

Northern Marianas College
ACADEMIC COUNCIL
Minutes of August 31, 2012

Approved 10/26/12

DATE: August 31, 2012

TIME: 1:00 p.m.

PLACE: HR Conference Room

Voting Members Present:

Barbara Merfalen, Academic Council Chair, Dean of Academic Programs & Services (APS)

Dr. Alfredo De Torres, Chair, Sciences, Mathematics, Health & Athletics Dept. (SMHA)

Chavel Green, Chair, Business Dept.

Jose Herrera, Acting Director, School of Education (SOE)

Michael Nurmi, Acting Chair, Languages & Humanities Dept. (LH), Instructor, English

Rosa Tudela, Chair, Nursing Dept.

Timothy Baker, Director, Counseling Programs & Services

Non-voting Members Present:

None

Others Present:

Velma Deleon Guerrero, Program Coordinator, Liberal Arts Program

Lisa Hacskaylo, Institutional Researcher, Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE)

Leo Pangelinan, Dean of Student Services and Acting Director, Office of Admissions & Records (OAR)

Meeting called to order at 1:15 p.m.

1) Review and Adoption of August 31, 2012 Agenda

The following changes were made to the agenda:

Add under New Business: e) International Student Survey f) WASC Visit

Chavel moved to adopt the agenda with changes. Dr. De Torres seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2) Review and Adoption of the following Minutes

a) July 6, 2012 Table

b) July 13, 2012 Table

3) Announcements

None

4) Old Business

a) Credit Hour Ad-Hoc Group: The group was formed to look at credit hour to comply with national standards and with accreditation in regards to the number of minutes per class in relation to credit hour. Some courses at the college run 55 minutes. The national average is 50-60 minutes. The group has met briefly, but as of today, there is nothing to report.

5) New Business

a) Procedures for BOR Policy 303.1 Program Guarantee: **Tabled**

b) Syllabus Requirements Update (PLOs and SLOs): There are several concerns by instructors regarding this matter. The AC Chair is very concerned that there is a misunderstanding or that clarification is still needed for Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs). The Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness of which Part III addresses Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) was distributed in an earlier AC meeting. We were at the awareness level when Dr. Cabrera was working with the Program Review and Outcomes Assessment Committee (PROAC) in getting the word out about putting SLOs in each syllabus. We now need to be at the proficiency level. PLOs came into full effect in 2008. PLOs are the "why" part of what is being taught in the class. Faculty need to be able to demonstrate to WASC and this institution that the students know why they are teaching what they are teaching. Students need to be aware of SLOs and PLOs. The AC Chair asked Velma to help her create sample PLO codes for easy referencing. **The department heads were asked to review the sample PLO codes with their department faculty and decide if they are going to use the codes or create their own codes and bring them to Academic Council for approval. Velma will e-mail the sample PLO codes to all department heads.**

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There was a lengthy discussion about knowing which PLOs to put in a syllabus. It was stated that a syllabus for CS 103 Introduction to Computers, for example, will have the course student learning outcomes and the degree program learning outcomes. Tim asked how do we tie them (SLOs and PLOs) together? Michael stated that the key word is outcome. A syllabus for a course will have SLOs and PLOs specific to that course and the degree program which the course is under. The course student learning outcomes must be linked to the degree program learning outcomes. The AC Chair expressed deep concern that some instructors are stating that it is too much work to incorporate PLOs into their syllabus.

It was clarified that the General Education Outcomes are the institutional outcomes.

It was recommended that a workshop be conducted to help the full-time and adjunct faculty with this matter. The AC Chair will ask the president if she can use one of the days for College Hour to address the issue of program learning outcomes with faculty.

Tim asked how do we document that we have incorporated the PLOs? It will be evident in the syllabus and the 5-Column Model for course assessment (Form 1).

Michael expressed concern that students will not be able to remember all SLOs and PLOs, but it was noted that it is about building awareness of the SLOs and PLOs and not necessarily remembering all SLOs and PLOs.

- c) Courses – Requirements and Sequencing: The AC Chair is concerned about the amount of course waiver forms that were submitted and the departments have to stop allowing this to keep occurring. Look at the requirements of the course. It is important that our students succeed, but not at the expense of their achievement when they are going through their academic career at the college. Be mindful of the prerequisites that are required for the course you are teaching. Lisa provided data which showed students enrolled in some courses that have not met the prerequisites for those courses. One example was SO 297 Current Issues in the CNMI which is a cap stone course. This course is not for freshmen, but for students who are in their last semester or next to their final semester. ***It was recommended that the Social Sciences & Fine Arts (SSFA) department have a procedure in place to ensure that students are appropriately enrolled in SO 297.***

There was a lengthy discussion about students not wanting to follow the course progression/sequencing and wanting to complete the core courses right away and not having to wait. It was noted that course progression/sequencing must be followed because of learning outcomes.

- d) Course Guide Schedule: Velma created a course guide schedule matrix to keep track of when course guides are supposed to be updated. She will e-mail the matrix to the department heads. When course guides are updated, they should be uploaded on the college website to make the articulation process more efficient.
- e) International Student Survey: A focus group was put together in May to get feedback from international students. Student Services received a budget for international students and had plans to create a separate unit for international students and a center to provide specialized services to serve their needs, such as translation services, academic, tutoring, and some other forms of support to help students who are in the various levels of the English program. For the most part students were satisfied with instructional quality.

Tim strongly suggested that orientation for international students be more complete, more incisive, and more focused on how they deal with our academic system versus an academic system they come from.

How can we improve instructional quality? The students are noticing a lack of preparedness from instructors. Another issue noted by the students was culture sensitivity. Dean Pangelinan has yet to meet with his leadership team to address the issues identified by the survey. ***The AC Chair will also place this issue on the agenda for the APS Leadership meeting.***

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- f) WASC Visit: The team will arrive in October. Read the full 2012 Self Evaluation Report. Today is the deadline to e-mail Becky, the president's executive secretary, the number of copies of the report each department needs.

6) Degree and Certificate Program Review

- a) Revisions to Individualized Degree Plans/Individualized Certificate Plans: None
- b) Department Request to Place Program(s) on Inactive Status: None

7) Course Guide Review

- a) Inactive Status: None
- b) Cancellations: None
- c) Modifications
 - i) ED 493: \$300 fee added for ED 493. The addition of a fee for a course must be approved before it can be placed in the course guide. The proposed fee has to be brought to the Management Team (MT) for review and approval first. ***The AC Chair will ask Becky to place this issue on the MT meeting agenda for Tuesday, September 4th.***
 - ii) ED 353: **Tabled until the next AC meeting.**
- d) New
 - i) CJ 203 Table
 - ii) CJ 233 Table

8) Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m. Next meeting will be on Friday, September 14, 2012 at 1:00 p.m. Location of the meeting will be announced at a later date.

“In order to foster a better informed and cohesive college community, NMC faculty, staff, and students are welcome to attend.”