College of Micronesia – FSM
Prioritization of Nonacademic Programs 2013

**Director, Institutional Research & Planning; Dean Academic Programs &
Acting Vice President for Student Services
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rschplanning@comfsm.fm

**Report on the Prioritization of Nonacademic Programs 2013
College of Micronesia – FSM**

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Introduction

The following report provides background, methodology, findings and recommendations from the Prioritization of Nonacademic Programs conducted from October 2012 to February 2013. Additional information regarding the report can be obtained from Jimmy Hicks, Director of Institutional Research and Planning (jhicks@comfsm.fm); Karen Simion, Dean Academic Programs (ksimion@comfsm.fm) and/or Joey Oducado, acting Vice President for Student Services (joducado@comfsm.fm); phone: (691) 320-2480.

Background & Preparation

In the spring of 2012 the College conducted its first prioritization of academic programs. The academic prioritization resulted in a ranking of programs with recommendations on what lower performing programs must do to make their programs viable.

A corresponding review of nonacademic programs was undertaken in late fall of 2012 and early spring of 2013. Major motivations for the prioritization of nonacademic programs included:

- Concern over across the board cuts to address budget reductions,
- Concerns by faculty and others that too much is being spent for administration,
- Desire for improving effectiveness and efficiency of operations, and
- Determining possibilities for streamlining services and operations.

Methodology

Both the academic and nonacademic prioritization processes were guided by the work of Robert C. Dickeson's "Prioritizing Academic Programs and Services: Reallocating Resources to Achieve Strategic Balance[1]".

The Society for College and University Planning's (SCUP) webinar and related materials on "Prioritizing Administrative Programs and Activities" by Robert C. Dickeson and Larry Goldstein was obtained in DVD. The webinar was used for developing understanding of the prioritization process and for training of the Nonacademic Prioritization Working Group. The webinar was presented to faculty and staff at all campuses during August – September 2012 to assist the college in its decision whether or not to undertake a nonacademic prioritization project.

Dickeson recommends a seven phase approach to prioritization:

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[1] Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA 2010.

1. Preparation and readiness phase
2. Organization phase
3. Data collection phase
4. Analysis and assessment phase
5. Decision-making phase
6. Implementation phase
7. Evaluation phase

This report represents the college's efforts to date for phases 1 – 5.

On October 16, 2013 the college's Management Team designated a Non Academic Prioritization Working Group (see appendix F for members and mandate). Chairs organization meetings were held in October & November 2013 and formal meetings of the working group begin on December 6, 2013 to review Dickeson's materials, scope out the project and develop the specific methodology for data collection and analysis.

In developing its methodology for the prioritization process, the college also accessed information and models on prioritization from the Jossey-Bass website at http://www.josseybass.com/WileyCDA/Section/id-403475.html that were related to Dickeson's book on prioritization. Material from the University of Saint Francis was used a guide for developing criteria and indicators. Dickeson's recommendations on potential criteria (Appendix E) were reviewed and his "Alternative Criteria" was selected for use) and Material from Seattle Central Community College was used for developing the college's Program Analysis and Viability Study Review Form. The college's Program Analysis and Viability Study Review FY 2011 – FY 2012 Form can be found in Appendix C. The college's Program Review Form can be found in Appendix D.

An initial timeline for completion of the nonacademic prioritization was originally set for April 30, 2013, but later revised to January 31, 2013.

The college's Program Analysis and Viability Study Review FY 2011 – FY 2012 Form was sent to Vice Presidents and Program Coordinators on December 11, 2012 and data collection phase was extended through mid-February 2013.

The overall working group agreed on a criterion model for the ratings and use of smaller ratings groups to reduce the work load. Each working group had approximately 11programs to review and rate. The composition of the ratings working groups:

Rating Group Review Teams:

1. Arthur, Kalwin, Joey*, Danny
2. Jeff, Grilly*, Magdalena
3. Karen*, , Arinda, Monica
4. Jimmy*, Ankie, Kind
5. Gordon*, Penseleen, Shermik

* Team Leader

A series of Ground Rules for the rating groups were established as part of the calibration process.

Ground Rules:
1. Majority rules
2. If three different ratings, then send back to Jimmy, Joey or Karen for another person to rate the item.
3. Base ratings on information provided in form – nothing else. Not everyone shares the same knowledge set. Ratings must be repeatable from group to group.

The rating groups reviewed all submissions during the week of February 18 – 22, 2013 and submitted summary sheets of their program ratings. The ratings were based on a scale of 4 to 1 indicating congruence with the identified criterion.

Ratings

Rating scale:
4 Indicators suggest highest congruence with identified criterion
3 Indicators suggest moderate high congruence with identified criterion
2 Indicators suggest moderate congruence with identified criterion
1 Indicators suggest low congruence with identified criterion

The Director of Institutional Research, Dean Academic Programs and the Acting Vice President of Student Services reviewed submissions of the ratings groups on February 26 & 27 and made the following findings and recommendations.

Findings

Criteria & Indicators

The following table provides a summary by criteria and indicator for the average ratings from all rating groups.

Criteria	Indicator(s)	Average Rating
1. Key Objectives and how they are measured	The program has a written mission.	Yes 51 No 2
1a.	The program mission is congruent with the college mission.	3.6
2. Services provided and to which customers, internal and external	The services provided are aligned with the needs and desires of internal stakeholder.	3.7
2a.	The services provided are aligned with the needs and desires of external stakeholder	3.3
3. Position-by-position	The number of program employees is aligned with	3.5

Criteria	Indicator(s)	Average Rating
analysis	the functions and responsibilities (from mission).	
3a.	The number of program employees is aligned with the internal and external demand for the program.	3.8
4. Unmet needs and demands	The programs resources and staffing allow it to meet internal and external demands.	3.1
5. Opportunities for collaboration and restructuring	The program is taking advantage of opportunities for collaboration and cooperation.	3.0
6. Opportunities to share skill sets and resources	The program is taking advantage of opportunities to share skills sets and resources.	2.8
7. Opportunities for cross-training	The program is taking advantage of opportunities to share cross training.	2.9
8. Technological improvement that are cost-effective	The program effectively uses technology to improve effectiveness and efficiency of services.	3.4
8a.	The program effectively uses technology to enhance service delivery.	3.2
9, Process improvements to streamline operations	The program has processes in place that provide for effective and efficient service delivery.	3.0
10. Outsourcing exploration to improve services and cut costs	The program takes advantage of outsourcing to cut costs while maintaining quality services.	2.5

Key points from the criteria and indicators:

- Item 1 & 1a - Programs have missions (51/53) and those mission statements are related to the overall college missions.
- Item 2 & 2a – Programs tend to address the needs of internal better than external stakeholders.
- Item 3 & 3a – Programs generally are felt to have sufficient personnel to meet their mission.
- Item 4 – Programs tend to have fewer non personnel resources to meet their mission.
- Items 5 – 9 – These items can be grouped under improving effectiveness and efficiency of operations. The area of effectiveness and efficiency of operations can be areas of major improvement but there is limited evidence that the college and individual programs are taking active steps to improve effectiveness and efficiency of operations, streamlining and other efforts that can reduce overall costs of the programs while maintaining quality of services.
- Item 10 – Outsourcing of various functions may not be possible in many cases due to a weak private sector.

Rating Process

A review of the rating group average scores shows a variation in each group's programs ratings. While a calibration process with a group review and rating of a program, time constraints prevented additional calibration efforts. Additional the process did not have a second stage of calibration after the ratings groups were formed.

Programs rankings were affected by which rating group was assigned to the program.

Rating Group	Group Average Rating
Rating Group 1	3.57
Rating Group 5	3.56
Rating Group 4	3.24
Rating Group 3	3.04
Rating Group 2	2.88

Strengths and Weaknesses

The following is a summary of strengths and weaknesses of nonacademic programs drawn from the review process:

Areas of strength:

There are major areas that standout as strengths of nonacademic programs.
- Programs do generally have written missions (51/53 programs) and those missions are generally aligned with the overall college mission.
- Programs are generally felt to be adequately staffed.

Areas needing improvement:

A number of areas standout as potential areas for improvement.
- Understanding who are external stakeholders for individual programs and how to address their needs and increase involvement in the college
- Items 5 – 9 can be grouped under improving effectiveness and efficiency of operations. These criteria and indicators are generally ranked lower than other categories. Program can improve their overall effectiveness and efficiency by increasing:
  - Collaboration and cooperation both internally and externally to the college,
  - Cross training of staff within programs,
  - Skill sharing with other programs and organizations,
  - Improved use of technology, and
  - Enhancing processes and procedures
- Generally programs are felt to lack adequate non personnel resources to adequately address their mission and continually improve.

Ranking of Programs:

Programs were divided into three categories (High, Medium & Low). Appendix A provides the rankings by program based on the average overall rating.

Ranking of programs was somewhat influenced by which rating group reviewed a particular program. This is likely results from inadequate training and calibration of the rating review process.

Recommendations

Recommendations are provided in two sections. The first section addresses recommendations from the prioritization findings. The second section addresses ways to improve the process for future prioritization efforts.

Program Improvement

- All nonacademic programs will select at least one of the following:
    - Revise FY 2014 Improvement and Assessment Plans to include at least one of the following:
        - Collaboration and cooperation with internal or external partners
        - Cross training within a program staff
        - Skill sharing with other programs, offices and external stakeholders
    - Revise FY 2014 Improvement and Assessment Plans to include specific actions and activities to improvement effectiveness and efficiency of operations.
    - Revise FY 2014 Improvement and Assessment Plans to include professional development activities. This professional development might include formal in-house training, directed readings in journals or other materials directly related to their mission, free online courses or other methods to improve professional capacity of staff.
- All nonacademic programs must determine who are their major external stakeholders and their specific needs and design interventions to address those needs.
- A formal review will be conducted by the Department of Institutional Effectiveness and Quality to review current distribution of non-personnel resources and make recommendations regarding adequate distribution of resources and materials for programs to meet their mission. This review will be coupled with how improved effectiveness and efficiency of programs can help reduce overall programs costs. Recommendations should be considered in development of the FY 2015 budget.

Process Issues

To improve future prioritization of nonacademic programs a number of improvements can be made in processes and procedures related to the development of the Program Analysis and Viability Study Review Form and the rating process itself.

- Adequate time need to be allocated to the prioritization process to ensure quality at each step. Dickeson recommendation

- Forms must be reviewed based on the content of the forms and not on individual knowledge of the program. To ensure accuracy and completeness of the forms, supervisory review must be conducted prior to submission and certify or endorse the forms as a true reflection of the status of the program.
- Formal training needs to be conducted to address:
    - Overall process
    - Program review and development of the program review form to ensure completeness and accuracy of information without being overly wordy.
    - NOTE: Training might be provided in a variety of ways: 1) coordinated with visioning summit, 2) during site visits, and or 3) using technology to delivery training either directly (real time) or recorded via programs such as Camptasia (accessible through National IT) and placed on the college web site or distributed through electronic media.
- Calibration of the ratings can be improved by using a two stage process:
    - First stage: Whole group calibration of the same program reviews.
    - Second stage: After establishment of rating groups do a second calibration exercise with all groups using the same program form.

Appendix A: Program Ranking

Rank	Program	Averages*
High	5-7 national VPAS	4
High	1-7 kosrae IT	3.9
High	5-2 national BO	3.9
High	5-10 yap Upward Bound	3.9
High	1-2 chuuk DEAN	3.8
High	1-6 kosrae AE & CRE	3.8
High	1-10 pohnpei Dean	3.8
High	1-11 yap CRE	3.8
High	3-10 yap Student Services	3.8
High	4-5 kosrae Student Services	3.8
High	4-9 national VPIA	3.8
High	5-4 national Main administration mail	3.8
High	5-3 national Facilities Grounds Transportation	3.7
High	4-10 pohnpei Instructional Coordinator	3.6
High	5-8 pohnpei Student Services Combined	3.6
High	1-9 national Sports	3.5
High	5-1 chuuk SHC	3.5
Medium	1-5 fmi Administration	3.4
Medium	1-8 national DCR	3.4
Medium	4-7 fmi Student Servics	3.4
Medium	5-9 national VPSS	3.4
Medium	1-1 chuuk Counseling	3.3
Medium	1-3 chuuk IC	3.3
Medium	1-4.chuuk Maintenance	3.3
Medium	2-9 yap IT	3.3
Medium	2-10 yap LRC	3.3
Medium	3-3 kosrae Dean	3.3
Medium	3-5 national CRE VPCRE	3.3
Medium	3-6 national IRPO	3.3
Medium	3-8 national VPIEQA	3.3
Medium	4-8 national IT	3.3
Medium	2-4 chuuk SAO	3.2
Medium	3-4 kosrae CRE	3.2
Medium	4-6 national FAO	3.2
Medium	5-5 national OARR	3.2
Medium	2-11 yap Maintencne	3.1
Medium	4-3 fmi Maintenance	3
Low	3-1 chuuk OARR	2.9
Low	2-1 chuuk FAO	2.8
Low	2-5 fmi BO	2.8
Low	2-6 kosrae BO	2.8
Low	2-8 national HRO	2.8
Low	3-11 yap Dean	2.8
Low	4-2 kosrae LRC	2.8
Low	4-4 kosrae Maintenance	2.8
Low	4-1 fmi IT	2.7
Low	2-7 kosrae Security Services	2.6
Low	4-11 chuuk lrc	2.6
Low	5-6 national Resident Hall	2.6
Low	3-2 chuuk SSC	2.5
Low	3-7 national security	2.5
Low	3-9 yap BO	2.5
Low	2-3 chuuk IT	2.1
* Averages do not inlcude Item 10		