



**Northern Marianas College
Accreditation Reaffirmation Action Plan (ARAP)
Update 1: July 30, 2010**

(Note: The following update was emailed from NMC Accreditation Liaison Officer Galvin Deleon Guerrero to the NMC campus community on July 30, 2010.)

ARAP SCHEDULE

To help you keep track of the College's ARAP progress, please refer to the attached ARAP Schedule. In particular, we want to notify you about a General Assembly on Thursday, August 12, at 8:30 a. m. (location TBA). At the assembly, we will distribute copies of the draft ARAP, provide an overview of plan, and answer a few questions and concerns.

Also, please note that this schedule was developed to give everyone at the College an opportunity to participate, provide input, and help in getting accreditation reaffirmed. We hope and trust that you will do your part.

MAKING SENSE OF IT ALL...

The June 30, 2010 ACCJC Show Cause letter cites six Eligibility Requirements, seven Standards, and ten recommendations, all of which are interrelated and interconnected. To help make sense of it all, the attached "ACCJC 06.30.10 Show Cause Summary Matrix" links the ERs, standards, and recommendations on a matrix sheet and summarizes each ER, standard, and recommendation.

TEAM UPDATES

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

That is why everyone at the college—faculty, staff, and students—is encouraged to sign up for any of the following teams by contacting the team leaders listed.

I.A: Mission

Team Leader

Dr. Patrick Moran, Director of School of Education

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The team is reviewing the mission as well as all college programs to identify concrete ways in which the mission can be genuinely integrated into all processes, activities, and decisions at the college.

I.B: Improving Institutional Effectiveness

Team Leader:

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

galving@nmcnet.edu

The team is exploring how institutional data and information about institutional effectiveness can be conveyed more clearly and routinely at all levels in the College, from individual programs up to the Board of Regents. By more effectively sharing and analyzing such information, all governance bodies at the College will be better positioned to engage in ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning to refine its key processes and improve student learning. For example, the team is developing a “dashboard” approach to presenting key data to governance bodies.

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

Team Leaders:

Barbara Merfarlen, Dean of Academic Programs and Services

barbaram@nmcnet.edu

Leo Pangelinan, Dean of Student Services

leop@nmcnet.edu

Maria Aguon, Program Coordinator, Tinian Instructional Site

mariaa@nmcnet.edu

Daniel Kintol, Acting President, Associated Students of NMC

danielk@nmcnet.edu

Cynthia Deleon Guerrero, Director, Office of Admissions and Records

cynthiad@nmcnet.edu

The team is closely studying current and proposed Human Resources (HR) policies that bear on instructional programs and student services to address concerns raised by ACCJC. Since Standard II.A and ACCJC

Recommendation #8 relate specifically to faculty, the team is also aggressively recruiting faculty to participate in the team's work.

III.A: Human Resources

Team Leaders:

Barbara Hunter, Acting Manager, Human Resources Office
bobbieh@nmcnet.edu

Daisie M. Camacho, Acting Director, Information Technology
daisiec@nmcnet.edu

Larry Lee, President, Faculty Senate
larryl@nmcnet.edu

The team is focusing its energy and attention on the proposed revisions to the College's Human Resources (HR) policies to address ACCJC Recommendation #6. The team is also reviewing the proposed revisions to address the historically high turn-over rate of faculty, staff, and administrators at the College.

III.D: Financial Resources

Team Leaders:

Henry Hofschneider, Chief Financial and Administrative Officer
henryh@nmcnet.edu

David Attao, Acting Dean, Community Programs and Services
dattao@nmcnet.edu

Ross Manglona, Director, Cooperative Research and Extension Education Services (CREES)
rossm@nmcnet.edu

Martin Mendiola, Program Coordinator, Rota Instructional Site
martinm@nmcnet.edu

The team is developing a detailed corrective action plan to address the findings of recent financial audits. The team is also exploring policies, enforcement measures, and training opportunities to ensure that similar findings do not recur in future audits.

IV.B: Board and Administrative Organization

Team Leaders:

Lorraine T. Cabrera, Interim President
lorrainec@nmcnet.edu

Frankie Eliptico, Director, Office of Institutional Advancement
frankiee@nmcnet.edu

Clarice Deleon Guerrero, President, Staff Senate
clariced@nmcnet.edu

The team is developing and reviewing a number of proposed Board of Regents policies for Board autonomy, Board members' training, policy development and review, and a policy regarding the filling of vacancies on the Board. To highlight NMC's autonomy from other government offices/branches, a draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between NMC and the Governor's Office and the Legislature is being considered. Further, the Board continues its training by participating in boardsmanship training (sponsored by the Pacific Post-secondary Education Council), governance/leadership training (sponsored by the Association of Community College Trustees), and follow up sessions to cover all the topics from the boardsmanship training in more complete detail. Further, as mentioned, the Board recently adopted Board Resolution 10-03 (as amended) to govern the presidential search process, which is now in process.

SELF STUDY APPROACH

You may notice that the above ARAP teams are patterned after an ACCJC Self-Study model. That is because, as Interim President Cabrera stated in her memorandum last week, we are treating accreditation reaffirmation efforts as a mini-self-study. Indeed, the level of participation and the depth of assessment of our College required for a self-study are required now to address ACCJC's concerns, have Show Cause removed, and have our accreditation reaffirmed.

To that effect, it would help to reacquaint ourselves with what ACCJC requires and encourages for a self-study, as stated in the 2009 edition of the "ACCJC Self Study Manual":

"Assess how well an institution meets Accreditation Standards, Eligibility Requirements, and policies of the Commission and to stimulate improvement of educational quality and institutional performance."

"Self appraisal requires a conscious and self-reflective analysis of strength and weaknesses and an examination of every aspect of institutional function against Commission Standards."

"The institution is expected to analyze and systematically evaluate what it has learned/knows about itself in terms of the standards. The basic questions have to do with whether or not and to what degree institutional evidence demonstrates that the institution meets the standards and how the institution has reached this conclusion. This analysis should result in actionable conclusions about institutional effectiveness and capacity, informing decisions for what needs to be done to improve."

"Statements of the plans, activities, and processes (as opposed to tasks) the institution expects to implement as a statement of what the institution thinks it will do."

"Discussion of the ways the areas identified in need of improvement will be or have been incorporated into the ongoing, systematic evaluation and planning processes of the institution."

"Discussion of how the outcomes of these plans, activities and processes are expected to improve student learning and foster institutional improvement in general."