

College of Micronesia -FSM

Integrated Educational Master Plan (IEMP)



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Executive Summary

The College of Micronesia-FSM (COM-FSM) has developed an Integrated Educational Master Plan (IEMP) in order to adequately address external impacts that the college has identified and to provide an operational plan to move the college forward toward mission fulfillment and vision attainment. The IEMP, which is a living document, integrates all aspects of the college's operations into specific, measurable actions that each area is set to accomplish over the next 5 years.

The narrative below describes not only the steps taken by the college to create the IEMP, but also the reasons why integrated planning is important to the college. A diagram illustrating the college's planning processes has been included, along with supporting documents that further explain the IEMP and its contents.

I. Introduction

Brief History

The College of Micronesia-FSM (COM-FSM) is located in the Federated States of Micronesia. This former trust territory is comprised of 607 islands covering almost 2 million square miles of the Western Pacific Ocean and is populated by approximately 102, 843 residents from fifteen different and distinct traditional cultures and languages.

The college began in 1963 as the Micronesian Teacher Education Center (MTEC) to provide in-service teacher training opportunities. MTEC changed its focus to pre-service teacher education and the center was renamed Community College of Micronesia (CCM). CCM expanded into additional areas such as business management, liberal arts, and continuing education. CCM was first accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) in 1978. When the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands split into three independent nations, CCM became COM-FSM in 1993.

Current State of the College

COM-FSM is a two-year, English language speaking institution offering 36 programs of study (i.e., certificates and degrees). The college has locations at six sites among the four island states of the Federated States of Micronesia. Certificate programs are offered mainly at the state campuses, with the degree programs offered at the National campus located in Palikir, Pohnpei.

The college has been faced with many challenges in recent years. The college President stated in his [Investiture Speech](#) on February 6, 2012, that these

challenges range, “from accreditation, finances, communication, college readiness by students, geographic expanse, and persistence to graduation.”

The mission of the college centers on the students, the nation, and the idea of continuous improvement:

The College of Micronesia-FSM is a learner-centered institution of higher education that is committed to the success of the Federated States of Micronesia by providing academic, career and technical educational programs characterized by continuous improvement and best practices.

As stated by the college’s President in his 2012 [White Paper](#), in order to fulfill its mission the college, “must define its own vision for quality, sustainability, and success and thereby serve the FSM by providing an educated citizenry to ensure the nation’s quality, sustainability, and success. To this end—and in order to refine, define, renew and establish new principles that will guide the college through 2025—we will together engage in a college and stakeholder-wide Vision Summit in August of 2012. This Vision Summit will begin the process of developing our new strategic plan: 2013-2017.”

By engaging in a systematic and regular review of the allocation of resources, the college will assure that it fulfills its mission and maintain institutional effectiveness. In light of the significant financial constraints the college faces as a result of the JEMCO decrement, more than ever before it is essential for the college to integrate its finances with its planning process. An ongoing, transparent financial planning process which informs the integrated planning process will enable the college to prioritize its broad educational objectives and effectively deploy its human, physical, technological and financial resources.

The Future of the College

Building on the college President’s messages to the college (as quoted above); a visioning summit in summer 2012, and several open forums with community involvement, in early 2013 the college’s Board of Regents [identified five \(5\) Strategic Institutional Outcomes \(SIOs\)](#) to help inform a Vision for COM-FSM. These outcomes not only align the college’s vision and mission, but also they serve as a framework to assess the performance of the strategic plan and a framework upon which an Integrated Educational Master Plan (IEMP) was developed. The Board-developed SIOs call for COM-FSM to do the following within the next 5 years:

- Emphasize Academic Offerings in Service to National Needs
- Focus on Student Success
- Be financially Sound, Financially Responsible, and Build Resources in Anticipation of Future Needs
- Invest in and Build a Strong Capacity in Human Capital
- Be a Learning Organization that Exemplifies Participatory Governance

The Board of Regents strategic institutional outcomes provide the framework for the six strategic directions approved at the [May 6-7, 2013 Board of Regents](#) meeting. The strategic directions are:

- Focus on student success
- Emphasize academic offerings in service to national needs
- Be financially sound, fiscally responsible, and build resources in anticipation of future needs
- Invest in and build a strong capacity in human capital
- Become a learning organization through development of a learning culture guided by learning leaders
- Evoke an image of quality

II. Planning at COM-FSM

Within the last year, COM-FSM has completed two major planning activities. First, the college closed the [assessment loop on the 2006-2010 Strategic Plan](#) by evaluating it in spring 2012. Second, the Board -- through its five SIOs -- has laid a framework for a new vision and strategic plan for the college.

It is around these five SIOs that the college's Integrated Educational Master Plan (IEMP) has been focused. The details within the IEMP have been aided by the college's [new participatory governance structure](#); improved levels of participation on college wide committees; the creation of a [Board two-year action agenda](#); [refinement of plans for a number of different college areas](#); [improvements in telecommunications and information technology](#); [completion of first phase of program prioritizations](#); improved [engagement of external stakeholders](#); and the establishment of a [physical resources contingency fund policy](#).

In addition, the development of the IEMP was aided by the following steps:

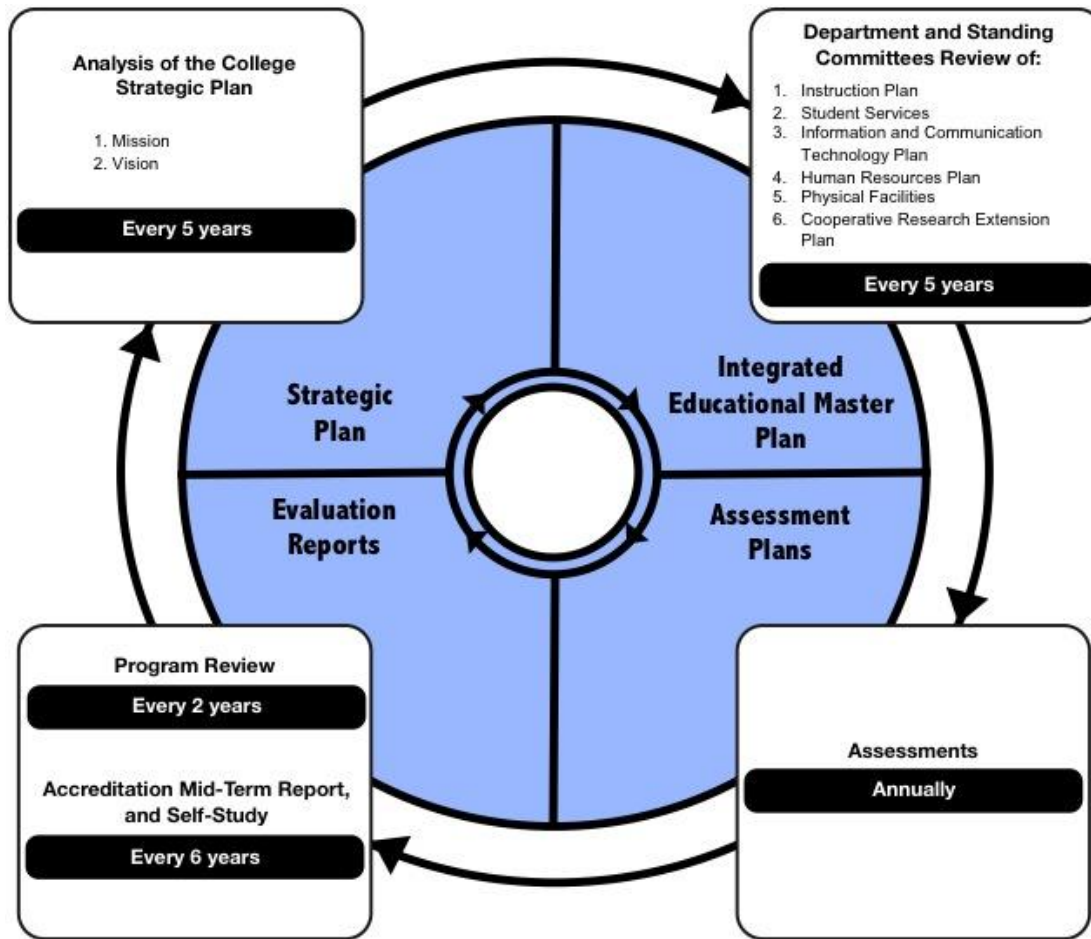
- 1 Analysis of the college's most recent Strategic Plan (2006-2011).
- 2 Department review and standing committee review of all college plans to determine what is still relevant; what is not relevant; and what should be changed or improved.
- 3 Completion of an external and internal environmental scan. (See Appendix A and B)
- 4 Visioning summit in order to obtain feedback from stakeholder groups.
- 5 Compilation of an [IEMP matrix](#) that links annual program assessment and program review results to the other plans of the college.

Since the IEMP provides for ongoing evaluation and planning, as each area of the college completes its aspects of the IEMP, the overall effectiveness of the college will be improved.

COM-FSM's Planning cycle

The diagram below illustrates the college's planning cycle, which is as follow:

- 1 The planning cycle begins at the start of the fiscal year when annual assessments plans are prepared and reported for service units and for courses.
- 2 Every two years a review of academic and non-academic programs and services are prepared to identify areas of priority and improvement.
- 3 Every five years, the college reviews its mission, vision, and strategic goals in order to guide its integrated educational master plan (IEMP), which consists of plans from all areas of the college.
- 4 These various plans are carried out and aspects of the plans are assessed by the annual assessment plans (i.e., program reviews at COM-FSM).
- 5 After six years, the college will have completed three cycles of program reviews and one cycle of mission, vision, strategic plan, and IEMP assessment. These various cycles are reported to the college's accreditation commission every six years.



COM-FSM's Planning Cycle

Data-Informed Planning: Environmental Scan

In order for the college to achieve the Board's five SIOs, the college must continue to have purposeful dialogue and to inform its decision-making and planning efforts via data. Therefore, the college scanning both its external and internal environments in order to identify opportunities and challenges that may influence its progress and effectiveness.

External Scan

In spring 2012, the college completed a scan of the external environment ([Appendix A](#)) in order to help inform its planning process. Some of the main highlights of the external scan include the following:

- Demographic trends in the FSM are undergoing significant changes. Overall, the FSM's population slightly declined from 107,008 in the 2000 census to 102,843 in the 2010 census. This decline is attributed to out migration; to a decline in household size (from 7 to 4 people); and to an increase in the average age (from 18.9 years in 2000 to 21.5 years in 2010). Pohnpei, which

is the urban and government center of the country, was the only FSM state to see a population increase between 2000 and 2010.

- The K-12 system also experienced a decline, from 34,086 students in SY 2006/07 to 28,845 in SY2011/12.
- The FSM GDP is estimated to be \$238.1 million with a per capita GDP of \$2,205. Compact aid and federal grants from the United States contributes approximately \$100,000,000 a year to the FSM.
- The workforce of the FSM has a total payroll employment of 16,360 with private sector employment of 7,542 and public sector employment of 8,265. The unemployment rate for the FSM was estimated to be 22% in 2000 with 26.7% of the population below the poverty line.

Internal Scan

In addition to an external scan, the college reviewed data and information about its internal environment ([Appendix B](#)). Some of the main highlights of the internal scan include the following:

- The fall 2012 enrollment at the college was approximately 2,700 students, which was a 5% decrease from fall 2011. The enrollment in 2007 was 2,400 and increased over the next five years to 2,900 in fall 2011. Fall 2004 enrollment was 2,700 which is the same as the fall 2012 enrollment.
- Over the past several years, the college has typically had slightly more female students than male students.
- The average age of the students has ranged between 19 and 23 years-old since 2007.
- Over the past five years, the number of full-time students has dropped from 75% to 69% and appears to be decreasing.
- For the past five years, course completion rates averaged around 78% and retention rate was 65%.
- The budget of the college has consistently been between \$10.5m and \$11.1m over the past eight years. Tuition and fees have remained steady, so the only variance comes from the slight increase in enrollment.
- The faculty instructor ratio has increased from 17 to 1 in 2007 up to 27 to 1 in 2011.
- The physical infrastructure of the college is 65 lecture classrooms and 32 specialized computer and technical laboratories. ([Appendix C](#))
- The current human capital of the college is as of fall 2012: 352 full-time employees and 184 part-time employees system wide.

The Need for Integrated Planning

In light of the information from the external and internal scans, the college realizes that it must work together in order to appropriately address the opportunities and challenges with which it has been presented.

In order for COM-FSM to achieve the Board's five SIOs, the college has integrated its various plans into one, cohesive master plan. This master plan (the IEMP) links the resource and capacity plans (financial, human, physical, and technology plans) of the college. For example, the IEMP is tied to the college's Five Year Financial Plan (5YFP), which is based on the delivery of existing programs and services and on maintaining the current structure of the college. In addition, the IEMP includes the college's prioritized academic programs for the next five years and includes the Instructional, Student Service, Human Resources, Facilities and Campus Environment, Administrative Service, and CRE/Land Grant plans of the college.

Examples of Integrated Planning at COM-FSM

As previously stated, the IEMP consists of [a matrix of integrated, measurable operational plans](#) for COM-FSM. These plans include a wide range of specific actions that the college will undertake in the coming five years. Samples of some of the detailed plans contained in the IEMP are given below:

In order to increase the success rate of the first year students, the college plans several major initiatives:

- implement a first year experience program including a College 101 course required for all new students (IEMP/AP1/Action Step 1.8)
- identify advising needs for nontraditional students and develop opportunities and/or procedures for assisting them. (IEMP/AP3/Action Step 3.5).
- establish links between instruction and student services through developing a comprehensive student life program that will track referrals by faculty to tutoring and counseling. (IEMP/AP1 and SS2/Action Steps 1.13 and 2.3)
- instruction and student services will coordinate planning and delivery of a student orientation. (IEMP/AP4/Action Step 4.2)
- establish a master schedule of instructional and student services activities with regular seminars and training each school year for coordination and consistency of activities for students and faculty. (IEMP/AP4/Action Steps 4.2)

The college plans to increase overall retention, graduation, progression, and persistence rates through collaboration of the Department of Student Services (which comprises of Financial Aid, Recruitment, Admissions and Records, Counseling, Peer Counseling, and Student Life) with the Department of Instructional Affairs in order to assess, improve, and implement better student services processes. One of these collaborations will enhance the timeliness of advising and referrals by adopting a computer software program to coordinate and integrate the faculty advising program with existing counseling and tutoring programs

(IEMP/AP4/Action Step 4.3, SS2/Action Step 2.6/TP1/Action Step TP1.2). In addition, plans are in place to improve the tutoring program by revising the procedures (including the orientation training) and by implementing a standardized pay scale and evaluation process through staff training (IEMP/HR3.1/Action step HR3.1.2).

An additional goal of the college is to not only increase student success while attending COM-FSM, but also students' success in transferring and when seeking employment. To achieve this, the college plans to develop new articulation pathways or partnerships with regional institutions for easy transition of COM-FSM transfer students (IEMP/AP1/Action Step 1.12) and to create and implement a work experience program through working with stakeholders in the public and private sectors for hands on training (IEMP/AP2/Action Step 2.1). Lastly, the college plans to create and implement an annual job fair to increase the visibility of students in the job market (IEMP/AP2/Action Step 2.2).

According to the external scan, the FSM population shows a decline; however, the college plans to maintain the current enrollment for the next five years. To achieve this, the college plans to collaborate with the K-12 system to articulate expectations of college ready students (IEMP/AP1/Action Step 1.7) and to improve the advising and recruitment of non-traditional students (IEMP/SS1/Action Step 2.3). In order to attract non-traditional students, the college plans to offer courses through distance education and expanded scheduling -- such as offering more courses in the evenings. (IEMP/AP1/Action Step 1.14 and 1.16)

III. Resources and Capacities to Support Institutional Effectiveness

To support its IEMP, the institution must effectively use its financial, human, physical, and technology resources. The resources and capacities allow the college to achieve its broad educational purposes, including its stated student learning outcomes.

Financial Resources

The College of Micronesia-FSM Five-Year Financial Plan has been prepared and linked to the programs and services in the IEMP in order to give the institution a better outlook of where the college will be in the next five years. This financial plan includes a five year look at the finances of the college. Since the IEMP includes all plans for the college, this document helps inform financial planning at the college in the future -- while, in turn, financial projections help drive future operational plans. This is an illustration of how the IEMP is a living document that adjusts to financial resources while informing financial planning at the same time. For example, the college's 2014 budget was formulated using established procedures for and guidelines to achieve program goals and objectives. Those program goals and

objectives may have been revised in light of the financial resources allocated to each during the budget process.

The college has prepared its financial assumptions using the best case scenario for the revenue projections and conservative assumptions on operating expenditures. The assumptions are based on the existing organization structure of the college. The 5YFP is focused on the primary operations of five of the college's six campuses (National, Pohnpei, Chuuk, Kosrae and Yap) and the five main departments of the college (Office of the President; Instruction; Department of Institutional Effectiveness & Quality Assurance; Student Services; and Administration). The Financial Plan for Technology has been completed separately as in previous years because funding is secured under the Technology Plan, where each student pays \$100 each semester of attendance. Others, like the college's sixth campus (Fisheries and Maritime Institute), auxiliary enterprises, and administration of grants and programs were not considered in the plan because all have other secured funding sources. ([See Appendix C](#))
<http://www.comfsm.fm/vpia/misc/AppendixAjh.pdf>

In order to maintain financial sustainability, the college has approved an increase in fees and tuition for the next five years. Additionally, \$1 million will be appropriated from [Compact funding and \\$2.8 million will be appropriated from the local revenue of the FSM government.](#)

Human Capital

The human resources office works with departments, campuses, and offices to recruit and retain qualified personnel through:

- facilitation of processes;
- administration of institutional benefit programs;
- training and consultation to ensure equality services;
- involvement of internal critical stakeholders in decision making in services such as staff development program, policy development, hiring processes, etc.;
- promoting diversity and high-performance through award recognition programs and salary increments;
- alignment of services across campuses through systematic review of programs and services.

The recruitment and retainment of qualified personnel continues to be a challenge. Therefore, the college has taken steps to improve its retention by developing and implementing a mentoring program for all new hires (IEMP/HR3.1/Action plan HR3.1.3) and by enhancing programs to promote the development of Micronesians to meet the employment needs of the college (IEMP/HR3.2/Action Plan HR3.2.1).

Physical Resources

In the college's effort to provide quality education and address financial sustainability, the college is undertaking the necessary preparations to conduct a space utilization study that will help support programs and services. (See Appendix C) However, in absence of the space utilization study, the college has planned to maximize the use of classrooms across sites through creative scheduling and strategic program planning. (IEMP/AP1/Action Plan 1.3/AP2/Action Step 2.4).

One of the objectives of the Instructional Plan component of the IEMP is to assure quality and consistency of courses and programs across all sites. To achieve this, the college, through the physical resources, plans to ensure that facilities and equipment meet needs to support programs and services identified in the Instructional Plan (IEMP/FCE3.1/Action Plan 3.1.1) and to re-prioritize projects based on results of academic program prioritization (IEMP/FCE1.3/Action Plan 1.3.1).

Technology Resources

In order to enhance the college's physical infrastructure and to support communication, the Information Technology (IT) division deliver effective technology services to support college services. COM-FSM uses a CentOS 5.4 (which is equivalent to RHEL5.4) Linux server setup as a gateway to the Internet. This provides email, an Apache web server, the Squid caching web proxy, and a variety of other critical network services. Each location that COM-FSM operates has a setup that works in conjunction with this central system.

Single mode fiber optic connectivity is now in use at the National campus, and dsl type technologies will soon be used to connect all other campuses, in order to reduce reliance on T1 lines. WiFi access is available, and authenticated network users are able to use mobile device for connectivity needs for academic, research, and other network purposes. Learning Resource Center (LRC) and Student Information System (SIS) services are available at all campuses in real time. Website services have been expanded to accommodate direct news posting from authorized constituents from all of the college campuses. In addition, bandwidth management is in effect to maximize potential per user usability of the college's network services.

For integration of technology resources with the college's priorities, the Information Technology (IT) division is working closely with all parts of the college (such as instructional and student services) to utilize all of the technology systems described above. For example, in cooperation with Instructional Affairs, the IT division plans to establish directions that link best instructional practices to ICT technologies, facilities, infrastructure, support staff, and capacity building (IEMP/TP1/Action Step TP1.3). In addition, to assure quality and consistency of courses and programs across sites, IT plans to improve communication across all campuses by enhancing technology infrastructures; by training faculty members; and by assisting with the development of future courses that utilize distance learning methods as a way to increase student access to required courses in order to lead to more timely

completion of courses and programs across all sites (IEMP/AP1/Action Plan 1.9 and 1.14).

IV. Utilizing Program Review Results

The IEMP is informed by the results of the college's [program reviews](#), which are completed on an annual basis by all areas of the college. Educational services program reviews (instruction, support services, library and learning resources) are based on student achievement indicators and student learning outcome assessments, which are completed each semester at the course level and annually at program level. Non-academic units conduct annual assessments of programs, which are also incorporated into the planning process for the purpose of supporting student success.

Based upon program review results, the college has also completed a [program prioritization for both the academic programs](#) and the [non-academic programs](#). These program prioritization results have also informed the IEMP.

V. Conclusion

“Moving Forward, Together” is the graduation theme chosen by COM-FSM’s graduating class of spring 2012. This is a fitting theme to describe the IEMP and the processes that were used to develop the matrix of measurable IEMP plans. Together, the college is moving forward with achieving the Board-developed five ISOs:

- Emphasize Academic Offerings in Service to National Needs
- Focus on Student Success
- Be financially Sound, Financially Responsible, and Build Resources in Anticipation of Future Needs
- Invest in and Build a Strong Capacity in Human Capital
- Be a Learning Organization that Exemplifies Participatory Governance

Together, using the IEMP as a roadmap, the college will effectively use its financial, human, physical, and technology resources to achieve its broad educational purposes, including its stated student-learning outcomes.

Together, as illustrated in the IEMP, the college appropriately plans and effectively incorporates the results of [program reviews](#).

In order for the college to move “forward” together, the college must achieve proficiency in its institutional effectiveness. President Daisy reiterated this point when he stated in his [White Paper](#):

Let us continue this journey with dedication and focus to confront our challenges and create our future; a future ensuring quality, sustainability and success for COM-FSM, the students we educate and the nation we serve.

This we will do, and in this we will succeed. To succeed, we must all work to ensure that we are upholding the mission of the college and working toward the collective vision that we set for the institution. We must assess and continuously improve our institution's quality and work to achieve greater success of our students.

The college will uphold the principles outlined by its President and fulfill the direction and agenda that the Board of Regents has set through operationally implementing its integrated educational master plan.

Appendices

Appendix A: *External Scan*. Retrieved from
<http://www.comfsm.fm/vpia/misc/External%20Environmental%20Scan.pdf>

Appendix B: *Internal Scan*. Retrieved from
<http://www.comfsm.fm/vpia/misc/Appendix%20B.pdf>

Appendix C: *Determination of Future Space Needs, Financial Plan and Total Cost of Ownership*. Retrieved from
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