ADDRESSING TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONABLE IMPROVEMENT PLANS (AIPS)

Standard 1

Introduction

Standard 1 focuses on the mission and purposes of each institution and institutional effectiveness achieving the mission; and, Standard 1 focuses on data-driven assessment and continuous quality improvement and student learning outcomes.

Actionable Improvement Plans (AIPS):

1. Engage all stakeholders in the College's continuous planning processes so that there is a clear understanding of roles and expectations among all constituents. (1.B.2)

Action Taken: During the 2012-2013 academic year Dr. Mary Okada held focus groups, a town hall style meeting, and open forums with students, faculty, staff, administrators, the Board of Trustees, and the island community.[1] The President engaged and informed the campus community of the status of the College's Institutional Strategic Master Plan, the Physical Master Plan, the financial status of the College, and the overall state of the College.[2] During each of these sessions, feedback was gathered and regular updates to inquiries were provided through the College's internal web portal, MyGCC.[3]

During the spring of 2013, the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Office of Assessment, Institutional Effectiveness & Research participated in the various committee meetings and campus events to gather feedback on the College's Mission statement and big picture goals.[4] Meaningful discussions and recommendations were noted and a final feedback period will commence in the fall of 2013.

Moreover, in spring Semester 2013, a new faculty evaluation rubric was adopted by the Job Specification/Evaluation Committee. It was implementation in the 2013-2014 academic year. The Job Specs Committee is comprised of faculty and administrators. The new rubric more clearly sets forth the expectations and roles for faculty in regard to assessment. Faculty must complete their assigned tasks as outlined in GCC's assessment matrix. This is part of the annual faculty performance evaluation.

Previously, some faculty department chairs felt it was difficult to get all faculty fully involved in assessment. Since the newly adopted evaluation rubric delineates the expectations, it significantly reduces the likelihood that anyone will misunderstand their role. Further, new evaluation system provides that faculty receive specific assessment assignments. Individual faculty member assessment tasks are listed so faculty know the tasks they are responsible for. Individual faculty will have a greater share of entering data into TracDat. TracDat is a software program that tracks and organizes assessment data.

This change constitutes a real improvement in understanding faculty roles and expectations versus those of department chairs. Department chairs can no longer be held responsible for any faculty who might not complete an assessment assignment. That means a department chairs no longer have to choose between performing a non-compliant faculty member's assessment work or receiving negative consequences in their DC evaluation.

Further, assessment training and assistance is available from AIER. It is offered in advance of assessment due dates. Likewise, department or individual training sessions are available by request. This shows that plans are in place to assist faculty, staff and administrators with using TracDat software and the assessment process. Therefore, this is another indication that GCC training ensures that the roles and expectations of all constituents are clear. Moreover, it shows assessment is part of GCC's continuous planning process.

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[1] Doris Perez, e-mail December 12, 2012
[2] Transcript of President's November 2012 presentation to the campus community
[3] President's November 16, 2012 PowerPoint presentation on ISMP updates
[4] Dr. Somera, extended review of mission statement

In regard to continuous planning, the College Governing Council, CGC, has representatives from all college stakeholders: faculty, staff, administrators and students. In fall 2012, the Vice President for Finance reported on building progress and distributed the FY 2013 CIP plan for review. Since all of the campus stakeholders had representatives at this meeting, all constituents were kept apprised of the college's continuous planning process. In spring 2013, the committee voted to approve the 2013 CIP plan. It included renovations, replacement of air conditioning, maintenance for classrooms, and a security system. A final spring 2013 CGC meeting outlined the progress made on renovation and construction plans. The CGC receives an annual status report. The information is available to GCC stakeholders through minutes and other information posted on the GCC website.

For those reasons, GCC demonstrates that there is dedicated planning taking place on a schedule. The CGC representatives seek comments from their constituency. For example, there is a process for students to make their concerns known to the student representative. Therefore, campus stakeholders are involved in the continuous planning process through representatives. The CGC's structure allows each member to be part of the process.

GCC responds to faculty and students concerns. During the 2012-2013 academic year, faculty and students expressed concerns about a lack of air conditioning in some classrooms, classrooms that required maintenance and security on campus. These issues were addressed in the CIP plan. This is an example of how the continuous planning process addresses faculty and student concerns.

Another example is stakeholder involvement in continuous planning was in fall 2012. At the fall ISMP update, the President took questions from college stakeholders. Student concerns included housing, transportation, and parking. In other venues, students have also expressed concerns about child care, lighting in parking lots, and security.

In order to gather data about student housing concerns, the President said that a survey about housing will be placed on the GCC website. The President explained that GCC can form community partnerships to address housing issues. Moreover, GCC could also refer students to government agencies and community organizations that may be able to provide assist with housing. Transportation is another area where partnerships may be able to help students.

Since Guam does not have a reliable mass transit system, many students have problems with transportation. Lack of transportation can create a barrier to higher education. The President recommended a conversation with village mayors to see what could be done to help the students.

All of Guam is affected by the lack of a reliable mass transit system, so it is not a situation that GCC alone can solve. However, GCC can make recommendations or supply data to government and community organizations. Therefore, GCC is responding to student concerns by gathering data. Thereby GCC can assist with student transportation issues by forwarding statistics and information to applicable agencies and organizations.

If Guam had reliable mass transit, it could also alleviate the parking issues on campus. At the ISMP update, the President answered student concerns about parking. She explained that additional parking will be made available on Sesame Street. This shows that a continuous planning process is in place to resolve parking problems. Moreover, GCC has other plans to provide more parking, such as building a parking structure. There are continuous plans in place to address parking issues. These plans are clearly communicated to stakeholders and contained in the ISMP.

It might be possible to reserve parking spots for those traveling in a carpool. Enforcement might be an issue, though. Peer pressure can be a powerful force to influence behavior. Additionally, as part of the

greening of the campus, there are parking spots for motorcycles, scooters and bicycles. Since those vehicles take up less space, more parking spaces are available.

There are students, in particular female students, who are concerned with returning to isolated parking spaces at night. Increased lighting in those areas and encouraging students to go to their cars with another person can reduce some of those concerns. The other person could be a security guard, if there is a mechanism in place for students to ask for a security guard to accompany them to isolated parking spots. It might be possible to install call boxes to summon help in an emergency.

Another student concern involves child care. Once again, GCC could look into partnerships that could help students, such as contact information for licensed daycares in Guam, particularly in the Mangilao area.

A more recent student request was for a 24 hours study room. GCC has provided a 24 hour study room. As the security guard patrols the campus, the guard will include the study room as part of that patrol. Some institutions offer a phone with a dedicated line to summon appropriate authorities in their 24 hour study room.

Stakeholders also asked about distance learning at GCC at the fall ISMP presentation. The President explained that ACCJC requires GCC to develop a strategic plan. Distance students would need technical 24/7 technical support. Some distance students would not be in Guam. MIS needs more support, more resources, and more personnel to support distance education.

Further, student service areas, such as the library, would need to provide support for distance students. Reference services by phone, e-mail, and possibly live chat or other Internet services will need to be implemented for distance students. In addition, the Library might need to mail books to distance students, if there is no e-book for the title in the collection, plus multiple copies of the e-book may be needed. It can take 10 days for a package to reach the mainland United States. The Library might need a way to purchase an e-book for the distance students' immediate use. Mailing a book can take so long that the student would not receive it in time to complete an assignment. There are quicker ways to ship a book, but other shipping methods are more costly. This represents only a few of the Library's concerns. Therefore, even in one campus area, there are many factors that need to be considered. The issues raise exponentially when we consider all the other GCC departments and administrative units that need to address specific concerns about distance learning.

The distance learning strategic committee will respond to that by including representatives of campus stakeholders in the planning process. The administration has clearly communicated that there is a great deal of planning that needs to be done before GCC offers distance education. The distance strategic plan will clearly set forth the roles and expectations of campus stakeholders.

The second initiative in the ISMP is educational excellence. One way that GCC uses to achieve educational excellence is through student learning outcomes (SLO). GCC's systematic assessment process examines how SLO are being met. The President also communicated this initiative as part of the ISMP in fall 2012. Some of the benefits of are: educational reaffirmation of accreditation, SLO driven courses and programs, and an assessment model to evaluate and make programmatic changes. Moreover, education excellence is shown by the examination of SLO provides evidence of GCC's quality and effectiveness in teaching students. This is taken even further when institutional learning outcomes (ILO) are assessed.

The President's fall 2012 ISMP presentation to the campus community stressed GCC's commitment to going green. A student initiative was a proposal that Styrofoam not be used by campus vendors. IN line with this, GCC had the first gold LEED certified building on Guam, the GCC Library. That helped make

GCC a community leader in going green. The Library and Allied Health both have solar panels. The ISMP includes further plans for alternative energy sources on campus. The student group, the Eco-warriors, is active in encouraging the campus community to go green.

This shows that campus stakeholders are involved in the continuous planning process for GCC's green initiatives. In fact, there are stakeholders who enthusiastically support the greening of the campus.

GCC gathered data about the campus by assigning administrators to rotating duty as "night administrators" during the 2012-2013 academic year. The assigned night administrator was responsible for walking throughout the campus and noting problems or situations needing improvement. Their reports included information about campus locations that did not have sufficient nighttime outdoor lighting. They also noted parking areas that are isolated. These reports provide data for the continuous planning process, so GCC can address these concerns. The President's fall 2012 speech described plans to improve the campus.

Further, as part of continuous planning in the ISMP, GCC will allocate funds to the Library when new programs are put in place or existing programs modified. This is an important improvement in the ISMP. Previously, the Library would learn of new programs or courses shortly before classes began to be scheduled. When no funds were available, the bulk of the library's budget went to support the new program. This meant that other programs did not receive updated materials that year, since the new program was an unexpected expense.

GCC will need to specifically plan for how and when the library will be notified of new programs or courses. The Library should be notified the time faculty begins writing curriculum for a proposed program. That will allow the Library to begin considering what resources will be needed, if the program and curriculum are ultimately approved. It would be a good process for the Library to consult with faculty about resources that will be needed. The Library may be able to have orders ready to be processed in the event the program is approved.

It takes time to transfer funds to the budget, order, receive and process books and other library materials. There may be a delay because some titles may be out of stock. That happens because publishers and booksellers no longer keep a large inventory of books on hand. Therefore, the Library needs to have as much notice of a program as possible.

Some program's resources are more expensive than that of other programs. For example, allied health program resources are more expensive than most other resources. A print subscription for one of the nursing journals is $500.00 per year. The most important nursing journals are not included in GCC's EBSCO subscriptions. A subscription to CINAHL, a nursing periodical database, would cost upwards of $5,000.00 a year for four people to be able to login at the same time. In comparison, GCC pays $5,000.00 per year for all of the EBSCO databases combined.

For that reason, it is recommended that GCC put specific procedures place for notifying the library in a timely fashion and providing sufficient funds to support library resources for a new program. Additionally, GCC should provide additional funds to the library to support the new program each year. That is especially true for programs that require more expensive library materials.

Student government requested to delay their formal input into the ISMP until August 2013.

Status: Ongoing. Data has been collected and reported on the plan.

Next Step: The feedback and final Institutional Strategic Master Plan and College Mission statement should continue to be tracked, along with other evidence of stakeholder participation. Evidence of the stakeholder understanding of roles and expectations must be collected and reported on for all constituents.

Feedback about the ISMP should be obtained from student government, since they requested an extension until fall 2013.

2. Assess how well the College has communicated information about institutional quality to the public through a community wide survey. (1.B.5.)

Action Taken: As part of the ISMP update in November 2012, the President explained the pioneering initiative in the ISMP. This initiative includes employers' need assessments. The information from employers' need assessments assists GCC to carry out its mission to be a leader in career and technical workforce development. Employers' need assessments are one of the ways GCC receives information to keep its courses and programs relevant to workforce needs in Guam.

While laying out the ISMP, part of the strategy to develop a new employer needs assessment focused on training and educational services. Further, the ISMP calls for partnering with private workforce training The goals of employers' needs assessment include, but are not limited to, identifying regional workforce needs and establishing educational standards that link to local and national industry standards.

The ISMP refers to surveys taken in 2008 with an 11% response rate; a second survey in June 2011 with a 40% response rate; with a third survey scheduled for December 2012. The target population included GCC advisory committees, apprenticeship sponsors, Chamber of Commerce and Guam Contractor's Association.

GCC industry advisory committees are in place to provide information to programs about industry needs. Therefore, results from needs assessment and advisory committees assist GCC to incorporate workforce and employer expectations into the curriculum. This process communicates institutional quality to employers in the community. It is directly linked to GCC's mission statement. GCC will be a leader in career and technical workforce development by providing the highest quality education and job training in Micronesia.

Further, individual departments such as Adult Education and Continuing Education, CE, have conducted specific surveys for targeted industries or populations.[5]

Likewise, GCC is developing a coordinated strategic plan for distance education. Surveys administered to targeted groups can also assist GCC in planning how distance education courses, will support GCC's mission.

Status: Ongoing. Data has been collected and reported on the plan.

Next Step: GCC should continue to conduct surveys and gather information from industry and employers in the community. The results can continue to be made available to the community and other stakeholders through GCC's website and additional means of communicating GCC's educational excellence.

3. Strengthen training of faculty and staff on linking program review, institutional effectiveness and resource allocation. (1.B.6.)

Action Taken: GCC professional development priorities are divided into two sections: organizational priorities and academic priorities. The first academic priority is: "Accreditation – Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), program review, linking institutional planning to budget." This demonstrates GCC's

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[5]September 29, 2010 survey results

commitment to strengthening training of faculty and staff on linking program review, institutional effectiveness and resource allocation. This also applies to training for administrators.

The second academic priority listed is course and program level assessment, General Education, and Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs). Course and program level assessment and ILOs are related to the first priority. Assessment is necessary for program review. It also takes the review to a higher level in examining ILOs and general education assessment. Therefore this second priority is related to the first priority. The second priorities have the goal of assessing institutional effectiveness as a whole.

Therefore, GCC sponsored training for faculty, staff and administers must meet Institutional Academic or Organizational priorities or faculty needs.[6] These priorities demonstrate that faculty and administrators/staff opportunities for training on linking program review, institutional effectiveness and resource allocation are given precedence.[7]

GCC's two training priorities were updated to reflect the results of the Faculty Needs Assessment for Professional Development in February 2010. So adjustments to training needs are likewise supported by assessment data.

However, it goes a step further. Even training funded by sources outside GCC should fit into the organizational and academic priorities. That is one way that GCC strengthens the importance of those priorities. Further, GCC allocates a substantial amount of funds to administrator/staff training as well as to faculty training.

GCC's goal of educational excellence is reached through successful accreditation, SLOs, program review and the linking of institutional planning to the budget. Therefore, the first academic training priority emphasizes the importance of training that links program review, institutional effectiveness and resource allocation.

The President's Fall 2012 speech stressed that program data must support program needs and budget requests. This was one more way of showing the importance of linking assessment and requests for resources in budget planning. Therefore, college stakeholders were reminded once again of their individual roles in linking program review and the budget. Program data must support program needs. From collecting data to assessing and analyzing that data to budget requests, most GCC employees have some involvement in that process.

During the 2012-2013 academic year, GCC held training for department chairs that tied requests for resources to program assessment. Department chair training emphasized that budget goals, performance indicators, and proposed outcomes must be linked.[8] The training made clearly outlined the role of department chairs. When department chairs submitted their budgets, assessment data must support requests for resources. The budget submission required that the department chair set out three goals with an explanation of what would show the evidence needed to determine whether these budget goals are met. Therefore, department chairs were held accountable for both the quality of the program and for resource allocation.

Status: Ongoing. Data has been collected and reported on the plan,

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[6]Professional Development Priorities, Approved: March 2011
[7]Professional Development Review Committee Bylaws, 2012-2013
[8]Budget preparation PowerPoint

Next Step: Data on faculty and staff training linking program review, institutional effectiveness and resource allocation must be continue to be collected and reported on.

Directory of Evidence

1. Doris Perez, e-mail December 12, 2012
2. Transcript of President's November 2012 presentation to the campus community
3. President's November 16, 2012 PowerPoint presentation on ISMP updates
4. Dr. Somera, extended review of mission statement
5. September 29, 2010 survey results
6. Professional Development Priorities, Approved: March 2011
7. Professional Development Review Committee Bylaws, 2012-2013
8. Budget preparation PowerPoint