

Self Study Report 2010

ABSTRACT

College of Micronesia - FSM

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Six years ago (2004), the College of Micronesia-FSM (COM-FSM) underwent a self assessment that described an institution that showed many areas that need improvement. The college's mission was too broad given the college's limited human and financial resources. The broad mission also contributed to the college's inability to move itself from the developmental level in the areas of evaluation and planning for over two years. Improvements at the college were done through individual efforts and not through a clear institutional mandate. The college's faculty members were still claiming that the college administration wanted to influence them by insisting that student learning outcomes (SLOs) be developed and assessed. The college did not have clear lines of authority and responsibility in providing quality programs and services at all sites. Clear dialogue became a challenge and the integrity of the college became questionable.

After the visit by the visiting team and the ACCJC Commissioners' meeting on January 12-14, 2005, President James of COM-FSM received an action letter from President Beno of the ACCJC dated January 31, 2005, which carried the commission's action to place the college on warning with six recommendations for improvement. The first three recommendations dealt with dialogue especially in the areas of communication, institutional commitment and organization. The fourth recommendation called for the need to integrate assessment, planning, resource and budget allocation. The fifth recommendation cautioned the college to improve its identification and assessment of SLOs, and the sixth recommendation called for the college to maintain integrity at all its sites by standardizing all programs and services.

Since the action letter of 2005, a revised mission statement was adopted, which reflected a mandate to align the college's programs and services its human and financial ability. The revised mission statement was endorsed by the Board of Regents through recommendations from the college community. The community's recommendations were manifested through the president retreat of 2006. The current mission statement, which promotes student learning, is available in all official college planning documents and is reviewed by participants from all sectors of the college community. In its current mission, the college sees itself as *historically diverse, uniquely Micronesian and globally connected*, and as a *continuously improving and student centered institute of higher education. The college is committed to assisting in the development of the Federated States of Micronesia by providing academic, career and technical educational opportunities for student learning.* To ensure that it delivers what it professes, the college has developed a continuous improvement cycle. This cycle includes programs and services planning, assessment, resource and budget allocation. This cycle is also mentioned in the body of this report under Standards I, II and III.

The college has developed SLOs for all courses and programs. Assessment of SLOs is currently taking place. The College of Micronesia – FSM sees SLO assessment as an integral part of program assessment and evaluation. The Institutional Assessment Plan Handbook (IAP) clarifies this interconnectivity. The revised governance structure of the college as noted in the governance policy reflects the roles of offices, individuals and committees therefore aiding the implementation of the continuous improvement cycle. Through the governance structure, the use of communications technologies, and the real time and longitudinal data-generating Student Information System (SIS) the college community now has a sense of to whom and through what

medium should information sharing take place. The governance structure was also set up to support areas within the structure to promote free exchange of information.

The current setup of the college now has four vice presidents that provide oversight for administrative, student, instructional and cooperative research and extension services at all sites. This arrangement ensures consistency of programs and services. The vice presidents regularly conduct monitoring visits as well as regularly communicating with staff and faculty at all sites as evidenced in trip logs and in email exchanges. Planning and communication at the college continually reflect the nature and needs of the college. The college's performance-based budget, which also brings together, planning and resource allocation, now reflects an institution that is thinking, planning and allocating resources while providing quality programs and services at all sites. The college is now able to set institutional priorities that are assessed at all areas of the college. During the development of the improvement plans and budget allocation for fy 2011, the college was able to select retention as the priority for all college planning, assessment and resources allocation for fy 2010. All assessment plans and strategies as well as resource and budget allocation are focused on retention.

It is the intention of this report to reveal a college that has transformed from the College of Micronesia – FSM, which was sanctioned in 2005, to a College of Micronesia – FSM, which plans what it wants to do; evaluates and assesses what it plans; improves based on assessment results; allocates resources accordingly; and communicates these results within and outside of the college.