campus software modules, as well as training from Holland Consulting for the Procurement and Property Management Office (PPMO), the Human Resources Office (HRO), and Finance Sage MIPS. The IT Department continues to upgrade and support the PowerCampus and PowerFaids Systems.

The IT Department purchased and is currently in the implementation process of the Cisco Wireless Access Mesh [IIIC:16] in collaboration with Marianas Wireless. Due to the renovation of Building A this project has been put on delay. The anticipated installation and configuration phase will take between 10-20 days. The completion of this project is expected to be completed by the end of October 2012. This is project will increase internet wireless access to faculty, staff, and students.

The NMC Saipan Campus is currently still using an outdated private branch exchange (PBX) telephone system that has reached its functional limits. The Mitel SX-200D was installed in 1993. At this time the Administrative Services, Information Technology, and the Dean of Administration are reviewing new digital telephone solutions.

The IT Department continues to replace old network cables from CAT5 to CAT6 to provide accessibility and connectivity to the college community.

The NMC Project Connect: Inter-Island Radio Network grant has ended. This technology was to provide redundant connectivity to the then instructional sites on Rota and Tinian via video teleconferencing (VTC). Due to the previous WASC sanction prohibiting distance learning delivery of courses to these sites, synchronous courses are no longer provided via VTC at these locations. VTC conferencing, however, is still utilized for CREES and various committee meetings.

#### Actionable Improvement Plan

1. Continue to upgrade computing resources for faculty and students.
2. Acquire additional bandwidth to provide increased access to the Internet.
3. Continue to develop a plan to upgrade secured wireless connectivity within the Saipan Campus.
4. Continue to update the institution's telecommunication system.
5. Backup college data virtually for improved institutional disaster recovery.

***Standard III.C1d. The distribution and utilization of technology resources support the development, maintenance, and enhancement of its programs and services.***

#### Descriptive Summary

Technology resource support is available for academic and institutional programs and services. Program review is one way that the institution evaluates how well its current technologies meet the needs of its programs and services. If a unit concludes that there is an unmet technological need, it will make a recommendation to the institution through the program review process. From these recommendations decisions concerning the priority and distribution of technology is identified.

#### Self Evaluation

During the past few years, the functionality of the student email system has been a major issue in the College's communications between its students, faculty and staff. In spring of 2011, NMC piloted and launched a Google Apps for Education-based email system that was

made available to all the College's students of NMC. The new system has led to an increase in the use of campus email, which now provides students additional space for their files and efficient collaboration options with instructors and peers. NMC is able to incorporate the student email system with MOODLE, which allows more security and more efficient access. The Google Apps for Education-based email system provides enhancements for group distribution of email and other communications (such as forms and surveys), centralized maintenance, and enhancements upgrades via Google apps. This new setup requires less system downtime and provides easy accessibility to resources for students and the campus as a whole.

NMC is running PowerCAMPUS v7.4, self-service module and the Power CAMPUS Analytics module are in the process of implementation however we must address preexisting network issues and the integration into a single 64-bit environment. The goal for NMC for online registration is Spring 2013.

Although NMC does not offer distance programs in full, a select number of courses are offered as online, hybrid and web-enhanced. These courses are supported and maintained by the Office of Distance Learning Education. MOODLE is the main technology utilized in these courses with additional support services and technologies. Online courses are also opening up access to hiring additional qualified faculty outside of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Since 2009, NMC has implemented the computer replacement plan for its computer laboratories. The NMC Foundation provided a new computer system for the computer laboratories in Building M for the English Language Institute. NMC Board of Regent members have also been provided laptops to better communicate in preparation of Board meetings and in reviewing policies.

The Noel-Levitz Survey [IIC:20], assessing student satisfaction, looked at "Computer labs are adequate and accessible. The results show that the students of NMC on a scale from 1-7 find this item of great importance at 6.45, which is 0.24 above National Community Colleges response of 191,857 records. The satisfaction of this item is 5.05 standing just 0.52 below the National Community Colleges response of 191,857 records. To meet the needs of our students and improve their satisfaction Building W computer laboratories were upgraded with new PC and Apple systems through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grant. Along with the update of these computers, the procurement of updated software and applications took place. Computer Application students were able to use these updated applications for their current courses, a prime example is the use of the most up-to-date version of Microsoft Office. There are still other areas that need periodic system upgrades and NMC will continue to look for funding sources in grants and revenue generating measures to keep our systems up to date.

In 2011, the IT Department obtained thirteen laptops and upgraded some older faculty laptops in addition to thirteen it acquired in 2009 [IIC:22].

In 2012, NMC upgraded and replaced obsolete VTC units for the Saipan Campus and the Tinian and Rota outreach sites. These upgrades allow for more VTC usage between all three



locations and other institutions and entities within the community. Additional features are being sought to further enhance NMC's VTC capabilities for community outreach [IIC:23]. Classroom projectors have been, and are being, updated in Buildings A, W and V to assist with the distribution of technology integrated with classroom instruction.

In 2008, NMC embarked on a campus-wide core network infrastructure upgrade and installed Cisco network infrastructure to provide a more efficient and reliable system [IIC:24]. Internet connection backbones were added, and two T1 high-speed lines were installed with our other existing DSL lines. These additions provided redundancy and additional bandwidth for the NMC community.

In 2011, NMC replaced its old library catalog system (Horizon) with a new Integrated Library System (Millennium System)[IIC:25], which was funded through an ARRA grant. This upgrade provided system enhancements for NMC's Library Programs & Services system. Training for this new system was provided by the system's vendor. The migration of data was successfully implemented in late December 2011, and NMC is now able to provide this new service to students, faculty, staff, and the public. Students, faculty, and staff can easily access the online catalog via the website library.nmcnet.edu.

The IT Department's policies and procedures are recently earmarked for revision and finalization. Qualified and professional staff are needed in the current vacant positions to properly balance the IT Departments workload. This balance will make way for staff to accurately address these policies and procedures.

Funding provided by ARRA allowed the College to completely replace computers in the computer classrooms located in Building W that been identified for replacement in NMC's 2009 computer replacement plan [IIC:26]. NMC has also secured additional computer equipment to replace all employee computers. Deployment of these units will begin as soon as the IT Department completes the installation of new network servers.

NMC lost additional computer labs due to the closure of the TRIO Programs (Upward Bound, Talent Search, and Student Support Services). However, with the campus-wide computer replacement nearing completion, the College will be able to open additional computing labs for students.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Update the IT Operational Plan, Policy and Procedures to meet the growing needs of the students, faculty and staff.
2. Secure additional funding to complete the implementation of the computer replacement plan that was initiated in 2009.
3. Review and approve a Distance Learning Policy.

4. Open additional computer laboratories to meet needs expressed in student surveys.
5. Move to offer programs 100 percent online, first securing ACCJC approval, in order to better meet the needs of adult learners and those students place bound on Tinian and Rota. This cannot happen until NMC has accreditation sanctions removed.

***Standard III.C2.*** *Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of technology resources and uses the results of evaluation as the basis for improvement.*

### Descriptive Summary

Program Review is one way that the institution makes decision about technology services, facilities, hardware, and software. If a department concludes that there is an unmet technological need it will make a recommendation to the institution through the Program Review Process. PROAC then evaluates and prioritizes all recommendations to the institution from each program using supporting data derived by a set rubric. These recommendations include technological needs in which decisions are made for improvement. NMC's Fiscal Year 2012 Operational Plan Goals and Priorities identified an operational plan, as well as goals and priorities. Technology planning was integrated into Goal 3 of this plan, which is titled "Information Technology" and lists the following objectives:

- Improve the utility of Information Technology.
- Improve our Student Information Management System (SIMS)
- Launch the online learning center
- Integrate technology with student learning.

Governance bodies (BAFC, AC, CC, PROAC,), department heads, deans and Management Team continue to be involved in technology planning.

### Self Evaluation

NMC systematically assesses the effectiveness of technology resources and uses the results of these evaluations as a guide for improvement. Satisfaction surveys [IIC:27] are periodically sent out to different units of the College and reviewed for ways in which IT can be made more effective. VTC evaluations are also conducted and information gleaned from these evaluations helps NMC identify problematic areas. The Help Desk system and information compiled from Held Desk requests allows NMC IT to assess the IT needs of the College. Each department uses program review through PROAC as a major venue for integrating technology planning with institutional planning.

As Management Team is responsible for reviewing and approving all college hires, it did support the hiring of an IT director.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Appoint a permanent IT Director in order to ensure that the IT Director's seat on PROAC is filled. This is necessary to ensure the appropriate involvement of the IT Department in the program review process. In turn, this ensures that technology planning is fully integrated with institutional planning.

### **Standard III D. Financial Resources**

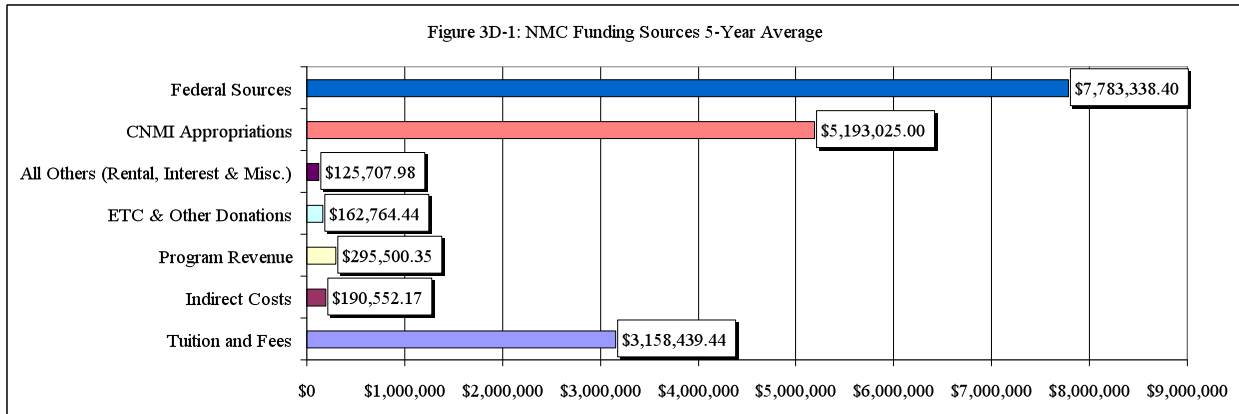
*Financial resources are sufficient to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. The distribution of resources supports the development, maintenance, and enhancement of programs and services. The institution plans and manages its financial affairs with integrity and in a manner that ensures financial stability. The level of financial resources provides a reasonable expectation of both short-term and long-term financial solvency. Financial resources planning is integrated with institutional planning.*

#### Descriptive Summary:

The Northern Marianas College (NMC) has been no stranger to financial struggles during the turbulent economic times that the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and other U.S. public institutions of higher learning have been experiencing. In addition, as the CNMI and U.S. economies continue to struggle, the highlights of NMC and many other small institutions of higher education and community colleges in the U.S. continue to forge around what institutions of higher education are doing to meet the economic and workforce needs of their respective communities and what are the returns on investments can such entities bring for the funds received. To meet such challenges, NMC relies heavily on its Mission to guide NMC through the rough seas. NMC's Mission states that the "mission of Northern Marianas College shall be to provide the best quality and meaningful post secondary and adult educational opportunities for the purpose of improving the quality of life for the individual and for the Commonwealth as a whole. NMC shall be responsible for providing education in the areas of adult and continuing education, post secondary and adult vocational education and professional development for the people of the Commonwealth."

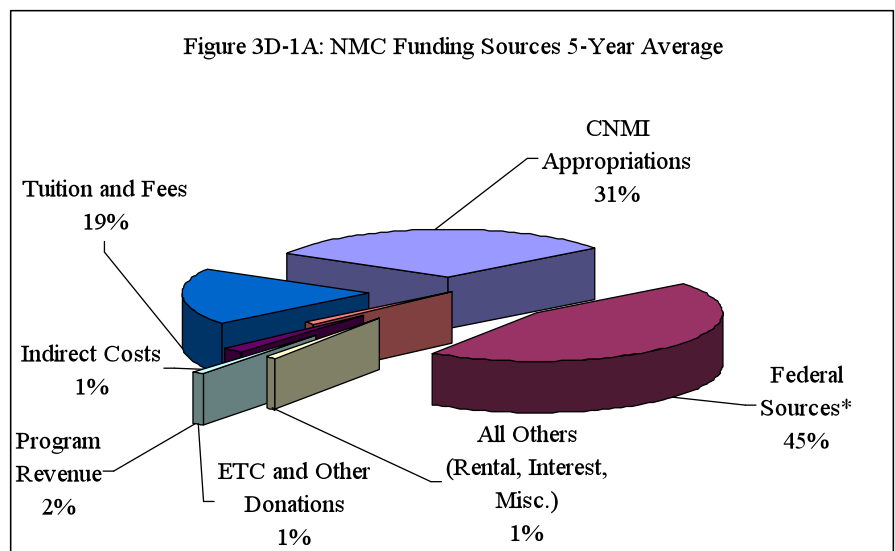
#### Self Evaluation

Being that said, over the past few years, NMC has dedicated its efforts to ensuring that financial resources meet NMC's mission, student learning programs and services are maintained, continuous institutional effectiveness efforts are funded, all while conducting such efforts with integrity and financial stability. Like many other U.S. public institutions of higher learning have been experiencing, with the scarce and dwindling resources available, NMC distributes its financial resources within reasonable expectation of short-term, medium-term, and long-term financial solvency. NMC's financial practices have revolved around and supported NMC's institutional planning, as planning drives NMC's budgeting and resource allocation processes.



NMC relies on seven main funding sources (See Figure 3D-1) such as revenues from Federal Sources, CNMI Appropriations, Tuition and Fees, All Others (Rental, Interest, and Miscellaneous), Educational Tax Credits (ETC) and Donations, Program Revenues, and Indirect Costs. Even as the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) financial resources and the economy continues to deteriorate, NMC has been fortunate enough to receive significant support from the CNMI Government and other financial sources to keep the CNMI's lone accredited institution of higher learning in fair standing. From fiscal year 2007 through fiscal year 2011, NMC received an average of \$5.193 million a year over that five year period. This represents an average of five percent of the entire CNMI budget available for appropriations per year. Over that same five year period, NMC's financial resources collected from Tuition, Fees, and Other Sources averaged over \$3 million per year. Funds received from federal sources averaged \$7.78 million, inclusive of funds received from American Recovery and Reinvestment Act State Financial Stability Funds (ARRA SFSF), Land Grant, and federal financial aid (PELL Grants). For comparative reasons, NMC stresses that the funds from federal sources contains land grant funds that may not be available in other public institutions of higher learning. The land grant funds average close to \$3 million a year. If removed from the total funds received, the amount from federal sources would be reduced to \$4.78 million a year. In total, NMC received an average of \$16.91 million a year over that time period.

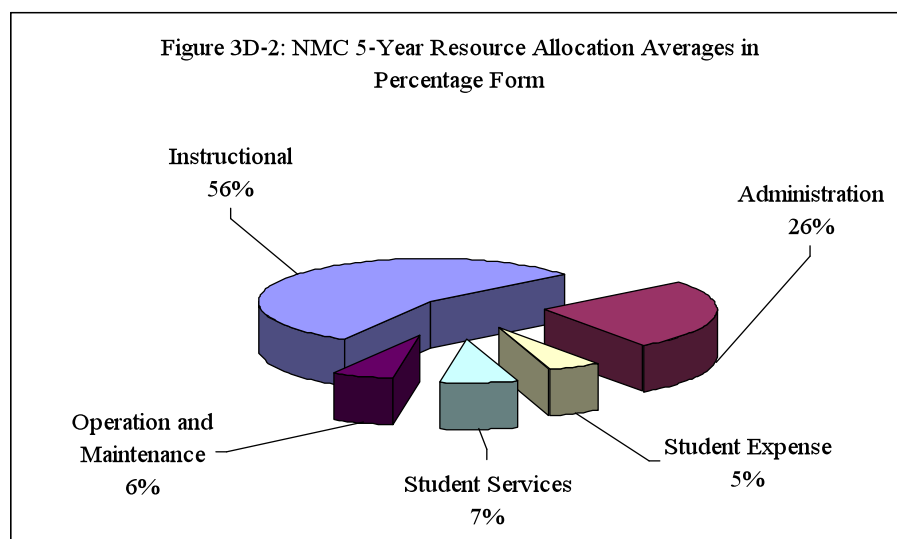
Broken down into percentages as illustrated in Figure 3D-1A, 31 percent comes from CNMI appropriations, 19 percent from Tuition and Fees, and 45 percent from federal funds\*, inclusive of ARRA SFSF, Land Grant Funding, and federal financial aid – PELL Grants, if land grant



funds are removed, the percentage of federal sources would be reduced to 28 percent. In comparison to public institutions as identified in the fourth Edition of “A Guide to College and University Budgeting” by Larry Goldstein (2012), NMC’s funding sources (with the exception of federal funds) are comparable and within the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) averages for public two year institutions. NACUBO averages consist of 35 percent from state funding, 17 percent from tuition and fees, and 17 percent from federal funds. NMC’s financial stability starts with acquiring adequate revenue sources and carefully planning and managing the use of such scarce resources.

Improving financial accountability and integrity has also been a consistent and continuous process for NMC. Audited financial statements, internal control, and compliance have continuously improved since fiscal year 2007. NMC went from having qualified audit opinions on its fiscal year 2007 financial statements to unqualified audit opinions on financial statements four years straight from 2008-2011 [IIID:1, IIID:2, IIID:3, IIID:4].

These efforts have demonstrated NMC’s ability to plan and manage its financial affairs responsibly and with integrity in a manner that ensures financial stability. Factors that helped NMC improve in this area include but are not limited to experienced and knowledgeable finance and accounting related staff and management, timely responses and corrections of audit findings, approval of the revised Procurement and

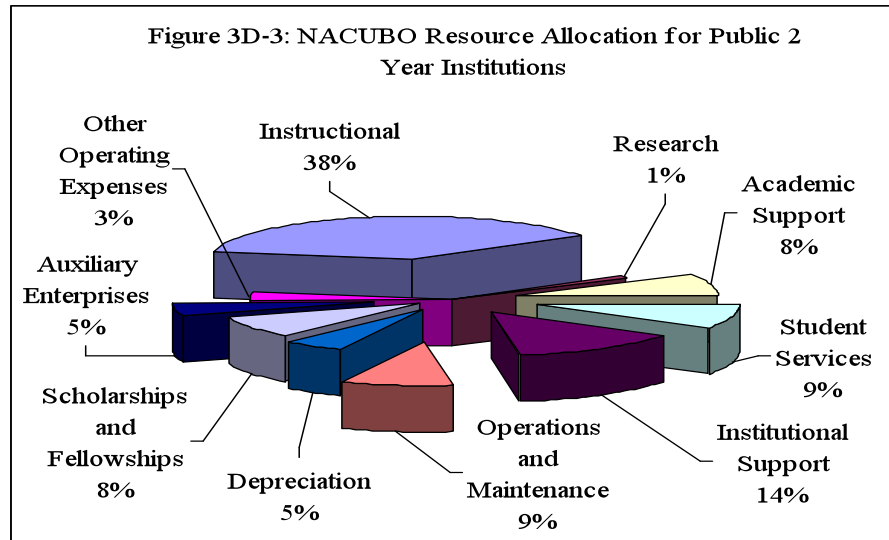


Property Management Manuals [IIID:5], training of employees, restructuring of the organization to place the financial departments under the newly hired Dean of Administration, and ongoing recruitment of a Director of Financial Services/Chief Financial Officer.

The allocation of NMC’s financial resources has been fairly consistent from fiscal years 2007 through 2011 (See Figure 3D-2). Emphasis of the funding revolved around maintaining and supporting existing programs and services and the resources needed to effectively run the College. NMC allocates funds within reasonable comparison of the national averages for similar functions as represented by NACUBO (See Figure 3D-3). More importantly, as shown in Figure 3.D-2, NMC exceeds the NACUBO national average for resources allocated to instructional functions. NMC allocated 56 percent of its annual resources to instructional functions (inclusive of academic support) while the NACUBO data indicates 38 percent for instructional functions and 8 percent for academic support, for a combined allocation of 46 percent. NMC allocates funds to administration (26 percent), student expenses (five

percent), student services (seven percent), and operations and maintenance (six percent). In comparison, the remaining NACUBO distribution of resources are for research (less than one percent), student services (nine percent), institutional support (14 percent), operation and maintenance of plant (nine percent), depreciation (five percent), scholarships and fellowships inclusive of student aid (eight percent), auxiliary enterprises (five percent), and other operating expenses (three percent). As described herein, NMC distributes its financial resources within range or significantly above NACUBO averages to instruction, academic support, student expenses, student services (student learning programs and services), and a fair amount to administration which is the primary allocation source for institutional effectiveness and institutional support to develop, maintain, or enhance programs and services.

NMC's budget process [IIID:6] has served as the key driver to integrate and link financial planning to institutional plans. NMC's ambition to continuously improve upon its efforts in this area have evolved to include organization of institutional and financial planning into four phases, the



creation of resource allocation processes as described in NMC's Form 3s [IIID:7] and planned budget analysis forms [IIID:8], as well as using results from composite reports [IIID:9] and other assessment data to advance such purpose.

With NMC's drive for excellence, the College recognizes that there are still adjustments that need to be made to strengthen the link between financial planning to institutional planning. One major effort that NMC is currently working on is the development of a new and improved NMC Financial Plan. The NMC Financial Plan will incorporate the existing four phases of institutional and financial planning and strengthen the College's ability to better measure short and long term financial impacts on institutional planning and the College as a whole. Some of the components of the NMC Financial Plan include the improved identification of financial resources essential to fund existing institutional plans and the transformation of funding allocation from what is currently practiced and considered as the "natural" allocation method (salaries, benefits, travel, etc.) to a more strategic "functional" method of allocation (instructional, student support, administration, strategic initiatives, etc). The NMC Financial Plan will then allow NMC to assign funding percentages to each function that could be clearly linked to measurable goals and objectives of each short-term, medium-term, and long term plans. NMC will also be more able to clearly evaluate and assess its institutional plans in terms of the amount of funds allocated to goals and objectives.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Develop a new and improved Draft Financial Plan to be tested in fiscal year 2013 which focuses on the integration of financial planning to institutional plans such as short-term operational plans, the medium-term President's White Paper [IIID-11], and the first phase of the Facilities Master Plan [IIID-12]. A full and final version of the new Financial Plan will be revealed in fiscal year 2014, with the results of NMC's new Strategic Plan scheduled to be released in fiscal year 2014, as the leading driver for the financial resource directions of the College.

***Standard III.D1.** The institution relies upon its mission and goals as the foundation for financial planning.*

### Descriptive Summary

The CNMI, the community which NMC serves, has been through complicated and ever-changing economic and workforce conditions for many years. The CNMI has been relying on alien non-resident labor and low wages since 1976 to stimulate, build and maintain its economy. In 1981, NMC was officially created to help thwart such reliance on the alien non-resident workforce and improve the lives of the citizens of the CNMI. In 1985, to ensure that NMC could meet such mandate, the Mission of NMC was embedded into the CNMI Constitution and states that the "mission of Northern Marianas College shall be to provide the best quality and meaningful post secondary and adult educational opportunities for the purpose of improving the quality of life for the individual and for the Commonwealth as a whole. NMC shall be responsible for providing education in the areas of adult and continuing education, post secondary and adult vocational education and professional development for the people of the Commonwealth." As mandated by the CNMI Constitution, NMC has created a variety of courses, programs, and services to meet such needs and focused on providing meaningful opportunities to improve the lives of the people and communities of the CNMI. Furthermore, in comparison to other institutions in the CNMI, NMC's programs and services have focused on providing its stakeholders with the ability to earn meaningful wages/salaries, lifelong educational opportunities, and innovative approaches to improving their lives as well as the CNMI's economic conditions. Unfortunately, NMC's accreditation sanctions over the last few years has significantly challenged the College in providing new degree programs or full online degree programs to meet the ever changing needs of the CNMI's workforce as well as providing academic courses for the populations served on the islands of Tinian and Rota, and other remote islands of the CNMI.

### Self Evaluation

With the understanding that the CNMI's economic base and workforce development opportunities have been rapidly decreasing, leading to the overall CNMI Government's revenue source being cut by 55 percent since 2006, NMC has been no stranger to financial struggles during the turbulent economic times that the CNMI and other U.S. public

institutions of higher learning have been experiencing. In addition, as the CNMI and U.S. economies continue to struggle, challenges of NMC and many other small institutions of higher education and community colleges in the U.S. continues to forge around what institutions of higher education are doing to meet the economic and workforce needs of their respective communities and the returns on investments such entities bring for the funds received. To meet such challenges, NMC relies heavily on its Mission to guide it through the rough seas. Over the past few years, NMC has dedicated its efforts to ensuring that financial resources meet NMC's mission, and student learning programs and services are either developed, maintained or enhanced; continuous institutional effectiveness efforts are funded, all while conducting such efforts with integrity and financial stability. Like many other U.S. public institutions of higher learning have been experiencing, with the scarce and dwindling resources available, NMC distributes its financial resources comparatively to NACUBO organizations (See Figures 3.D-2, 3.D-3), within reasonable expectation of short-term, medium-term, and long-term financial solvency. NMC's financial practices have revolved around and supported NMC's institutional planning: as planning drives NMC's budgeting and resource allocation processes.

NMC does this through phase one of the College's financial planning process (See Standard IIID1a). Each phase contains important processes and tools that help link plans to each other and the funds needed to execute such plans. The four phases of financial planning includes phase one: Planning and Interlinking of Plans, phase two: Resource Allocation, phase three: Program and Service Delivery, and phase 4: Assessment and Evaluation; the cycle is then repeated with modifications or improvements as needed.

In phase one, to ensure that NMC's mission is accomplished, NMC's Mission is incorporated in its PROA Strategic Plan 2008-2012 [IIID:13]. NMC's mission is further emphasized through each respective department/unit's Expanded Statements of Institutional Purpose (ESIPs) [IIID:14], which describe the types of program or service they provide. Day to day activities funded to meet the mission is reflected in NMC's yearly departmental operations plans [IIID:15].

NMC's mission as described earlier has been the main reference point for funding from the CNMI Government. Through the State Appropriations Process, NMC submits to the Governor its funding needs. The Governor then tries to meet NMC's needs to the best of his ability and allocates identified resources under the "All Others" category to NMC. The "All Others" category is appropriate for NMC as it provides NMC with the autonomy and financial ability to decide what to do with the funding provided by the Government. This funding is then sent to the CNMI Legislature for review and appropriation. NMC has historically used funding provided by the CNMI Government to fund NMC's personnel and benefits expenses, with the remainder used for utilities or other need as identified by NMC to accomplish its Mission. All other funding for NMC's operations and initiatives are either absorbed by NMC or funded separately through local laws, federal sources, etc.

NMC's PROA Strategic Plan 2008-2012 [IIID:13] is used as the guide to College's strategic initiatives, goals, objectives, and priorities and has been instrumental in NMC decision making process for funding and allocating resources throughout the institution. NMC's



organizational structure for the five years of the strategic plan is then aligned to the PROA Strategic Plan 2008-2012 so that the programs and services provided by NMC are focused on accomplishing the plan.

NMC's ESIPs [IIID:14], combined with the President's White Paper [IIID:11] are essential to NMC's planning to fund medium-term operations. The ESIPs state the purposes of the programs and services available at NMC and how such programs and services align to the mission of NMC. Accomplishing the mission and strategic plan of NMC revolves around having the appropriate personnel and resources to do so. The President's White Paper helps NMC with both short-term and mid-term strategic and financial decision-making on these matters.

NMC further incorporates its mission, PROA Strategic Plan 2008-2012, President's White Paper and ESIPs in the development of NMC's yearly Institutional Priorities [IIID:16], which are implemented through NMC's yearly departmental Operational Plans [IIID:15]. These operational plans guide each respective department/unit day to day activities with the overall goal of meeting goals and objectives of NMC's plans and mission, all while attending to stakeholder needs. NMC then funds the Operational Plan, ESIPs, President's White Paper, PROA Strategic Plan 2008-2012 and Mission through the College's Priority Initiatives [IIID:17] as identified in NMC's budgeting process which also serves as the key tool used to integrate financial planning to the plans and the mission of the institution.

NMC has adopted several tools to help tie financial planning to institutional plans. These tools include results from Composite Reports [IIID:9], Form 3 Reports [IIID:7], Planned Budget Analysis Forms [IIID:8], and fiscal year 2012 Third Quarter Budget Reports [IIID:28]. Other factors that impact financial planning at NMC are also considered such as federal and local mandates, Peer Study Analysis [IIID:20], NACUBO Studies, and accreditation recommendations. These tools and factors not only help NMC keep the integrity of its financial planning, they also help NMC remain transparent and open to multiple participatory opportunities for stakeholders, shared governance committees, mid-management, and executive management to provide input at different levels of the budget and financial process.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Modify the 2008 Institutional Excellence Guide [IIID-18] to reflect notable changes and practices needed. Strengthen the ESIPs and improve them to better align and link programs and services to funding. Continue to enhance the Form 3 process as recommended in evaluations [IIID-19]. The development of a new Draft Financial Plan to be tested in fiscal year 2013 to focus on the integration of financial planning to short-term operational plans, medium-term President's White Paper, and the first phase of the Facilities Master Plan. Full implementation of the improved Financial Plan to be revealed in fiscal year 2014, with appropriate modifications and alignment to NMC's new Strategic Plan scheduled to be released in fiscal year 2014.

***Standard III.D1a.*** *Financial planning is integrated with and supports all institutional planning.*

### Descriptive Summary

NMC has been placing extreme importance on the linking of financial planning to institutional planning as well as organizing financial planning into a four-phase approach, the development of resource allocation tools (Form 3) [IIID:7], peer study analysis [IIID:20], and assessment/monitoring practices. Since fiscal year 2006, NMC's budgetary process has served as the key financial planning mechanism used to integrate and link financial planning to institutional plans. NMC's drive to continuously improve upon its efforts in this area have evolved to include resource allocation decision-making process as described in NMC's Form 3s, while incorporating the results from composite reports [IIID:9], planned budget analysis forms [IIID:8], and other assessment data to advance such purpose.

NMC's 2008 Institutional Excellence Guide [IIID:18] serves as the key guide to participatory decision making at the College. A major component that was created as a result of the guide is the Planning Program Review and Outcomes Assessment Committee (PROAC) which puts together composite reports for program decision making purposes. PROAC also developed Form 3 [IIID:7] to help assess and guide financial planning, decision making, performances of programs and services, and resource allocation. NMC revamped its Budget and Finance Committee to focus on the operational needs of NMC and adopted the President's White Paper [IIID:11] to improve upon and focus on the medium-term needs of NMC. Through the adoption of the President's White Paper, decision making on the hiring of personnel was shifted to NMC's Management Team (MT). MT is now the clearinghouse for all strategic personnel needs of the institution. Peer Study Analysis [IIID:20] data is used to compare the College's personnel needs to those of its peers. MT considers such in its personnel management decisions. NMC then executes all of the above through its day to day operational plans [IIID:15], which links the plans all together through its institutional priorities and priority initiatives. The plans and processes described above are funded through NMC's yearly budgeting process, which requires each department to link their financial needs to their operational plans, priority initiatives, personnel needs as described in their ESIP functions, to the institutional priorities, which is derived from the strategic plan and the mission of NMC.

### Self Evaluation

NMC uses its four-phase financial management process to describe the integration of financial planning in support of institutional planning. Each phase contains important processes and tools that help link plans to each other and the funds needed to execute such plans. The four phases of the financial management process are: phase 1: Planning and Interlinking of Plans, phase 2: Resource Allocation, phase 3: Program and Service Delivery, and phase 4: Assessment and Evaluation.

#### Phase 1: Planning and Interlinking of Plans:

Institutional plans are reviewed and assigned accordingly to programs and services for implementation (Form 1 [IIID:23] and Form 2 [IIID:24] are instrumental in this process). In this phase, NMC's mission is linked to programs and services through each program's respective ESIPs [IIID:14]. Linked to the mission and each program's ESIPs is the NMC's PROA Strategic Plan 2008-2012 [IIID:13], which is used as the long-term overall guide of the College and its programs and services. NMC's programs and services are then linked to one or more goals and initiatives as described in the strategic plan. To accomplish such goals and initiatives, the College prioritizes the initiatives on a yearly basis. NMC then requires each program and service to create a yearly operational plan [IIID:15] with each respective goal and objective linked to the identified yearly institutional initiatives. The main link that integrates financial planning in support of institutional planning is done through the Priority Initiatives. The College prioritizes all activities within those priority initiatives and allocates funding to such.

#### Phase 2: Resource Allocation:

Through the yearly operational plan, programs and services are then allocated resources in the natural classification of budgeting (supplies, travel, etc.) to meet goals, objectives, and institutional priorities, which are all linked back to the PROA Strategic Plan 2008-2012, ESIPs, and mission of NMC. Form 3s [IIID:7], Composite Reports [IIID:9], Planned Budgets and Analysis Forms [IIID:8], Institutional Priorities, and Priority Initiatives are reviewed and prioritized to determine how much resources are to be allocated to each program or services, and thus provides each department with an operating budget to operate its programs and or service. As resources are added up for each program or service, they are grouped into their respective unit or divisions to form an overall budget. Each unit or division represents a key function of the College and has responsibility over one or more long-term strategic goals and initiatives, etc. The outcomes of the resource allocation process provides NMC with an overall picture as to how much funding was allocated to each function of the College but more importantly, it describes how much funding was allocated to accomplishing each priority initiative, strategic goal, and ultimately the mission of NMC.

#### Phase 3: Program and Service Delivery:

Programs and services are expected to administer and accomplish their responsibilities as assigned through their ESIP, priority initiative, goals, and objectives. Through monthly reports, programs and services update the management on their activities and efforts. To support such activities and monitor funds used, NMC's Budget and Finance Offices send out monthly budgetary status reports [IIID:26], and encumbrance reports [IIID:27]. NMC also requires quarterly budget reports [IIID:28] from programs and services with updates on their spending.

#### Phase 4: Assessment and Evaluation:

Each program and service is expected to fill out the appropriate Form 1 [IIID:23], 2, and/or 3 dependent upon the type of program or service and the cycle they are in. These Forms are submitted to PROAC for review, evaluation, and assessment and the results are incorporated into a composite report to guide decision making on program improvements and or future

resource allocation. Programs and services are then required to make the necessary changes and/or adjust their resource request for the next funding cycle. For fiscal year 2012, the College provided funding for programs based on the results of PROAC's Form 3 analysis [IHD:7, IHD:19], which was then be provided to the Budget and Finance Committee for resource distribution. Programs either maintained, increased, or decreased the funding it received based on the Form 3 analysis and the overall projected funds available for the College for fiscal year 2012.

NMC's culture of continuous quality improvement drives NMC to strive for excellence in integrating financial planning to support institutional planning. NMC's transformation to better ensure integration comes in the development of its new Draft NMC Financial Plan. The NMC Financial Plan will include the complete identification of financial resources essential to fund existing institutional plans; transform funding allocation from what is currently practiced and considered as the "natural" allocation method (salaries, benefits, travel, etc.) to a more strategic "functional" method of allocation (instructional, student support, administration, strategic initiatives, etc). The NMC Financial Plan will then allow NMC to assign funding percentages to each function that will make goals and objectives of each short-term, medium-term, and long-term plans as well as other recognized plans more measurable. NMC will then be more able to clearly evaluate and assess its institutional plans in terms of measureable goals and objectives along with actual funding provided to such goals and objectives over an extended period of time.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Develop an improved Draft Financial Plan to be tested in fiscal year 2013 which focuses on the integration of financial planning to support institutional plans such as short-term operational plans, medium-term President's White Paper, and the first phase of the Facilities Master Plan. A full and final version of the improved Financial Plan to be published in fiscal year 2014, with the results of NMC's new Strategic Plan scheduled to be released in fiscal year 2014, leading the financial resource directions of the College, as it is firmly linked into institutional planning.

***Standard III.D1b.*** *Institutional planning reflects realistic assessment of financial resource availability, development of financial resources, partnerships, and expenditure requirements.*

#### Descriptive Summary

NMC's institutional planning reflects realistic assessments of financial resource availability, development of financial resources, partnerships, and expenditures requirements. As financial planning foundations revolve around NMC's mission [IHD:14], the PROA Strategic Plan 2008-2012, respective program expanded statements of institutional purposes (medium-term) operational plans (short term), are all tied together through Institutional Priorities and the yearly operations [IHD:29] and appropriations [IHD:30] budget.

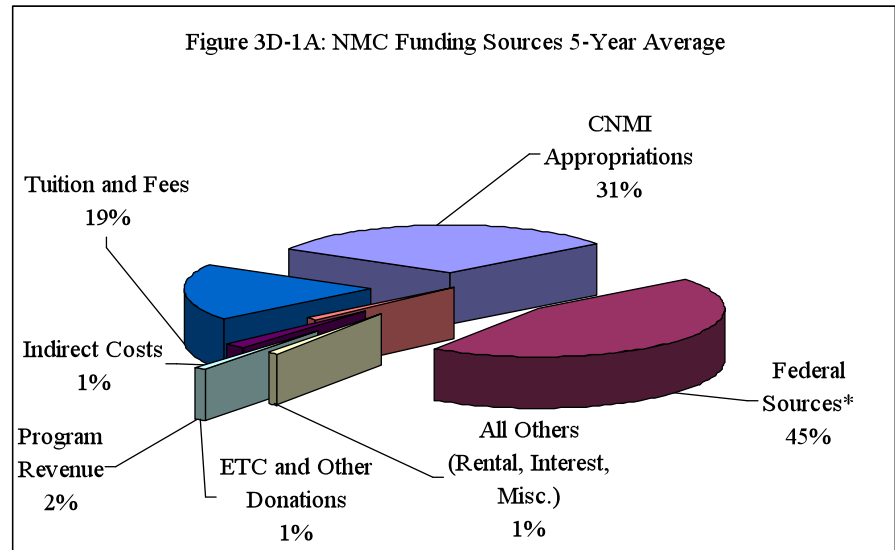
NMC's institutional plans are easily accessible by the members of the Board of Regents (BOR), College's Management Team, which composes of all the Deans of the Institution, the direct reports of the President, and the Presidents of the Staff and Faculty Senates, as well as the President of the Associated Students of the Northern Marianas College, and all other stakeholders. The BOR are responsible for ensuring that the public's money is spent wisely and well. The BOR fulfills this responsibility by approving the overall budgets as well as reviewing the annual audits of the College. The Management Team is responsible for the proper administration and oversight of the funds and the programs and services funded to conduct the College's operations.

Planning is then formally introduced to these entities, which in turn is charged to disseminate information, gather feedback and provide access to information and planning within their respective constituencies. These plans and associated policies or procedures reflect the institution's departments, units, and programs goals and objectives that provide the planning and procurement of resources in efforts for NMC to operate efficiently and remain sustainable. NMC incorporates program review results in its financial planning. NMC's program review guidelines require analysis of the assessment of program learning outcomes and student learning outcomes. This analysis, compiled into a composite report [IIID:9], is used to set annual goals for the programs. Through assessment and program review, and the outcomes of Form 3 data [IIID:7, IIID:19], funding priorities and resource allocations are established.

### Self Evaluation

NMC also composite reports to help guide academic and administrative agendas. In 2011, NMC adopted its Form 3 reports as a guide to resource allocation. In addition, to ensure that NMC's planning efforts reflect the realistic assessment of financial resource availability, NMC relies on audited financial statements [IIID:1, IIID:2, IIID:3, IIID:4], historical financial data, quarterly budget updates, and Financial Status Reports (FSR) [IIID:31] which is a summary of financial statements, revenue and expenditure reports, and other financial data. The FSRs help the College assess and plan its short-term financial resources and decision-making. All of these documents are formally reviewed and most are included in the Management Review and Discussion Analysis (MRDA) [IIID:32] of finances on a yearly basis, and can also be found in audit reports. The MRDA describes the financial condition of NMC, its Operating and Non-Operating Revenues, Net Assets, Cash positioning, etc. This document is essential in the decision making and planning of NMC for the upcoming year as well as provides NMC with economical outlook information so that the institution can have an idea of the environment it faces ahead.

NMC received an average of \$16.91 million a year from fiscal year 2007 through 2011. Broken down into percentages, 31 percent of NMC's funding comes from CNMI appropriations, 19 percent from Tuition and Fees, and 45 percent from federal sources\* inclusive of ARRA SFSF, Land Grant Funding, and federal financial aid – PELL Grants, if land grant funds are removed, the percentage of federal sources would be reduced to 28 percent. In comparison to public institutions as identified in the fourth Edition of "A Guide to College and University Budgeting" by Larry Goldstein (2012), NMC's funding sources (with the exception of federal funds) are comparable and within NACUBO averages for public two year institutions. NACUBO averages consist of 35 percent from state funding; 17 percent from tuition and fees, and 17 percent from federal funds. NMC's financial stability starts with



acquiring adequate revenue sources and carefully planning and managing the use of such scarce resources.

In looking at the development of financial resources, NMC also relies on the MRDA, as well as enrollment figures, classroom limits, minimum enrollments per course, tuition and fees, peer study analysis, stakeholder needs, program and services mix, government appropriations, grant opportunities/losses, cost control, revenue generation efforts, foundation, and investment opportunities.

Partnerships of the NMC revolve around creating relationships with entities that share the same views and values of NMC, including NMC's mission, goals, objectives, and priorities. NMC maintains a sound relationship with its foundation, federal programs, local agencies, non-profit organizations, international relations, contractors, information technology providers, communications providers, vendors, and others that NMC foresees as sharing or complimenting NMC's recognized priorities, objectives, and goals.

In March of 2011, NMC formally introduced its approved and revised Procurement and Property Management manual [IIID:5] that guides NMC with its expenditure requirements. NMC also contracts with an independent third party Auditor to audit NMC's Internal Control and Compliance efforts.

NMC's ongoing development of a Draft Financial Plan will be tested in fiscal year 2013 which focuses on the integration of financial planning to short-term operational plans, medium-term President's White Paper, and the first phase of the Facilities Master Plan. Full

implementation will be revealed in fiscal year 2014, with appropriate modifications and alignment to NMC's new long-term Strategic Plan scheduled to be released in fiscal year 2014.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

None

***Standard III.D1c.*** *When making short-range financial plans, the institution considers its long-range priorities to assure financial stability. The institution clearly identifies and plans for payments of liabilities and future obligations.*

### Descriptive Summary

NMC relies on seven main funding sources (See Figure 3D-1A) to achieve its short-, medium- and long-term plans. Three primary funding sources revolve around tuition and fees, state government appropriations, and federal grant funding. As many public institutions of higher education are experiencing, the volatile and constantly changing economy has affected NMC's financial conditions. NMC continues to work with the CNMI Government to maintain its appropriations and has received an average flow of five percent of the total CNMI Government funding available for appropriations. As NMC increases its revenue sources from resident tuition, a reduction in revenue from international student attendance has also been recognized. The support received from the U.S. Department of Education's American Recovery Reinvestment Act State Financial Stabilization Funding (ARRA SFSF) provided NMC with much needed financial relief and has actually positioned NMC in better financial standing for future activities. During these trying times, NMC efficiently plans to meet any budget shortfalls and minimize the impact on loss of revenues through cost reductions, implementation of Form 3 recommendations [IIID:7, IIID:19], use of the Planned Budget Analysis Forms [IIID:8], proration of instructor costs, leveraging of federal grants and increase in diversified sources of funding.

In its short-term operations planning, NMC considers the overall effects of adequate financing for long-term fiscal planning and priorities. NMC's Financial Status Reports [IIID:31], provide "real-time" updates of NMC's finances at any given time. In addition, as identified in NMC's Annual MRDA, efforts to affect long-range planning is directly related to the understanding of revenue sources, economic trends, cash positioning, special revenue, as well as alternative revenue sources and the costs associated with operations. NMC has gone through organizational structure changes which aim to improve the overall operations of NMC and adequately execute both short, medium, and long range planning goals and objectives.

### Self Evaluation

NMC, based on the results of assessment reports, composite reports, Form 3 results, and prior year MRDA reports, develops its financial planning conservatively when projecting

liabilities and obligations in its yearly operations budget [IIID:29] request. A schedule of cost breakdowns and encumbrance reports [IIID:27] are available for each program, department, or unit to review when planning for budgeting requests. NMC utilizes the respective offices in charge of facilities, administration, procurement, and technology to budget and procure the ideal products and services that best fit for NMC's requirements and structural capacity. Cost estimates are then provided to the Budget Office to be utilized as baseline budget data in developing NMC's annual budget.

In fiscal year 2012, NMC implemented program quarterly budget updates [IIID:28] to go along with their monthly updates [IIID:26] to ensure that programs and services not only expend within their approved funding amounts, but to serve as a guide to past budget practices, which in turn serves as a method for funding use assessment. Also related are Financial Status Reports [IIID:31], which provide the Management Team and Board of Regents with a synopsis of NMC's Financial Statements and financial condition. This was created to ensure that NMC's finances reflected realistic assessment of financial resource availability, as well as guided NMC in the development of financial resources, partnerships, and expenditure requirements. In times of economic uncertainties, NMC remained diligent in ensuring that all its obligations are settled and that funding is available for ensuring that NMC's mission, goals, and objectives are met.

Furthermore, NMC looked at short-termed changes that would affect long-term decision-making and financial conditions in the academic programs. NMC raised the minimum number of students in classes, redesigned rooms to accommodate increase, improved cost sharing efforts with federal programs, instituted cost savings measures, reviewed historical funding sources for solvency, and created, revised, and/or updated finance and procurement procedures [IIID:8] for improved expenditure monitoring and internal control measures. NMC also created a tuition and fees task force [IIID:33] to review the current tuition and fees structure and has provided preliminary presentations to the Board of Regents and/or Management Team. NMC also conducted three retreats [IIID:34] to identify the personnel, financial operational needs and obligations of NMC. The results were then provided to the Dean of Administration to identify the funding sources and to align funding to such activities. Weekly management team meetings were also held to assure that NMC's needs for prioritized personnel [IIID:37] were met as well as other outstanding and future obligations was properly funded. NMC also developed the planned budget analysis form to serve as a resource allocation formula to ensure that most of the funding received from tuition and fees were to be allocated for instruction, instructional support, student learning, administration (accreditation) and operations.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

None.

***Standard III.D1d.*** The institution clearly defines and follows its guidelines and processes for financial planning and budget development, with all constituencies having appropriate opportunities to participate in the development of institutional plans and budgets.



## Descriptive Summary

As done throughout many other public institutions of higher education, NMC's participatory governance structure provides constituencies with appropriate opportunities to participate in the development of institutional plans and budgets. The Budget and Finance Committee plays an important role in NMC's financial planning and budget development process and serves as the forum for discussing needed operational resources and facility issues or concerns for short-term day-to-day and yearly plans. The membership composition of the committee is representative of all stakeholders of the campus community which includes representatives of the Faculty Senate, representatives of the Staff Senate, Budget Officer, Finance Office Representative, the three Deans of NMC, four at large faculty members and two at large staff members and student representatives. Another arm of NMC's governance structure is NMC College Council (CC). CC also plays an important role in the development of institutional policies and procedures. The College Council serves to provide broad participation of faculty, staff, administrators, and students in the decision-making processes regarding institutional issues. The CC, with the input from its respective constituencies, makes and/or forwards recommendations to the President for informed decision making. Management Team formulates a third arm of decision making when it comes to strategic personnel planning and funding mid- to long-term activities.

Financial planning at NMC is integrated with and clearly supports institutional planning. NMC, places an extreme importance on the linking of institutional planning to financial planning to resource allocation and monitoring. As mentioned earlier, NMC's financial planning originates from the mission of NMC. Along with the mission, NMC's PROA Strategic Plan 2008-2012 embodies goals and objectives of NMC that are incorporated into the financial planning of NMC. For mid-range planning, NMC relies on programs Expanded Statements of Institutional Purposes (ESIPs) and the President's White Paper. Through the PROA Strategic Plan 2008-2012 (long term), NMC derives its yearly institutional priorities which are implemented through NMC's yearly departmental operational plans (short term). Each department has expanded statements of institutional purpose which describe the types of program or service they provide. Funding is then integrated to each plan through the operational plans.

NMC overall planning is easily accessible by the members of the Board of Regents (BOR), College's Management Team (MT), which composes of all the Deans of the Institution, the direct reports of the President, and the Presidents of the Staff and Faculty, as well as the President of the Associated Students of the Northern Marianas College, and all other stakeholders. The BOR are responsible for ensuring that the public's money is spent wisely and well. The BOR fulfills this responsibility by approving the overall budgets as well as reviewing the annual audits of the College. The Management Team is responsible for the proper administration and oversight of the funds and the programs and services funded to conduct the College's operations.

Planning is then formally introduced to these entities, which in turn is charged to disseminate information, gather feedback and provide access to information and planning within their

respective constituencies. These plans and associated policies or procedures reflect the institution's, departments, units, and programs goals and objectives that provide the planning and procurement of resources in efforts for NMC to operate efficiently and remain sustainable. NMC incorporates program review results in financial planning. NMC's program review guidelines require bi-annual analysis of the assessment of program learning outcomes and student learning outcomes. This analysis, compiled into a composite report, is used to set annual goals for the programs. Through assessment and program review, and the outcomes of Form 3 data, funding priorities and resource allocation are established. NMC is considered a small institution with less than 200 employees and averages 1,200 full time equivalent students. NMC's financial planning and budget development considers these respective audiences as well as other community stakeholders. Transparency and participatory decision-making and planning are a priority at NMC and are open to all who wish to participate in the process.

### Self Evaluation

NMC uses its four-phase financial management process to guide financial planning and budget development, and allows for all constituencies to have appropriate opportunities to participate in the development of institutional plans and budgets. Each phase contains important processes and tools that help link plans to each other and the funds needed to execute such plans. The four phases of the financial management process are: phase 1: Planning and Interlinking of Plans, phase 2: Resource Allocation, phase 3: Program and Service Delivery, and phase 4: Assessment and Evaluation.

In efforts to improve the linking of institutional planning, financial planning, resource allocation and monitoring, NMC instituted a modified budget process. As mentioned in the 2008 Institutional Excellence Guide [IIID:18], NMC follows the appropriate steps to come to a working budget. In strengthening such process, NMC would then review the Financial Status Reports [IIID:31] and historical financial data, and establish a baseline funding ceiling. The budget process then proceeds with each department being asked to review its program history and performance through Form 2 [IIID:24], Form 3 [IIID:7], composite reports [IIID:9], and/or quarterly budget reports [IIID:28] as well as forecast (enrollment, operations, facility, technology, professional development, travel, etc.) needs for the upcoming fiscal year and to provide their anticipated quarterly budget spending plans. With the understanding that the Expanded Statements of Institutional Purpose [IIID:14] and the President's White Paper [IIID:11] are key to personnel and mid range planning, departments are asked to create a budget that links the ESIPs to their yearly operational plans, to the priority initiatives, institutional priorities, the PROA Strategic Plan 2008-2012, and the Mission of NMC and submit such to their respect Deans. The Deans will then further the same process and prioritize funding needs. The results of this process will eventually be submitted to the Budget and Finance Committee for review and to provide recommendation to the Management Team. The Management Team further reviews such recommendations as well as the prioritized personnel [IIID:37] needs and submits a revised budget to the President for consideration. If changes are to be made, the President thus delegates such changes back to the Management Team and the cycle works its way back to the top. The President's approved budget is then submitted to the Northern Marianas College Board of

Regents for review and/or approval/disapproval. NMC then uses the approved document as its spending guide for each fiscal year.

As the Budget is approved by the Board of Regents, NMC's Budget Office will then work with the departments to monitor allocations and spending plans. Deans will then review the department spending plans and if warranted, request for changes to the Dean of Administration. If within the program's and/or overall unit's budget, changes can be made by the respective Deans. If such changes can be absorbed by NMC's overall budget or through a collaborative body within NMC, changes can be made between the respective deans. In the event that none of these bodies can afford the changes, the Budget and Finance Committee is then requested to convene to resolve the matter or to provide recommendations to the Management Team and/or president for further action. The Budget and Finance Committee through the Budget Office also monitors quarterly spending of each program (which includes quarterly progress of meeting Priority Initiatives and Goals). In regards to personnel decisions [IIID:37], these are managed by the Management Team and institutional prioritization of personnel is ultimately decided for recommendation to the President at that level.

In the event that NMC recognizes that additional funding is available or a significant reduction is needed to be made, NMC is able to take the appropriate measures to present a new budget to the NMC BOR. A key example of this was reflected in NMC's FY 2012 Budget. In FY 2012, NMC anticipated a payroll of eight million dollars. As NMC realized that the CNMI Government was to only fund NMC with a budget of \$3.9 million for personnel and benefits, NMC quickly made key financial decisions to counter the effects of such loss. NMC instituted measures to control the financial dilemma. NMC President shifted the responsibility of planning and monitoring of Personnel financing [IIID:37] to the Management Team. In such, each department reviews its personnel needs, prioritizes such positions, and submits such requests to their respective Deans for continued funding. Priority goes to those positions already being funded followed by a list of prioritized positions as identified by the respective departments, divisions, or units. These lists are then brought forth to the Management Team for further review, compared to peers, and then organized into institution-wide prioritization as fit with the College's overall Priority Initiatives [IIID:17]. The institution wide priority lists are further reviewed for organizational and functional changes as needed. A significant measure taken was the reorganization of NMC to consolidate and align programs, services, and personnel to best serve the institution and stakeholder needs. Another measure taken was when NMC increased qualified staff responsibilities to include teaching courses in which they were qualified to teach in; such measure was called "Additional Duties." Other notable measures include the creation of a Tuition and Fees Task Force [IIID:33], the reactivation of the Budget and Finance Committee that reports to the Dean of Administration, the increase in the minimum number of students per course, retrofitting existing classrooms to increase enrollment capacity, and the development of the resource allocation formula for adjuncts and overloads. These measures all play an important role in NMC's efforts to cope with the financial situations it encounters.

Prior to February of 2012, NMC lacked comprehensive financial data needed to make significant institutional financial decisions. In February of 2012, NMC's Financial Status Report (FSR) [IIID:31] was created and recorded all the needed financial data that NMC would need to make sound financial decisions and to describe the financial condition of the College. Contained in the FSR is financial information about funding from CNMI Appropriations, NMC's Tuition and Fees, Payroll Projections, Outstanding Obligations, and Savings and Reserve Fund Balances, and other financial data. The FSR provides NMC with realistic data to be used for planning purposes. The FSR were presented to the Board of Regents and has become the prime resource of the Board for financial planning and decisions.

The FSR which was considered a missing link to NMC's efforts to institutional and financial planning as well as resource allocation and monitoring, gave light to the financial information needed to fully align NMC's Form 3 [IIID:7] and data derived from program review and performance results, etc. from each department, institutional priorities, goals, and allocation of resources. The effect of such decision was instrumental in helping NMC develop the appropriate measures needed to respond to negative or positive financial situations that arose in FY 2012. The effects also called for additional measures that NMC had to take in order to meet its mission, goals, and priorities. As a result, the budget and resource allocation process was slightly changed to reflect realistic needs, real time financial information and improved allocation and monitoring of NMC's finances.

As described, financial planning process at NMC encourages participative involvement and solicits ideas on revenue generating and cost-saving measures from the campus community. Any innovative ideas on improving and strengthening the financial posture of the institution are made part of NMC's budget development. Before budget documents are finalized, they must undergo review by NMC's governance structure. This check-and-balance system ensures that the needs of the institution and stakeholders are factored in the final budget document.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

None.

***Standard III.D2. To assure the financial integrity of the institution and responsible use of financial resources, the financial management system has appropriate control mechanisms and widely disseminates dependable and timely information for sound financial decision making.***

#### Descriptive Summary

Financial documents and independent audits reflect appropriate allocation and use of financial resources to support student learning programs and services. Institutional responses to external audit findings are comprehensive and timely. NMC recently adopted its revised Procurement and Property Management Manual [IIID:5] that helps to ensure the financial

integrity of the institution and responsible use of financial resources; all purchase requests and contracts are subjected to a multi-layer review and approval process. The originator requesting approval is responsible for preparing appropriate procurement documents for such requests. The procurement documents are then reviewed by the department or division manager, which is further reviewed by the procurement manager, certified for financial compliance and funding availability by the finance office and ultimately reviewed and approved or returned by the Dean of Administration. Policies and procedures for various dollar amounts can be found in the procurement manual. Any expenditure over \$25,000 requires review and approval by the President and Board of Regents.

This multi-level approval process serves as a check and balance approach to protecting the integrity of and effective oversight of NMC's finances. Additionally, departments have access to accounts and encumbrance reports [IID:26, IID:27] by contacting our Finance and Budget Office at any time, or through their Finance and Budget Offices' monthly reports to each department. Such reports are distributed by the 15<sup>th</sup> day of each month. A check and balance system is in place as each department is expected to monitor and track their expenses and reconcile on a regular basis with the Finance and Budget Office.

Since Fiscal Year 2008 to date, the independent third party external audits of NMC's Financial Statements [IID:1, IID:2, IID:3, IID:4], have proven to have unqualified audit opinions on its financial statements. According to the language used by NMC's Auditors' Deloitte and Touche LLC, "In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Northern Marianas College as of September 30, 2011 and 2010, and its changes in net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America." This same statement can be found in Audit Reports for fiscal years 2010, 2009, and 2008.

#### Self Evaluation:

NMC uses Sage Accounting Software to keep the budget, expenditure details, financial reports, and available balances readily available. The financial reports system and the format of the budget document provide dependable and timely information for sound financial decision making by the Board. Furthermore, the recently established Financial Status Report (FSR) [IID:31] provided "real time" financial information of the College. Contained in the FSR is financial information about funding from CNMI Appropriations, NMC's Tuition and Fees, Payroll Projections, Outstanding Obligations, and Savings and Reserve Fund Balances, and other financial data. The FSR provides NMC with realistic data to be used for planning purposes.

The FSR served to be valuable in NMC's efforts to institutional and financial planning as well as resource allocation and monitoring, and gave light to the financial information needed to fully align NMC's Form 3 and data derived from program review and performance results, etc. from each department, Institutional Priorities, goals, allocation of resources. The effect of such decision was instrumental in helping NMC develop the appropriate measures needed to respond to negative or positive financial situations that arose in FY 2012. The effects also called for additional measures that NMC had to take in order to meet its mission, goals, and

priorities. As a result, the budget and resource allocation process was slightly changed to reflect realistic needs, real time financial information and improved allocation and monitoring of NMC's finances.

NMC has achieved the goal of assuring financial integrity and responsible use of financial resources by making sure the financial management system has appropriate control mechanisms and by instituting procedures with fiscal, purchasing, payroll, and budget department staff to disseminate dependable and timely information for sound financial decision making. Internal control procedures are in place to assure the financial integrity of the institution and responsible use of financial resources. Financial management within NMC involves a separation of duties with financial procedures, signature requirements and the procurement process. Furthermore, NMC is audited on an annual basis for its internal control and compliance measures and the report reveals that only one percent of NMC's funds and practices were questioned. NMC points out that the remaining 99 percent of the funds spent were within NMC policies and procedures and complied with all applicable laws and regulations. Any weaknesses in the organization's internal controls and or compliance are acted upon, resolved, or awaiting federal response or clearance on findings made.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Complete Negotiations with SAGE Software providers to incorporate a seamless transition for its Human Resources functions, also known as ABRA, and to allow for departments to access the financial information online at any time of the day from any location.

***Standard III.D2a.** Financial documents, including the budget and independent audit, reflects appropriate allocation and use of financial resources to support student learning programs and services. Institutional responses to external audit findings are comprehensive, timely, and communicated appropriately.*

#### Descriptive Summary

NMC's financial documents reflect the appropriate use of financial resources to support student learning programs and services. Although NMC's budgeting processes follow the natural classification for revenues and expenditures, NMC's overall functional classifications are done through each respective department. The NMC budgeting process includes the review of the CNMI Appropriations Budget requests, in which NMC allocates funding to ongoing personnel expenses based on expenditures charged against the appropriations funding source. The Appropriations Budget request is the primary funding source for medium-term planning efforts. Through the tuition and fees funding sources, funds are allocated to support instructional, student, and institutional objectives established through the planning process (Operational Plans and Strategic Plans). These objectives are developed to realistically achieve NMC's stated goals.

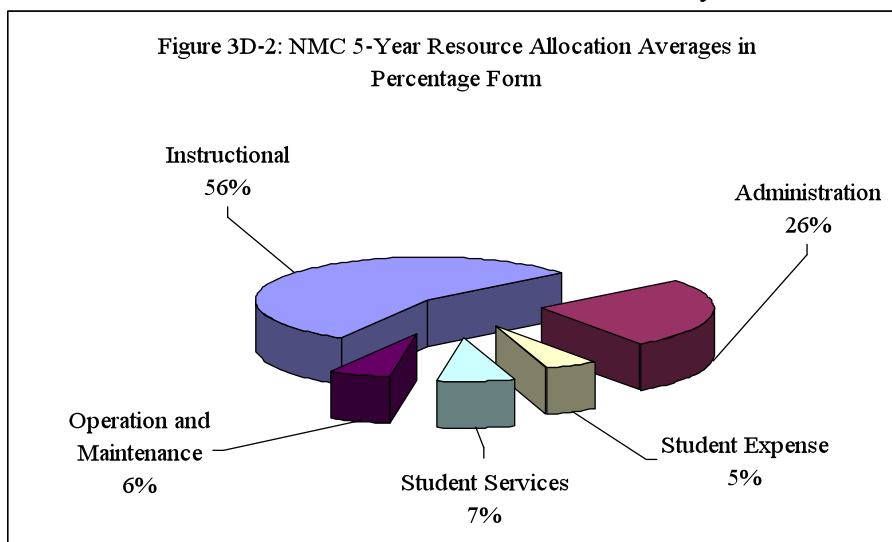
NMC's annual audit reports [IIID:1, IIID:2, IIID:3, IIID:4] have been submitted with unqualified audit opinions from Deloitte and Touche, LLC since FY 2008 and any audit findings not awaiting federal clearance, are immediately addressed and corrected. The audits reveal that NMC continuously allocates financial resources that support student learning and fiscal integrity. NMC is a land grant institution and operates according to federal and local regulations and guidelines. NMC follows Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) requirements.

NMC was audited with the types of compliance requirements described in the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-133 Compliance Supplement that are applicable to major federal programs for the year ending September 30, 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011 [IIID:1, IIID:2, IIID:3, IIID:4]. The audit includes examining on a test basis, evidence about NMC's compliance of OMB Circular 133 requirements and performing auditing procedures considered necessary. Based on the audit reports, while dealing with millions of dollars in federal support, NMC complied with 99 percent of all material aspects with the requirements applicable to its major federal programs for those years. The remaining one percent were reviewed for action, addressed and/or forwarded to the appropriate federal agency for review and response. NMC takes appropriate actions on the audit findings that the College concurs with and works closely with the independent auditors and federal agencies to resolve others in question.

### Self Evaluation

For Fiscal Years 2007 to 2011, reports of the independent third party external audits of NMC, reveal that the allocation of NMC's financial resources has been fairly consistent.

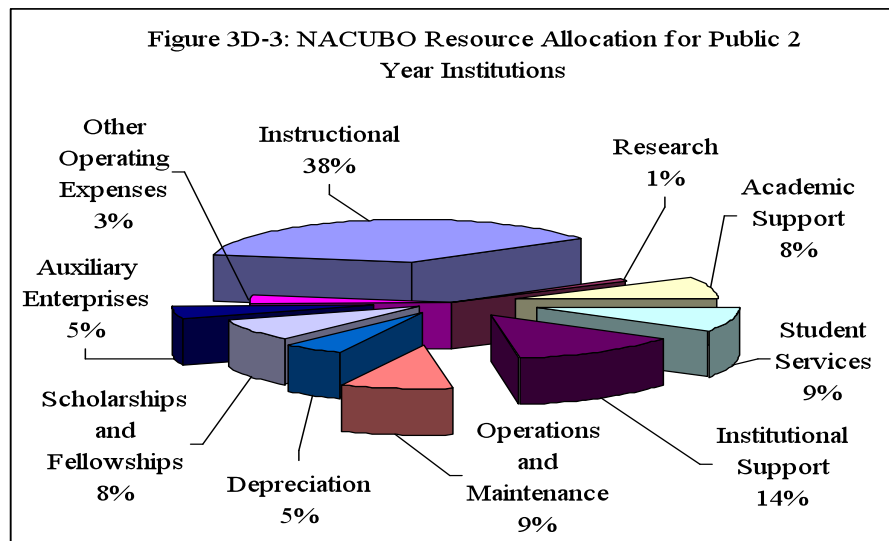
Such reports revealed that emphasis on funding revolved around the key programs and services needed to maintain and effectively run the mission of the College. NMC allocates funds within reasonable comparison of the national averages for similar functions in two-year public institutions as represented by the



fourth Edition of "A Guide to College and University Budgeting" by Larry Goldstein (2012), (NACUBO) as shown in Figure 3D-3. More importantly, as shown in the Figure 3D-2, NMC exceeds the NACUBO national average for resources allocated to instructional functions (recognized at NMC as the main support for student learning programs and services). NMC allocated 56 percent of its annual resources to instructional functions (inclusive of academic

support) while the NACUBO data indicates 38 percent for instructional functions and eight percent for academic support, for a combined allocation of 46 percent. NMC allocates funds to administration (26 percent), student expenses (five percent); student services (seven percent); and operations and maintenance (six percent). In comparison, the remaining NACUBO distribution of resources are for research (one percent); student services (nine percent); institutional support (14 percent); operation and maintenance of plant (nine percent); depreciation (five percent); scholarships and fellowships inclusive of student aid (eight percent); auxiliary enterprises (five percent); and other operating expenses (three percent).

As described herein, NMC distributes its financial resources within range or significantly above NACUBO averages to instruction, academic support, student expenses, student services (student learning programs and services) and a fair amount to administration which is the primary allocation source for institutional effectiveness and institutional support to develop, maintain, or enhance programs and services.



NMC contracted Deloitte and Touche LLC., to perform an independent third party external audit on the College's financial statements, internal control and compliance. Fiscal years 2008 through 2011, revealed that NMC's Financial Statements have proven to have unqualified audit opinions, making that four years straight of clean financial statements [IID:1, IID:2, IID:3, IID:4]. According to the language used by Auditors' Deloitte and Touche LLC, "In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Northern Marianas College as of September 30, 2011, and its changes in net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America." This same statement can be found in Audit Reports for fiscal years 2010, 2009, and 2008.

Deloitte and Touche LLC is also contracted to conduct an Independent Audit on the College's Internal Control and Compliance. From Fiscal Year 2008 to Fiscal Year 2011, NMC continues to see improvement in its Internal Control and Compliance. According to statements made from Deloitte and Touche LLC Partner Mr. Mike Johnson, "NMC has improved with its Internal Controls and Compliance over the past few years...NMC is one of the best agencies in terms of clean audits for Financial Statements, Internal Controls and Compliance in the CNMI and the entire region...NMC's management has demonstrated complete competence in dealing with such matters."



As the College strives for continued improvements with its financial management, internal control and compliance, since fiscal year 2008 NMC had unqualified audit opinions on its Financial Statements [IIID:1, IIID:2, IIID:3, IIID:4]. Based on the audit reports, while dealing with millions of dollars in federal support, NMC complied with 99 percent of all material aspects with the requirements applicable to its major federal programs for those years. The remaining one percent were reviewed for action, addressed and/or forwarded to the appropriate federal agency for review and response. NMC takes appropriate actions on the audit findings that the College concurs with and works closely with the independent auditors and federal agencies to resolve others in question.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

None.

***Standard III.D2b. Appropriate financial information is provided throughout the institution.***

#### Descriptive Summary

NMC is considered a small institution of higher education. In such, data, information, and communication of such data and information are easily accessible through a centralized approach. Financial information is provided throughout the institution via the respective managers and department heads in charge of finances. In addition, financial statements and budget reports are presented to the Board of Regents via the Dean of Administration's Financial Status Reports [IIID:31] at regular monthly meetings as needed. NMC Board of Regent's meetings are open to the public. The Board of Regents reactivated its Finance and Legislative Committee which oversees the finances of NMC. Such committee is given regular updates with regard to changes to the current budget and reports on the projected impact of legislation that might affect NMC's budget. Minutes of Board meetings are posted on the NMC website and are accessible to the public.

Presentations have been made to the Budget and Finance Committee, Management Team, Board of Regents and any other stakeholder interested in NMC's finances. Detailed accounting information is provided to departments for planning purposes. Budgets are assigned to each division or unit, which are tied to departments, programs, and offices or functions. Each division can request financial status information from the budget and or finance offices daily indicating current expenditures and encumbrances. Each respective administrative head is accountable for making sure that their areas of responsibility remain within budget. The finance and budget office monitors expenditures on a weekly basis and sends advisory reports to respective departments/units/divisions on a monthly basis in order to prevent entities from exceeding allocations.

#### Self Evaluation

NMC continues to improve upon its efforts to provide the institution with appropriate financial information. Before the 15<sup>th</sup> day of each month, the respective members of NMC's Budget and Finance Office send out monthly budget and encumbrance reports [IIID:26, IIID:27] to each respective expenditure authority for review and dissemination to their respective departments, divisions, units or teams. Financial Status Reports [IIID:33] are provided to the NMC Management Team during the weekly Management Team meetings. Deans and direct reports of the President then share results of the Management Team meetings to their respective bodies during their respective division/unit meetings; such information can be found in the Management Team minutes shared with NMC. Financial Status Reports are also shared with the NMC Board of Regents. These Financial Status Reports are indicative of the financial conditions of NMC, the availability of funds from the various sources NMC receives funding from, as well as key expenditures that need action taken upon.

In relation to this, NMC provides for yearly participatory budget submissions from all departments and divisions/units. The approved budgets are then monitored through NMC's Quarterly Budget Review [IIID:28] and through continuous communication between departments, divisions, units and Deans. Requests for revisions, additions, or deletions are funneled through the Deans, Budget and Finance Committee or Management Team. Decisions are usually made efficiently, effectively, and expeditiously, depending on the area where such decision takes place. Criteria revolves around the circumstances and impact such decisions would make to NMC's Finances.

An example of such is personnel decision making, which has become the purview of the Management Team. Based on results of the Management Team Retreats [IIID:34] and on the Institutional Priorities [IIID:16] of NMC, the Management Team would review and vote for recommendation to the President the types of positions to recruit for. Such recruitment would then be sent to the department to work with our Human Resources Office to fill out the recruitment form [IIID:37]. The recruitment form identifies the linkage between the position, NMC's mission, goals, objectives and institutional priorities. Such form also identifies the availability of funding, the funding source, and the financial impact to NMC.

Another example of such is when reprogramming of funds needs to take place within departments, programs, divisions or units. Departments may request funds to be transferred within their respective programs directly to the Budget Office. When requesting for funds between divisions or units, departments collaborate and work with their respective Deans to identify such funds and then work with the Budget Office to conduct the transfer. When requesting for additional funds outside the authorized amount allowed for NMC, the matter is then referred to the Budget and Finance Committee or the Management Team. An example of requesting for additional funding outside of the authorized amount for the entire College follows:

NMC recognized in November of 2011 that it would be short on adjunct payments and overall payroll in the amount of \$1.5 million. Immediately, NMC as a whole, worked together to discuss the matter of how to address the shortage. A forum was called for the entire College's input into the matter in fall of 2011. NMC was provided an opportunity to

provide suggestions for cost cutting and revenue generating opportunities. Soon after, NMC's Management Team implemented Additional Duties for Staff, Intercession Semester, reduced the "winter" break, cut utility costs, and made strategic hiring as well as strategic non-renewals of contracts. NMC then referred all hiring and renewal functions of personnel to the Management Team for review and prioritization of a listing to be recommended to the President. A payroll analysis was conducted to ensure that the amount estimated as short was accurate. NMC's Administration then conducted a review of total available funds collected from Tuition and Fees. The amount identified as an adjusted available amount from tuition and fees was compared to the approved budget for FY 2012. A difference of \$900,000 was identified. The Administration then approached the Management Team to recommend to the President that the additional amount be used to cover the shortfall of adjunct payments with the remaining available funding to be used to cover the overall payroll shortage [IIID:31]. In addition, within the same request, the Administration requested that NMC approach the Board of Regents (BOR) for approval of such additional funding and to use NMC's savings to cover any difference in payroll shortages and outstanding obligations. NMC President approved both requests. NMC then presented such recommendations to the NMC Board of Regents. The NMC Board of Regents referred the request to the BOR Finance and Legislative Committee, which conducted its due diligence and subsequently approved such recommendation for full Board passage. The Board of Regents then approved the request and passed the recommendations [IIID:36].

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

None.

***Standard III.D2c.** The institution has sufficient cash flow and reserves to maintain stability for appropriate risk management, and realistic plans to meet financial emergencies and unforeseen occurrences.*

#### Descriptive Summary

Considering the communities and population demographics the College serves, NMC strives to keep the cost of attending NMC at a low so that its community members can afford to attend the lone accredited institution of higher education. The population base of the CNMI consists of 55,000 people mostly of Asian and Pacific Island heritage. Economic statistics revealed that of that number, 60 to 70 percent live at or below the National Poverty Level. Coupled with these statistics is the fact that the CNMI economy continues on a rapid decline due to the shutdown of its former number one industry in garment manufacturing, the pull out of Japan Airlines and Continental Airlines (United) and Asian economic crisis and natural disasters, thus weakening our second largest industry in tourism, and rising shipping and utilities costs have left the community to rely heavily on the CNMI Government to stay afloat. NMC has been able to navigate its PROA through rough seas as the CNMI Government continued to see a budget deficit and appropriations to NMC remained steady at an average of five percent of the entire CNMI budget available for appropriations. Although NMC faced financial difficulties, NMC managed to maintain or exceed the five percent cash

reserve to maintain operational stability. From 2008 to 2011, NMC has been able to maintain afloat ending up with positive net worth in cash equivalencies. This feat is attributed to the diligence of the Finance Office, Administrative Service, and the entire College's efforts to find ways to increase revenues and reduce operational costs. As identified in the Management Review and Discussion Analysis (MRDA), NMC continues to monitor all its financial revenue sources and make appropriate adjustments in personnel, utility consumption with reduced usage of 20 percent per year since FY 2009, and keeping within procurement policies, procedures, and practices.

NMC also credits its Board of Regents, President, Employees, Students and Management Team for being proactive in addressing the financial needs of the institution. Such members aggressively solicit with the Legislators and Governor for additional funding. A prime example of this is when in FY 2012, NMC received an all time low appropriation for personnel in the amount of \$3.9 million. The team identified above worked with the CNMI Government to get an additional \$1.2 million in scholarship funds [IIID:30, IIID:38] dedicated to those NMC students qualified for such. Furthermore, for fiscal year 2013, NMC aggressively campaigned for a budget increase from \$3.9 million in personnel and \$1.2 million in scholarships to an expected appropriation of at least \$5.8 million for fiscal year 2013 [IIID:38]. This new funding level represents a funding increase from fiscal year 2012 as well as shows improved and increased support from the CNMI Government. A stronger relationship between the CNMI Department of Finance and NMC has been blossoming as NMC and the CNMI Department of Finance are in regular communications to receive scheduled draw downs of funds and support for other financial needs in a timely and organized manner. This includes the CNMI Government's efforts to assume the Retirement contributions liabilities of the College's Defined Benefits Program [IIID:39].

### Self Evaluation

Like the many other entities reliant on the CNMI Government for financing, NMC is one of them. Total appropriations available for the entire CNMI Government since 2008, ranged between \$110 million to \$102 million in various years. Fortunately for NMC, since fiscal year 2008 until present, NMC has been receiving an average of five percent of the total funding available for appropriation in the CNMI Government. NMC uses such funding to cover personnel costs and when available other expenditures, such as utilities. Funding appropriated from the CNMI Government is considered Non-Capital financing activities.

The chart below (derived from Deloitte and Touche LLC Audit Reports [IIID:1, IIID:2, IIID:3, and IIID:4]), shows that NMC continues to have a positive net change in Cash and Cash Equivalents from FY 2008 to FY 2011.

<b>Cash Provided (used in)</b>	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY2010</b>	<b>FY2009</b>	<b>FY2008</b>
Operating Activities	(\$2.04M)	(\$4.34M)	(\$4.56M)	(\$3.23M)
Investing Activities	\$2,434	\$120K	\$15K	\$850K
Non Capital Financing Activities	\$4.48M	\$5.4M	\$5.4M	\$5.56M
Capital and Related Financing	(\$353K)	(\$305K)	(\$708k)	(\$579K)

Net Change in Cash & Cash Equiv. \$2.08M      \$647K      \$108K      \$922K

NMC has been diligently setting aside funds and practicing financial prudence through improving collections from stakeholders and federal programs, increased federal funding, and aggressive student recruitment efforts. These actions have helped NMC with the dwindling appropriations and reduced enrollment of international students since fiscal year 2008. As displayed in the chart below, NMC averaged a net growth of 26 percent in Cash and Cash Equivalents for the periods starting FY 2008 and ending FY 2011. The Deloitte and Touche Audit Reports on NMC define cash and cash equivalents as cash on hand and cash held in demand accounts as well as short-term investments with a maturity date within 90 days of the date acquired. Time certificates of deposits with maturities of greater than three months are separately classified.

	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY2010</b>	<b>FY2009</b>	<b>FY2008</b>
<b>Cash and Cash Equivalents</b>	\$5.94M	\$3.86M	\$3.19M	\$3.06M

NMC Board of Regents Policy 2000, adopted on July 30, 1999 as amended on July 29, 2004, requires that NMC “plan for financial uncertainties by ensuring that adequate reserves fund is maintained at all times.”

*It is further the Policy of the Board that on an annual (financial year) basis 5% of the total Tuition and Fees (Operations) budget shall be deposited into the Reserve Fund i.e. if the annual Tuition and Fees (Operations) budget is \$2,000,000, %5 of such or \$100,000 shall be deposited into the reserve fund providing \$1,900,000 available for regular operations.*

*It is further the policy of the Board of Regents that the reserve fund shall be maintained in an interest bearing account and shall not be used for any other purposes than financial emergencies or other financial circumstances that cannot be anticipated and planned for through the normal budgeting process.*

NMC has \$1.3 million in savings due to such policy [IIID:31]. These funds are spread through three FDIC Insured banks. In addition, NMC recently liquidated \$850,000 out of the NMC Foundation’s Investment Account, created a special investment account and transferred the amount for NMC to access in the event that uncertainties arise [IIID:31].

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

None.

***Standard III.D2d.*** *The institution practices effective oversight of finances, including management of financial aid, grants, externally funded programs, contractual relationships, auxiliary organizations or foundations, and institutional investments and assets.*

#### Descriptive Summary

NMC practices effective oversight of finances. All grant funded, auxiliary entities (including the foundation, institutional investments and assets), externally funded programs and contractual relationships are subject to the finance and procurement policies and procedures, in addition to the appropriate prescriptive federal and state fiscal and program compliance guidelines. Oversight and management of financial resources begins at the department level under the direction of each respective Dean. Furthermore, the multilevel review and oversight allows for the Procurement Manager, Funds Certification Officer, and Chief Accountant to weigh in on compliance and controls. All of these are done in cooperation with the Dean of Administration. The Finance Office helps NMC monitor its internal control practices and compliance of policies and procedures. In addition, NMC adopted an approved and reviewed Procurement and Property Management Manual [IIID:5] in 2011 to ensure that procurement and property management practices are followed.

NMC has responded to the CNMI Office of the Public Auditors finding on compliance with local laws and has taken the appropriate actions as recommended by the CNMI Office of the Public Auditor [IIID:40]. As stated earlier, Deloitte and Touche LLC is contracted to perform the annual audit of all financial records, including the auxiliary accounts. The auditors express an opinion on the financial statements and the adequacy of the accounting procedures and internal control. The audited financial statements report issued for Fiscal Years 2009, 2010, and 2011 [IIID:1, IIID:2, IIID:3, and IIID:4], had unqualified audit opinions with no material weaknesses. Furthermore, the Board of Regents' committee on Finance and Legislative issues is currently reviewing a subcommittee to provide additional financial oversight. Such committee is tentatively titled the Budget, Audit and Finance Committee (BAFC) which will ensure that all financial matters in question are reviewed and formally addressed.

#### Self Evaluation

NMC's continuous improvement efforts for this standard has, in accordance to comments from external auditor Mike Johnson of Deloitte and Touche LLC, expressed that NMC has improved tremendously over the past four years in terms of its financial statements, internal control and compliance [IIID:1, IIID:2, IIID:3, and IIID:4]. NMC was noted for being one of the best institutions in the CNMI and region in meeting such norms.

The NMC Finance Office dedicates its human resources to conduct checks and balances of the finances and financial processes of the institution. The finance office evaluates, improves upon, and makes the necessary adjustments to the various financial systems to meet the needs of the institution and to identify and solve problems before major audit exceptions occur. When potential audit issues arise, the staff of the Finance Office brings such information to

the Chief Accountant, who then reviews and provides recommendations for improvement. Evaluation and improvement are of extreme importance, considering our limited resources; thus, efficiency and effectiveness are top priorities. The staff actively participates in in-house hands-on training or external training and maintenance of support documentation as changes are implemented. The accounting systems used for the institution are constantly updated with the associated training provided.

Regular reviews and monitoring of expenditures pertaining to grants, awards, and contractual agreements ensure that the expenses are consistent with the funding agency's mandates and the district's mission and goals. In regards to management of federal financial aid, NMC continues to receive unqualified audit opinions on its financial statements, making four years straight of clean financial statements. According to the language used by Auditors' Deloitte and Touche LLC, "In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Northern Marianas College as of September 30, 2011, and its changes in net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America." This same statement can be found in Audit Reports for fiscal years 2010, 2009, and 2008.

Deloitte and Touche LLC is also contracted to conduct an independent audit on the College's Internal Control and Compliance. From Fiscal Year 2008 to Fiscal Year 2011, NMC continues to see improvement in its Internal Control and Compliance. According to statements made from Deloitte and Touche LLC Partner Mr. Mike Johnson, "NMC has improved with its Internal Controls and Compliance over the past few years...NMC is one of the best agencies in terms of clean audits for Financial Statements, Internal Controls and Compliance in the CNMI and the entire region...NMC's management has demonstrated complete competence in dealing with such matters."

In efforts to maintain its financial integrity, strengthen its internal control, and ensure compliance, NMC worked closely with its programs and services, auditors, and federal partners to resolve and correct findings. Program Determination Letters (PDLs) [IIID:41, IIID:41a] dated April 8, 2011 and June 26, 2012 revealed that NMC's audit issues for the United States Department of Education were resolved. For findings with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), due to transition and retirements within the USDA, the remaining findings remain under review with USDA's recently assigned auditor, Mr. Jack Goldberg. NMC held meetings with Mr. Goldberg to resolve all pending matters with the USDA programs, as such, the USDA PDL remains pending [IIID:42].

As a result of prior years audit findings, NMC strived to make its procurement and accounting practices more stringent than those of their federal and local counterparts. In doing such, NMC remains compliant with all local regulations. NMC is periodically selected for compliance by the CNMI Office of the Public Auditor (OPA) and has implemented recommendations made by OPA [IIID:40]. Furthermore, NMC is in compliance with CNMI Public Law 17-47, which mandates NMC to submit a yearly financial report [IIID:43] (audited or unaudited) to the Governor and CNMI Legislature. Public Law 17-47 reviews how NMC expends the funding it receives from the CNMI in the various forms awarded either via appropriations, scholarships, or other funding mechanisms.

For federal programs, NMC's internal control and compliance findings revolve around the discrepancy between federal and local regulations on small purchases, travel, equipment and real property management, and time and effort reporting. NMC believes that its practices on these matters are more stringent than the federal regulations. NMC created the 2011 Procurement and Property Management Manual [IIID:5] to strengthen its procurement and property management practices. The PPMO Manual for example, lists NMC's small purchase thresholds to range from zero to \$2,499.00 and requires at least one quote or an open purchase order from a qualified vendor to expend funds below the \$2,499 threshold. In comparison, federal small purchase thresholds range from zero to \$250,000 and require only one quote for such purchase. NMC's believes that the College is more accountable for small purchases by adding additional requirements for purchases above the \$2,500 range, which require three quotations, the \$10,000 range which then goes into the bidding and request for proposals process. For purchases above \$25,000, NMC requires a Board of Regents signature to ensure multilevel review. For travel, federal regulations yield determining factors to local regulations. Considering that the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands only has two U.S. affiliated carriers (United and Delta Airlines), NMC chose to solicit quotations from three travel agencies (small businesses) in efforts to make purchasing of travel more competitive [IIID:44]. For equipment and real property management, NMC conducts inventory and property management verification on biennial cycles. This action was taken as a result of previous years audit findings. In regards to time and effort reporting, NMC requires all federal employees to report their time and effort on time sheets [IIID:45], reflecting the number of hours such employee works on the projects or programs (depending on the funding source).

For Fiscal Year 2011, NMC had unqualified audit opinions on its Financial Statements. However, due to new and stricter rules and regulations of the 2011 Procurement and Property Management Manual [IIID:5], and minor transition issues, auditors found 13 findings and questioned costs for major federal award programs. Questioned costs amounted to \$22,440 (.02 percent of the total federal funds expended). In comparison to the \$11,872,542 worth of federal funding expended in FY 2011, NMC properly spent 99.98 percent of the funds used. Of the 13 findings, six are similar and related to the definition of federal vs. state definition of small purchases and travel and awaiting federal clearance. Of the remaining seven findings, five have been resolved and two are in the process of resolution. See 3.D-4 for responses to the findings.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Implement recommendations and/or clarifications in a timely manner and/or upon receipt of communication from auditors and federal partners.



***Standard III.D2e.*** *All financial resources, including those from auxiliary activities, fund-raising efforts, and grants are used with integrity in a manner consistent with the mission and goals of the institution.*

### Descriptive Summary

The NMC Foundation is a local non-profit organization established by law, for the purpose of managing NMC's Land-Grant Endowment and raising funds for student scholarships and College programs. The NMC Foundation fosters community relationships and partnerships and accepts donations from businesses and individuals on behalf of NMC. The Foundation is considered a non-profit, public benefit corporation and operates with a Board of Directors separate from that of NMC's Board of Regents. The President serves as an ex-officio non-voting member on the Foundation Board of Directors.

The Foundation is subject to all the financial and procurement policies and procedures of NMC. The Foundation's main fundraising efforts come from Educational Tax Credits (CNMI Public Law) and from the annual NMC Foundation Golf Tournament. The Foundation is audited along with the rest of NMC, on an annual basis by Deloitte and Touche LLC. Although NMC does not control the timing, purpose, or amount of receipts from the Foundation, the resources (and income thereof) held and invested by the Foundation are restricted to the activities of NMC. As such, the Foundation is considered a component unit of NMC and its Statements of Financial Position and Statements of Activities and Changes in Net Assets are separately presented in NMC's financial statements [IIID:1, IIID:2, IIID:3, and IIID:4].

The purpose of the NMC Bookstore is to provide services and educational resources, materials, supplies, etc. for NMC's students and employees. This entity is included in NMC's annual audit by Deloitte and Touche LLC. The NMC Bookstore hires out a Certified Public Accounting firm to also monitor its accounting process and reconciliation services. All other recognized auxiliary programs and services such as grants are also subjected to NMC's policies and procedures along with local and federal requirements and are included in NMC's yearly independent third party single audit.

### Self Evaluation

NMC's bookstore (auxiliary), foundation (fund-raising efforts), and grants awarded to and from the institution are included in the scope of NMC's annual audit, which examines all funds, bookstore, foundation, and grants awarded to and from the institution for fair statement presentation, analysis of accounting principles utilized, and adequate internal control and compliance practices. The bookstore, foundation, and grants awarded to and from the institution are required to comply with established and adopted Board Policies and College Procedures.

The following represents auxiliary services of NMC and are audited:

Bookstore: Serves as an interdependent entity of NMC which provides services for students, employees, and other entities. This is the main arm of NMC where students can purchase books, course materials, supplies, and other course and personal needs.

Foundation: NMC administers an Endowment through the NMC Foundation Board of Directors, a separate legal entity. The investments are held in the name of NMC; however, they are administered by a separate legal entity.

Grants Awarded to and from the Institution: NMC receives Direct Program Funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Education, and the Corporation for National and Community Service. In addition, NMC receives Indirect Program Funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Interior, the National Science Foundation, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

None.

***Standard III.D2f.*** *Contractual agreements with external entities are consistent with the mission and goals of the institution, governed by institutional policies, and contain appropriate provisions to maintain the integrity of the institution.*

### Descriptive Summary

NMC has a variety of contractual agreements ranging from purchase orders, maintenance contracts, security services, technology contracts, consultant service contracts, professional services contracts, food services contracts and leasehold agreements, etc. NMC uses its approved and revised Procurement and Property Management manual [IIID:5] to manage its contracts. The Procurement and Property Management Office is responsible for reviewing and providing guidance for soliciting Request for Proposals (RFP) and developing contractual agreements that adheres to the CNMI's procurement laws and regulations.

The President and the Dean of Administration, with the assistance of the legal counsel, review all contractual agreements to ensure that the language in the contract is in line with established procurement laws and regulations and consistent with the mission and goals of the institution. Included in all contractual agreements are sections covering termination of the agreement as well as an appeal process for disputes. The termination section covers situations where the contractor fails to perform in whole or in part on any of its obligations. The dispute section covers the appeal process where the contractor can present merits for the reconsideration of NMC's decision to terminate the contractual agreement.

The established policies and procedures in the Procurement and Property Management manual authorize the President and his/her designee to approve contracts below the \$25,000 threshold. Anything above the \$25,000 threshold requires the Board of Regent's authority

and signature. The respective department head or director initiating the contractual agreement is responsible for overseeing the contract to ensure that the contractor meets the obligations stipulated in the contract.

### Self Evaluation

Contractual agreements at NMC include the following types: sub-grants and sub-awards, outside/inter agency contracts for training or personal and professional services, legal services, audit services, procurement contracts, construction contracts, consultant agreements, instructional service agreements, and contracts for information technology.

All contracts are submitted to the Procurement and Property Management Office by the respective department or division/unit as described in NMC's Procurement and Property Management Manual [IIID:5]. Contracts are driven by the mission and goals of both NMC and the department or division/unit requesting for such contract. The Procurement Manager conducts an initial review of such contracts to ensure that the contract terms and conditions are governed by institutional policies and contain appropriate provisions to maintain the integrity of the institution. The Procurement Manager then works closely with the departments or division/unit heads to clarify any discrepancies and appropriate changes is made. Once all discrepancies are cleared and changes made, the Contracts are then submitted to the Dean of Administration for further review. Each contract is reviewed for the fiscal impact and funding availability/allocation, risk component, termination clauses, standards of conduct, compliance with local and federal laws, and any other language that may have potential impact for NMC. Once review is completed, the contracts are then further reviewed by the legal counsel for legal sufficiency. Once determined legally sufficient, Contracts are then ready for signatures. Contracts with financial impact will be certified and encumbered by the Finance Office. All Contracts are monitored in a database located at the Procurement and Property Management Office with copies at each level of review.

Effective spring of 2012, all grants, prior to submittal, go through the Management Team (except for formula driven direct program funding grants) for review and recommended approval to the President. Grants need to be linked to and support institutional goals. All grants must follow Finance Office and Procurement and Property Management procedures. A copy of award letters, grant stipulations, and quarterly reports go to the Finance Office and President's office regarding all grants submitted and awarded.

Construction, renovations, and major alterations or repairs are coordinated by the Administrative Services Facilities Manager according to priorities identified to the Operations Plan, including the Facilities Master Plan, and the Strategic Plan. All preliminary construction cost estimates are submitted to the Dean of Administration and/or President for approval before any work can begin.

Proposals and other contracted training are dedicated to meeting the needs of community, government, non-profits, businesses and other entities, which strives to provide meaningful

and lifelong learning opportunities for economic and workforce development. These are managed by the Community Development Institute.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

None.

***Standard III.D2g.*** *The institution regularly evaluates its financial management processes, and the results of the evaluation are used to improve financial management systems.*

### Descriptive Summary

NMC's Dean of Administration is charged with the review of management processes and procedures on a regular basis to ensure that financial records and transactions are being maintained in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and government accountability standards board (GASB) requirements. NMC's Management Review and Discussion Analysis (MRDA) reports provide management and auditors with the financial conditions of NMC and serves as a guide to improving the financial condition and management systems of NMC. In addition, NMC contracts Deloitte and Touche LLC to conduct yearly audits on financial statements, internal control and compliance. Feedback from the audits is used to make improvements in NMC's financial management system and practices.

NMC's Dean of Administration Office and all the offices that report to such unit (Administrative Services, Auxiliary Services, Budget Office, Community Development Institute, Finance Office, Information Technology and Procurement and Property Management Office) also participate in the PROAC Program Assessment Process, Form 1 [IIID:23], Form 2 [IIID:24] and Form 3 [IIID:7] analysis, which is reviewed on a two year cycle.

### Self Evaluation

NMC contracts with Deloitte and Touche LLC to perform an annual audit. The auditors prepare the statements and findings to provide NMC feedback on its processes, financial statements, compliance and internal control [IIID:1, IIID:2, IIID:3, and IIID:4]. NMC works closely with the Auditors to conduct progress interviews as well as exit interviews to discuss all findings and weaknesses, if any. The auditors also provide a Board of Regents presentation as to the opinion of the financial statements. If findings and weaknesses are found, NMC works closely with the respective persons responsible to resolve such issue and come into compliance as quickly as possible. NMC also works with the federal government to resolve any matters pertaining to differences between federal and local statutes or regulations, in efforts to come to an agreed upon understanding. NMC also tries to resolve federal audit matters within the two-year rule as described in the Office of Management and Budget Circular A-133. In the event that no resolution occurs within the two years, NMC would request the auditors to remove such findings. Federal grants management's rule of

Two-Years, no response from the federal agency on the finding becomes enough action for removal.

The institution has made increased efforts to define priority initiatives, and outcomes through Management Team, Program Review and Outcomes Assessment Committee and Budget and Finance Committee to determine the best allocation of resources to improve student experiences and learning. The Administration reviews the initiatives, outcomes, and activities identified by the team above and align such deserving of priority status based on Form 3 [IIID:7] results as well as the Board of Regents goals.

Management Team and the Board of Regents continue to place a greater emphasis on assessment, paying particular attention to the degree of success attributed to particular resource allocations, through quarterly budget reports. All areas of the institution, including the Finance Office and Administration, have undergone recent Program Reviews. The Program Review process includes self-assessment and plans for improvement. This information is useful in determining budget priorities for current and future years.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

None.

***Standard III.D3.*** *The institution systematically assesses the effective use of financial resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.*

#### Descriptive Summary

NMC submits as a part of its Audit package a Management Review and Discussion Analysis [IIID:32] that describes the use of financial resources of NMC for each fiscal year. Such analysis helps the overall College with planning and improvement of financial resource uses. More importantly, assessment of the effective use of financial resources appropriately occurs at the various levels of NMC where resources are used. NMC's assessment processes, composite reports, Forms 2 and 3 help NMC in determining the departmental level of staffing, supplies, equipment, etc., necessary to support the stated goals of the department, linked back to the institutional goals and priorities. As described earlier in NMC's Budget process, requests are made and funded after being reviewed and evaluated by the appropriate committees, deans, administration and the President.

#### Self Evaluation

NMC assesses the effective use of financial resources by evaluating actual revenue and expenditures and comparing it to the fiscal year budget. More in-depth assessment occurs at the department, unit, and division level when focusing in particular areas and or programs. This process started in the third quarter of fiscal year 2012 [IIID:28].

Systematic planning and assessment for the effective use of financial resources is included by NMC's Operational Plan to maintain fiscal stability. There is continued commitment by NMC to place a significant emphasis on fiscal integrity as one of its highest priorities. Part of the process for assessing the effective use of resources is through the Form 3 [IIID:7] and Composite Reports that occurs annually at the Management Team, Budget and Finance Committee as well as the Dean of Administration.

NMC continues to assess and evaluate its processes as evident by the work of the Governance Review Taskforce which reviewed and assessed the existing process of the BAFC and other Governance Bodies and the Balanced Scorecard. Modifications and recommendations were made to the Budget and Finance Committee (BAFC) and College Council. A major recommendation to BAFC was to refine its documents to provide clear links with NMC's planning documents, Program Review, and assessment processes. Also included in the modification was a clearly delineated implementation plan and assessment component.

As a result, when the budget process begins, each department is asked to review its program history and performance through Form 2 [IIID:24], Form 3 [IIID:7], composite reports [IIID:9], and/or quarterly budget reports [IIID:28] as well as forecast needs (enrollment, operations, facility, technology, professional development, travel, etc.) for the upcoming fiscal year and to provide their anticipated quarterly budget spending plans. They are asked to create a budget that is linked to NMC's yearly operational plan, the institutional priorities, priority initiatives, the PROA Strategic Plan 2008-2012, and the Mission of NMC and submit such to their respective Deans. The Deans will then further the same process and prioritize funding needs. This process will eventually be submitted to the Budget and Finance Committee for review and to provide recommendations to the Management Team. The Management Team further reviews such recommendations and submits a Consolidated Budget for the President's review and, if warranted, approval. If changes are to be made, the President thus delegates such changes back to the Management Team and the cycle works its way back to the top. The President's approved budget is then submitted to the Northern Marianas College Board of Regents for review and/or approval. NMC then uses such document as its spending guide for each fiscal year.

The Northern Marianas College's Budget Office then works with the departments to monitor allocations and spending plans. Deans then review the department spending plans and, if warranted, will request changes to the Dean of Administration. If within the program's and/or overall unit's budget, changes can be made by the respective deans. If such changes can be absorbed by NMC's overall budget or through a collaborative body within NMC, changes can be made between the respective Deans. In the event that none of these bodies can afford the changes, the Budget and Finance Committee is then requested to convene to resolve the matter or to provide recommendations to the Management Team and/or President for further action. The Budget and Finance Committee also monitors quarterly spending of each program.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

None.

***Additional ACCJC Standard as of June 2012:*** *The institution plans for and allocates appropriate resources for payments of liabilities and future obligations including other post employment benefits, compensated absences, and other employee related obligations and the actuarial study to determine other post employment benefits liability is prepared as required by appropriate auditing standards.*

### Descriptive Summary

In this volatile economic environment that many public institutions of higher education find themselves in, planning for future liabilities or unexpected obligations have been a challenge. NMC, in its efforts to maintain financial stability and integrity, continues to work closely with the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Government and other funding sources to ensure that NMC's resources are sufficient enough to meet such liabilities and obligations. NMC's Board of Regents authorized the President to alter the FY 2012 budget to pay for future or unexpected liabilities and obligations. NMC recognized such to be liabilities and obligations that would stem from the Facilities Master Plan, procurement of Technology software and licenses, pending litigations against NMC, fluctuating Utilities, increase in adjunct payouts, retirement benefits, and any other personnel expenditures not previously budgeted.

### Self Evaluation

NMC and the CNMI recognize two post employment benefits for its employees, one being the CNMI Retirement Plan and the other is for Compensated Absences. Every employee is obligated by law to participate in the CNMI Retirement Plan as well as to be compensated for approved absences. The following are excerpts from the Deloitte and Touche LLC Audit Reports for FY 2011.

#### *Retirement Plan*

NMC contributes to the Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund's (the Fund) defined benefit plan (DB Plan) and defined contribution plan (DC Plan), a cost sharing, and multi-employer plan (the Plan) established and administered by the Fund. The Fund issues a publicly available financial report that includes financial statements and required supplementary information for the Plan. That report may be obtained by writing to the Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund, P.O. Box 501247, Saipan, MP, 96950-1247.

In the Auditors' note to NMC, Financial Statements as of September 30, 2011 and 2010 (2) Summary of Significant Accounting Policies, GASB Statement No. 45 require employers to record other postemployment benefits (OPEB) expenses for their contractually required contributions to the OPEB plan. As noted by the auditors, NMC has complied with GASB Statement No. 45 by recording OPEB expenses based on the statutorily determined contribution rate of the Fund. It is the understanding of the management of NMC that the statutorily determined contribution rate of the Fund incorporates both the pension liability

and OPEB liability. GASB Statement No. 45 also requires detailed disclosure of information related to the OPEB plan and the management of NMC was unable to obtain this information from the Fund financial report. The management of NMC is unable to obtain the required disclosures and is of the opinion that such information must be obtained from the Fund. It is the position of the management of NMC that the Fund is solely responsible for disclosure of OPEB information.

*Defined Benefit Plan (DB Plan)*

The DB Plan provides retirement, disability, security and other benefits to employees of the CNMI Government and CNMI agencies, instrumentalities and public corporations and their spouses and dependents. Benefits are based on the average annual salary of the beneficiary over the term of credited service. Public Law No. 6-17, the Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund (NMIRF) Act of 1988, is the authority under which benefit provisions are established. Public Law No. 6-17 was subsequently amended by Public Law Nos. 6-41, 8-24, 8-30, 8-31, 8-39, 9-25, 9-45, 10-8, 10-19, 11-9, 11-95, 13-60, 15-14, 15-70, 15-126, 16-2 and 16-36. DB Plan members are required to contribute 6.5 percent and 9 percent of their annual covered salary for Class I and Class II members, respectively. On June 14, 2007, Public Law No. 15-70 was enacted to amend the NMIRF Act to improve the DB Plan's fiscal solvency. Public Law No. 15-70 provides for increasing employee contributions to the DB Plan by one percent per year beginning in fiscal year 2008 until reaching 10.5 percent for Class I members and 11 percent for Class II members. The actuarially determined contribution rate for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2009 is 60.8686 percent of covered payroll based on an actuarial valuation as of October 1, 2009 issued in May 2011. The established statutory rate at September 30, 2011 and 2010 is 37.3909 percent of covered payroll.

*Defined Contribution Plan (DC Plan)*

On June 16, 2006, Public Law No. 15-13 was enacted which created the DC Plan, a multiemployer pension plan, and is the single retirement program for all employees whose first time CNMI government employment commences on or after January 1, 2007. Each member of the DC Plan is required to contribute to the member's individual account an amount equal to 10 percent of the member's compensation. NMC is required to contribute to each member's individual account an amount equal to four of the member's compensation. The DC Plan by its nature is fully funded on a current basis from employer and member contributions. Members of the DC Plan, who have completed five years of government service, have a vested balance of 100 percent of both member and employer contribution plus any earnings thereon.

NMC's contributions to the Fund for the years ended September 30, 2011, 2010 and 2009 were \$1,202,149, \$584,329 and \$767,148, respectively. Pursuant to Public Law No. 6-41, codified in 1CMC § 8362, any employer who fails to pay or remit contributions as required by this section shall pay a penalty of 10 percent per month or part thereof for which the contribution remains unpaid, up to a maximum penalty of 25 percent of the unpaid contribution. On June 24, 2008, the Office of the CNMI Governor confirmed that the CNMI central government will be responsible for NMC's deficient retirement contribution beginning October 1, 2005. NMC's deficient retirement contributions, including penalties and interest, amounted to \$6,345,651 and \$6,128,657 as of September 30, 2011 and 2010,



respectively. Such deficient retirement contribution and related penalties and interest are not reflected in the accompanying financial statements.

NMC continues to work with the CNMI Government and has developed a practice to allocate appropriate resources for payments of liabilities and future obligations inclusive of Retirement Benefits and Compensated Absences. An example of such practice can be found for persons who retire under the Defined Benefits (DB) Category within the CNMI's Retirement Fund. NMC pays its share (average 20 percent) of the CNMI Retirement Fund's actuarial rate which ranges between 36.67 percent to 61.64 percent. Through a letter from the Governor dated in 2008 [IIID:39], the CNMI Government then pays for the remaining share of the CNMI Retirement Fund as a person of the DB Category retires. Since 2008, NMC has fronted the difference (between NMC and the CNMI Governments' share) due to the CNMI Retirement Fund. The Government then reimburses NMC for such share within a reasonable time frame.

#### *Compensated Absences*

As reported in the Deloitte and Touche LLC Audit Reports, NMC recognizes cost for accrued annual leave at the time such leave is earned. As of September 30, 2011 and 2010, NMC recorded accrued annual leave in the amount of \$625,601 and \$615,848, respectively, which is included within the statements of net assets as compensated absences.

NMC also approved a payout of \$15,000 to BECA International for the remaining amount due on the services provided to finalize the Facilities Master Plan. Financing of technology software upgrades and services have also been noted as liabilities and obligations due by NMC. Adjunct pay and payments for litigations against NMC have also been planned for and approved for payment.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Continue with NMC's Tuition and Fees Taskforce [IIID:33] that has been assigned with coming up with appropriate tuition and fee schedules to address NMC's financial needs, outstanding obligations and other notable liabilities. As NMC completes such report, as well as existing litigation and negotiations between the CNMI Government and Retirement Fund continues, NMC will adopt the appropriate measure to minimize such liabilities and obligations

***Additional ACCJC Standard Requirement as of June 2012:*** *On an annual basis, the institution assesses and allocates resources for the repayment of any locally incurred debt instruments that can affect the financial condition of the institution.*

#### Descriptive Summary

As it does with its budgeting process, NMC will budget and allocate locally incurred debt instruments that can affect the financial condition of the institution.

Self Evaluation

NMC demonstrated when it last entered into a short-term loan agreement with a local bank in FY 2007, that it had the ability to make payments and manage such liability. The amount loaned was \$250,000 for the purpose of financing its capital improvements. The loan was fully repaid in June 2010 [IIID:3]. The loan bore an interest rate of 5.8 percent per annum and was collateralized by a time certificate of deposit with the same bank. NMC does not anticipate going into another loan agreement within the next two years.

Actionable Improvement Plans

None.

*Additional ACCJC Standard as of June 2012: Institutions monitor and manage student loan default rates, revenue streams, and assets, to ensure compliance with federal requirements*

Descriptive Summary

NMC currently does not participate in such activity.

Self Evaluation

NMC currently does not participate in such activity. A position paper [IIID:46] written by the Director of Financial Aid Services advises NMC not to participate in such services. Major factors involve research studies in peer institutions and nationally on the high default rate of such institutions. Other factors include President Obama's national initiatives on the use of PELL and other federal Financial Aid has also discouraged the use of student loans.

Actionable Improvement Plans

None.





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# Standard IV: Leadership and Governance



## Standard IV: Leadership and Governance

*The institution recognizes and utilizes the contributions of leadership throughout the organization for continuous improvement of the institution. Governance roles are designed to facilitate decisions that support student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness, while acknowledging the designated responsibilities of the governing board and the chief administrator.*

### IVA. Decision-Making Roles and Processes

*The institution recognizes that ethical and effective leadership throughout the organization enables the institution to identify institutional values, set and achieve goals, learn, and improve.*

**Standard IV.A1.** *Institutional leaders create an environment for empowerment, innovation, and institutional excellence. They encourage staff, faculty, administrators, and students, no matter what their official titles, to take initiative in improving the practices, programs, and services in which they are involved. When ideas for improvement have policy or significant institution-wide implications, systematic participative processes are used to assure effective discussion, planning, and implementation.*

#### Descriptive Summary

As Northern Marianas College (NMC) has strived for continued excellence, in 2008 the Board of Regents adopted the PROA Strategic Plan 2008-2012 [IVA:1]. This plan contains four major goals:

- Goal One: **P**romote student learning and success.
- Goal Two: **R**espond to the professional development, continuing education and personal enrichment needs of the Commonwealth.
- Goal Three: **O**ptimize financial and human resources.
- Goal Four: **A**ccelerate the upgrade of physical and technology infrastructure.

Within these overarching goals the college is ensuring its annual goals focus the institution on specific key institutional goals or objectives. For example, at its September 29, 2011 Board of Regents (BOR) Meeting, the Board approved the NMC 2011-2012 Goals and Objectives [IVA:2]. These were identified as follows:

#### Goal 1—Student Success

Focus the institution on the following:

1. Increasing enrollment and retention rates.
2. Addressing the diverse student needs.
3. Improving methods for teaching and assessing student learning.
4. Removing barriers that impede on student success.

#### Goal 2—Optimize Financial Resources

Focus the institution on the following:

1. Effectively address budget issues to best achieve efficient and effective use of resources.
2. Review NMC salaries and implement a plan for salary growth.
3. Proposals, contracts, and other policy issues requiring Board approval are timely, accurate and complete.

#### Goal 3—Information Technology

Focus the institution on the following:

1. Improving the utility of Information Technology.
2. Improving our Student Information Management System.
3. Launching the online learning center.
4. Integrating technology with student learning.

#### Goal 4—Focus on CNMI Workforce Needs

Focus the institution on the following:

1. Increasing job placement rates.
2. Developing partnerships with key entities.
3. Assessing workforce needs.
4. Ensuring program offerings to match The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) workforce demands.

#### Goal 5—Other Distinctive Objectives in an Environment of Continuous Quality Improvement

Focus the institution on the following:

1. Reaffirmation on Accreditation

NMC's goals and values can be linked back, though broadly, to the mission statement. This statement appears in many places, including the NMC website, catalog, and in the monthly BOR packets, to name just a few.

The public is able to access critical and important documents, especially via the NMC website. As a result, the college community—both internal and external—has access to reports, minutes, and other pertinent information.

All entities of NMC must undergo evaluation and review. All assessment plans, which include specific goals, data, etc., are accessible to the unit being assessed. Upon request, interested parties can also be given access. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) maintains hard copies of all assessment reports. All employee positions of NMC have clearly defined job descriptions. Additionally, positions are attached to units that are assessed and ideas for improvement are outlined in assessment plans. All units at NMC, whether they are educational, administrative or financial, are tasked with their own assessment.

Each unit must address the annual goals/objectives. To keep the institution focused on these, the President provides to the Board (and to all college employees) each month a progress report on the annual goals/objectives that is assembled with input from across the institution.

Thus, the college can readily identify those areas needing improving without waiting for the end of the fiscal year to complete its analysis.

The President holds open meetings and discussions with students. This gives students opportunities to express issues of concern. Also, the Associated Students of Northern Marianas College (ASNMC) President serving as a member of the President's Management Team, as well as an Honorary member of the Board of Regents affords the opportunity for student leadership to further engage with key leaders of the college. Each month the ASNMC President prepares both a verbal and written report that is disseminated to the Board.

NMC recognizes the critical importance of input from all levels of the organization. It fully recognizes that it has undergone significant leadership (presidential) turnover since 2006. Each president has fostered different levels of support toward creating and fostering environments of empowerment, innovation, and institutional excellence. The last three years has witnessed significant changes from top-down to broad based involvement of staff, faculty, administrators and students in the governance and decision-making process. Thus, the participative governance structure has evolved and now enables and encourages members from across the College community to participate in the decision-making process. This structure ensures all levels of decision making are involved in and afforded the opportunity to provide ideas for institutional improvement.

The College has, since July of 2011, taken great strides to ensure all board policies have broad-based input from across the institution prior to board review and approval. BOR Policy 206 *Policy Introduction, Amendment, Passage, Suspension*, [IVA:4] states "...All policies are to be discussed within the College's shared governance bodies, which will, in turn, submit input to the President for review and consideration..." Additionally, BOR Policy 206 requires new policies or amendments to be placed on the board agenda for action with an introduction and first reading, plus a second reading and adoption. This now allows further review and comment by both internal and external stakeholders prior to board policy adoption.

### Self Evaluation

NMC's PROA Strategic Plan 2008-2012 has served to focus the college on long-term goals and initiatives. This has been shared regularly with internal and external audiences of the College. The College has earlier been deficient in the development of annual plans, but this did change in 2011 when the new President worked with the Strategic Planning Task Force to develop the NMC 2011-2012 Goals and Objectives [IVA:2], which was approved by the Board of Regents in September of 2011. This plan has served to drive the key budgetary decisions for the college this past fiscal year. Additionally, all units of the College were tasked to develop and have regularly reported on their unit's success in meeting their respective goals/objectives. Also, the Board of Regents has recently reviewed and adopted Policy 202.3 NMC Strategic Plan and Objectives. [IVA:5] This policy ensures the college's mission is central to institutional planning and that it will commit to the development of a long-term strategic plan that will only be successful upon the development of short-term



annual plans that comprise evaluation, goal setting, resource distribution, implementation and reevaluation. The Board is clear that the institutional planning process will indeed be the driver of the financial planning, budgeting and resource allocation process.

The College's mission statement is shared at all levels within the College. Yet, because the mission statement is embedded in the Constitution of the CNMI [IVA:6], it has not changed over the years. With full support from both the CNMI House and Senate, the College is embarking on a ballot initiative for November 2012, referenced as Senate Legislative Initiative 17-12 [IVA:7]. Voters will be asked "Shall the Northern Marianas College Board of Regents establish the mission statement of the Northern Marianas College?" If this does pass, the Constitution can be amended accordingly.

Institutional leaders do foster an environment of shared governance that embraces empowerment, innovation, and institutional excellence. At all levels of the institution, students, faculty, staff and administrators are encouraged to work together to improve the college's practices, programs and services. The College can continue to improve its dissemination of all committee meeting minutes in a timelier manner to ensure employees are kept informed. With the fall semester now underway, the President can once again continue with the Brown Bag Lunches, which serve as an opportunity for all college employees and students to meet with and address the President. Additionally, and through the various college senates, communications and concerns are brought forward to the Management Team and are being adequately addressed.

The Northern Marianas Board of Regents continues to take its policy-making role very seriously and is thoroughly examining the policies of the College through a comprehensive review process, which includes an examination of the policies on the quality and effectiveness of the institution and specifically on student learning, student services, and financial matters.

In working with the College President, the Board has realized that many of the older policies have procedural language imbedded in them. As such, in addition to updating many of these policies, the Board has adopted a six-year calendar [IVA:8] to review all the policies to make certain that board policies are appropriately separated from procedures and that the Board's involvement in this review cycle is focused on the policy level and not the procedural level.

The Board has already embarked on an accelerated pace to review and update policies, as evidenced by the list of approved policies that is attached to this Self Evaluation Report [IVA:9]. To keep up the regular review of said policies, the Board has increased the frequency of its regular meetings from a quarterly to a monthly basis.

Although the NMC website serve as the key communication link to the greater community, it needs to maintain up-to-date information on college reports, BOR minutes, etc. Knowledge of the institution will be enhanced by expanding the information on the website accordingly.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Encourage governance bodies and committees to provide minutes in a timelier manner in order to improve communications within the College.
2. Update the NMC website with important Board of Regents minutes, other important information, and publications in order to improve internal and external communications.

***Standard IV.A2.** The institution establishes and implements a written policy providing for faculty, staff, administrator, and student participation in decision-making processes. The policy specifies the manner in which individuals bring forward ideas from their constituencies and work together on appropriate policy, planning, and special-purpose bodies.*

#### Descriptive Summary

Board of Regents Policy 200.1 [IVA:10] sets forth the policy for faculty, staff, administrator, and student participation in the decision-making processes. As the policy states, “The Northern Marianas College Board of Regents recognizes the major constituencies of the College, namely the administration, the faculty, the support staff, and the students, as participants in the governance of the institution. Each of these constituencies is to have a role in the formulation of the mission and goals of the institution and in the development of policies governing it.”

BOR Policy 200.1 further states, “The President shall develop procedures that specify the governance role of each of these four components of the College community in terms of policy formulation; decision-making and planning; and problem identification, analysis, and resolution. Such procedures, however, will not interfere with the rights and procedures of the Faculty Assembly, Faculty Senate, Staff Assembly, Staff Senate, and ASNMC and their officers as they relate to their constitutions, duties and obligations to their own constituents.”

To effectuate BOR Policy 200.1, the Institutional Excellence Guide specifies the manner in which individuals bring forward ideas from their constituencies and work together on appropriate policy, planning, and special-purpose bodies. As the guide states, “The administration must solicit and consider input from the College community and represented constituencies before decisions that have a direct impact on academic policy, academic curriculum, academic procedure, suspension or closure of programs, budget request and resource allocations, strategic educational master plan, capital projects, and others are made.”

The Institutional Excellence Guide further clarifies the role of each governance and representative body, including the Board of Regents, College Council, standing committees of College Council, Academic Council, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and the Associated Student of Northern Marianas College.

Regular and special assemblies are also held throughout the year to allow stakeholders to participate in the dialogue for planning. These assemblies include General Assemblies,

Faculty Assemblies, Staff Assemblies, Term Professional Development Days (PDD), the annual Planning Summit, and various workshops. These assemblies are often scheduled to accommodate maximum participation. In some cases, such as the 2010 Planning Summit, classes are suspended and offices are closed to enforce mandatory attendance at assemblies. Attendance is documented at all assemblies to monitor participation, and video teleconferencing (VTC) is enabled for each assembly and governance body meeting to ensure participation from Rota and Tinian stakeholders. Moreover, information about assembly meetings and governance body meetings are circulated via email to all employees.

### Self Evaluation

Since 2009, the College has shifted towards a more inclusive governance model. In addition to the Board of Regents, College Council, standing committees of College Council, Academic Council, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and the Associated Student of Northern Marianas College, the Management Team has been expanded to include the presidents of the Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and the Associated Students of Northern Marianas College.

In late 2010, a Governance Review Task Force (GRTF) was appointed by the Office of the President to assess the College's governance model, including planning, budgeting, and program review processes, and to develop a mechanism for assessing those processes. Specifically, the task force was tasked with the following:

- Review NMC's current governance structures and processes, identifying strengths and weaknesses.
- Study and explore ways to improve NMC's governance structures and processes.
- Develop draft policies and procedures for regular, systematic review of NMC's governance structures and processes.
- Formulate recommendations to modify NMC's governance structures and processes as laid out in the Institutional Excellence Guide.
- Seek documented input and feedback on its work from ASNMC, Staff Senate, Faculty Senate, the Program Review Outcomes and Assessment Committee (PROAC), the Budget and Finance Committee (BAFC), the Academic Council, and the College Council.
- Provide weekly updates on its work to the Management Team.
- Submit final recommendations to the Office of the President.

The task force thus began meeting regularly to identify how it would fulfill its charge, utilizing Accrediting Commission standards to guide its work. Eventually, the GRTF worked with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to develop and administer a Governance Evaluation Survey [IVA:11] that would gauge how effective NMC's governance model is at structuring self-reflective dialogue towards improving institutional processes. The survey had respondents assess five dimensions of governance—democracy, openness and transparency, effectiveness, accountability, and mission—and rate each NMC governance and representative body according to those dimensions. The results of that survey were

shared with the Management Team and the College community, and led the task force to recommend the following changes to the College's governance model:

- Encourage more student engagement and participation in the College's shared governance.
- To clarify and uphold the advisory nature of the College's governance bodies, remove the President from all governance bodies.
- To alleviate the overlapping membership of many members of Management Team on governance bodies, and to ensure more balanced representation of the College's various constituent groups, the membership of College Council should be amended as follows: 3 Administrators, 3 Faculty, 3 Staff, and 2 Students.
- To address the current lack of a governance body specifically tasked with developing short-term and long-term planning for the institution, the Office of the President should be tasked with initiating planning efforts, which will then be routed through shared governance for review, discussion, and adoption.

The above recommendations were effectuated by the Office of the President in a college-wide memorandum issued in March of 2012.

Despite these changes and improvements to the College's shared governance model, some members of the College community have expressed confusion about how decisions are made and how various constituencies can participate in that decision-making.

The Governance Review Task Force also noted that the Management Team composed mostly of deans, directors, and managers that report directly to the president, serves primarily as the president's cabinet that executes decisions and procedures issued by the president. In contrast, the College Council, composed of representatives from the faculty, staff, students, and administrators, has served as the representative voice of shared governance that deliberates mostly on policy proposals. The task force thus recommended that the roles of the two bodies should be clarified.

Moreover, the arrival of a new president has led to several changes in planning, budgeting, and resource allocation. While these changes have been made to improve the alignment between planning and budgeting and resource allocation, the manual that guides these processes, the Institutional Excellence Guide, has yet to be revised.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Clarify and communicate governance processes and procedures for all current and future employees. To that effect, the Institutional Excellence Guide to be revised to reflect recent changes made to the College's shared governance model.

***Standard IV.A2a.*** Faculty and administrators have a substantive and clearly defined role in institutional governance and exercise a substantial voice in institutional policies, planning, and budget that relate to their areas of responsibility and expertise. Students and staff also

*have established mechanisms or organizations for providing input into institutional decisions.*

### Descriptive Summary

The Northern Marianas College pursues excellence as an institution to provide successful outcomes. NMC encourages all stakeholders to participate and contribute toward its progress and development.

The faculty body as a whole is represented by the Faculty Senate which provides routine input regarding policies, planning, curriculum, budget and other related issues. Additionally, the Faculty Senate through the Faculty Senate President provides representation as a seated member of the Management Team, College Council, and as an honorary member of the Board of Regents. The Faculty Senate Vice-President is a member of the Planning, Program Review and Outcomes Assessment Committee (PROAC).

Full-time faculty have membership in all of the institution's governance committees, and participate throughout the academic year. In addition, they are encouraged to attend any and all meetings as an open door atmosphere is instilled as part of the institution's philosophy.

Faculty, staff and students are represented as active members on the board of Regents. These three represent their respective constituencies, giving voice and input on concerns, and ultimately participate in the decision-making process that will positively affect college policies. This allows the President and the Board of Regents to gather stakeholder input before finalizing decisions.

Student governance is important to the process and is well-documented. The NMC student body has all student organizations represented under the Associated Students of Northern Marianas College (ASNMC). The ASNMC President is an honorary, non-voting member on the Board of Regents, is a part of the Management Team, and has a seat on College Council. ASNMC is invited to attend and have a voice in all committees. The primary role of the ASNMC President is to provide broad participation and representation of student concerns in the concept of participatory governance.

The budget process is distinctly separate for faculty and staff. Faculty and their respective department chairs meet and develop the department's annual budget, which is then submitted to the Dean of Academic Programs and Services. Support staff supervisors initially establish the budget and, as always, staff are encouraged to contribute input before all budgetary information is submitted to the Budget and Finance committee and then on to the Management Team, and ultimately on to the Board of Regents.

### Self Evaluation

The degree of input that faculty is involved with concerning the development or recommendation toward policies, planning and budget controls goes beyond the roles established for the Faculty Senate, the College Council, and Management Team

committees. Three levels of participation exist for faculty: individual, departmental, and committee. All recommendations and input are welcome and given consideration at the highest levels for all issues.

Faculty and staff are encouraged to participate in institutional planning sessions, but their attendance is usually hampered by conflicting schedules and or other duties. However, since the information is published on the website and a shared folder on a server that the whole campus can use to access information, the “N” drive, and disseminated through department meetings, and since the faculty and staff have avenues such as the Faculty Senate and the Staff Senate, and the chain of command, they have significant opportunities to access the information and voice their views and concerns.

Faculty serving on the Faculty Senate have experienced greater involvement and have become more aware of the College’s inner workings and have greater interaction and communication with their colleagues, as well as improved dialogue with administrators.

To remain competitive in the global search for and retention of qualified College personnel, it is acknowledged that a faculty pay adjustment needs to be approved, especially considering the fact that there have been no pay increases for more than ten years. Even though policy allows for advancement through the teaching ranks from instructor to full professor, NMC’s current practice is to have only instructors. It is also a priority of the Faculty Senate to implement policies and procedures that will allow for advancement through the ranks. In addition, the Faculty Senate has set a goal to implement a policy and procedures on obtaining tenure, to replace the current practice of only issuing two-year contracts.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Continue efforts to better define and communicate the roles and duties of the governance bodies, and effectively disseminate this information to all constituent groups.
2. Evaluate proposals to implement standards for tenure and for rank advancement of faculty.

***Standard IV.A2b.*** *The institution relies on faculty, its academic senate or other appropriate faculty structures, the curriculum committee, and academic administrators for recommendations about student learning programs and services.*

#### Descriptive Summary

The College in July of 2011 officially hired the current president, Dr. Sharon Y. Hart. To date, she continues to be the executive officer of the Northern Marianas College. Through her leadership and direction, the institution assesses, implements, and evaluates every aspect of the teaching and learning process that is the backbone of the College. The Organizational Structure Master Chart outlines the persons who are under the immediate supervision of the

president, as well as a management team that meets every week to discuss and evaluate recommendations about student learning programs and services. The Management Team (MT) is made up of all the Deans, the Human Resources Manager, the Accreditation Liaison Officer, the School of Education Director, the Director of Institutional Advancement, and representatives from the faculty, staff, and student senate.

Various governance groups have also continued to work with the President and MT to assess the state of the institution, its programs and the services provided to students and the community. The governance groups make recommendations and advise the President on matters regarding NMC as it affects student learning. These groups are in place to ensure that open communication in the decision-making process takes place and that the process includes key stakeholders.

### Self Evaluation

Involvement has been evolving and has become increasingly more effective. In the past year Academic Council, extending through the departments and faculty, has accelerated ownership of College programs and offerings. They were greatly effective in helping provide guidance in shortening the Fall 2011 semester to benefit international students, creating an intercession between that fall and subsequent spring semester, changing class sizes in order to be more economically responsible, providing online and accelerated courses, and in providing leadership in course improvements.

The Academic Programs and Services (APS) leadership team, consisting of department chairs, directors, and coordinators, work cooperatively with faculty at the program or department level. These are evidenced by department, program or council meeting minutes. All changes regarding program learning outcomes and student-learning outcomes are discussed and reviewed at the program level before introduction to the dean of Academic Programs and Services (APS), as addressed at Academic Council, for recommendation to all other governance groups of the College.

The President continues to work collaboratively with the Management Team and governance groups of the College, in assessing and evaluating the current policies, procedures and documents to ensure continued compliance and establishment of effective policies and procedures that are systematically communicated among the institution's constituencies.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

None

***Standard IV.A3.*** *Through established governance structures, processes, and practices, the governing board, administrators, faculty, staff, and students work together for the good of the institution. These processes facilitate discussion of ideas and effective communication among the institution's constituencies.*

### Descriptive Summary

Essential information is disseminated on the college's efforts to achieve goals as well as for the improvement of student learning. The College utilizes its website, college materials, local publications/media, and banners, to effectively communicate. The President provides monthly updates to the Board of Regents, and keeps them routinely informed of key critical events/issues in the spirit of "no surprises." Using these forums, she disseminates information about the status and progress of the College on numerous fronts. Additionally, she receives input from students, faculty, staff, and others and addresses these accordingly. The College utilizes PROA NewsU [IVA:13], which is sent out every week, to both internal and external audiences—especially government leaders, private sector representatives, prospective students, the Board of Regents, NMC Foundation Board, NMC employees and all current students.

### Self Evaluation

The College is taking great efforts to achieve institutional goals, taking this information forward to the Board every month so the Board can fulfill its responsibility in monitoring institutional effectiveness. Additionally, the governance structure has a systematic participative process in place for effective discussion, planning, and implementation of issues that are impacting the institution and the various senates. Senate Reports to the Board of Regents reflect that issues are going to management to address, and that these are being openly discussed.

The Management Team and the Board of Regents do include representatives from the Faculty and Staff Senates, and the ASNMC President. This allows for input from these senates and serves as a vehicle of effective communication. At the Board of Regents level, the three senate presidents serve as Honorary Board members with no voting privilege. They do participate in the Board meetings, representing their constituents accordingly.

Professional development days are held every semester. This allows the entire college faculty, staff, administrators and often student leaders to come together to share information about the College and enhance skills and knowledge. In addition, individual units (e.g. student services, academic affairs, etc.) are encouraged to hold their own professional development days/times to specifically address issues. For example, in spring of 2012, the Division of Student Services held a half-day inservice training [IVA:14] for all division personnel, including student workers. The agenda included: Updates from the Dean of Student Services; Procurement Regulations and Compliance; and presentations on Developing Cultural Competency in the Chamorro, Korean and Refalauwasch communities. The President and other employees from the College also attended portions of this inservice.

The College also encourages informal interaction among college constituents through events, such as birthday celebrations, Thanksgiving luncheon, holiday parties, and similar social events.

### Actionable Improvement Plans



None

***Standard IV.A4.*** *The institution advocates and demonstrates honesty and integrity in its relationships with external agencies. It agrees to comply with Accrediting Commission standards, policies, and guidelines, and Commission requirements for public disclosure, self-study and other reports, team visits, and prior approval of substantive changes. The institution moves expeditiously to respond to recommendations made by the Commission.*

### Descriptive Summary

The Board of Regents Policy 906, *Integrity and Ethics* [IVA:15], lays the foundation for the College's relationships with external agencies, including the Accrediting Commission. As the policy states, "The Northern Marianas College and any individual or entity acting on its behalf shall exhibit integrity and subscribe to and advocate high ethical standards in the management of its affairs and all of its activities."

In order to ensure College-wide compliance with the policy and Standard IV.A.4, the scope of BOR Policy 906 [IVA:15] broadly covers and applies to all matters with students, faculty, staff, the Board of Regents, external agencies and organizations, and the general public.

All employee contracts at the College also include provisions to require employees to support and participate in accreditation-related activities and to comply with Accrediting Commission requirements for public disclosure, self-study, and other reports, team visits, and prior approval of substantive changes.

Furthermore, the College publishes expectations for employee conduct and communication in its Human Resources Policy Part VII – *Conduct/Rules and Expectations* [IVA:17], and provides copies of its Human Resources Manual to all employees upon initial employment and on request thereafter. Training on Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the privacy of student records, among other professional development activities are scheduled for faculty and staff, reinforce and support these expectations for appropriate and professional conduct.

### Self Evaluation

Northern Marianas College is committed to abiding by the Standards, Policies, and Procedures established by the Accrediting Commission. The College has taken pains to institutionalize that effort and make it a shared value of all constituencies in the College.

The institution has been forthcoming in communicating changes in its accreditation status by making timely announcements in the media and on its Web site of the Commission's actions. In fact, there is a portion of the home page of the College Web site dedicated to informing the community about the College's accreditation efforts. The College also created a Q&A flyer [IVA:18] and poster and disseminated it to students to answer some basic questions

about the show cause status. The Q&A was also published in the local newspaper to aid the general community's understanding of show cause.

The broad and intensive dialogue and education on accreditation matters has been promoted at the College among faculty, staff, administrators, and regents, through workshops, trainings, and professional development interaction. These activities stem from a conscious and deliberate attempt to eliminate misconceptions about the accreditation process and to promote more honest and accurate discussions. The results of these activities have contributed to a culture of "accreditation awareness" evident at all levels of the institution.

More recently, all members of the Board of Regents and most of the College's Management Team successfully completed the online training, "Accreditation Basics," sponsored by the Accrediting Commission.

The importance of honesty and integrity in the College's dealings with external agencies and the Accrediting Commission was underscored by President Hart in a presentation entitled *Communication*, which the president delivered at the opening of the College's fall 2011 Professional Development Days on August 9, 2011. The President's concerns and values with regard to the College's compliance with Commission requirements, standards, and policies are communicated regularly to managers in an effort to ensure that concerns are addressed promptly at appropriate levels within the institution's organizational hierarchy.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Promote increased awareness of the value and necessity of demonstrating honesty and integrity in dealings with external agencies and the Accrediting Commission by continuing to embed accreditation training in all biannual professional development workshops.

***Standard IV.A5.** The role of leadership and the institution's governance and decision-making structures and processes are regularly evaluated to assure their integrity and effectiveness. The institution widely communicates the results of these evaluations and uses them as the basis for improvement.*

#### Descriptive Summary

The Board of Regents Policy 201, *Monitoring College Effectiveness* [IVA:20], sets forth the policy for evaluating and monitoring all activities at the College, including governance and decision-making. As the policy states, "The Board of Regents shall monitor College effectiveness in meeting Board policies. Monitoring will be done in a way to permit the Board to focus on planning the future direction of the college, its campuses, and its programs."

In addition, the College's *Institutional Excellence Guide* [IVA:21] describes the processes for regular evaluation, review, and assessment of governance and decision-making. The guide

speaks to the College's program review process, a college-wide activity that presents findings and recommendations unique to each program with the clear intent of facilitating both improvement and accountability as they relate to program effectiveness. The direct result of the institutional program review process is to meaningfully inform the College's decision-making, planning, and budgeting processes, particularly with regard to making improvements at the course, program, and institutional levels, including governance and decision-making structures and processes. It is a coordinated systematic process for evaluating program effectiveness as outlined in the Student Learning Outcomes Comprehensive Implementation Program (SLOCIP) [IVA:22], adopted in fall 2007.

Each academic, student services, and administrative programs uses the Five-Column Model (Form 1) [IVA:23] to identify student learning outcomes (SLOs) and/or administrative unit outcomes (AUOs). Programs develop specific measures and criteria for determining success for each outcome. Data are gathered and analyzed to determine if the outcomes are being met or if curricular/administrative processes need change. A program's Form 1 is incorporated into its program review report (Form 2) [IVA:24], which provides a comprehensive analysis of the program's effectiveness and presents recommendations for the program and the institution based on a thorough analysis of data.

### Self Evaluation

From 2007 through 2010, all governance bodies completed a Form 1 [IVA:23] as part of their ongoing self-evaluation and assessment. Their participation in the annual assessment, however, proved to be difficult given the substantial overlap between all the bodies and the amount of time those bodies spent in meetings and other committee-related activities. For instance, the following matrix from October 2010 demonstrates the amount of overlap between governance bodies, particularly for members of the College's Management Team.

C = CHAIR                      V = VOTING                      N = NON-VOTING/EX-OFFICIO

<b>Management Team</b>	<b>College Council</b>	<b>BAFC</b>	<b>PROAC</b>	<b>Academic Council</b>
President	C	V	V	
CFAO	V	C	V	
Dean of APS	V	N	V	C
Dean of Student Services	V	N	V	
Dean of COMPASS	V	N	V	
OIA Director	V	V		N

OIE Director	V	V	C	N
IT Director	V	V		N
Rota Site Coordinator	V	V		N
Tinian Site Coordinator	V	V		N
Faculty Senate President	V			
Staff Senate President	V			
ASNMC President	V			N

The October 2012 Visiting Team from the Accrediting Team took note of these overlaps in its visiting report, writing, “Analysis of the membership in the major campus governance/advisory groups identified a high degree of overlapping membership.”

To address these overlaps and systematically evaluate NMC’s planning, program review, and budgeting processes, in late 2010, a Governance Review Task Force (GRTF) was appointed by the Office of the President to assess the College’s governance model, including planning, budgeting, and program review processes, and to develop a mechanism for assessing those processes. Specifically, the task force was tasked with the following:

- Review NMC’s current governance structures and processes, identifying strengths and weaknesses.
- Study and explore ways to improve NMC’s governance structures and processes.
- Develop draft policies and procedures for regular, systematic review of NMC’s governance structures and processes.
- Formulate recommendations to modify NMC’s governance structures and processes as laid out in the Institutional Excellence Guide.
- Seek documented input and feedback on its work from ASNMC, Staff Senate, Faculty Senate, the Program Review Outcomes and Assessment Committee (PROAC), the Budget and Finance Committee (BAFC), the Academic Council, and the College Council.
- Provide weekly updates on its work to the Management Team.
- Submit final recommendations to the Office of the President.

The task force thus began meeting regularly to identify how it would fulfill its charge, utilizing Accrediting Commission standards to guide its work. Eventually, the GRTF worked with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to develop and administer a survey [IVA:11] to gauge how effective NMC’s governance model is at structuring self-reflective dialogue

towards improving institutional processes. The survey asked respondents from all sectors of the College community to assess five dimensions of governance—democracy, openness and transparency, effectiveness, accountability, and mission—and rate each NMC governance and representative body according to those dimensions. The results of that survey were shared with the Management Team and the College community, and led the task force to recommend the following changes to the College’s governance model:

- Encourage more student engagement and participation in the College’s shared governance.
- To clarify and uphold the advisory nature of the College’s governance bodies, remove the President from all governance bodies.
- To alleviate the overlapping membership of many members of Management Team on governance bodies, and to ensure more balanced representation of the College’s various constituent groups, the membership of College Council should be amended as follows: 3 Administrators, 3 Faculty, 3 Staff, and 2 Students.
- To address the current lack of a governance body specifically tasked with developing short-term and long-term planning for the institution, the Office of the President should be tasked with initiating planning efforts, which will then be routed through shared governance for review, discussion, and adoption.

The above recommendations were effectuated by the Office of the President in a college-wide memorandum issued in March of 2012.

For its part, the Board of Regents has continued its periodic self-evaluation and evaluation of the President pursuant to Board of Regents policies and Accrediting Commission standards.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Continue to actively evaluate the College’s governance and decision-making structures and processes as part of the College’s overall data-driven continuous quality improvement.

### **Standard IVB**

*Standard IV.B1. The institution has a governing board that is responsible for establishing policies to assure the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the student learning programs and services and the financial stability of the institution. The governing board adheres to a clearly defined policy for selecting and evaluating the chief administrator for the college or the district/system.*

#### Descriptive Summary

The Northern Marianas College has a Board of Regents that is responsible for establishing policies that assure the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of student learning programs and services and the financial stability of the institution.

With respect to policies that specifically assure the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the College's student learning programs and services, the College has a significant volume of policies that is focused on this area, including a recently-approved Board Policy 303.1 "Program Guarantee" [IVB:1] which provides for up to eight credits of tuition-free retraining for A.S., A.A.S., or bachelor's-in-education degree holders from the College if an employer believes they do not meet ordinarily expected standards for equivalently trained entry-level employees. Other policies [IVB:2] that assure the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of student learning programs are attached as an addendum to this Self Evaluation Report.

Other Board policies [IVB:2] also ensure that the Board of Regents continues to monitor college effectiveness by assessing data sources that include student goal attainment, course completion, retention rates, job placement rates, assessment methods for direct evidence of student learning, and indirect evidence of student learning narratives.

Furthermore, the Board of Regents has also established a set of policies that specifically assure the financial stability of the institution. One such policy, also approved recently, is Board Policy 704.6 "International Student Fee" (effective November 28, 2011) [IVB:3] which increased services primarily for international students by authorizing the College to charge international students an extra fee. In addition to this and other fiscal policies, this policy ensures that the Board of Regents is continuously monitoring the fiscal performance of the College as well as exploring options to continue to strengthen the financial stability of the institution.

With respect to hiring a new chief administrator for the College, the Board of Regents last year completed a presidential search which was guided by Board Resolution No. 2010-03 (Second Amendment) [IVB:4]. More recently, the Board of Regents passed Board Policy 203 "President Recruitment and Hiring" [IVB:5]. This policy sets forth a clear protocol for the Board to follow the next time there is a presidential vacancy.

### Self Evaluation

The Northern Marianas College Board of Regents continues to take its policy-making role very seriously and is thoroughly examining the policies of the College through a comprehensive review process, which includes an examination of the policies on the quality and effectiveness of the institution and specifically on student learning, student services, and financial matters.

In working with the College President, the Board has realized that many of the older policies have procedural language imbedded in them. As such, in addition to updating many of these policies, the Board has adopted a six-year policy review calendar [IVB:6] to review all the policies to make certain that board policies are appropriately separated from procedures and that the Board's involvement in this review cycle is focused on policy and not procedure.

The Board has already accelerated its pace to review and update policies, as evidenced by the list of approved policies [IVB:7] that is attached to this Self Evaluation Report. To keep up

the regular review of said policies, the Board has increased the frequency of its regular meetings from a quarterly to a monthly basis [IVB:8a thru 8f].

Additionally, the Board has recently taken steps to further clarify the process involved for selecting and evaluating the college president with the passage of Board Policy 203 “President Recruitment and Hiring” [IVB:5].

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Further assure the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of student learning programs and services and the financial stability of the College by having the Board of Regents focus on new policies and initiatives, including ones that shift the focus of the College’s financial reliance on the central government to external sources of funds, including more federal grants, foundation support, and alumni contributions.

***Standard IV.B1a.** The governing board is an independent policy-making body that reflects the public interest in board activities and decisions. Once the board reaches a decision, it acts as a whole. It advocates for and defends the institution and protects it from undue influence or pressure.*

#### Descriptive Summary

As previously described, the Board of Regents is composed of seven voting members and three non-voting honorary members who are elected by the Faculty Senate, the Staff Senate, and the Associated Students of the Northern Marianas College. The Board is empowered and required to act independently by Section 2(a) of the Article XV of the Commonwealth Constitution [IVB:9]. Because the Northern Marianas College is a public entity, none of the Regents is an owner of the institution.

The general duties and authority of the Board of Regents are re-enforced by 3 CMC § 1304(b) [IVB:10], which directs that “the Northern Marianas College is established as a nonprofit public corporation under the general control and direction of a board designated as the Board of Regents of the Northern Marianas College...” Commonwealth Code also specifically empowers the Board of Regents in 3 CMC § 1316 [IVB:11] to perform a number of duties that reassert its autonomy.

From these provisions in both the Commonwealth Constitution and statutory Commonwealth law, it is clear that the Northern Marianas College Board of Regents is an autonomous, independent policy-making body. The Board of Regents has both a broad mandate under Section 2(a), Article XV of the Commonwealth Constitution [IVB:9] and 3 CMC § 1304(b) [IVB:10], and is specifically empowered to control the college’s affairs under 3 CMC § 1316 [IVB:11].

In addition, the Board is required to have a diverse composition in its membership under Commonwealth statutes. Specifically, 3 CMC § 1311 [IVB:12] requires that: “at least one member shall be a resident of Tinian, one member shall be a resident of Rota, at least one member shall be of Carolinian descent, and at least one member shall be a woman,” and thus reflects a variety of public and constituent interests. Also, under 3 CMC § 1315 [IVB:13], “all meetings of the board shall be open to the public, except when personal matters affecting the privacy of an individual or other confidential matters are considered.” As such, not only is the Board an independent policy making body under Article XV of the Commonwealth Constitution [IVB:9], but also it is also capable of reflecting constituent and public interest in its activities and decisions because of its diverse membership and open meeting requirements.

In addition, the Board’s members are prohibited from having employment, family, or personal financial interest in the institution by Board of Regents Policy 1022 [IVB:14], which states, “[t]he Board of Regents shall file [an] annual statement of financial interest in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Commonwealth Government Ethics Code Act of 1992 [IVB:15], as amended.”



### Self Evaluation

It is evident that the governing board is an independent policy-making body that reflects the public interest in board activities and decisions. Once the board reaches a decision, it acts as a whole. It advocates for and defends the institution and protects it from undue outside influence or pressure.

The Board of Regents has moved to protect the College against political pressure on several occasions. In June of 2011, the Board passed Resolution 2011-03 [IVB:16], which referenced the Commonwealth Constitution and the Commonwealth Supreme Court case *N. Marianas College v. Civil Serv. Comm'n II*, 2007 MP 8 [IVB:17]; both make clear that the College is an independent institution. The resolution further noted the expectations of ACCJC that the College, as an ACCJC accredited institution, must comply with ACCJC Eligibility Requirements and Standards. With these provisions and requirements set forth, the resolution asserted the College's autonomy and stated "that the Board of Regents of the Northern Marianas College, in a duly called meeting, reaffirms the autonomy that it was granted, and still has, under the Constitution of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands[.]"

Prior to this resolution, the Board and the then-Interim President were able to successfully advocate for the College to be exempted from a government shutdown that occurred in late 2010. When it occurred, Senate Bill 17-26 [IVB:18] and the Governor's Executive Order 2010-11 [IVB:19] both exempted the College from the shutdown. Furthermore, the College has been exempted from the imposition of current austerity measures imposed by the Commonwealth government.

Additionally, the Board has undergone significant board training and development activities, which has included major discussion and reflection on this particular standard. As a result of participating in board training, the Board has acted as a whole once decisions have been made, and has successfully defended the College from undue outside influence or pressure.

To ensure leadership continuity and to maintain the forward momentum of the Board of Regents, the Regents recently re-elected—by acclamation—all the officers to serve for another term.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Provide further and regular Board of Regents training for all board members. Continue to focus the Board on what constitutes appropriate board behavior, which has helped resolve many of the issues the Board has previously had difficulties with. Continue with the monthly Board of Regents evaluation process.

***Standard IV.B1b.*** *The governing board establishes policies consistent with the mission statement to ensure the quality, integrity, and improvement of student learning programs and services and the resources necessary to support them.*

### Descriptive Summary

The College's mission is currently set forth in Section 2 (b), Amendment 38, Article XV of the Commonwealth Constitution [IVB:9], which reads:

The mission of Northern Marianas College shall be to provide the best quality and meaningful post secondary and adult educational opportunities for the purpose of improving the quality of life for the individual and for the Commonwealth as a whole. The College shall be responsible for providing education in the areas of adult and continuing education, post-secondary and adult vocational education and professional development for the people of the Commonwealth.

To assure that the mission of the College is carried out in a manner that assures the quality, integrity and improvement of student learning programs, the Board has adopted a comprehensive set of policies that govern academic programs and services, which will be described in greater detail below under the self-evaluation section. These policies govern academic responsibility, academic freedom, course and instructor evaluation, and professional ethics. Similarly, another set of policies adopted by the Board governs student development activities. These policies include admissions and enrollment, student regulations, career services, academic advisement, and counseling. Furthermore, Board policies exist to ensure financial stability, which, in turn, ensures that resources exist to support student learning, which will also be described in greater detail below under the self-evaluation section. Finally, the Board also has policies in place, and has taken other actions, which affect general institutional effectiveness, including student learning programs and the resources needed to support them.

### Self Evaluation

With respect to policies that specifically assure the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the College's student learning programs and services, the College has a significant volume of policies that are focused on this area. For example, the recently-approved Board Policy 303.1 "Program Guarantee" [IVB:1] provides for up to eight credits of tuition-free retraining for A.S., A.A.S., or bachelor's-in-education degree holders from the College if an employer believes they do not meet ordinarily expected standards for equivalently trained entry-level employees. These policies all ensure that student learning programs and services are of high quality, integrity, and effectiveness. As part of the comprehensive review discussed above, these policies are expected to be examined as part of the Board of Regents' six-year policy review calendar [IVB:6].

Furthermore, the Board has a number of policies that specifically assure that resources exist to support student learning by ensuring financial stability of the institution. These policies also ensure that the College is run in a financially responsible manner and, therefore, that resources will be available for student learning needs.

In addition, the Board's commitment to ensuring the quality, integrity, and improvement of student learning programs and securing the resources to support them is emphasized in the PROA 2008-2012 Strategic Plan [IVB:20], which was adopted by the Board in 2008. This five-year plan identifies four main goals, two of which include promoting student learning and success and optimizing financial and human resources. The Board also adopted the Northern Marianas College Fiscal Year 2013 Operational Plan Goals and Priorities [IVB:21], which prioritize student success through the following goals: "1. [i]ncrease[ing] enrollment and retention rates[;] 2. [a]ddress[ing] diverse student needs[;] 3. [i]mprov[ing] methods for teaching and assessing student learning[;] [and] 4. [r]emov[ing] barriers that impede on student success."

Overall, as the above information reflects, the Board has put a number of policies in place consistent with the College's mission statement to ensure the quality, integrity, and improvement of student learning programs and services and the resources necessary to support them. Review of some of the methods for how these policies are carried out is ongoing. The Governance Review Task Force is examining the shared governance structure at the College, including the composition and role of the Planning, Program Review and Outcomes Assessment Committee (PROAC) and the Budget and Finance Committee.

Further, the Northern Marianas College Board of Regents, along with the NMC President and members of the Management Team, has been working with members of the legislature to amend the CNMI Constitution to allow the Board of Regents to establish the College's mission statement. As stated earlier, the mission statement is embedded in the CNMI Constitution, which limits the Board's authority to periodically review and update the statement as needed. Both houses of the CNMI legislature recently passed the initiative S.L.I. 17-12 [IVB:22], which will now be included as a measure that voters will vote on in the upcoming election in November.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Ensure the Board of Regents continues on its pace to regularly review and update board policies, which will have the Board permanently move from meeting quarterly to a monthly basis [IVB:8a thru 8f]. Maintaining this momentum will be one of the most valuable actions that will ultimately improve all Board policies and, thus, the function of the Board.
2. Launch a public awareness campaign aimed at educating registered voters in the CNMI about the legislative initiative [IVB:22] that seeks to empower the Board of Regents to establish the mission statement of the College.

In anticipation of the constitutional amendment, the initiative would give the Board of Regents the authority to establish the mission statement. The Northern Marianas College is also moving forward with its strategic planning activities, which will be led by internationally-recognized Dennis Jones, president of NCHEMS, in October 2012. Through a federal grant from the U.S. Department of Interior, the College enlisted Mr. Jones' assistance with the College's long-term strategic plan because of his extensive experience in setting and prioritizing state-wide educational agendas. The strategic plan will include input from students, staff, faculty, administrators, as well as public stakeholders including the governor, legislators, and private sector representatives.

***Standard IV.B1c.*** *The governing board has ultimate responsibility for educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity.*

### Descriptive Summary

The Board of Regents is ultimately responsible for the quality, integrity, and financial stability of Northern Marianas College and the successful completion of its mission. As noted above, this autonomy is outlined in Section 2(a) of Article XV of the Commonwealth Constitution [IVB:9], which states:

The legislature shall establish by law a Northern Marianas College that shall be headed by a president. The president of the college shall be appointed by a representative board of regents. The board of regents shall be appointed to staggered terms by the governor and shall have autonomy in the administration of its affairs and shall formulate policy relating to the higher education needs of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The composition of the board of regents and other matters pertaining to its operations and duties shall be provided by law. (Emphasis added.)

In addition to this provision of the Commonwealth Constitution, the general duties and authority of the Board are re-enforced by 3 CMC § 1304(b) [IVB:10], which directs that “the Northern Marianas College is established as a nonprofit public corporation under the general control and direction of a board designated as the Board of Regents of the Northern Marianas College....”

These provisions in both the Commonwealth Constitution and statutory Commonwealth law stipulate that the Board of Regents is responsible for the quality, integrity, and financial stability of the institution as well as the successful outcome of its educational mission and the use of its financial resources to meet its mission. The Board of Regents has both a broad mandate under Section 2(a), Article XV of the Commonwealth Constitution and 3 CMC § 1304(b) [IVB:9], and is specifically empowered to control the college's affairs, including its financial matters, under 3 CMC § 1316 [IVB:11].

In addition to the Commonwealth Constitution and Commonwealth Code, the Commonwealth Supreme Court has also made clear that Northern Marianas College is an autonomous agency, which further supports the authority of the Board of Regents. In *N. Marianas Coll. v. Civil Serv. Comm'n II*, the Commonwealth Supreme Court explicitly ruled that “NMC is a fully autonomous agency under the CNMI Constitution.” 2007 MP [IVB:17].

The Board of Regents is kept apprised of the College’s effectiveness in ensuring educational quality and maintaining the institution’s financial integrity in numerous ways. Regents are regularly provided information during their monthly meetings through the President’s Report [IVB:23a thru 23c], which is formatted to correspond with the priorities and objectives that the Board has identified. As for legal matters, the Board of Regents has a legal counsel who regularly attends Board meetings to provide updates of pending legal issues or to provide legal guidance when needed.

#### Self Evaluation

As evident from its actions, as well as Commonwealth law and Board of Regents policy, the Board of Regents is ultimately responsible for the quality, integrity, and financial stability of the College and the successful completion of its mission. To fulfill this responsibility, in Fall 2011, the President began presenting program highlights, student achievement data, and peer comparison studies to the Board during its monthly meetings. Some reports have included presentations from the English Language Institute, Counseling Programs and Service, and the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

#### Actionable Improvement Plan

None.

***Standard IV.B1d.*** *The institution or the governing board publishes the board bylaws and policies specifying the board’s size, duties, responsibilities, structure, and operating procedures.*

#### Descriptive Summary

The Board of Regents’ size, duties, responsibilities, structure, and operating procedures are specified in the Board of Regents Policies and Procedures. Board of Regents Policies and Procedures 1001-1030 [IVB:2] details the composition and operations of the Board of Regents and are readily available on the Northern Marianas College Web site at <http://www.nmcnet.edu> [IVB:24].

#### Self Evaluation

The Northern Marianas College Board of Regents has published the board policies specifying the board’s size, duties, responsibilities, structure, and operating procedures on the Northern

Marianas College website which is accessible to the public, staff, students, and constituent groups. The policies are also available through a shared network drive accessible by members of the campus community.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Codify the Board of Regents' policies into a formal set of bylaws to better conform to CNMI statutes, recognizing that all of the Board of Regents' duties, responsibilities, structure, and operating procedures are currently set in the policies that relate to Board operations.

***Standard IV.B1e.*** *The governing board acts in a manner consistent with its policies and bylaws. The board regularly evaluates its policies and practices and revises them as necessary.*

### Descriptive Summary

The Board is transparent in its actions and is governed by Board policies including applicable CNMI statutes to ensure compliance and accountability to its policies, which are reviewed on a regular basis.

First, the Board of Regents adopted a “Board Member Training and Development” policy [IVB:25] on December 23, 2010, which sets forth the training and development requirements that each individual Board member must undergo upon becoming a part of the Board of Regents. The policy also requires all regents to undergo a formal orientation that is conducted by the President and the Chair of the Board. The basic requirements include (ACCJC accreditation basics, Roles and Responsibilities of Trustees, ACCT, etc.) In this regard, the newest member of the Board was provided an orientation several days after he began service on the Board.

Second, the members of the Board conduct self-evaluation of their roles and responsibilities, performance of their officers, and evaluate strengths and weaknesses within the Board. Results of the evaluations guide future training and development for the Board as well as its broader planning efforts. A recent Board Training Workshop, facilitated by the College Brain Trust [IVB:26], covered evaluations of the Board of Trustees.

Third, the Board of Regents adopted a “Disciplinary Action for Board Member Misconduct” policy [IVB:27], which details progressive discipline procedures to be implemented when Board members have violated the code of ethics or any other existing policy.

Fourth, Board decisions are made in open, public meetings that are announced pursuant to the CNMI Open Government Act, 1 CMC Subsection 9901 [IVB:28]. Furthermore, the Board passed BOR Policy 206 “Policy Introduction, Amendment, Passage, Suspension,” [IVB:29] which further details the process by which policies are regularly reviewed and adopted.

Also, the Board assures that all policies are reviewed on a periodic basis. The Board and the

President have continued aggressive efforts to update and review all BOR policies recognizing that many current BOR policies are more procedural in nature. Earlier this year, the NMC Board of Regents approved a six-year policy review calendar [IVB:6] by which all policies will be reviewed and updated. The review process for policies originates from Management Team and is advanced to governance bodies for input and ultimately transmitted to the appropriate Board Committee for review and final recommendation to the full Board.

### Self Evaluation

This renewed focus on updating BOR policies has already resulted in the several new BOR policies adopted [IVB:7] by the Board since President Hart's arrival in July 2011.

The Board recognizes the need to continue reviewing and updating all BOR policies and has continued to meet on a monthly basis [IVB:8a thru 8f] (rather than on a quarterly basis, which schedule had been followed until last year). These additional meetings have also enabled the Board to work more closely with President Hart in conforming to the Carver model of board governance.

Furthermore, as illustrated by the meeting minutes [IVB:8a thru 8f] of each board meeting, the Northern Marianas College Board of Regents' actions are consistent with the policies.

As indicated, the Northern Marianas College has a very thorough policy review and adoption process that encourages participation from the students, staff, and faculty. The review and adoption process occurs in accordance with the six-year policy review calendar [IVB:6] that the Board recently adopted.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Ensure the Board of Regents continues on its pace to regularly review and update board policies, which will have the Board permanently move from meeting quarterly to a monthly basis [IVB:8a thru 8f]. Maintaining this momentum will be one of the most valuable actions that will ultimately improve all Board policies and, thus, the function of the Board.

***Standard IV.B1f.*** *The governing board has a program for board development and new member orientation. It has a mechanism for providing for continuity of board membership and staggered terms of office.*

### Descriptive Summary

The Board of Regents is cognizant of the importance of a sustainable board development program and the need to formally orientate new members of the Board. To underscore this, the Board adopted the "Board Member Training and Development" policy on December 23, 2010 [IVB:25]. The policy states, in part, "[t]o be effective, all members of the Board of

Regents must engage in training on the proper role and conduct of regents, on general governing board relations and practices, on college policy, and on accreditation standards and accrediting commission policy.”

Among several requirements, the policy requires Board members to be trained on board policies and other issues concerning the College. It also requires the provision of a comprehensive manual that contains the College’s mission statement, goals, objectives, strategic plan, board operations policies, financial reports, and other important documents. The manual is provided during the new member orientation.

The Board policy on training and development specifically states that Regents must engage in training on the proper role and conduct of Regents on general governing Board relations and practices, on College policy, and on accreditation standards and accrediting commission policy.

### Self Evaluation

The NMC Board of Regents has a program for board development and new member orientation. Each of the Regents regularly participates in training and development activities that include participation in national conferences that focus on the role of Board members in institutional effectiveness. Further, the Board has a mechanism in place—that is prescribed by CNMI law—that provides for the continuity of board membership and staggered terms of office.

The honorary regents serve as non-voting members of the Board. These honorary regents have not participated in all of the training and orientation activities that the other members have undergone, and the College realizes that this needs to be improved.

Nonetheless, the honorary regents are involved in policy development from the very beginning of the process—when policies are first introduced to the campus for review and input prior to submission to the board. These honorary regents are specifically involved in obtaining input from their respective constituents on board policy.

Regents have participated in training sessions on a number of topics and issues, including “Accreditation 101,” “Boardsmanship and Accreditation,” and “Accreditation Eligibility Requirements and Standards,” and the ACCJC/WASC online “Accreditation Basics Course.”

The members of the Board of Regents have also participated in training activities that include the following:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Organizer</b>
02/19/10	Training Session	Accreditation 101	ALO
02/26/10	Training Workshop	Self-Study Workshop	ACCJC
06/14/10	Training Session	Boardsmanship and Accreditation	PPEC



08/04/10	Training Conference		New Trustee Governance Leadership Institute (Washington, D.C.)	ACCT
09/08/10	Lunch Session	Training	Role of Governing Board	ALO
09/29/10	Training Workshop		FERPA	President's Office
10/13/10	Lunch Session	Training	ACCJC (Site Visit Prep)	ALO
01/05/11	Lunch Session	Training	Governing Board and Institutional Quality & Effectiveness	ALO
02/25/11	Lunch Session	Training	Accreditation Eligibility Requirements and Standards	ALO
03/04/11	Lunch Session	Training	CNMI Constitution, Commonwealth Code, and Standard IV	LinC Director
03/10/11	Accreditation Standards Briefings	Team	Standard 1.A, Standard, 2.A, Standard 2.B, Standard 3.A	President's Office
03/11/11	Accreditation Standards Briefings	Team	Standard 1.B, Standard 3.D, Standard 4.B	President's Office
9/29-30/2011	Board Workshop	Training	Board of Regents and President as a Team / Defining & Avoiding Micromanagement / President and Board Evaluation Processes / Board Officers, Committees, and Officers / Communication Protocols	College Brain Trust
10/12/11	Training Workshop		ACCT 42nd Annual Leadership Congress Conference in Dallas, Texas.	ACCT
10/25/11	Training Workshop		Media Relations Workshop	College Brain Trust (Ray Guiles)
05/04/12	Training Workshop		Board and CEO Assistants Workshop	ACCT
03/20/12	Webinar		"Safeguarding Your Institution: the Board's role in Navigating Disaster"	ACCT
04/20/12	Training Workshop		AACC 92nd Convention (Various Topics)	AACC

The Board of Regents also has a mechanism in place for providing for the continuity of board membership and staggered terms of office. Under 3 CMC § 1312 [IVB:30], “[m]embers of

the board [of Regents] shall serve staggered terms of four years.” Furthermore, under 3 CMC § 1313 [IVB:31], “[a]ny vacancy caused by resignation, removal, death or otherwise shall, within 90 days of the vacancy, be filled for the period of [the] unexpired term . . . .” As such, Commonwealth law provides for continuity and staggered terms in the Board of Regents.

#### Actionable Improvement Items

1. Formalize a standard set of training activities for new members of the Board of Regents ensuring these training activities are completed within a specified time after the member’s term on the Board begins. Include in this training “Accreditation 101,” “Boardsmanship Training,” “Code of Ethics,” and other important topics. Honorary regents to also undergo this training upon the initiation of their term on the Board.
2. Work with the Office of the CNMI Governor to assess Board members’ terms to ensure that they are appointed to staggered terms, as mandated by law. Quite often, unexpired terms remain unfilled for a period of time and as a result, several unfilled positions are filled around the same time resulting in expiring terms happening at the same time as well.

***Standard IV.B1g.** The governing board’s self-evaluation processes for assessing board performance are clearly defined, implemented, and published in its policies or bylaws.*

#### Descriptive Summary

The Board of Regents has a very specific and well-defined policy for its own self-evaluation [IVB:32]. As part of its evaluation processes, the Board members are also asked to evaluate their actions after every Board meeting. The Board will then periodically review the evaluations as a whole and set goals for continuous improvement. This self-assessment will assist the Board in identifying which of its functions are being addressed satisfactorily and which may need improvement.

Furthermore, the Board of Regents has conducted self-evaluation activities as set forth in Board of Regents Policies and Procedures 1024 [IVB:33].

#### Self Evaluation

As indicated earlier, the members of the Northern Marianas College Board of Regents are asked at the end of each meeting to complete a document that deals with that particular Board meeting and the Board’s evaluation of how that meeting went. The Board periodically reviews these assessments as a basis of dialogue in how future meetings can be improved. The evaluation instrument [IVB:34] used for this purpose includes items that speak to the clarity of the board agenda, the preparedness of board members, the board’s avoidance of micromanagement behavior, etc.

Furthermore, the Board of Regents has also refined its annual evaluation procedures through the assistance of College Brain Trust (CBT). Based in Sacramento, California, as the consulting arm of the McCallum Group Inc, CBT has provided a wide-variety of consulting services to more than 30 community colleges in California, Michigan, Wyoming, Idaho and Washington, D.C. A workshop held several months ago was facilitated by Dr. Cindra Smith, a nationally recognized expert in community college trusteeship, and Dr. Walt Packard, who has served as a senior level administrator and leader at a variety of US community colleges.

The workshop focused on strengthening the alignment between performance measures and accreditation standards; and, as a result, a new evaluation instrument [IVB:34] was developed and used for the most recent annual self evaluation conducted on November, 2011. The new evaluation instrument focuses on the following: 1) Mission, Planning and Policy; 2) Board – CEO relations; 3) Community Relations and Advocacy; and 4) Educational Programs and Quality.

As part of its continuous improvement efforts, an Ad Hoc Committee was recently created by the NMC Board of Regents to further improve the Board’s self-evaluation process.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Implement a regular mechanism to evaluate the performance of the leadership (i.e. the elected officers) of the Board. This will ensure that the officers of the Board, including the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer, and Secretary, are also having their performance assessed.

***Standard IV.B1h.** The governing board has a code of ethics that includes a clearly defined policy for dealing with behavior that violates its code.*

#### Descriptive Summary

The Board of Regents has a code of ethics that includes a clearly defined policy for dealing with behavior that is inconsistent with said policy. Their actions, performance, and behavior are guided by Board of Regents Code of Ethics Policy (BOR Policy No. 1019) [IVB:35] which enumerates the responsibilities of each Board member in deference to their oath of office. The policy also addresses conflict of interest issues by stating that Regents must “Disclose to fellow Regents any and all relationships that may be perceived by constituent groups as influencing judgment pertaining to any issue before the Board. Reportable relationships shall include but not limited to blood relationships, current or former professional associations, and personal friendships.”

The Code of Ethics policy is augmented by the “Board of Regents Code of Conduct,” [IVB:36] which is outlined in the Board Member Training and Development Policy (adopted December 23, 2010) [IVB:25]. This policy requires that Board members sign a “Code of

Conduct” [IVB:36] agreement upon acceptance of the position to serve as a member of the NMC Board of Regents.

The Board of Regents Code of Conduct [IVB:36] encourages Regents to speak from the breadth of stakeholder interest, invites others to express their opinion on issues germane to the discussion, discourages Regents from disclosing or discussing “differences of opinion on the board outside of board meetings” and requires regents to “refrain from lobbying other board members outside of board meetings” to prevent “creating factions and limiting free and open discussions.”

The second part of the Code of Ethics policy 1019, “Part B. Censure,” [IVB:35] governs how violations against the Code of Ethics will be treated. The Board of Regents also adopted the “Disciplinary Action for Board Member Conduct” policy (adopted December 23, 2010) [IVB:27] that lays out progressive steps to be taken against any Board member violating a Board policy. These steps include warning, reprimand, censure, and removal from office.

### Self Evaluation

The NMC Code of Ethics policy was recently buttressed by a new policy, BOR Policy 906, “Integrity and Ethics” [IVB:37]. This policy brings the Board of Regents and the entire College into compliance with the Commission’s recently adopted Policy on Integrity and Ethics.

“Integrity and Ethics,” [IVB:37] states, in part, that the “Northern Marianas College shall exhibit integrity and subscribe to and advocate high ethical standards in the management of its affairs and all of its activities dealing with students, faculty, staff, the Board of Regents, external agencies and organizations, and the general public.”

### Actionable Improvement Plans

None.

***Standard IV.B1i. The governing board is informed about and involved in the accreditation process.***

### Descriptive Summary

The NMC Board of Regents is informed and involved at different levels of the accreditation process. Through its policy, “Monitoring College Effectiveness” (effective August 17, 2011) [IVB:38], the Board monitors and assesses data sources that include student goal attainment, course completion, retention rates, job placement rates, assessment methods for direct evidence of student learning, and indirect evidence of student learning narratives that are all directly related to accreditation standards and eligibility requirements.

## Self Evaluation

The Northern Marianas College Board of Regents is informed about and is involved in the accreditation process. To keep itself informed of accreditation requirements, standards, and processes, the Board of Regents, has engaged in many training sessions, which cover topics including the proper role of regents, board leadership and practice, and accreditation eligibility requirements.

Furthermore, on February 19, 2010, the College's Accreditation Liaison Officer conducted a training session with the Board entitled "Accreditation 101." The Pacific Postsecondary Education Council boardmanship training (June 14-18, 2010, Honolulu, HI) provided an in-depth study of the proper role of board members at a community college. The New Trustee Governance Leadership Institute was sponsored by the Association of Community College Trustees followed soon after the Pacific Post-Secondary Education Council training. The chairperson of the Board also participated in the self-study workshop hosted by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges in Guam.

The lessons and insights gained at the Pacific Post-Secondary Education Council and Association of Community College Trustees trainings were reinforced by a series of Board of Regents lunch training sessions, including a session that focused on the role of the governing board and the nature of board leadership within the context of the college's mission. Another session focused on accreditation eligibility requirements and was facilitated by the Accreditation Liaison Officer.

To ensure that Regents remain involved in the accreditation processes, the Board passed on December 23, 2010, a policy on "Board Member Training and Development" [IVB:25] that sets forth certain requirements that each individual Board member must undergo upon becoming a regent. The policy states that "To be effective, all members of the Board of Regents must engage in training on the proper role and conduct of regents, on general governing Board relations and practices, on College policy, and on accreditation standards and accrediting commission policy."

The Board regularly receives information regarding accreditation standards and efforts to improve student learning through its institutional effectiveness policy [IVB:38]. For example, the Nursing certification (NCLEX) passing rates are considered, along with other longitudinal data like enrollment, graduation data, etc.

Board actions, including planning and resource allocation, indicate a commitment to improvements planned as part of ongoing institutional self-evaluation and accreditation processes. The College also regularly examines comparative data [IVB:39] to benchmark many of its resource allocation targets as well as performance goals.

Board actions also reflect its commitment to supporting and improving student-learning outcomes as reflected in the accreditation standards and expectations for institutional improvement. For instance, the Board of Regents discussed and approved several key resources and tools that support improvements in student learning outcomes such as the

English Learning Lab; the Learning in Communities (LinC) initiative [IVB:40]; ARRA/SFSF funding for instructional programs; new assessments such as ReadingPlus, Accuplacer, Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), Survey of Entering Student Engagement, and Community College Learning Assessment (CCLA); Student Learning Outcomes Comprehensive Implementation Program (SLOCIP) [IVB:41]; and the Institutional Excellence Guide [IVB:42].

The Board of Regents is fully informed about institutional reports to the Accrediting Commission of Community and Junior Colleges as well as Commission recommendations to the institution. An accreditation update, in which the College President and Accreditation Liaison Officer (Galvin Deleon Guerrero) provide members of the Board a summary of accreditation-related news and announcements, is a standing agenda item for Board meetings [IVB:8a thru 8f]. The president also regularly transmits accreditation related documents, including all action letters from the Accrediting Commission of Community and Junior Colleges, to the Board by email. These action letters, as well as all institutional reports to the Accrediting Commission of Community and Junior Colleges, team visit reports, and other important accreditation documents are readily accessible on the Northern Marianas College website, [www.nmcnet.edu](http://www.nmcnet.edu) [IVB: 24].

The NMC board of Regents has also taken additional steps to increase its level of involvement in the accreditation process by appointing an Ad Hoc Committee to work with the team tasked with preparing the Standard IV section of the self evaluation report. The Ad Hoc Committee and the Standard IV Team have met on three separate occasions to review drafts of the Standard IV section of the Self Evaluation Report.

More recently, the NMC Board of Regents played an important role in the preparation of the Self Evaluations Report by meeting with each of the standard teams and reviewing their highlights. The Board members provided input and other feedback, which teams incorporated into their narratives.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

None.

***Standard IV.B1j.*** *The governing board has the responsibility for selecting and evaluating the district/system chief administrator (most often known as the chancellor) in a multi-college district/system or the college chief administrator (most often known as the president) in the case of a single college. The governing board delegates full responsibility and authority to him/her to implement and administer board policies without board interference and holds him/her accountable for the operation of the district/system or college, respectively. In multi-college districts/systems, the governing board establishes a clearly defined policy for selecting and evaluating the presidents of the colleges.*

#### Descriptive Summary

The Board of Regents is specifically charged with selecting a president for the college. This responsibility is stated unambiguously in Section 2(a) of Article XV of the Commonwealth Constitution [IVB:9], which directs that: “[t]he president of the college shall be appointed by a representative board of regents.” On December 23, 2010, the Board of Regents passed Resolution 2010-03 (Second Amendment) on December 23, 2010 [IVB:4], which sets forth clear written procedures for how the new president will be selected.

The resolution reflects the statutory requirements for the president set forth in 3 CMC § 1322 [IVB:43] that “[a]ll candidates for the position of president of the Northern Marianas College shall possess at least a graduate degree from an accredited university in the United States or its territories and such other qualifications as the board may determine” and sets forth a clear written process for the Board of Regents to choose the president of the college.

The Board has used the process stated in the aforementioned resolution in its most recent search, which concluded in April 2011 with the hiring of Dr. Sharon Y. Hart, who began service in July 2011.

More recently, the Board of Regents passed Board Policy 203 “President Recruitment and Hiring” [IVB:5]. This policy sets forth a clear protocol for the Board to follow the next time there is a presidential vacancy.

Additionally, the Northern Marianas College Board of Regents has set forth a clearly defined mechanism for evaluating the chief administrator’s performance in implementing institutional policies and achieving institutional goals [IVB:44].

The Board of Regents delegates full administrative authority for the college to the chief administrator. Under 3 CMC § 1321 [IVB:45], “[t]he Board [of Regents] shall appoint a president to serve as the chief executive officer of the college and board.” Board of Regents Policies and Procedures 1009(I) [IVB:46] states that “[t]he president is the chief executive officer of the Northern Marianas College, and in this capacity is charged with full administrative responsibility for the College,” and Board of Regents Policies and Procedures 1002 [IVB:47] directs that:

no individual member of the Board, by virtue of holding office, shall exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the College, nor as an individual command the services of any college employee.

The Board shall delegate authority to the president as the Board’s executive officer and confine Board action to policy determination, planning, performance evaluation, and maintaining the fiscal stability of the College. Problems and issues that arise shall be referred to the president to be handled through the proper administrative channels or be placed on the Board agenda for discussion. In this regard, rather than working directly with staff, it is imperative for Board members to take their concerns directly to the president.

Furthermore, Board of Regents Policies and Procedures 1013 [IVB:48] places administrative control even more firmly in the hands of the president by requiring that:

[t]he Board [of Regents] does not adopt administrative procedures unless specifically required to do so by law, or unless requested to do so by the president. . . . The Board reserves the right to review and direct revisions of administrative procedures should they, in the Board's judgment, be inconsistent with the policies adopted by the Board.

### Self Evaluation

The delegation of authority to the President has been re-emphasized in various Board of Regents training sessions and orientation. To clarify the distinctive roles between the president and Board members, the Board of Regents has also continued to participate in training on the proper roles and functions of board members, including the training facilitated by the College Brain Trust (CBT) on September 29 and 30, 2011.

It is clear from Board of Regents Policies and Procedures that the Board of Regents has delegated administrative power over the college to the president. Furthermore, this delegation has been emphasized to all members of the Board of Regents during new regent orientation and Board of Regents training events.

The former interim president has observed that the numerous training and orientation sessions provided to the Board of Regents have led to a marked improvement in the Board focusing on policy and not on administrative matters. There has also been improvement in communication between the president and the Board of Regents. The current president, Dr. Sharon Hart, continues to work with the Board members to keep the Regents focused on the policy level.

President Hart has worked with the Management Team and the Strategic Planning Task Force to develop goals and priorities for Fiscal Year 2012 [IVB:49]. The goals and priorities are lifted from the current PROA Strategic Plan 2008—2012 (PROA-SP) [IVB:20] and include the following goals: improve student success, optimize financial resources, enhance information technology, focus on Commonwealth workforce development needs, and accomplish other distinctive objectives in an environment of continuous quality improvement. Building on those goals and priorities, President Hart also presented to the Board at its October 12, 2011 meeting a set of Fiscal Year Primary Goals and Objectives [IVB:49]. The Board of Regents has already completed a mid-year evaluation of the president against these performance indicators identified in the document. Additionally, the President's monthly report [IVB:23a thru 23c] is provided in a format that clearly demonstrates the continuous achievement of the goals and priorities established for the year.

An annual Board of Regents calendar [IVB:50] has been developed to incorporate elements of this BOR Policy 201.0 [IVB:38]. This policy also indicates when the Board will receive other important reports such as financial audits and annual reports.



The Regents are regularly provided information during its monthly meetings through the President's report, which includes updates from the Accreditation Liaison Officer. The report is formatted to correspond with the priorities and objectives that the Board has identified and that also addresses accreditation standards.

The Board of Regents has the ultimate responsibility for selecting and evaluating the president using the clearly written procedures [IVB:51] and following the Commonwealth Code as stated above. The process was last used during the most recent presidential search and the hiring of the current president, Dr. Sharon Hart.

The Board of Regents delegates full administrative authority for the college to the chief administrator and must do so under Commonwealth law (3 CMC § 1321) [IVB:45]. Board of Regents Policies and Procedures 1009(I) [IVB:46] states that “[t]he president is the chief executive officer of the Northern Marianas College, and in this capacity is charged with full administrative responsibility for the College.”

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Update the presidential summative evaluation instrument in preparation for the annual presidential evaluation.

***Standard IV.B2.*** *In addition to the leadership of individuals and constituencies, institutions recognize the designated responsibilities of the governing board for setting policies and of the chief administrator for the effective operation of the institution.*

#### Descriptive Summary

The Northern Marianas College has a Board of Regents comprised of seven voting members who are appointed to the Board by the Governor and three non-voting, honorary student, staff and faculty Regents who are elected to the Board by their respective constituent bodies. Board of Regents policies [IVB:2] delineate the specific responsibilities, structure, and operating procedures of the Board, as well as the duties and powers of the Board, which are limited primarily to appointing and evaluating the President of the College, reviewing and approving policies for the College, and periodically reviewing the College's organizational structure, its financial management, and its overall strategic direction.

The NMC Board of Regents has delegated all administrative authority to the President, and the President's duties and responsibilities are specified in both CNMI statute as well as Board of Regents policy. BOR Policy No. 1009 [IVB:46] opens with the following passage:

“The President is the chief executive officer of the Northern Marianas College, and in this capacity is charged with full administrative responsibility for the College. The Board of Regents judiciously recognizes and supports the President as the major line of communication between the Board and the internal and external College community. In this capacity as the Board's Liaison, the President informs

the Board of such communications, and is guided by the policies, general directions, and financial guidelines established by the Board.”

The Northern Marianas College Board of Regents is evaluating a new policy that would further clarify the NMC President’s duties and responsibilities. This policy is currently being reviewed by the respective committees of the Board and is expected to advance in the next several weeks.

### Self Evaluation

While the designated responsibilities of the NMC Board of Regents and the NMC President are clearly identified through statute and policy, both the members of the Board and the NMC President continue to enhance their ability to work as a team.

In a Board of Regents’ training workshop conducted by the College Brain Trust [IVB:26], the trainers indicated that,

“We observed the President demonstrating her ability to work with the Regents. She clearly communicated how she plans to enhance communication with the Regents and others in the college community, e.g. developing an annual calendar for board meetings and a system of monitoring reports, making regular reports to the Board, and expanding the use of comparative reports using peer institutions. We commend these valuable steps for ensuring Board members are informed, and encourage regular weekly or biweekly emails that inform the Regents about ongoing activities of the college.”

To continue this spirit of open communication, teamwork and cooperation and to ensure that the Board is regularly informed about the College’s institutional effectiveness, the NMC president provides a monthly report [IVB:23a thru 23c] that details the College’s progress in meeting the goal and priorities that the Board has identified for the College.

### Actionable Improvement Plans

None.

***Standard IV.B2a.*** *The president plans, oversees, and evaluates an administrative structure organized and staffed to reflect the institution’s purposes, size, and complexity. He/she delegates authority to administrators and others consistent with their responsibilities, as appropriate.*

### Descriptive Summary

The president plans, oversees and evaluates an administrative structure, which includes: institutional effectiveness, finance and procurement, educational programs, human resources, student services, administrative services, and cooperative research, extension and educational services. Further, the size of the administrative structure is appropriate to meet the needs of

the Northern Marianas College with a current credit student FTE population of approximately 1,200.

In his/her leadership role, the president shares in the planning, organizing, budgeting, personnel selection and assessment of institutional effectiveness through the college governance structure. This includes the Faculty Senate, the Staff Senate, Associated Students of the Northern Marianas College, the Academic Council, College Council, the members of the Management Team inclusive of all the Deans and the Budget and Finance Committee (BAFC) which is chaired by the Dean of Administration.

This shared decision-making is reflected, for example, in how budgetary decisions are made within the organization. Each entity of the college is given the opportunity to formulate and manage its own budget (as evidenced in all BAFC meeting minutes) [IVB:53a thru 53c]. Proposals are reviewed by Budget and Finance Committee, College Council, forwarded to the president for review, and then transmitted to the Board of Regents for its final approval (further evidenced in all Board meeting minutes) [IVB:8a thru 8f].

In addition to shared institutional decision making, the President also delegates authority to her administrators and others in the organization consistent with their responsibilities, as appropriate. Hiring decisions, for instance, are made by the deans or the heads of every division. Thus, all personnel decisions about the final selection of qualified and experienced faculty, for instance, are ultimately made by Dean of Academic Programs and Services.

### Self Evaluation

To ensure that the College's administrative structure is appropriate in size and complexity, President Hart tasked the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, to work with the National Center for Higher Education Management System (NCHEMS) to continue developing a peer comparison analysis. Through the Comparison Group Selection Services (CGSS) of NCHEMS, the College has already identified six institutions for peer analysis: Chipola College in Marianna, Florida; Great Basin College in Elko, Nevada; Northern New Mexico College in Espanola New Mexico; Edison State Community College in Piqua, Ohio; Kent State University Salem Campus in Salem, Ohio; and Guam Community College in Mangilao, Guam. The peer comparison analysis [IVB:39] has helped the College evaluate its administrative structure against that of other comparable peer institutions. At the same time, the president is ensuring the administrative structure is organized in accordance with the college's mission statement and purpose.

President Hart has made some adjustments to the membership and structure of the Management Team to help make leadership and College operations more efficient, responsive, and effective. This restructuring was presented to the Board of Regents at its October 15, 2011 meeting.

President Hart has also held Management Team meetings every week, with each meeting running an average of three to four hours. The restructuring of the Management Team and the expanded frequency and length of its meetings have enabled the president and the

Management Team to address-college issues in a timely and expeditious matter. Additionally, it keeps all key managers well informed and involved in all major areas of the organization. The president has also made a practice to empower all of her direct reports to rotate into the role of Acting President in her absence. This process further helps to develop her team to become strong leaders within the college.

To empower the College's leadership, President Hart has worked with the Human Resources Office to modify the process by which employees are hired. After the interview committee recommends the top scoring candidates, the Human Resource Office facilitates a second interview with the hiring authority, usually the dean or director, along with the Chair of the Search Committee. It is this Dean/Director who in turn makes the final selection of the individual to be hired.

In addition to organizing general assemblies and sending email to employees and students, the President continues to work closely with her Management Team to communicate goals, directions and priorities.

At almost every board meeting the college presents monitoring reports [IVB:23a thru 23c] to the board. The purpose of the monitoring reports is to provide the Board with up-to-date information that is research focused and explains the progress in achieving various institutional goals. Most often these monitoring reports benchmark NMC against its peer institutions and/or against Regional/National data. This further helps the Board to determine how well or not the college is achieving its goals.

Brown bag luncheons to open up the doors of communication with faculty and staff, often highlighting our accomplishments, are held during the academic year. This is led by the president and is open to all. Further, Dr. Hart maintains an open door policy, especially for her direct reports, but at the same time has set aside time for regular one-to-one sessions with her direct reports to review departmental and individual performance and progress.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

None.

***Standard IV.B2b.*** *The president guides institutional improvement of the teaching and learning environment by the following:*

- *Establishing a collegial process that sets values, goals, and priorities.*
- *Ensuring that evaluation and planning rely on high quality research and analysis on external and internal conditions.*
- *Ensuring that educational planning is integrated with resource planning and distribution to achieve student-learning outcomes.*
- *Establishing procedures to evaluate overall institutional planning and implementation efforts.*

### Descriptive Summary

The president guides institutional improvement of the College's teaching and learning environment by cultivating a collaborative atmosphere that helps to guide and inform the college community of NMC's goals, plans, and priorities. This environment is framed by participatory governance structure that includes students, staff, and faculty in integrated processes for planning, program review, budgeting, and resource allocation processes.

Additionally, the president submits a status report [IVB:23a thru 23c] at every monthly Board meeting, which appraises the Board on the College's financial, educational, institutional and operational status in relation to the College's institutional goals. This monthly report keeps the Board informed of the various aspects and progress of the College in achieving its identified goals. Weekly the president meets with her Management Team to address/review each unit's various tasks and responsibilities. This also helps to ensure "no surprises" and to keep everyone focused on institutional goals. As the Management Team is composed of all direct reports to the president, elected representatives, plus the Director of the School of Education, this ensures college-wide representation.

The president addresses the college community at least once or more each semester, including meeting with students. Weekly the president meets with the Chairman of the Board of Regents. All of these meetings help the president to stay abreast of current issues/concerns as well as keeping the Board Chair focused on NMC policy and key strategies.

The president is a member of the following organizations: CNMI Chamber of Commerce; Pacific Postsecondary Education Council (PPEC); State Rehabilitation Council, CNMI Energy Task Force and an ex-officio member of the newly created NMC Foundation. Her involvement in these organizations has been instrumental in allowing her to effectively network in the community and to build a relationship with key community leaders. Additionally, she works very closely with the political community, including the Legislature and the U.S. Congressman from the CNMI. President Hart participated in an accreditation visit early this year as a team member to the Defense Language Institute in California.

### Self Evaluation

The process by which the College formulated its PROA Strategic Plan 2008-2012 [IVB:20] evidences the president's ongoing dialogue with the College community over continuous quality improvements. This plan, which identified the primary goals that the College would pursue, is a product of a series of visioning and strategic planning sessions held in the spring and summer of 2008 that included input and discussion by staff, faculty, and students. A draft of the strategic plan had been transmitted to College Council, which is a recognized shared governance body that reviews policies and procedures plus key topics and serves as an advisory body to the President. The plan was then transmitted to the president and ultimately, the NMC Board of Regents.

The participatory process by which the president guides institutional goal setting can also be

evidenced by the organization of the 2010 Planning Summit [IVB:57], which was held on October 1, 2010 at the Fiesta Resort on Saipan. Again, broad input was sought from students, staff, and faculty for the development of a plan that would identify specific objectives and timeline for goals that contributed toward the PROA Strategic Plan [IVB:20].

The president ensures that evaluation and planning rely on high quality research through the efforts of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE), the department primarily responsible for gathering, evaluating, and monitoring institutional data. The OIE supports the data and research needs of all other departments on campus and leads the campus's planning, program review, and evaluation activities. For instance, staff members from the OIE led survey efforts to measure students' responses to questions regarding classroom instruction [IVB:58a thru 58e].

To ensure that educational planning is integrated with resource planning and distribution to achieve student-learning outcomes, the president oversees a comprehensive program review process. That process is detailed in the NMC Institutional Excellence Guide [IVB:42]. Recently, the College used the data obtained from the third cycle of program review to identify institutional priorities, which were then used to guide and inform the College's 2012 budget request to the Commonwealth Legislature. The College is now in its fourth cycle of program review, which is led by the Program Review, and Outcomes Assessment Committee (PROAC).

With the links between programs' outcomes and the PROA-SP's priority initiatives established, the College continues to monitor achievement of those outcomes through annual program assessment using the Nichols and Nichols (2000) five-column model [IVB:59] format for annual program assessment. At the conclusion of the current cycle of program review, when programs report on achieving their respective program outcomes, the College will measure the extent to which it is achieving and implementing the goals and priority initiatives of the PROA-SP [IVB:20].

Planning at the College is guided by the PROA Strategic Plan 2008—2012 (PROA-SP) [IVB:20], which lays out four goals and 28 priority initiatives that serve as general criteria for determining institutional priorities. The PROA-SP was developed following a campus wide "visioning" process and planning workshops during spring and summer of 2008. The Operational Plan (Ops Plan) [IVB:49] supplements the PROA Strategic Plan 2008—2012 (PROA-SP) [IVB:20]. It organizes actionable items in support of the priority initiatives in addition to identifying responsible parties, establishing implementation timelines, and specifying resources needed for each of those actions.

Program review at the College is overseen and facilitated by the Program Review Outcomes and Assessment Committee (PROAC), an advisory body for the president. Program review processes begin with each academic, student services, and administrative program annually using the Nichols and Nichols (2000) five-column model (Form 1) [IVB:59] to identify student learning outcomes (SLOs) and/or administrative unit outcomes (AUOs). Programs develop specific measures and criteria for determining success for each outcome. Data are gathered and analyzed to determine if the outcomes are being met or if

curricular/administrative processes need change. A program's Form 1 is incorporated into its program review report (Form 2) [IVB:60], which provides a comprehensive analysis of the program's effectiveness and presents recommendations for the program and the institution based on a thorough analysis of data.

Academic Council, an advisory body chaired by the Dean of Academic Programs and Services, also facilitates assessment of student learning outcomes at the course level, and works closely with PROAC on all assessment and program review activities. In particular, the Academic Council and the Dean of Academic Programs and Services facilitate and oversee annual course assessment and instructor evaluations in all academic programs.

Budgeting and resource allocation proposals at the College are overseen and facilitated by another advisory body to the president, the Budget and Finance Committee (BAFC). Budgeting and resource allocation proposals are aligned with long-term plans as articulated in the PROA-SP [IVB:20], short-term plans as articulated in the annual Ops Plan [IVB:49], and results from program review. The College relies on its mission, strategic plan, program review results, and annual institutional priorities to guide the budgeting process. PROAC guides the College's program review process and assists in identifying and setting priorities at the program, departmental, and institutional levels. These priorities are compiled in the Composite Report [IVB:61], which, in turn, is used by BAFC the budgeting process.

The chairs of these key governance bodies—PROAC, Academic Council, and BAFC—all sit on the president's Management Team and work closely with the president to ensure that educational planning is integrated with resource planning and distribution to achieve student learning outcomes and overall institutional planning and implementation efforts are evaluated.

On May 18, 2011, the College convened a Strategic Planning Summit [IVB:62], in which the College's Strategic Planning Task Force launched a yearlong collaborative process to begin the next five-year strategic plan process for the College. In subsequent meetings, the task force also worked with President Hart and the College's Management Team to develop a set of planning goals and priorities for Fiscal Year 2012 [IVB:49] that were formally adopted by the Board of Regents at its meeting on September 29, 2011. The goals and priorities are lifted from the current PROA Strategic Plan 2008—2012 (PROA-SP) [IVB:20] and include the following goals: improve student success, optimize financial resources, enhance information technology, focus on Commonwealth workforce development needs, and accomplish other distinctive objectives in an environment of continuous quality improvement. All programs have been directed to complete program-level operational plans using a template provided by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. Programs are expected to submit completed plans to the Management Team by the end of the fiscal year. All administrators will be evaluated at the end of the fiscal year against performance goals identified in action plans of programs under their respective supervision.

The College's planning efforts are also being guided by the white paper [IVB:63] developed by President Hart. Drawing from an article published by Dennis Jones in the January/February 2011 issue of Association of Governing Boards (AGB) Trusteeship entitled

“Protecting and Building Your Institution’s Assets,” President Hart’s white paper emphasizes that the College’s “approach to resource allocation must put the long-term capacity and health of the College at the center of the process...[That approach] must be strategic [and must] protect and enhance our College rather than erode its core capacity and ability.” Laying out five steps for making intentional decisions about budgeting and resource allocation, the president’s white paper has been integrated into the College’s ongoing dialogue about planning, budgeting, and resource allocation.

To ensure the President receives timely data and analysis of institutional performance, the president works closely with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE), the department primarily responsible for gathering, evaluating, and monitoring institutional data. OIE supports the data and research needs of all other departments on campus and leads the campus’s planning, program review and evaluation activities. For instance, staff members from OIE led survey efforts to measure students’ responses to questions regarding classroom instruction.

To make certain that OIE staff members are kept up to date on latest research methods and practices, they regularly participate in training activities to elevate their skills in collecting, processing, and reporting pertinent data. For example, OIE staff members have participated in training activities hosted by the ACCJC and PPEC.

The president also ensures that evaluation and planning rely on high quality research through the efforts of the OIE, the department primary responsibility for gathering, evaluating, and monitoring institutional data. OIE supports the data and research needs of all other departments on campus and leads the campus’s planning, program review, and evaluation activities.

The Director of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, who oversees all institutional research, reports directly to the President and provides regular reports to the Board of Regents, in the Board’s role of monitoring institutional effectiveness.

The president spent the early part of her higher education career as a director of institutional research and evaluation, plus she has taught statistics at the community college level. Thus, the president strongly links data into strategic planning and decision- making. The President submits her reports based on data and analysis.

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness has been tasked to provide relevant and up-to-date monitoring reports to the Board, based on research and comparative analysis (Regional data and that of our peer institutions). As a matter of fact, the Northern Marianas College received a comment from the CNMI’s budget office that NMC is setting the bar/direction as to how all-state agencies should be establishing their budget requests. The College is doing this by including research and national comparative analysis.

The President communicates the importance of a culture of evidence and a focus on student learning through the College’s incorporation of program review requirements into every



employee's job description [IVB:64]. Every employee may be required to participate in program review activities.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Continue to work with the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) to ensure that current planning efforts continue to rely on high quality research and analysis on external as well as internal conditions and to utilize and strengthen NMC's peer comparison analysis. The peer comparison analysis [IVB:39] will help contextualize the College's data and benchmarks that information against data of comparable peer institutions. It will need to be expanded to include other data sets including salary schedules. Additionally, NCHEMS will work with NMC to review this list further and to incorporate additional peers into the mix.
2. Hire a replacement for the previous Director of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness by late September 2012.
3. Continue to analyze data from the Noel-Levitz survey.

***Standard IV.B2c.** The president assures the implementation of statutes, regulations, and governing board policies and assures that institutional practices are consistent with institutional mission and policies.*

### Descriptive Summary

As the chief administrative officer of Northern Marianas College, the president is charged with implementing statutes, regulations, and governing Board policies at the institution as well as to ensure that institutional practices are consistent with the college's mission and policies. These powers and duties are explicitly set forth in the Board of Regents Policies and Procedures [IVB:2]. Policy 203.1 [IVB:65], presently under Board review/approval, will further define the president's authority and responsibility.

The President is the Board's single official link with the College as an organization. The President is accountable to the Board acting as a collective body. At present, the President's responsibilities are:

1. Accomplishment of the Board's policies.
2. College operation within the boundaries established in Board policies.
3. Accomplishment of the responsibilities set forth in the President's position description.
4. Accomplishment of annual goals and objectives established by the Board in consultation with the President.
5. Keeping the Board informed of the identity of the administrator who shall be in charge in case of emergency or temporary absence of the President.
6. The Board as a collective body will assess presidential performance in meeting the above responsibilities through a formal review at the conclusion of the fiscal year.

Further, the President's powers and duties are explicitly set forth in the Board of Regents Policies and Procedures. Board of Regents Policies and Procedures 1009(I) [IVB:46] state:

“The Board of Regents judiciously recognizes and supports the president as the major line of communication between the Board and the internal and external College community. In this capacity as the Board's Liaison, the president informs the Board of such communications, and is guided by the policies, general directions, and financial guidelines established by the Board.”

The broad based powers and requirements of the president under Board of Regents Policies and Procedures [IVB:2] authorize and require the president to ensure that the college's statutes, regulations and policies are implemented and that the college's practices are consistent with them and its educational mission.

### Self Evaluation

In addition to implementing statutes, regulations, and board policies, the President has also established presidential directives that are consistent with the College's mission and policies.

These administrative directives are related to a variety of topics that are communicated to stakeholders. Since 2008, these include the following:

1. Presidential Directive No. 1 – August 24, 2008 (Adjunct Certification Process)
2. Presidential Directive No. 2 – August 24, 2008 (Roof Top Tree Trimming)
3. Presidential Directive No. 3 – August 24, 2008 (Travel Clearances)
4. Presidential Directive No. 4 – November 2, 2008 (Audit Finding – Check Clearing)
5. Presidential Directive No. 5 – November 2, 2008 (Audit Finding – Federal Program Spending)
6. Presidential Directive No. 6 – November 7, 2008 (Purchase Orders)
7. Presidential Directive No. 7 – November 23, 2008 (Limited Term Appointment)
8. Presidential Directive No. 8 – December 4, 2008 (Posting on glass doors)
9. Presidential Directive No. 9 – May 10, 2009 (NMC Logo)
10. Presidential Directive No. 10 – May 24, 2009 (Dean AP&S: Instructor Materials)
11. Presidential Directive No. 11 – July 28, 2009 (Temporary Reporting of Enrollment Manager)
12. Presidential Directive No. 12 – September 1, 2009 (ACCUPLACER, SENSE, and CCLA Assessment Tools)
13. Presidential Directive No. 13 – September 8, 2009 (Temporary Reporting for Financial Aid Office)
14. Presidential Directive No. 14 – October 19, 2009 (NMC Media Protocol DRAFT ONLY FOR REVIEW)
15. Presidential Directive No. 15 – September 21, 2009 (Require Chief Accountant's Initials)
16. Presidential Directive No. 16 – October 17, 2009 (Campus Security and Training)
17. Presidential Directive No. 17 – November 7, 2009 (OVERTIME AND COMP TIME)
18. Presidential Directive No. 18 – May 10, 2010 (No Overtime Compensation)
19. Presidential Directive No. 19 – February 23, 2012 (Bad Debt Write Offs for Northern Marianas College)
20. Presidential Directive No. 20 – June 1, 2012 (Restructuring of College Council)
21. Presidential Directive No. 21 – June 15, 2012 (Security of Public Funds)
22. Presidential Directive No. 22 – August 3, 2012 (Travel Clearance Directive)
23. Presidential Directive No. 23 – August 10, 2008 (Working Together to Reduce Electricity and Water Consumption)

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

1. Continue the College's aggressive efforts to update and review all BOR policies while recognizing that many current Board of Regents policies are more procedural in nature and less policy-oriented. Any and all board policies that are procedural in nature are to be repealed.

***Standard IV.B2d. The president effectively controls budget and expenditures.***

Descriptive Summary

The president effectively controls budget and all expenditures by overseeing the shared governance mechanism designed to monitor and regulate the college's financial activities. With her vast experience as a college president, she has been pivotal in ensuring high financial integrity of the college.

The president does monitor the budget on a monthly basis and implements critical cost saving measures when the cash flow is tight. These measures have been identified through numerous governance involvement as well as college-wide assemblies. Often the College has had to "think out of the box" and has suggested new ways at cutting costs while at the same time continuing to maintain its high financial integrity.

The NMC Board of Regents is reviewing a new board policy that will provide for executive constraints—especially over presidential control over budgeting and expenditures.

Self Evaluation

According to the most recent Report on the Audit of Financial Statements in Accordance with OMB Circular A-133 Year Ending September 30, 2011, an Independent Auditors' Report [IVB:66] found the financial statements of the College present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Northern Marianas College as of September 30, 2011, and its changes in net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the USA. According to the Auditor, for the fourth consecutive year, NMC has had no questionable costs or findings.

The Budget and Finance Committee, chaired by the Dean of Administration, is responsible for reviewing, approving and advising the president on all operational financial matters. It is charged with aligning institutional operational priorities with the allocation of resources; reviewing and adjusting the budget in accordance with present circumstances and future projections; and for producing financial reports.

In preparing the annual operations budget, the Committee leads a budget call and conducts hearings where departmental representatives justify their budget requests using the results of their program review. The Budget and Finance Committee then compiles the budget and submits it to Management Team for final review and approval. Upon its approval, the Management Team will send the budget to the president, who makes the final call on the budget before it is transmitted to the Board for its review. Without the president's endorsement, the budget would be sent back to the Budget and Finance Committee for further review and adjustments. In that sense, the president effectively controls budget and all expenditures.

Personnel comprise approximately eighty percent of NMC's overall budget. New and/or replacement personnel come forward to the Management Team for review and approval, as the key hiring authorities in the college serve on Management Team. All prioritization of positions begin at the department and then division level, and must address institutional goals/priorities, funding sources (if any), and a comparative analysis against peer institutions.

The College has revamped its Budget and Finance Committee to focus on the operational needs of NMC and adopted the President's White Paper [IVB:63] to improve upon and focus on the medium term needs of NMC. Through the adoption of the President's White Paper, decision making on the hiring of personnel was shifted to NMC's Management Team (MT). MT is now the clearinghouse for all strategic personnel needs of the institution. NMC then executes all of the above through its day-to-day operational plans which links the plans all together through its institutional priorities [IVB:49]. The plans and processes described above are funded through NMC's yearly budgeting process, which requires each department to link their financial needs to their operational plans, institutional priorities, and personnel needs as described in their ESIP functions, to the institutional priorities, which is derived from the strategic plan, and the mission of NMC.

Regular financial updates are provided to the Board of Regents as part of the president's report, which is a standing agenda item for every regular Board meeting. In addition, the Budget Officer provides expenditure reports to all expenditure authorities on a monthly basis, and upon request from authorized personnel. These reports inform the expenditure authorities on current encumbrances, budget balances, and any reprogramming adjustments that may be needed.

President Hart has worked closely with the Strategic Planning Task Force and the Management Team to develop a set of planning goals and priorities for Fiscal Year 2012 [IVB:49]. The president wrote and disseminated a white paper [IVB:63] that guides the College's budgeting and planning efforts for the new fiscal year. Drawing from an article published by Dennis Jones in the January/February 2011 issue of Association of Governing Boards (AGB) Trusteeship entitled "Protecting and Building Your Institution's Assets," President Dr. Sharon Hart's white paper emphasizes that the College's "approach to resource allocation must put the long-term capacity and health of the College at the center of the process...[That approach] must be strategic [and must] protect and enhance our College rather than erode its core capacity and ability." Laying out five steps for making intentional decisions about budgeting and resource allocation, the president's white paper has been integrated into the College's ongoing dialogue about planning, budgeting, and resource allocation.

#### Actionable Improvement Plans

None.

***Standard IV.B2e.*** *The president works and communicates effectively with the communities served by the institution.*

#### Descriptive Summary

Board of Regents Policy 1009 [IVB:46] recognizes the role that the College president plays in the community, stating, "The President is an educational leader of the Commonwealth, and as such represents the College in the Community."

Thus, BOR Policy 1009 [IVB:46] clearly sets forth the policy for the president's role in communicating with the communities served by the institution. As the policy states, the president's duties and responsibilities include "Representing the College to the community and maintaining adequate public information service," and "Maintaining open and adequate channels of communication with the internal and external College community."

### Self Evaluation

The president works and communicates effectively with the communities served by the institution. By actively participating in and reaching out to the community, the president advances the image and the reach of the college through leadership and involvement. Since beginning service at the College, President Sharon Y. Hart has met repeatedly with members of the 17th CNMI Legislature. The president has also met with several members of the community since assuming the role of president. These meetings have included meetings with Governor Benigno Fitial, Lieutenant Governor Eloy Inos, CNMI Delegate to the U. S. Congress, Congressman Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan, the mayors of Rota, Tinian, and Saipan, the CNMI Commissioner of the CNMI Public School System, the CNMI Scholarship Board, the president of Tan Holdings Corporation (the largest private employer in the CNMI), the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, and the Rotary Club, to name just a few. Additionally, the president serves on numerous public and private community organizations across the CNMI.

President Hart has also reached out to regional partners in meetings with the Pacific Post-Secondary Education Council (PPEC), University of Guam President Dr. Robert Underwood, and representatives from the University of Alaska, Fairbanks. In addition, she is spearheading the CNMI's upcoming membership in the Western Interstate Commission of Higher Education (WICHE). The CNMI is expected to become a member at the Fall 2012 Commission Meeting of WICHE.

The President also recognizes the importance of community involvement in long-term planning for the College. As such, the College will be conducting a major long-term strategic planning summit, to be held October 1-3, 2012, and facilitated by Dennis Jones, president of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems. Additionally, this process and involvement of the community will help NMC to invest in and assess the needs and role of the College in the Commonwealth.

Internal to the institution, the president has been involved in many College-sponsored activities and events, including visiting students and staff at the Tinian and Rota instructional sites. One illustrative event was a presentation President Hart delivered to College faculty, staff, and administrators at the opening session of the Fall 2011 Professional Development Days. The president's presentation focused on the importance of healthy communication within an institution and reinforced the need to improve communication at the College in order to improve the overall health and effectiveness of the College community. President Hart has also begun a series of "Brown Bag Lunch Sessions" whereby she meets with students, staff, and faculty in an informal setting to discuss a myriad of College issues. Additionally, she disseminates a monthly report to the college community, which shares

progress the institution is making in addressing the key institutional goals.

With the business community's emphasis on preparing a workforce that will replace the contract workers presently employed in the CNMI, the president has worked diligently with her team to set up a US apprenticeship program. Also, with the fact that the College does not offer credit programs on the islands of both Tinian and Rota, the president has visited these islands and their community leaders to emphasize both the apprenticeship program and Ed2Go offerings available through NMC.

Actionable Improvement Plan

None.



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# Summary of Actionable Items



## **SUMMARY OF ACTIONABLE IMPROVEMENT PLANS**

### **Standard I**

#### **I.A2**

1. Undergo a public awareness campaign aimed at educating registered voters in the CNMI about the legislative initiative that seeks to empower the Board of Regents to establish the mission statement of the College.

#### **I.B1**

1. Follow the 2011 Composite Report recommendations to improve program review, annual assessment, and overall planning and budgeting: Invite external reviewers, such as program advisory councils (PACs), to serve as third-party evaluators in program review; enhance the College's student information management system (SIMS) to more quickly and efficiently provide access to student achievement data; provide training on the use of the student information management system (SIMS) in order to enable programs to access and utilize student achievement data; align the program review schedule with the academic calendar in order to allow faculty to participate more in the process and to ensure student achievement data is available to academic programs when needed; records of Dialogue should allow programs to document developments and/or progress not necessarily linked to recommendations from previous program review cycles; enforce deadlines for program review and assessment submissions; provide Form 2 training to Form 2 authors; the Form 2 should be further simplified; explore ways to engage more participation in PROAC and program review, with a particular emphasis on using various electronic media to facilitate participation.

#### **I.B2**

1. Develop a new long-term strategic plan based on institutional, regional, national, and peer data, utilizing the leadership of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS).

#### **I.B3**

1. Move forward to work with the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), especially engaging all stakeholders in the development of a new long-term strategic plan based on institutional, regional, national, and peer data.
2. Hire a new OIE Director to be in place by late September 2012.
3. Test a new DRAFT Financial Plan in fiscal 2013 to focus on the integration of financial planning to institutional plans such as short-term operational plans, medium-term President's White Paper, and the first phase of the Facilities Master

Plan. Reveal the new and improved Financial Plan in fiscal year 2014, linking it to NMC's new Long-Term Strategic Plan.

**I.B4**

1. Continue the Governance Review Task Force (GRTF) in its role to revise the Institutional Excellence Guide to reflect changes to planning, budgeting, and resource allocation at the College and to suggest improvements to these processes.

**I.B5**

1. Complete the hiring process for a new OIE Director. The Director will be in place by late September 2012.

**I.B6**

1. Continue the Governance Review Task Force (GRTF) in its role to revise the Institutional Excellence Guide to reflect changes to planning, budgeting, and resource allocation at the College and to suggest improvements to these processes.

**I.B7**

1. Follow the 2011 Composite Report recommendations to improve program review, annual assessment, and overall planning and budgeting: Invite external reviewers, such as program advisory councils (PACs), to serve as third-party evaluators in program review; enhance the College's student information management system (SIMS) to more quickly and efficiently provide access to student achievement data; provide training on the use of the student information management system (SIMS) in order to enable programs to access and utilize student achievement data; align the program review schedule with the academic calendar in order to allow faculty to participate more in the process and to ensure student achievement data is available to academic programs when needed; Records of Dialogue should allow programs to document developments and/or progress not necessarily linked to recommendations from previous program review cycles; enforce deadlines for program review and assessment submissions; provide Form 2 training to Form 2 authors; the Form 2 should be further simplified; explore ways to engage more participation in PROAC and program review, with a particular emphasis on using various electronic media to facilitate participation.

**Standard II****II.A1b**

1. Revise the Staggered Course Assessment (IIA15) so that it identifies program and student learning outcomes.
2. Incorporate the use of comparable national data to institutional data when evaluating program plans and student achievement.

**II.A1c**

1. Plan a Math and English refresher course or seminar to be offered in the summer before students take the placement tests.
2. Make NMC policies and procedures clearer and aligned with Board of Regents functions and responsibilities.
3. Appoint a coordinator to manage the LinC Program under the Dean of Student Services.
4. Work closely with all programs in getting off of the College's accreditation status of probation and collaborate collegially at maintaining a full accreditation status for NMC.
5. Identify and plan new degree programs to match workforce demands.

#### **II.A2**

1. Obtain certification in DACUMs or related career and curriculum programs with involvement and input from the business community by program as it relates to competencies and related outcomes.

#### **II.A2a**

1. Work collaboratively with the APS leadership, faculty and Academic Council to update the two-year Staggered Course Assessment Schedule.
2. Increase business industry input in program planning and development.

#### **II.A2b**

1. Communicate clearly, Student Learning Outcomes beginning in fall 2012.
2. Evaluate the alignment between stated learning outcomes in the course guides and actual classroom instruction and evaluation.
3. Identify faculty for DACUM certification.

#### **II.A2c**

1. Align all program and student learning outcomes with the Program Review process.
2. Continue to monitor and review the goals and objectives, Program Learning Outcomes and Student Learning Outcomes.

#### **II.A2d**

1. Make available webinars and the Magna Publications subscription throughout the year.
2. Fill vacant full-time or adjunct instructor positions as recommended by the program, based against institutional priorities, peer analysis, and program review.

#### **II.A2e**

1. Formalize the next 2-year Staggered Course Assessment schedule for reviewing courses in all academic degree programs, to include the attainment of proficiency of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) according to the WASC Rubric for Evaluating Instructional Effectiveness – Part III: Student Learning Outcomes.
2. Re-evaluate the need to offer or develop new programs with emphasis on engaging targeted business sectors.

**II.A2g**

1. Implement in the spring 2013 semester, a standardized test tool in accordance with Academic Council [IIA: 32] for Math placement and exit examinations.

**II.A2h**

1. Discuss and review the current federal definition of credit hour as it relates to post-secondary institutions.

**II.A2i**

1. Review and update the “Procedure for Proposing a New Program or Course.”

**II.A3**

1. Use measurable student learning outcomes to ensure the alignment between general education and program requirements.
2. Review and evaluate student learning outcomes in Non-Degree Units in Mathematics.

**IIA3b**

1. Monitor the success of the BE111 College Success course as a core requirement.
2. Refocus the College’s attention in ensuring that capabilities of a productive individual and lifelong learner is accomplished in the General Education and in all College courses by benchmarking the following as a checklist: skills that include oral and written communication, information competency, computer literacy, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis/logical thinking, and the ability to acquire knowledge through a variety of means.

**II.A3c**

1. Include the meaning of an ethical human being and effective citizen: qualities that include an appreciation of ethical principles; civility and interpersonal skills; respect for cultural diversity; historical and aesthetic sensitivity; and the willingness to assume civic, political, and social responsibilities locally, nationally, and globally, in non-General Education courses.

**II.A5**

1. Support of the Apprenticeship Program.
2. Track graduates from academic degree programs in Nursing, Business and Education.

3. Examine local market data to determine new vocational and occupational needs and expectations.

**II.A6a**

1. Submit to UOG course outlines and syllabi to start the review process and articulation.

**II.A7**

1. Update all the academic policies.

**II.A7a**

1. Develop procedures for Board of Regents Policy 301.1 Academic Freedom.

**II.A7c**

1. Develop and distribute a code of conduct handbook.

**II.B**

1. Evaluate the needs of the “non-traditional” student population.

**II.B1**

1. Implement a calendar of events to promote inter-divisional collaboration, better planning and organization.
2. Develop a plan for recruiting, enrolling, and retaining adult students.
3. Develop a plan to provide student services to potential online participants.

**II.B2**

1. Publish a flow chart and timeline to describe the development of the college catalog to improve work processes and publication.

**II.B3**

1. Support the Learning in Communities (LinC) to enhance student learning and achievement.

**II.B3a**

1. Continue efforts to provide online information and services for all current and prospective students.
2. Implement a web-based course registration process to improve access to courses and remove barriers to student success.

**II.B3b**

1. Create more outdoor study and recreational space for the students, including having more durable picnic tables around campus and more outdoor pavilions.

**II.B3c**

1. Assess academic advising services to further coordinate and improve advising services.
2. Provide counseling and academic advising services in a format accessible to online students.

**II.B3d**

1. Encourage more student activities, membership in registered student organizations, participation on college committees and greater involvement in shared governance groups.
2. Develop more cultural exchange programs and multicultural courses to better promote an understanding and appreciation for diversity.
3. Create an annual, college-wide cultural sensitivity training for faculty and staff to better promote the value of diversity.

**II.B3e**

1. Create a central coordinating office for all placements exams.
2. Administer a computer-based math placement test and explore moving responsibilities of placement tests under a centralized office.
3. Evaluate placement tests annually to remove bias and improve score alignment with course placement levels.

**II.B3f**

1. Implement a Records Management Plan.

**II.B4**

1. Integrate results of peer comparison reviews and national assessment tools with institutional planning, setting institutional priorities and processes to better fine-tune the allocation of resources.

**II.C1**

1. Modify the library survey to request specific information on deficiencies in the library collection to better determine customer concerns.

**II.C1a**

1. Review the current staffing levels and compare with peer review staffing analysis to determine the best course of action when vacancy requests are submitted.

**II.C1b**

1. Review the current staffing levels and compare with peer review staffing analysis to determine the best course of action when vacancy requests are submitted.

**II.C1c**

1. Assess the library needs of the students, staff and faculty and modify operations accordingly while working within budgetary constraints. Purchase materials in areas the collection is weakest in as a top priority. Solicit feedback from faculty for purchase requests and review survey comments to improve the collections.

**II.C1d**

1. Continue to install security strips on the Archival collection, keeping in mind the delicacy of some materials. Continue to have security strips installed on new items for the library.

**II.C2**

1. Continue to collect vital statistics through the new Integrated Library System, information desk statistics, library introduction sessions and door count data. Particular attention will be on evaluating services for the online students.

**Standard III****III.A1**

1. Revise and adopt procedures to support Board Policy 501.2 Recruitment and Hiring Practices.

**III.A1a**

1. Revise and adopt procedures to support Board Policy 501.2 Recruitment and Hiring Practices.
2. Create a post-interview survey to improve the recruitment and hiring process.
3. Review and modify the NMC employment application to be more user friendly.

**III.A1b**

1. Review and revise the established performance evaluation tools to improve and enhance the performance evaluation process, specifically addressing measurable institutional goals and priorities.

**III.A2**

1. Hire a Director of Institutional Effectiveness by late September of 2012.
2. Utilize the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) Peer Study on staffing created for NMC. The NCHEMS Peer data will then aide in the prioritization of essential personnel.

3. Establish and effectively execute a recruitment plan for the hiring of faculty positions in a more timely manner.

**III.A3b**

1. Continue to electronically back up all active and inactive employee records.
2. Purchase a fireproof and heavy duty safe for additional security.

**III.B1**

1. Continue to work on identifying funding to undergo major planned CIP projects as identified in the Facilities Master Plan [III.B 2] as per the NMC PROA Strategic Plan 2008-2012 [III.B 6].

**III.B1a**

1. Secure funding to begin the implementation of The Facilities Master Plan [III.B 2]. This includes a ten-phase plan to be accomplished according to a set schedule.

**III.B2a**

1. Secure funding to begin the implementation of The Facilities Master Plan [III.B 2], which encompasses additional classrooms, administrative and faculty offices, laboratory facilities, etc., to encourage and support increasing enrollment of students.
2. Retain an architectural firm to assist with new construction and renovation projects as necessary. As funding becomes available, the College will acquire additional contract personnel to carry out activities called for in the Operations and Maintenance Manual [III.B 2] and to assist with the current maintenance workload. The cost of collateral equipment will be included in construction budgets. The College will continue to secure funding to maintain, repair, renovate, and/or replace facilities, equipment, and fixtures and work to correct deficiencies and make further improvements.

**III.B2b**

1. Review and revise by department annual plans for the replacement of equipment which will be compiled in NMC's Annual Composite Report [III.B 5]. Prior to any project implementation, all projects will be taken through the shared governance process, allowing for input from all areas on campus, utilizing information from the PROA Strategic Plan 2008-2012 [III.B 6] and the Annual Composite Report [III.B 5].

**III.C1**

1. Hire a permanent Director of Information Technology.

**III.C1a**



1. Make request to Management Team in order to hire qualified IT professionals to fill crucial vacant IT positions, mainly the IT Director's position. These positions with justification being linked to strategic planning and comparison to peer institutions.
2. Provide more direction on the formality and legal issues with offering online distance education courses. Assign this task directly to legal counsel for the College.

**III.C1b**

1. Assess faculty competence in technology through a required and routine skills assessment mechanism. The results of this assessment will be used to provide the needed training in technology skills.

**III.C2c**

1. Continue to upgrade computing resources for faculty and students.
2. Acquire additional bandwidth to provide increased access to the Internet.
3. Continue to develop a plan to upgrade secured wireless connectivity within the Saipan Campus.
4. Continue to update the institution's telecommunication system.
5. Backup college data virtually for improved institutional disaster recovery.

**III.C1d**

1. Update the IT Operational Plan, Policy and Procedures to meet the growing needs of the students, faculty and staff.
2. Secure additional funding to complete the implementation of the computer replacement plan that was initiated in 2009.
3. Review and approve a Distance Learning Policy.
4. Open additional computer laboratories to meet needs expressed in student surveys.
5. Move to offer programs 100 percent online, first securing ACCJC approval, in order to better meet the needs of adult learners and those students place bound on Tinian and Rota This cannot happen until NMC has accreditation sanctions removed.

**III.C2**

1. Appoint a permanent IT Director in order to ensure that the IT Director's seat on PROAC is filled. This is necessary to ensure the appropriate involvement of the IT

Department in the program review process. In turn, this ensures that technology planning is fully integrated with institutional planning.

### **III.D**

1. Develop a new and improved Draft Financial Plan to be tested in fiscal year 2013 which focuses on the integration of financial planning to institutional plans such as short-term operational plans, the medium-term President's White Paper [3.D-11], and the first phase of the Facilities Master Plan [3.D-12]. A full and final version of the new Financial Plan will be revealed in fiscal year 2014, with the results of NMC's new Strategic Plan scheduled to be released in fiscal year 2014, as the leading driver for the financial resource directions of the College.

### **III.D1**

1. Modify the 2008 Institutional Excellence Guide [3.D-18] to reflect notable changes and practices needed. Strengthen the ESIPs and improve them to better align and link programs and services to funding. Continue to enhance the Form 3 process as recommended in evaluations [3.D-19]. The development of a new Draft Financial Plan to be tested in fiscal year 2013 to focus on the integration of financial planning to short-term operational plans, medium-term President's White Paper, and the first phase of the Facilities Master Plan. Full implementation of the improved Financial Plan to be revealed in fiscal year 2014, with appropriate modifications and alignment to NMC's new Strategic Plan scheduled to be released in fiscal year 2014.

### **III.D1a**

1. Develop an improved Draft Financial Plan to be tested in fiscal year 2013 which focuses on the integration of financial planning to support institutional plans such as short-term operational plans, medium-term President's White Paper, and the first phase of the Facilities Master Plan. A full and final version of the improved Financial Plan to be published in fiscal year 2014, with the results of NMC's new Strategic Plan scheduled to be released in fiscal year 2014, leading the financial resource directions of the College, as it is firmly linked into institutional planning.

### **III.D2**

1. Complete Negotiations with SAGE Software providers to incorporate a seamless transition for its Human Resources functions, also known as ABRA, and to allow for departments to access the financial information online at any time of the day from any location.

### **III.D2d**

1. Implement recommendations and/or clarifications in a timely manner and/or upon receipt of communication from auditors and federal partners.

**ADDITIONAL ACCJC STANDARD AFTER JUNE 20, 2012**

1. Continue with NMC's Tuition and Fees Taskforce [3.D-33] that has been assigned with coming up with appropriate tuition and fee schedules to address NMC's financial needs, outstanding obligations and other notable liabilities. As NMC completes such report, as well as existing litigation and negotiations between the CNMI Government and Retirement Fund continues, NMC will adopt the appropriate measure to minimize such liabilities and obligations

**Standard IV****IV.A1**

1. Encourage governance bodies and committees to provide minutes in a timelier manner in order to improve communications within the College.
2. Update the NMC website with important Board of Regents minutes, other important information, and publications in order to improve internal and external communications.

**IV.A2**

1. Clarify and communicate governance processes and procedures for all current and future employees. To that effect, the Institutional Excellence Guide to be revised to reflect recent changes made to the College's shared governance model.

**IV.A2a**

1. Continue efforts to better define and communicate the roles and duties of the governance bodies, and effectively disseminate this information to all constituent groups.
2. Evaluate proposals to implement standards for tenure and for rank advancement of faculty.

**IV.A4**

1. Promote increased awareness of the value and necessity of demonstrating honesty and integrity in dealings with external agencies and the Accrediting Commission by continuing to embed accreditation training in all biannual professional development workshops.

**IV.A5**

1. Continue to actively evaluate the College's governance and decision-making structures and processes as part of the College's overall data-driven continuous quality improvement.

**IV.B**

2. Further assure the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of student learning programs and services and the financial stability of the College by having the Board of Regents focus on new policies and initiatives, including ones that shift the focus of the College's financial reliance on the central government to external sources of funds, including more federal grants, foundation support, and alumni contributions.

**IV.B1a**

1. Provide further and regular Board of Regents training for all board members. Continue to focus the Board on what constitutes appropriate board behavior, which has helped resolve many of the issues the Board has previously had difficulties with. Continue with the monthly Board of Regents evaluation process.

**IV.B1b**

1. Ensure the Board of Regents continues on its pace to regularly review and update board policies, which will have the Board permanently move from meeting quarterly to a monthly basis [IVB:8a thru 8f]. Maintaining this momentum will be one of the most valuable actions that will ultimately improve all Board policies and, thus, the function of the Board.
2. Launch a public awareness campaign aimed at educating registered voters in the CNMI about the legislative initiative [IVB:22] that seeks to empower the Board of Regents to establish the mission statement of the College.

**IV.B1d**

1. Codify the Board of Regents' policies into a formal set of bylaws to better conform to CNMI statutes, recognizing that all of the Board of Regents' duties, responsibilities, structure, and operating procedures are currently set in the policies that relate to Board operations.

**IV.B1e**

1. Ensure the Board of Regents continues on its pace to regularly review and update board policies, which will have the Board permanently move from meeting quarterly to a monthly basis [IVB:8a thru 8f]. Maintaining this momentum will be one of the most valuable actions that will ultimately improve all Board policies and, thus, the function of the Board.

**IV.B1f**

1. Formalize a standard set of training activities for new members of the Board of Regents ensuring these training activities are completed within a specified time after the member's term on the Board begins. Include in this training "Accreditation 101," "Boardsmanship Training," "Code of Ethics," and other important topics.

Honorary regents to also undergo this training upon the initiation of their term on the Board.

2. Work with the Office of the CNMI Governor to assess Board members' terms to ensure that they are appointed to staggered terms, as mandated by law. Quite often, unexpired terms remain unfilled for a period of time and as a result, several unfilled positions are filled around the same time resulting in expiring terms happening at the same time as well.

**IV.B1g**

1. Implement a regular mechanism to evaluate the performance of the leadership (i.e. the elected officers) of the Board. This will ensure that the officers of the Board, including the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer, and Secretary, are also having their performance assessed.

**IV.B1j**

1. Update the presidential summative evaluation instrument in preparation for the annual presidential evaluation.

**IV.B2b**

1. Continue to work with the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) to ensure that current planning efforts continue to rely on high quality research and analysis on external as well as internal conditions and to utilize and strengthen NMC's peer comparison analysis. The peer comparison analysis [IVB: 39] will help contextualize the College's data and benchmarks that information against data of comparable peer institutions. It will need to be expanded to include other data sets including salary schedules. Additionally, NCHEMS will work with NMC to review this list further and to incorporate additional peers into the mix.
2. Hire a replacement for the previous Director of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness by late September 2012.
3. Continue to analyze data from the Noel-Levitz Survey.

**IV.B2c**

2. Continue the College's aggressive efforts to update and review all BOR policies while recognizing that many current Board of Regents policies are more procedural in nature and less policy-oriented. Any and all board policies that are procedural in nature are to be repealed.



Northern Marianas College | 2012 Self Evaluation Report

# Directory Evidence

eightth  
edition  
Understanding  
BUSINESS



**Evidence List:****Standard IA**

IA 1	Sample Form 1 (Nichols and Nichols (2000) Five Column Model)
IA 2	Expanded Statements of Institutional Purpose (ESIPs)
IA 3	PROA STRATEGIC PLAN 2008—2012
IA 4	Sample Form 2
IA 5	Sample Form 3
IA 6	Goldstein (2012) “A Guide to College and University Budgeting” as published by the National Association of Colleges and Universities (NACUBO).
IA 8	2012 Legislative Initiative

**Standard IB**

IB 1	Board of Regents Policy 201, <i>Monitoring Institutional Effectiveness</i>
IB 2	Institutional Excellence Guide
IB 3	Five-Column Model (Form 1)
IB 4	Program Review Report (Form 2)
IB 5	Record of Dialogue
IB 6	Cyclical program review calendar
IB 7	Form 2 rubrics and evaluation sheet
IB 8	2011 Composite Report
IB 9	Governance Evaluation Survey
IB 10	PROA Strategic Plan 2008—2012 (PROA-SP)
IB 11	The Operational Plan (Ops Plan)
IB 12	Planning goals and priorities for Fiscal Year 2012
IB 13	President Hart’s white paper
IB 14	Form 3 timeline
IB 15	Form 3 template
IB 16	Form 3 procedures
IB 17	Form 3 process
IB 18	GRTF Evaluation Instrument

**Standard IIA**

IIA 1	Mission (Catalog 2012-2013 pg.5)
IIA 2	Institutional Experience Guide
IIA 3	Degree Programs (IDP's)
IIA 4	Re-Organization Hart
IIA 5	Distance Learning Education Director
IIA 6	Nichols 5 Column Model Form 1/2
IIA 7	Course Assessment / Instructor Evaluation
IIA 8	Demographics and Achievement
IIA 9	Registration Surveys
IIA 10	BE111 In Core Requirements
IIA 11	BE 111
IIA 12	End-Course Assessment
IIA 13	Program Advisory Council



IIA 14	NCLEX / Praxis
IIA 15	Staggered Course Assessment Schedule
IIA 16	AC Course Guides (SLO's)
IIA 17	PLO's (Catalog 2012-2013 pgs. 82-121)
IIA 18	Senior Commission WASC
IIA 19	SOE PLO / SLO
IIA 20	Student Success
IIA 21	PLO / SLO
IIA 22	GELO / PLO - Syllabus
IIA 24	Line Evaluations
IIA 25	Staggered Course
IIA 26	ECAC
IIA 27	Program Advisory Councils
IIA 28	Academic Council Minutes - BOR Policy 4467
IIA 29	EN 202 / BE 111
IIA 30	Community Development Institute Procedures
IIA 31	CREES
IIA 33	Course Grading
IIA 34	Pohnpei Accord
IIA 35	Various Course Grading
IIA 36	Liberal Arts Coordinator / Director / Academic Council minutes
IIA 37	BOR policy 3008
IIA 38	BOR Policy 3002
IIA 39	Gen Ed
IIA 40	BOR Policy 3009
IIA 41	BOR Policy 3008
IIA 42	BOR Policy 3010
IIA 43	301.1 Academic Freedom
IIA 44	BOR Policy 906 Integrity Ethics
IIA 45	HRO Procedure - Academic Honesty Employees
IIA 46	Personal Contracts Faculty and Staff
IIA 47	SOE Student Handbook

## Standard IIB Student Support Services

IIB 1	NMC Enrollment by Academic Year and Term 1994-1995 to 2011-2012 Report
IIB 2	NMC DSS Enrollment Report. September 28, 2011
IIB 3	Spring 2012 Student Enrollment Data. February 8, 2012
IIB 4	Start Smart Seminar Results of Surveys/Evaluations. November 18, 2011
IIB 6	Student Registration Survey Report 2006-2012
IIB 7	Admission Process Survey
IIB 16	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, p. 5
IIB 16	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, p. 5
IIB 17	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 122-160
IIB 18	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 79-111
IIB 19	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 1-3
IIB 20	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 66-67
IIB 21	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 79-111

IIB 22	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, p. 81
IIB 24	<b>NMC 2012-2013 Catalog</b> , p. 4-7, 8-13, 19-24, 163-164
IIB 25	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 165-167
IIB 26	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 4-7
IIB 27	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 26-39
IIB 28	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 24-25
IIB 29	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 44-46
IIB 30	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 46
IIB 31	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 49-50
IIB 32	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 48-49
IIB 33	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 50
IIB 34	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 35-38
IIB 35	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 38-39
IIB 36	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 73-78
IIB 37	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 75
IIB 38	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 63-73
IIB 39	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 65
IIB 40	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, p. 78
IIB 41	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 35-38
IIB 42	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 38-39
IIB 43	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, p. 76
IIB 44	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, p. 70
IIB 45	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, p. 78
IIB 46	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, p. 46
IIB 47	Conditions of Employment: Faculty and Non-Instructional Contract
IIB 48	<a href="http://www.nmcnet.edu">http://www.nmcnet.edu</a>
IIB 49	Admission Application Form
IIB 50	Student Appeal and Grievances Brochure
IIB 51	English Placement Slip Sample
IIB 52	Free Application for Federal Student Aid
IIB 53	FAFSA
IIB 54	Disability Support Services
IIB 55	UPWARD BOUND
IIB 56	Counseling 3rd Cycle Form 2
IIB 57	OIE Presentation to the Academic Council. October 25, 2010
IIB 58	National Summer Institute on Learning Communities Application Packet
IIB 59	BOR Policy 704.601 International Student Fee
IIB 60	International Student Questionnaire
IIB 61	Email Communication: "Key Changes in DSS". March 7, 2012
IIB 62	Division of Student Services Faculty and Staff July 2011
IIB 65	Division of Student Services Peer Staffing Patterns
IIB 66	<a href="http://www.cas.edu/index.php/about/applying-cas/">http://www.cas.edu/index.php/about/applying-cas/</a>
IIB 67	<a href="http://www.library.nmcnet.edu">http://www.library.nmcnet.edu</a>
IIB 68	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 8-19
IIB 69	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 26-43
IIB 70	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 51-62

IIB 71	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 10-11
IIB 72	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 14-15
IIB 73	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, p. 13
IIB 74	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 11-12
IIB 75	NMC New & Returning Student Orientation Booklet
IIB 76	NMC Registration Survey – Longitudinal Analysis: Fall 2008-Spring 2011
IIB 77	BOR Policies 8003-8003.6
IIB 78	BOR Policy 8004
IIB 79	BOR Policy 8004.1
IIB 80	Catalyst for Change: ASNMC Leadership Summit Event Evaluation
IIB 81	Today at NMC email
IIB 82	Registration Information Booklet
IIB 83	NMC 2012-2013 Catalog, pp. 14-15
IIB 86	ASNMC Spring 2012 Assembly Program Agenda
IIB 87	Email Communications: “Nihon Univ. Visit to NMC”. September 6, 2011
IIB 88	Academic Council October 3, 2011 Meeting Minutes
IIB 89	NMC 2013-2014 Catalog, P. 17
IIB 90	BOR Policy No. 8004.2
IIB 91	BOR Policy No. 8001
IIB 92	Accuplacer Manual
IIB 93	Accuplacer Report. September 2009
IIB 95	Confidentiality of Records Agreement form
IIB 96	Directory Information form
IIB 97	NMC 2013-2014 Catalog, pp. 73-74
IIB 98	BOR Policy No. 8202 Access to Student Records
IIB 99	BOR Policy No. 8203 Student Educational Rights and Privacy
IIB 100	OAR Standard Operating Procedures
IIB 101	FERPA Trainings
IIB 102	Student Learning Outcomes Comprehensive Implementation Program (SLOCIP)
IIB 103	2011 Composite Report
IIB 104	2010 Composite Report
IIB 105	Spring 2011 Class Schedule Booklet
IIB 106	Survey of Entering Student Engagement. NMC 2010 Key Findings
IIB 107	Enrollment by Age for Fall's 2010, 2011, and 2012
IIB 108	2011 PSS HS Graduates at NMC 2011-12 MA PL by Schools

## Standard IIC

IIC 1	NMC Catalog Library
IIC 2	Staff PD

## Standard IIIB

IIIB 1	NMC Operations and Maintenance Manual
IIIB 2	NMC Facilities Master Plan. BECA
IIIB 3	FMP Building Condition Assessment

IIIB 4	FMP Capital Cost Plan
IIIB 5	2011 Composite Report
IIIB 6	PROA Strategic Master Plan 2008-2012
IIIB 7	NMC PWS Contract
IIIB 8	NMC Conservation Report Final
IIIB 10	Campus Safety and Security Survey Results
IIIB 11	2012 Campus Energy Efficiency Improvements
IIIB 13	NMC Saipan, Tinian, Rota Campus maps and Title Documents

### Standard IIIC

IIIC2	2008-2012 Strategic Plan
IIIC6	NMC Courses.nmcnet.edu
IIIC7	NMC Website Link
IIIC8	CBT Nuggets
IIIC9	IT Staff Professional Training
IIIC10	Atomic Learning
IIIC11	FASGov Software
IIIC12	IT Resource Guide
IIIC13	Help Desk
IIIC16	Marianas Wireless Access Points
IIIC22	Laptop Purchase
IIIC23	VCT Upgrade
IIIC24	Sysco Network
IIIC25	Integrated Library System
IIIC26	Computer Replacement Plan in our Comp. Lab
IIIC27	Satisfaction Survey IT Resource Guide

### **Standard 3D Evidence List**

IIID 1	Deloitte and Touche, LLC Single Audit on NMC for Fiscal Year 2008
IIID 2	Deloitte and Touche, LLC Single Audit on NMC for Fiscal Year 2009
IIID 3	Deloitte and Touche, LLC Single Audit on NMC for Fiscal Year 2010
IIID 4	Deloitte and Touche, LLC Single Audit on NMC for Fiscal Year 2011
IIID 5	Procurement and Property Management Manual 2011
IIID 6	NMC's Budget Process
IIID 7	Sample Form 3
IIID 8	Sample Planned Budget Analysis Form
IIID 9	Sample Composite Report
IIID 11	President's White Paper
IIID 12	Facilities Master Plan
IIID 13	PROA Strategic Plan 2008-2012
IIID 14	Expanded Statements of Institutional Purpose (ESIPs)
IIID 15	Sample Departmental Operations Plan
IIID 16	Sample Institutional Priorities

IIID 18	2008 Institutional Excellence Guide
IIID 19	Form 3 Evaluation
IIID 23	Sample Form 1
IIID 24	Sample Form 2
IIID 26	Sample Monthly Budgetary Status Reports
IIID 27	Sample Monthly Encumbrance Reports
IIID 28	Sample Quarterly Budget Reports
IIID 29	Sample Yearly Operations Budget
IIID 30	Sample Yearly Appropriations Budget
IIID 31	Sample Dean of Administration Financial Status Reports (FSR)
IIID 32	Sample Management Review and Discussion Analysis (MRDA). See Audits.
IIID 33	Tuition and Fees Task Force
IIID 34	Sample NMC Retreat Notes
IIID 36	Sample Board of Regents Meeting Minutes
IIID 37	Sample Human Resources Recruitment Form
IIID 38	Governor's 2013 Budget Submission to the CNMI Legislature
IIID 39	2008 Letter from Governor on the Retirement Fund Liabilities
IIID 40	Sample of Compliance with the Office of the Public Auditor Recommendations
IIID 41	U.S. Department of Education Program Determination Letters
IIID 42	U.S. Department of Agriculture Communications Letter
IIID 43	NMC's Public Law 17-47 Financial Report
IIID 44	Sample Travel Quotation Form
IIID 45	Sample Federal Time and Effort Time Sheet
IIID 46	Position Paper on Student Loans
IIID 47	Role of Budget and Finance Committee
<b>Standard IVA</b>	
IVA1	PROA Strategic Plan 2008-2012
IVA2	NMC 2011-2012 Goals and Objectives
IVA3	NMC Mission and Program Mission Statements
IVA4	BOR Policy 206
IVA5	BOR Policy 202.3
IVA6	CNMI Constitutional Article 15-Education
IVA7	CNMI Senate Legislative initiative 17-12 Draft
IVA8	BOR 6-year Calendar
IVA9	BOR List of Approved Policies
IVA10	BOR Policy 200.1
IVA11	Governance Evaluation Survey Results
IVA12	President Memo March 2012
IVA13	PROA News Letter
IVA14	DSS In Service Agenda May 24 2012
IVA15	BOR Policy 906
IVA16	Employee Contract Provision requiring participation in Accreditation standards activities and compliance
IVA17	Human Resources Policy
IVA18	Show Cause Question & A (Two documents)
IVA19	Dr. Harts August 9 presentation titled " <i>Communications</i> "
IVA20	BOR Policy 201

IVA21	Institutional Excellence Guide
IVA22	Student Learning Outcomes Implementation Program
IVA23	Five Column Model Form 1 Sample
IVA24	Program Review Report Form 2 Template
IVA26	Annual Goals and Objectives

### Standard IV B

IVB1	BOR Policy 303.1 “Program Guarantee”
IVB2	BOR Policies & Procedures 1001-1030
IVB3	BOR Policy 704.6 “International Student Fee”
IVB4	BOR Resolution No. 2010-03 (Second Amendment)
IVB5	BOR Policy 203 “President Recruitment and Hiring” (draft)
IVB6	Six-Year Policy Review Calendar
IVB7	List of recently adopted policies
IVB8a thru 8f	BOR meetings (last 3 meetings’ agenda and minutes)
IVB9	Section 2(a) of the Article XV of the Commonwealth Constitution
IVB10	3 CMC § 1304(b)
IVB11	3 CMC § 1316
IVB12	3 CMC § 1311
IVB13	3 CMC § 1315
IVB14	BOR Policy 1022
IVB15	Commonwealth Government Ethics Code Act of 1992
IVB16	BOR Resolution 2011-03
IVB17	<i>N. Marianas College v. Civil Serv. Comm’n II</i> , 2007 MP 8
IVB18	Senate Bill 17-26
IVB19	Governor’s Executive Order 2010-11
IVB20	PROA 2008-2012 Strategic Plan
IVB21	President’s Fiscal Year 2013 Operational Plan Goals and Priorities
IVB22	S.L.I. 17-12
IVB23a-23c	President’s Report (last 3 meetings)
IVB24	<b>Northern Marianas College Web site at <a href="http://www.nmcnet.edu">http://www.nmcnet.edu</a></b>
IVB25	“Board Member Training and Development” Policy
IVB26	College Brain Trust
IVB27	“Disciplinary Action for Board Member Misconduct” Policy
IVB28	CNMI Open Government Act, 1 CMC Subsection 9901
IVB29	BOR Policy 206 “Policy Introduction, Amendment, Passage, Suspension,” (draft)
IVB30	3 CMC § 1312
IVB31	3 CMC § 1313
IVB32	BOR Policy No. 1016
IVB33	BOR Policies and Procedures 1024
IVB34	BOR Evaluation Instrument
IVB35	Code of Ethics policy 1019, Part B “Censure”
IVB36	“Board of Regents Code of Conduct” Agreement
IVB37	BOR Policy 906 “Integrity and Ethics”
IVB38	BOR Policy 201 “Monitoring College Effectiveness”
IVB39	Comparative Data (Peer Comparison Analysis)

IVB40	Learning in Communities (LinC) Initiative
IVB41	Student Learning Outcomes Comprehensive Implementation Program (SLOCIP)
IVB42	Institutional Excellence Guide
IVB43	3 CMC § 1322
IVB44	President's Evaluation Instrument
IVB45	3 CMC § 1321
IVB46	BOR Policies and Procedures 1009(I)
IVB47	BOR Policies and Procedures 1002
IVB48	BOR Policies and Procedures 1013
IVB49	Fiscal Year 2012 Operational Plan Goals and Priorities
IVB50	BOR Annual Calendar
IVB51	BOR Policy 1017
IVB53a-53c	BAFC meeting minutes (last 3 meetings)
IVB56	Strategic Plan
IVB57	2010 Planning Summit (Agenda)
IVB58a, 58b, 58c, 58d, 58e	Noel Levitz survey
IVB59	Nichols and Nichols (2000) five-column model
IVB60	Form 2
IVB61	Composite Report
IVB62	Strategic Planning Summit (Memo)
IVB63	NMC White Paper based on "Protecting and Building Your Institution's Assets" article
IVB64 –	Job Vacancy Announcement
IVB65 –	BOR Policy 203.1
IVB66 -	FY2011 Audit Report