**College of Micronesia - FSM**

**Academic Program Prioritization 2014**

**Report and Recommendations**

**August 2014**

**Overview:**

This report addresses the 2nd Round of Academic Program Prioritization for the College of Micronesia – FSM. The previous academic prioritization was conducted in 2012.

The program assessment and program review process is described in the Program Assessment and Program Review Procedures Manual for the college. The manual calls for program assessment each year and program reviews to be conducted bi-annually. The manual provides the purpose of the program review as:

Program review is a key element in the Western Association of Colleges and Schools (WASC) accreditation process. According to Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACJCC), the purposes of a program review are as follows:

1. Construct an effective, integrated system of program review and planning and resource allocation.
2. Enable the institution to continually assess its effectiveness.
3. Use results of this assessment to advance effectiveness and educational quality.

The Academic Prioritization process is to build upon the program reviews and rate individual academic program. The ratings are to assist the college in decision making in what changes might occur in its program offerings in light of changing needs of the nation and the financial condition of the college.

**Organization and prioritization process:**

On February 25, 2014, President Joseph M. Daisy, President and CEO; confirmed nominations for the Academic Program Prioritization Working Group (APPWG) (see appendix C). The APPWG was composed of 16 members from the Department of Instructional Affairs, Administrative Services, Student Services and Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance. The APPWG conducted a series of meetings over the spring semester 2014 to review the process from the 2012 Academic Program Prioritization and make modification as needed. The modifications were based on reviews of recommendations form the 2012 Academic Program Prioritization and also internal discussions within the APPWG.

**Issues and discussion**

***Process decisions***

Process discussions were centered on data and documents, timelines, criteria and the review process itself. Critical recommendations were:

* **Criteria**
  + Use the same ten criteria (see appendix “A” for the major criteria as well as the rubrics for generating scores) from the 2012 Academic Prioritization based on Robert Dickeson’s book Prioritizing Academic Programs.
  + Develop rubrics for each criteria to reduce subjective decisions on ratings for both qualitative and quantitative data.
  + Determine which of previous prioritization sub-criteria were relevant and data sources available.
  + Difference between Not Applicable (N/A) and no data. Selected sub-criteria do not apply to all programs, but there were areas where sub-criteria were valid for a program, but for which no data was provided.
  + Certain sub-criteria were set for bonus points**.** Certain criteria do not apply to all programs and require extra effort to accomplish.
  + No changes were to be made to criteria once the rating process began.
  + Data sources for the sub-criteria were:
    - * Program review from spring 2014 covering AY 2012/13 and 13/14
      * Program data sheets prepare by IRPO
      * Institutional data on IRPO website
  + Programs rated were those designated as either Certificate of Achievement or Degree Program. Areas such as Achieving College Excellence (ACE) and General Education were not rated. Consideration should be given for including these “programs” into future prioritizations. This may require a formal change in the definition of what constitutes a program.

***Rating decisions***

A decision was made to use the same rating scale 5, 3, and 1 from the previous prioritization. A rating of 1 was to be assigned if no data was provided.

The APPWG agreed to follow the 2012 Academic Prioritization in grouping programs as Top, Middle and Low. Programs rated top might be considered for additional resources. Programs rated middle are deemed as acceptable, but could be improved. Programs rated low must be improved or could face reduction in resources and support services, major restructuring or phased out.

Additionally, as programs in different degree categories serve populations and purposes, the APPWG agreed to rank programs by Associate, Associate of Applied Science, Certificate and Third Year Programs (Trial counselor programs was included with the Third Year Programs as its population is expected to have already achieved an associate’s degree).

***Teams and calibration***

To reduce overall workload on committee members, the APPWG established four teams. Programs were assigned to the various teams for rating.

To ensure consistency of ratings across the four teams, two strategies were used. First, a program was selected (Computer Information Sciences) for detailed discussions and was reviewed by the group as a whole. Second, selected programs were assigned to more than one group to have cross validation for the ratings.

A review of the ratings for programs with cross validation generally showed similar ratings. Where program ratings variation was high, a third reading was conducted to validate the overall rating through an averaging system. (see appendix B for summary ratings)

**Results:**

***Prioritization:***

***Findings:***

The following table provides the recommendations of the APPWG on programs on placed into Top, Middle and Low categories.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Academic Program Prioritization 2014 Rankings** | | | | |
|  | **Associates** | **Applied Sciences** | **Certificates** | **Third Year Programs** |
| Top | * AA Micronesian Studies * AS Business Administration * AS Public Health * AA Liberal Arts | * AAS Telecommunications | * COA Agriculture and Food Technology Program * COA Refrigeration and Air Conditioning * COA Cabinet & Furniture Making | * TYC Teacher Preparation Elementary |
| Middle | * AS Computer Information Science * AS Hospitality and Tourism Management * AA Pre-Teacher Preparation | * AAS Electronic Technology * AAS Building Technology | * COA Construction Electricity * COA Bookkeeping * COA Carpentry * COA Community Health Assistant * COA Electronic Engineering Technology * COA Secretarial Science | * COA Trial Counselor |
| Low | * AS Marine Science * AA Health Careers Opportunity Program * AS Agriculture & Natural Resources |  | * COA Nursing Assistant | * TYC Public Health |

***Recommendations:***

The APPWG set the programs into three categories as with the previous prioritization process. The Top category is recommended for continuation and consideration for added resources. The Middle category is recommended to remain the same funding level (if possible). The Low category is recommended to be reviewed and improvement plans and criteria be established if the program should be considered for continuation in its current form.

Specific and general recommendations regarding academic programs:

**Specific recommendations:**

* Consideration given to combining COA Bookkeeping and Secretarial Sciences as a single program. There is duplication in courses. It was noted in several reviews that students from the different programs were combined in the same class to allow sufficient numbers to conduct the class.
* Consideration given to combining AA Liberal Arts and AA LA/HCOP. The courses and requirements are similar. With the startup of the Public Health programs, students now have the opportunity to select a major in their preferred health careers.

**General recommendations:**

* Consideration given to a rethinking and redesign of COA programs. The COA programs were designed quite a few years ago and student and community needs have changed. Some COA programs indicated students were not taking the COA out of interest, but rather because it might be the only program for them to take or available. Students appeared to desire a program that would lead to entrance into a degree program.
* Consideration given to rethinking what is a terminal degree program and what is a transfer orientated degree program. As with the certificate programs an important question to ask is the design of the degree programs still meeting the needs of students and the nation? No evidence was found in the program reviews addressing the issue of relevancy of the programs and if the programs are providing a career path for students.
* Consideration given to establishing ratios or high cost programs that will allow weighted comparisons. It was noted that there is variation in the cost per program. While some programs (CTE, science, etc.) are expected to cost more per student due to capped class size, laboratories, materials, etc., currently there are no established ratios for the different types of programs.

***Process:***

***Findings:***

Strengths:

* Program reviews are made available.
* Comparison data with other programs was made available in certain PRs.
* Use of program data sheets allowed accurate data.
* Some program reviews provided data on course student outcomes.

***Recommendations:***

* Program reviews should tell a story about how the program is performing. Data was provided in the program reviews, but often lacked analysis. This was practically evident in the data on student learning outcomes. A number of the program reviews did not have any information on student learning outcomes.
* Program reviews need to address Institutional, Program and Course Student Learning Outcomes with data and analysis.
* Program reviews need to include a summary of prior program review recommendations, actions taken to improve learning and the impact of those actions on student learning. There were limited linkages between the 2014 program review and the recommendations in the 2012 program review. It was also noted that a number of 2014 recommendations were similar to those included in the 2012 program reviews.
* Recommendations should be linked to the findings in the program reviews. There appears to be a disconnect between many recommendations and information included in the body of the program review.
* The recommendations in the program review should be phrased in terms of student learning. The recommendations in many of the 2014 program reviews are not phrased in terms of student learning.
* Program data sheets should be used in conjunction with the institutional available information and data. This approach will allow comparison between programs.
* Programs need to be aware that the quality of the program reviews greatly affected the prioritization rating. It appeared that a number of program reviews were assigned late to the developer of the program review raising the issue was there a process to implement the recommendation in the previous program review.
* Mission, PSLOs and CSLOs must be consistent across programs reviews from different campuses and represent the published information. It was noted that some missions in the program review were different from the missions in the catalog. It was also noted, that different missions were provided by different campuses for the same program.
* Consideration for conducting program reviews every two years and program prioritization every four to six years.
* Consideration given for general education and other programs (as defined by Dickeson) conduct program reviews.
* Consideration given for a single program review developed for programs offered at different campuses with desegregated information included for each campus.
* Consideration given to reformatting the program review and prioritization forms for greater congruence.

**Appendix:**

**Appendix A: Academic Program Prioritization Rating Form 2014**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Program name:** |  | **Reviewed by:** |  | **Date:** |

| **Criteria (Target)** | **Comments** | **5** | | **3** | | **1** | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1. Quality of outcomes** |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * Employer satisfaction survey |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * Graduation rates (12.8%) |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * Required certifications (FSM Teacher, Vocational (CISCO, ETA, etc.) (55% to 45% meet certification requirement) |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * Job placement and success, earnings reports (Top 3rd., middle 3rd., low 3rd. ranking) |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * Other external validity of quality (Very, Somewhat, Not Important) |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * Percent of PSLOs met (At average or w/in 2%) |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * Percent of CSLOs met (At average or w/in 2%) |  |  | |  | |  | |
| **2. Impact, justification and overall essentiality of the program (Program meets all 4 criteria, 2/3, one criterion)** |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * Degree to which program is “mission-critical” (program is aligned to mission) |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * Program learning outcomes (PSLOs) are aligned with Institutional Learning Outcomes (ISLOs) |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * Contains elements/resources for forward-looking new programs (program review identifies specific elements and resources that can improve outcomes) |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * Contributions to state’s economy (development of individuals who are likely to be employed in the workforce) |  |  | |  | |  | |
| **3. Size, scope and productivity of the program** |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * Three-year graduation rates, trend-line (Upward, Constant, Downward) |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * Retention rate (53.4%) |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * Persistence (76%) |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * Percent Withdrawals (Fall- 6.6%, Sp-12.2% |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * Section fill (79.5%) |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * Course completion rates (Fall-66.3%, Sp-60.6%) |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * Redundancy of courses across the programs (1 redundant course) |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * Redundancy of programs across the institution (1 redundant program) |  |  | |  | |  | |
| **4. External demand for the program** |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * Placement office reports on placement, alumni, professional (longer term) and association reports (Great, Average, Low Demand) |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * Employer feedback/survey or advisory council feedback |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * Program added or cancelled at nearby rival institutions. Same program offered at nearby institutions? (High if program not offered, average if 1, Low if 2 or more) |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * State and federal requirements/gainful employment, etc. (Exceeds, Meets, does not meet) |  |  | |  | |  | |
| **5. Internal demand for the program.** |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * Student credits generated by: major, program, general education, service courses (27146) |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * Program mapping of courses delivered/timing & frequency (High, Average w/some adjustment, Low if won’t allow timely graduation) |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * Student enrollments in program (Average or 63.6% in Fall) |  |  | |  | |  | |
| * Programs that support majors and minors of other programs /at the program level this applies to programs that support other programs, Gen. Ed. etc. (Provides courses required by other programs, Provides courses that prepare students) |  |  | |  | |  | |
| **6. Revenue and other resources generated by the program.** |  | |  | |  | |  |
| * Tuition, program allocated (Direct revenue exceed, equal, less than direct instructional costs. |  | |  | |  | |  |
| * Online program revenues (projected) |  | |  | |  | |  |
| * Grant income (program applies & receives grants) ***\*Bonus*** |  | |  | |  | |  |
| **7. Costs and other expenses associated with the program.** |  | |  | |  | |  |
| * Direct instructional cost per credit hour. (Cost per credit hour is at average or 5% within) |  | |  | |  | |  |
| * Allocated institutional support /library, computing, tutoring services, other administrative support. (How is the budget for LRC and student services attached to this program?) |  | |  | |  | |  |
| * Cost of duplicate or redundant courses/programs/services. (Which program or course is considered to be redundant?) |  | |  | |  | |  |
| **8. History, development, and expectations of the program.** |  | |  | |  | |  |
| * Alignment with state or national strategic development plan (Linked directly with section of state or national strategic development plans or at congressional or executive request) ***\*Bonus*** |  | |  | |  | |  |
| * Extend to which program is “core” to the educational experience. (Program provides foundation for entry/transfer into upper level programs.) ***\*Bonus*** |  | |  | |  | |  |
| * State requirements and goals. (Program prepares students meeting state/national certification requirements. ***\*Bonus*** |  | |  | |  | |  |
| * Historical enrollment patterns (Increasing, flat, declining). |  | |  | |  | |  |
| **9. Quality of program inputs and processes.** |  | |  | |  | |  |
| * Program review data; specialized program accreditation |  | |  | |  | |  |
| * Percent of program courses taught by full time faculty (70-80% program courses taught by full time faculty). |  | |  | |  | |  |
| * Faculty major (70-80% faculty have major in program area) |  | |  | |  | |  |
| * Faculty student ratios (Faculty/student ratio is at average). |  | |  | |  | |  |
| * Adaptability to technology (shows impact, adaptation, use of new technologies in instruction). |  | |  | |  | |  |
| * Curriculum (PR provides information on the breath, depth, and level of the discipline) |  | |  | |  | |  |
| * Student Instructional profile data (% of new program students in developmental or remedial courses.) |  | |  | |  | |  |
| **10. Opportunity analysis of the program** |  | |  | |  | |  |
| * Exploration of alternative delivery mechanisms (PR provides effects on student learning, information, limited information). |  | |  | |  | |  |
| * Formation of productive external partnerships and collaborations (PR provides effects on student learning, information, limited information) |  | |  | |  | |  |
| * Opportunity to realign or strengthen existing programs. (PR provides effects on student learning, information, limited information) |  | |  | |  | |  |

**Appendix B: Summary Rating Chart**



Appendix C: Nomination Memorandum