

## **Follow-Up Report**

**PALAU COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
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**Koror, Republic of Palau 96940**

**A Confidential Report Prepared for the Accrediting Commission  
for Community and Junior Colleges**  
**This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited**

**Palau Community College**

**on**

**April 2 - April 3, 2012**



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## **Palau Community College Evaluation Team Follow Up Report**

### **Introduction**

At its meeting of June 8-10, 2011, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges reviewed the *Follow-Up Report* submitted by Palau Community College (PCC) and the *Follow-Up Report* of the evaluation team which visited PCC on Monday, March 28, 2011 - Friday, April 1, 2011. The Commission took action to “remove Warning, reaffirm accreditation,” and required that the College complete a Follow-Up Report by March 15, 2012, which would demonstrate that Palau CC had addressed the recommendations noted below, completed the resolution of deficiencies, and therefore met Accreditation Standards.

### **Recommendation #1:**

**Improving Institutional Effectiveness** - To respond fully to the previous team’s (2004) Recommendation 1, 2 and 3 concerning the increase of institutional effectiveness and student learning through the use of a systematic cycle of planning and evaluation, e.g., as applied to the college’s efforts to integrate planning with resource development and allocations, to improve learning and success through identifying and assessing student learning outcomes, and to conduct systematic program review, respectively, the team recommends the college do the following:

- a. Develop and implement a strategy that ensures appropriate feedback and dialogue wherein assessment results are communicated to all constituent groups in an accurate, timely, and systematic manner. (I.B.1, I.B.5)
- b. Establish and implement clear written policies and procedures that demonstrate the flow of human, facilities, technology, and financial planning protocols. (I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.5, II.A.2.e, III.A.6, III.B.2.b, III.C.2, III.D.3)
- c. Ensure these written policies, procedures, and processes delineate the roles and responsibilities of the various college planning groups that will monitor implementation, assessment, evaluation, and improvement of college plans. (I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.5, II.A.2e, II.B.1, II.B.4, II.C.2, III.A.2, III.A.5, III.A.6, III.B.2b, III.C.1, III.C.2, III.D.3)
- d. Establish and implement a written process by which the college will systematically review and revise as necessary its human, facilities, technology, and financial planning and budgeting processes. (I.B.6)
- e. Establish and implement a means to assess its programs and services evaluation mechanisms through a systematic review of their effectiveness. (I.B.7)

## **Recommendation #2:**

**Library and Learning Support Services** – To increase the effectiveness of library services support for student learning and to assure the acquisition of an appropriate and current collection of library materials that are available to support educational offerings, the team recommends that the college: provide appropriate staffing and resources; develop and implement student learning outcomes for library programs and services; and assess the SLOs and utilize the resulting information for sustainable planning and improvement. All library and learning support services programs need to participate in the on-going program review process. (II.C.1, II.C.1.b. and II.C.2)

## **Recommendation #3:**

**Human Resources** – To increase the effective use of human resources and to assure a more equitable application of college policies and procedures, such as the Board Policies and Personnel Rules and Regulations Manual, the team recommends that the college practice transparency, collaboration and communication in development, implementation, and review of all policies and procedures, and to assure that the administrative needs of the college continue to be met, the college needs to fill the key vacant administrative positions. (III.A.1, III.A.1.a, III.A.2, III.A.3, III.A.3.a, III.A.4)

## **Recommendation #4:**

**Leadership and Governance** – To assure improvement and full implementation of the governance process created in response to Recommendation 6 of the 2004 report, the 2010 team recommends that the Executive Committee structure be formalized. Furthermore, to assure that the mission and values statements are central to decision making, the team recommends that the college formalize, communicate, and implement all governance processes for faculty, staff, students and administration, assess the effectiveness of those processes, and utilize the results for improvement. (I.A.4.IV.A.2, IV.A.3, IV.A.5, IV.B.2.b)

## **Overview**

The visiting team, Dr. Leon Richards and Dr. Salvatore Lanzilotti, conducted the site visit to PCC on April 2 – April 3, 2012. The purpose of the team visit was to verify, through examination of evidence, that the March 2012 *Follow-Up Report* prepared by the college was accurate; that sustained, continuous, and positive improvements had been made at the institution; and that the institution has resolved the recommendations made and now meets the Accreditation Standards.

In general, the follow-up team found that the college had prepared well for the visit by having the evidence it had prepared available in both hard copy and electronic formats, by assembling appropriate documents and equipment in the meeting room as requested by the team either beforehand or upon arrival, and in arranging for meetings

with individuals as requested by the team after it had reviewed all the documented evidence. Over the course of the two days, the team met with the President, the Dean of Academic Affairs, the Director of Human Resources, the Head Librarian, the Head of Institutional Research, and informally spoke to students attending the College.

Finally, the team is impressed with the overall results of the dialog and self-reflection that has taken place at Palau CC. The processes and procedures that have been implemented illustrate a high level of dedication and commitment by PCC's leadership, faculty, staff, and students toward addressing the four accreditation recommendations, and more importantly, to student learning and success. Through interviews and review of the evidence, it is apparent to the team that the entire college community is engaged in refining its policies, procedures, and structures in order to further promote and sustain continuous organizational improvement for the purpose of improving student engagement, learning and success for the ultimate improvement of the Republic of Palau.

## **College Responses to the Team Recommendations**

### **Recommendation #1: Improving Institutional Effectiveness**

*To respond fully to the previous team's (2004) Recommendations 1, 2 and 3 concerning the increase of institutional effectiveness and student learning through the use of a systematic cycle of planning and evaluation, e.g., as applied to the college's efforts to integrate planning with resource development and allocations, to improve learning and success through identifying and assessing student learning outcomes, and to conduct systematic program review, respectively, the team recommends the college do the following:*

*a. Develop and implement a strategy that ensures appropriate feedback and dialogue wherein assessment results are communicated to all constituent groups in an accurate, timely, and systematic manner. (I.B.1, I.B.5)*

### **Findings and Evidence:**

As reported in the 2011 Evaluation Team's *Follow-Up Report*, the Executive Committee is the conduit through which the College implements its strategy to ensure appropriate feedback and dialogue wherein assessment results are communicated to all constituent groups in an accurate, timely, and systematic manner. Through this Committee, the college maintains an ongoing, collegial, self-reflective dialogue about the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes. Since the 2011 visit, to ensure that the Committee attends to assessment as an essential aspect of the College's culture, the President instituted a subcommittee, the Institutional Assessment Committee, in October 2011, whose functions include:

1. Overseeing institutional assessment process to ensure that it is systematic and follows established time frame;
2. Monitoring the quality of assessment to ensure findings are valid and

- Actionable;
3. Making recommendations to improve the institutional assessment process;
  4. Making recommendations regarding publication of assessment results;
  5. Monitoring the implementation of assessment/program review recommendations;
  6. Reporting the results of the Committee's work to the Executive Committee.

According to the Head of Institutional Research, this strategy has been implemented and is working. A Program Review process has been utilized by academic and non-academic programs. Discussions of assessment data has occurred not only at the institutional level but also at the department and program levels. The College provided evidence that assessment results are communicated systematically to the appropriate constituents, have been discussed, and have been used to make improvements.

*b. Establish and implement clear written policies and procedures that demonstrate the flow of human, facilities, technology, and financial planning protocols. (I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.5, II.A.2.e, III.A.6, III.B.2.b, III.C.2, III.D.3)*

### **Findings and Evidence:**

As reported in the 2011 Evaluation Team's *Follow-Up Report*, the College uses its 15-Year Institutional Master Plan 2009-2024 (15-Year IMP) as a strategic plan that guides the College in fulfilling its mission. In February, 2011 the College developed an Institutional Master Plan "Report Card" to assess the status of the strategic directions stated in this plan. Through this "Report Card," the College monitors its progress toward human, facility, and technology goals, and, consequently, develops and implements action plans for improvement.

For example, the 15-Year IMP, *Strategic Direction 3 – Resources*, covers the goals and objectives for Finance, Facilities and Equipment, Technology, and Human Resources. Implementation of the 15-Year IMP begins at the unit/program level, and moves to the department/division level, and up to the institutional level. The College provided evidence that in September of 2011, the Security Unit and the Maintenance Unit under the Physical Plant Department revised their yearly assessment tools to include goals stated under *Strategic Direction 3 - Resources* of the 15-Year IMP. Objectives of stated goals were discussed and agreed upon by the members of these units. In addition, the College provided evidence that the policies and procedures for planning were institutionalized further through the use of established templates, e.g., a *Monitoring Template for Program Review*, which was developed to show the status of Non-Academic recommendations and action plans. These templates were distributed to the Non-Academic units to provide a format for a written status of their units. Assessments began with the Security Unit in the fall of 2011. Also, the College provided evidence that policies and procedures for review of action plans from program reviews were established and that these procedures were being used.

The College provided evidence that the Technology Resource Committee continues to monitor the Technology Plan. As a result of this monitoring, technology areas underwent improvements. Such improvements include relocation of the Information Technology Program classroom, installation of Deep Freeze software in classroom labs, and the policy change in library for Facebook. The College provided evidence of assessment of the On Line and Open Lab, and the evaluation and implementation of changes to improve services of these laboratories, as well as evidence of budgeting decisions related to the needs uncovered by these processes. In addition, the Technology Plan, initiated in 2005 and updated in 2009, has been further updated in February and March 2011 and integrated into the College's 15 Year Institutional Master Plan.

Furthermore, a Policy Review Committee was established by the Board of Trustees on 12/9/10 to “a. Help ensure that personnel policies and processes are adhered to; b. Review and assess the effectiveness of the personnel policies and processes; and c. Review and revise the Personnel Rules and Regulations Manual on a regular basis or at least every four (4) years.” The immediate result of this Committee was the production of nine recommendations to the Manual that were approved by the Board of Trustees and presented to the faculty and staff in January, 2011.

It was reported in several interviews that the formalization and/or establishment of college wide committees, since the comprehensive evaluation team's visit, has been most helpful in further establishing and implementing written policies and procedures that allow for the efficient flow of human, facilities, technology, and financial planning protocols. Moreover, the faculty and staff interviewed stated that these events have helped to increase and improve communications throughout the college.

*c. Ensure these written policies, procedures, and processes delineate the roles and responsibilities of the various college planning groups that will monitor implementation, assessment, evaluation, and improvement of college plans. (I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.5, II.A.2e, II.B.1, II.B.4, II.C.2, III.A.2, III.A.5, III.A.6, III.B.2b, III.C.1, III.C.2, III.D.3)*

### **Findings and Evidence:**

The College provided evidence that the roles and responsibilities of various college planning groups responsible for monitoring, implementing, assessing, evaluating, and improving College plans are clearly defined. The roles and responsibilities of the Executive Committee, the Personnel Rules and Regulations Manual Revision Committee, the Policy Review Committee, the Institutional Assessment Committee and others were provided, as stated in memos written by the President of the College. Furthermore, the College provided evidence of written descriptions of committees' policies, procedures and processes, roles and responsibilities in the Technology Resources Plan, the Committee on Programs and Curricula handbook, the Retention Committee minutes, and documentation of the establishing of the Institutional Assessment Committee. Evidence was provided that these groups are monitoring implementation, assessment, evaluation, and improvement of college plans.

The College provided evidence of continued evaluation of courses, departments, and programs through an ongoing systematic review of their relevance, appropriateness, achievement of learning outcomes, currency, and future needs and plans. In August 2010, the Academic Dean, Associate Dean and the chairperson of Committee on Program and Curricula (CPC) created the *Academic Assessment Flow Chart*. This Flow Chart delineates the steps of the assessment process with roles and responsibilities of each component of the process and was adopted as the official assessment flow chart of the Academic Affairs Department.

*d. Establish and implement a written process by which the college will systematically review and revise as necessary its human, facilities, technology, and financial planning and budgeting processes. (I.B.6)*

**Findings and Evidence:**

The Executive Committee has been formally established to systematically review and revise college-wide planning and budgeting processes, as per the President's memo dated 2/07/11. Evidence provided shows that the review of progress on the college's 15 Year Institutional Master Plan is a mandatory item on the Executive Committee agenda and is discussed accordingly. In addition, results of the annual program review process are reviewed by the Executive Committee. As stated above, the Committee includes the College's institutional researcher who brings all assessments to the committee for review and action.

Furthermore, the Institutional Assessment Committee (IAC), a standing committee established as a subcommittee of the Executive Committee, is dedicated to improving college wide planning by ensuring that systematic review, based on assessment and evaluation, is taking place in all areas of the College. Through the IAC, and the oversight of the Executive Committee, the College has established a formal review and revise system for institutional processes and procedures on a time-related basis. In addition, the College provided evidence that it utilizes the IAC to support review and revision of processes and procedures on a more informal or ad hoc basis. Thus, through regular annual reports and through monthly reporting of division-, department- and constituent-based issues, the Executive Committee is presented with problems and issues needing attention and assigns issues for review to the IAC when its members deem it necessary. This Executive Committee-IAC structure guarantees the college attends, on a systematic basis, to not only the problems that naturally arise from the implementation of human, facilities, technology, and financial and budgeting processes, but also to the efficacy and efficiency of the processes themselves.

*e. Establish and implement a means to assess its programs and services evaluation mechanisms through a systematic review of their effectiveness. (I.B.7)*

**Findings and Evidence:**

The College provided evidence that it understands the need to evaluate the evaluation mechanisms it employs. The monitoring instrument, the 15 year Institutional Master Plan “Report Card,” is used to assist the college in documenting progress made to the 15-Year IMP.

The College uses the Institutional Research Office to assist academic and non-academic programs in systematically assessing its programs and services and in evaluating the mechanisms used for assessment. For example, the Technology Resources Committee revised several goals of the College Technology Plan and instituted surveys as a systematic mechanism to assess the adequacy of technology resources. Although students, faculty, and staff had been surveyed in the past, it was not done on a regular basis. The surveys have been revised, and students, faculty, and staff will now be surveyed annually. The results of the surveys will be used to assess the sufficiency of technology resources as well as to identify needs. The survey instruments will be reviewed before distribution each time to ensure that they are fulfilling the survey purpose.

Recognizing the need for stronger faculty involvement in the assessment process through the use of the *Academic Assessment Flow Chart* (described above), the College created the Academic Assessment Committee (AAC) in August 2010. The committee consists of five faculty members from the School of Arts and Sciences, the School of Business, the School of Technical Education, a General Education Program representative and the Student Learning Outcome Coordinator who meet to review course, department, and program assessment results. The Committee reviews the Academic Assessment Flow Charts and submits a summary report to the Committee on Program and Curricula Coordinator and the Dean of Academic Affairs. Changes are made accordingly and appropriately. Major resource allocation requests are presented to the Executive Committee through the Institutional Assessment Committee for proper institutional planning and budgeting. This systematic review provides the College with an evaluation mechanism for the effectiveness of its procedures and processes that starts at the department level and ends at the institutional level (Executive Committee) after review of the Institutional Assessment Committee.

Finally, the College presented evidence of its implementation of the process it calls FAMED – Formulate, Assess, Measure, Evaluate, and Develop, for planning college wide in academic, student support services, and non-academic programs. This process has afforded the College an institution-wide mechanism for focused improvement. The team was provided evidence, both written and through interviews, that all units of the College utilize this process to formulate and establish goals, objectives, and/or learning outcomes that are aligned to the PCC mission. Evidence was provided that illustrated how different departments use the FAMED process to assess the criteria for achievement of the goals, objectives, and learning outcomes, and to develop assessment strategies. Utilizing this process, measurement of performance has become integrated into the College’s institutional processes. For example, the Library provided evidence of how it measured service provider and service receiver’s performance and satisfaction, using qualitative and quantitative methods via assessment instruments centered on its student

learning outcomes. Also, Executive Committee minutes were provided to illustrate how assessment data was used to develop and improve a faculty evaluation instrument when the results were not congruent with expected outcomes. Use of the FAMED process has led to changes throughout the College that are connected to the goals established in its 15-Year Master Plan.

### **Conclusion:**

The team concludes that the College has fully implemented this recommendation. The College has implemented a complete cycle of institutional improvement, i.e., it has shown evidence of having the appropriate structures, policies, and procedures in place; initiated and supported the necessary dialogue concerning institutional improvement; demonstrated and expressed an understanding of the purpose of the improvements recommended by the accreditation team - student engagement, learning, and success; and implemented the recommendation fully through planning, action, assessment, evaluation, and continued planning.

### **Recommendation #2:**

#### **Library and Learning Support Services**

*To increase the effectiveness of library services support for student learning and to assure the acquisition of an appropriate and current collection of library materials that are available to support educational offerings, the team recommends that the college: provide appropriate staffing and resources; develop and implement student learning outcomes for library programs and services; and assess the SLOs and utilize the resulting information for sustainable planning and improvement. All library and learning support service programs need to participate in the on-going program review process. (II.C.1, II.C.1.b, and II.C.2)*

### **Findings and Evidence:**

The College provided evidence that it has addressed the issue of providing the appropriate staffing and resources necessary to increase the effectiveness of library services support for student learning. The library increased its full-time staff by one through a U.S. federally funded Workforce Investment Act program in December 2011. This staff member along with three others are pursuing their Associated of Applied Science degrees in Library and Information Services. In addition, the College provided evidence of its support for professional development for library staff through a variety of opportunities both inside and outside the country. Through these professional development opportunities, Library staff members have increased the College's ability to provide services to its students in new ways.

Furthermore, the College provided evidence of the purchase of additional books and resources in support of the PCC curriculum with the assistance of the College's

instructors, e.g., in the areas of Japanese language, Automotive Mechanics Technology, Library and Information Services, Criminal Justice, Construction Technology, and Education. In addition, the library has increased its collection in the area of foreign language and has begun developing a collection of eBooks. The latter effort has increased access of books throughout Palau.

The College provided evidence of the student learning outcomes (SLOs) that have been developed and implemented for library programs and services, and aligned with both the library and the PCC mission statements. The SLOs are evaluated using four types of assessment tools. i.e., Reference Desk Survey Card, Library Orientation Post Test, Library User Satisfaction Survey, and the Library Computer Lab Evaluation. The results of tests are compiled, reviewed, and used for continuous improvement.

In addition, the College provided evidence that it assesses the SLOs and utilizes the resulting information for sustainable planning and improvement. The library staff apply the FAMED process (Formulate, Assess, Measure, Evaluate, and Develop) to assess the four assessment tools listed above. Results are used to improve goals and learning outcomes, and to develop or improve programs to better meet student needs. For example, the Learning Resource Center assessment for tutoring effectiveness is tied directly to a percentage of students who pass the course(s) in which they receive tutoring. Adjustments and improvements in tutoring and programs are made accordingly. Further examples of this ongoing planning and improvement process were provided for the Library Computer Lab and the On Line Lab.

The College provided evidence that all library and learning support services programs participate in the on-going program review process by using the FAMED guidelines as discussed above. The library staff are involved in the FAMED process and are aware of the library goals, objectives, and student learning outcomes as well as the value of the assessment tools and their results. The Head Librarian was interviewed and confirmed the documentation presented, i.e., that the results of assessments are compiled, reviewed, and used for continuous improvement. A further example of continuous assessment and improvement was illustrated through the changes in the use of the physical space of the library between the 2011 and 2012 visits. These changes resulted in a more efficient use of the space for the needs of high school students who use the facility while increasing the efficiency of the library space for use by the PCC students.

### **Conclusion:**

The team concludes that this recommendation has been implemented fully and has been met by the College. The College has increased its library collection both through hard copy and eBooks, to meet better the needs of the College's students and the community at large. It has increased its staffing, as well as provided professional development opportunities for its staff; the latter practice should continue in order for staff to remain current and to continue to be able to meet student needs. It has developed and assessed its library services support SLOs, assessed them, and utilized the resulting information for sustainable planning and improvement. Finally, all library and learning support service

programs are and have been participating in the FAMED process that ensures an ongoing program review process that includes assessment, evaluation, and improvement.

### **Recommendation #3:**

#### **Human Resources**

*To increase the effective use of human resources and to assure a more equitable application of college policies and procedures, such as the Board Policies and the Personnel Rules and Regulations Manual, the team recommends that the college practice transparency, collaboration and communication in development, implementation, and review of all policies and procedures, and to assure that the administrative needs of the college continue to be met, the college needs to fill the key vacant administrative positions. (III.A.1, III.A.1.a, III.A.2, III.A.3, III.A.3.a, III.A.4)*

#### **Findings and Evidence:**

On January 25, 2011 the College President established the forming of a *Policy Review Committee* (PRC) to ensure a more equitable application of policies and procedures and to improve transparency, collaboration, and communications. The principal duty of the Committee is "to ensure that the personnel policies and processes are adhered to as well as updated on a regular basis." Members of the PRC Committee are representative of all departments and divisions of the College, ensuring equal representation of each area and allowing for transparency in dealing with all issues.

In addition, in August and September of 2011 the College filled the positions of Director of Human Resources and Director of Finance, respectively. Both directors serve on the college's Executive Committee as well as various committees of the College to better understand the issues and challenges of their positions and to provide valuable resources to the College's decision-making processes.

The Human Resources Director stated that he has begun meeting with various departments, divisions, and individuals to help resolve issues of transparency, fairness, and equity in all human resources processes. In addition, he has taken the lead on the Policy Review Committee to complete a comprehensive review of the Personnel Rules and Regulations Manual, as mandated by the College's 15-Year Institutional Master Plan which calls for review of the Personnel Rules and Regulations Manual every four years.

#### **Conclusion:**

The team concludes that this recommendation has been addressed and is being met by the College. The team concludes that the College has put appropriate structures in place and has initiated and supported the necessary dialogue concerning the effective use of human resources and the equitable application of college policies and procedures. The College has filled the two major administrative positions.

## **Recommendation #4:**

### **Leadership and Governance**

*To assure improvement and full implementation of the governance process created in response to Recommendation 6 of the 2004 report, the team recommends that the Executive Committee structure be formalized. Furthermore, to assure that the mission and values statements are central to decision making, the team recommends that the college formalize, communicate, and implement all governance processes for faculty, staff, students, and administration, assess the effectiveness of those processes, and utilize the results for improvement. (I.A.4, IV.A.2, IV.A.3, IV.A.5, IV.B.2.b)*

### **Findings and Evidence:**

The College provided evidence that it has continued to assess the effectiveness of its governance structure and processes. The College has evaluated the functioning of the Executive Committee, which serves to integrate and coordinate planning and decision-making at the institutional level. The College uses the results for improvements, including revisions to the agenda of meetings and creation of standing committees, such as Institutional Assessment Committee and Program Review Committee.

The College uses a Master Plan Report Card to assess the effectiveness of its Executive Committee as it relates to attaining the 15-Year Institutional Plan goals and objectives. With the assistance of the Institutional Assessment Committee, and the use of the established institution-wide assessment process – FAMED, the College evaluates its governance structures for their effectiveness.

The College provided evidence that the Associated Students of PCC, Faculty Senate Association, and Classified Staff Organization assess their productivity through regular evaluation of their meetings and activities. Organizations utilize the FAMED process so that results of their evaluations are reviewed and used to make improvements to their decision-making process. This assessment strategy is further expanded to governance structures at the department level, such as the Technology Resource Committee, Retention Committee, and the Student Services management team who are meeting on a regular basis.

The College provided evidence that the FAMED process is used as a metacognitive tool to assess the overall effectiveness of all the governance structures. For example, the results of the evaluations are used toward improvements in the decision-making processes, including the communication of decisions made and resulting changes and improvements. In addition, improvements in the evaluation process and implementation of the FAMED process have been occurred through the support of the Institutional assessment Committee.

**Conclusion:**

The team concludes that the College meets the requirements of this recommendation. The College has provided evidence that it has formalized and improved the functionality of the Executive Committee and that it has utilized this structure for governance and as a conduit for college-wide dialogue and inclusion of all constituency groups. The College has developed an overall assessment and evaluation process through the use of its 15-Year Master Plan Score Card and a process for improvement through its FAMED process, the latter being used for both a strategy for improvement at the individual unit level and as a meta-cognitive institutional strategy. These processes are applied to all formalized governance structures such as the Faculty Senate, the Classified Staff Organization, and the Associated Students of Palau CC.

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