

**Follow-Up Report**

**PALAU COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
Postal Box 0009  
Koror, Republic of Palau 96940**

**A Confidential Report Prepared for the Accrediting Commission  
for Community and Junior Colleges**

**This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited**

**Palau Community College**

**on**

**March 30 - April 1, 2011**

**Leon Richards, PhD, Chancellor, Kapi'olani Community College**  
*Team Chair*

**Salvatore Lanzilotti, EdD, Assistant to Chancellor, Kapi'olani Community College**  
*Team Member*

Institution: Palau Community College  
Dates of Visit: March 30 to April 1, 2011  
Team: Dr. Leon Richards, Team Chair and Dr. Salvatore Lanzilotti,  
Team Member.

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**Introduction:**

At its meeting of June 9-11, 2010, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges acted to require Palau Community College (PCC) to submit a Follow-Up Report by March 15, 2011 followed by a visit. The visiting team, Dr. Leon Richards and Dr. Salvatore Lanzilotti, conducted the site visit to PCC on March 30 – April 1, 2011. The purpose of the team visit was to verify, through examination of evidence, that the Follow-Up Report prepared by the college was accurate; that sustained, continuous, and positive improvements had been made at the institution; and that the institution has resolved the recommendations made by the comprehensive evaluation team and now meets the Accreditation Standards addressed through recommendations in the initial accreditation team visit.

In general, the follow-up team found that the college had prepared well for the visit by arranging for meetings with the individuals and groups agreed upon with the team chair and by assembling appropriate documents in the meeting room used by the team. Over the course of the two days, the team met with the President of the college, Chair of the Board of Trustees, members of the college's Executive Committee, the Accreditation Liaison Officer and Deputy Liaison Officer, the Faculty Senate President, the President of the Student Association, and members of the college staff.

Finally, the team is duly impressed with the overall energy, self-reflection, dedication, and commitment that are being expended, not only by the college leadership but also by the college's faculty, staff, and students, toward addressing the four accreditation recommendations. Through interviews and review of the evidence, it is apparent to the team that the entire college community is engaged in refining its policies, procedures, and structures in order to further promote and sustain continuous organizational improvement for the purpose of improving student engagement, learning and success.

The Follow-Up Report and visit were expected to document resolution of the following recommendations:

## **Recommendation #1:**

### **Improving Institutional Effectiveness**

To respond fully to the previous team's (2004) Recommendations 1, 2 and 3 concerning the increase of institutional effectiveness and student learning through the use of a systematic cycle of planning and evaluation, e.g., as applied to the college's efforts to integrate planning with resource development and allocations, to improve learning and success through identifying and assessing student learning outcomes, and to conduct systematic program review, respectively, the team recommends the college do the following:

- a. Develop and implement a strategy that ensures appropriate feedback and dialogue wherein assessment results are communicated to all constituent groups in an accurate, timely, and systematic manner. (I.B.1, I.B.5)
- b. Establish and implement clear written policies and procedures that demonstrate the flow of human, facilities, technology, and financial planning protocols. (I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.5, II.A.2.e, III.A.6, III.B.2.b, III.C.2, III.D.3)
- c. Ensure these written policies, procedures, and processes delineate the roles and responsibilities of the various college planning groups that will monitor implementation, assessment, evaluation, and improvement of college plans. (I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.5, II.A.2e, II.B.1, II.B.4, II.C.2, III.A.2, III.A.5, III.A.6, III.B.2b, III.C.1, III.C.2, III.D.3)
- d. Establish and implement a written process by which the college will systematically review and revise as necessary its human, facilities, technology, and financial planning and budgeting processes. (I.B.6)
- e. Establish and implement a means to assess its programs and services evaluation mechanisms through a systematic review of their effectiveness. (I.B.7)

## **Recommendation #2:**

### **Library and Learning Support Services**

To increase the effectiveness of library services support for student learning and to assure the acquisition of an appropriate and current collection of library materials that are available to support educational offerings, the team recommends that the college: provide appropriate staffing and resources; develop and implement student learning outcomes for library programs and services; and assess the SLOs and utilize the resulting information for sustainable planning and improvement. All library and learning support service programs need to participate in the on-going program review process. (II.C.1, II.C.1.b, and II.C.2)

**Recommendation #3:**

**Human Resources**

To increase the effective use of human resources and to assure a more equitable application of college policies and procedures, such as the Board Policies and the Personnel Rules and Regulations Manual, the team recommends that the college practice transparency, collaboration and communication in development, implementation, and review of all policies and procedures, and to assure that the administrative needs of the college continue to be met, the college needs to fill the key vacant administrative positions. (III.A.1, III.A.1.a, III.A.2, III.A.3, III.A.3.a, III.A.4)

**Recommendation #4:**

**Leadership and Governance**

To assure improvement and full implementation of the governance process created in response to Recommendation 6 of the 2004 report, the team recommends that the Executive Committee structure be formalized. Furthermore, to assure that the mission and values statements are central to decision making, the team recommends that the college formalize, communicate, and implement all governance processes for faculty, staff, students, and administration, assess the effectiveness of those processes, and utilize the results for improvement. (I.A.4, IV.A.2, IV.A.3, IV.A.5, IV.B.2.b)

## **College Responses to the Team Recommendations:**

### **Recommendation #1:**

#### **Improving Institutional Effectiveness**

To respond fully to the previous team's (2004) Recommendations 1, 2 and 3 concerning the increase of institutional effectiveness and student learning through the use of a systematic cycle of planning and evaluation, e.g., as applied to the college's efforts to integrate planning with resource development and allocations, to improve learning and success through identifying and assessing student learning outcomes, and to conduct systematic program review, respectively, the team recommends the college do the following:

- a. Develop and implement a strategy that ensures appropriate feedback and dialogue wherein assessment results are communicated to all constituent groups in an accurate, timely, and systematic manner. (I.B.1, I.B.5)

### **Findings and Evidence:**

To ensure appropriate feedback and dialogue wherein assessment results are communicated to all constituent groups in an accurate, timely, and systematic manner, the college improved and enhanced the functionality of its Executive Committee. Through this Committee the college maintains an ongoing, collegial, self-reflective dialogue about the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes.

The Executive Committee, in its advisory capacity to the President, serves as the management team and deals with policy issues relating to the college. It serves to integrate and coordinate planning and decision-making at the institutional level. It also ensures that the college's mission and value statements are central to its decision-making processes. This Committee consists of 19 individuals in leadership positions, i.e., two Vice-Presidents, three deans, the presidents of the Faculty Senate, Associated Students of Palau CC, and the Classified Staff Organization, the directors of seven programs, the Librarian, the Institutional Researcher, the Executive Assistant to the President, and the ALO. It is the responsibility of the members of this committee to communicate information to their constituent groups from the Committee and to bring data, information and requests from their groups to the Committee when warranted.

Examples of the minutes of the Executive Committee meetings illustrate that the Committee makes decisions based on information provided by the Program

Review process. Under agenda items referring to Program Review during the 9/3/10, 10/7/10 and 10/19/10 meetings, nine Program Review recommendations were discussed and decisions were made and recorded. In addition, this Executive Committee agenda includes items related to assessing progress of the college's 15 Year Institutional Master Plan (e.g., March 8, 2011).

In addition, evidence shows that the institution uses documented assessment results to communicate matters of quality assurance to appropriate constituencies. Through interviews it was established that the Executive Committee plays a pivotal role in the cycle of assessment, evaluation, planning, implementation, and re-assessment. The Institutional Researcher, a member of the Executive Committee, for example, reported that assessment data of non-academic programs is disseminated in college publications, i.e., *Palau CC InFocus*, the IRO newsletter, the Palau CC newsletter, and reported to the Vice President for Administration and Finance, and to the Executive Committee. The committee reviews the assessment data and receives reports from the Vice President who, working with the appropriate program staff, reviews the data and creates a plan for improvement, where necessary. The Vice President reports to the Executive Committee on progress. In addition, plans are made during the implementation phase to assess the effectiveness of changes made.

b. Establish and implement clear written policies and procedures that demonstrate the flow of human, facilities, technology, and financial planning protocols. (I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.5, II.A.2.e, III.A.6, III.B.2.b, III.C.2, III.D.3)

The college responded to this recommendation by making several structural and procedural changes. For example, the college formally established an Executive Committee, which serves as the college's management team and which deals with policy issues. Through this Committee, its members (as described above) can bring any and all issues to the forefront and discuss them openly. Once decisions are made, recommendations are sent to the President, and if adopted by the President, to the Board of Trustees, if appropriate. The Executive Committee serves to integrate and coordinate planning and decision making and based on its composition, it guarantees representation of all the college's units and constituencies.

The college's 15 Year Institutional Master Plan 2009-2024 outlines the improvements set for the immediate future. The "Report Card" (February, 2011) is a tool used to assess the status of the strategic directions stated in this plan. The "Report Card" includes the college's progress toward human, facility, and technology goals, as well as that toward student success, planned change, and use of a culture of evidence for the purpose of institutional improvement, as stated in the 15 Year Institutional Master Plan.

Furthermore, a Policy Review Committee was established by the Board of Trustees on 12/9/10 to “a. Help ensure that personnel policies and processes are adhered to; b. Review and assess the effectiveness of the personnel policies and processes; and c. Review and revise the Personnel Rules and Regulations Manual on a regular basis of at least every four (4) years.” The immediate result of this Committee is nine recommendations to the Manual that were approved by the Board of Trustees and presented to the faculty and staff in 1/11.

In addition, the Technology Plan, initiated in 2005 and updated in 2009, has been further updated in February and March 2011 and integrated into the college’s 15 Year Institutional Master Plan.

It was reported in several interviews that the formalization and/or establishment of committees since the comprehensive evaluation team’s visit has been most helpful in further establishing and implementing written policies and procedures that allow for the efficient flow of human, facilities, technology, and financial planning protocols. Moreover, the faculty and staff interviewed stated that these events have helped to increase and improve communications throughout the college.

c. Ensure these written policies, procedures, and processes delineate the roles and responsibilities of the various college planning groups that will monitor implementation, assessment, evaluation, and improvement of college plans. (I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.5, II.A.2e, II.B.1, II.B.4, II.C.2, II.A.2, III.A.5, III.A.6, III.B.2b, III.C.1, III.C.2, III.D.3)

The college provided evidence that the roles and responsibilities of various college planning groups responsible for monitoring, implementing, assessing, evaluating, and improving college plans are clearly defined. The roles and responsibilities of both the newly formalized Executive Committee, outlined in a 2/07/11 memo written by the college President, and those of the Personnel Rules and Regulations Manual Revision Committee/Policy Review Committee, outlined in a 3/24/10 memo by the President, are two examples.

Evidence further illustrated that other college planning groups/committees have been and will continue to be monitored at the division/department level, and by the Executive Committee. These groups include the Retention Committee, the Committee on Student Financial Aid, the Technology Resources Committee, and the Committee on Programs and Curricula.

The college provided evidence of written descriptions of committees’ policies, procedures and processes, roles and responsibilities in the Technology Resources Plan, the Committee on Programs and Curricula handbook, the Retention Committee minutes, and documentation of the establishing of the Institutional Assessment Committee.

d. Establish and implement a written process by which the college will systematically review and revise as necessary its human, facilities, technology, and financial planning and budgeting processes. (I.B.6)

The Executive Committee has been formally established to systematically review and revise college-wide planning and budgeting processes, as per the President's memo dated 2/07/11 memo. Evidence provided shows that the review of progress on the college's 15 Year Institutional Master Plan is a mandatory item on the Executive Committee agenda and is discussed accordingly. In addition, results of the annual program review process are reviewed by the Executive Committee. The Committee includes an institutional researcher who brings all assessments to the committee for review and action. Furthermore, to improve and ensure systematic review is taking place in all areas, a standing committee, the Institutional Assessment Committee (IAC), was established as a subcommittee of the Executive Committee. Through the IAC and the oversight of the Executive Committee the *review and revise* system adopted by Palau CC allows for both systematic review of formal annual and other time-related review content and processes, as well as for ongoing reviews, on a more informal basis, of planning and budgeting content- and process-related issues for the purpose of institutional improvement. Thus, through regular annual reports and through monthly reporting of division-, department- and constituent-based issues, the Executive Committee is presented with problems and issues needing attention and can assign issues for review to its IAC when its members deem it necessary. This system guarantees the college attends, on a systematic basis, to not only the problems which utilize human, facilities, technology, and financial and budgeting processes, but also to the efficacy and efficiency of the processes themselves. Both problems/issues and processes are discussed by the Executive Committee during regularly scheduled review cycles as well as on a monthly basis, where necessary, and through the IAC review and recommendation process, attended to by the Executive Committee when warranted.

e. Establish and implement a means to assess its programs and services evaluation mechanisms through a systematic review of their effectiveness. (I.B.7)

The college provided evidence that it understands the need to evaluate the evaluation mechanisms it employs. The college uses the Institutional Research Office to assist academic and non-academic programs in systematically assessing its programs and services and in evaluating the mechanisms used for assessment. For example, the Technology Resources Committee revised several goals of the college Technology Plan and instituted surveys as a systematic mechanism to assess the adequacy of technology resources. Although students, faculty and staff had been surveyed in the past, it was not done on a regular basis. The surveys have been revised and students, faculty, and staff will now be surveyed annually. The results of the surveys will be used

to assess the sufficiency of technology resources as well as to identify needs. The survey instruments will be reviewed before distribution each time to ensure that they are fulfilling the survey purpose.

### **Conclusion:**

The team concludes that this recommendation has been addressed and is being met by the college. Although the college has not had the opportunity to implement a complete cycle of institutional improvement, the team concludes that the college has put appropriate structures, policies, and procedures in place; has initiated and supported the necessary dialogue concerning institutional improvement; shows and expresses an understanding of the purpose of the improvements recommended by the accreditation team, i.e., student engagement, learning, and success; and is moving to fully implement the recommendation as quickly as possible.

### **Recommendation #2:**

#### **Library and Learning Support Services**

To increase the effectiveness of library services support for student learning and to assure the acquisition of an appropriate and current collection of library materials that are available to support educational offerings, the team recommends that the college: provide appropriate staffing and resources; develop and implement student learning outcomes for library programs and services; and assess the SLOs and utilize the resulting information for sustainable planning and improvement. All library and learning support service programs need to participate in the on-going program review process. (II.C.1, II.C.1.b, and II.C.2)

### **Findings and Evidence:**

The college hired a head librarian on August 1, 2010, with a two-year contract that ends on July 31, 2012. Although the librarian has been on the job only approximately one-half a year at the time of the follow-up visit, considerable progress has been made concerning the team's recommendation in this area. For example, library staff have been requested, approved, added, and trained; the non-catalogued materials have been catalogued; areas needing additional book resources have been assessed and new book resources have been ordered; a new process, utilizing computer technology, for ordering books and resources has been initiated; SLOs for classes given by the library have been established and these classes are assessed regularly. In addition, a mission statement has been written for the library and is being reviewed by library staff;

the mission statement needs further review and approval by the college, including the faculty and staff.

In order to provide a systematic approach to increasing library resources a Collection Development Policy has been developed and is in place. Evidence was presented showing that the librarian is working with the Technology Resources Committee to resolve computer and technology issues that will enhance the functioning of the library. Furthermore, an additional router for the library computer lab has been installed. Also, a Library Policy Manual has been developed, which includes a gifts/donation policy and a collection development policy, as outlined in the 15 Year Institutional Master Plan.

Some issues will not be resolved until the technology issues of the college are resolved, e.g., once the internet speed is improved, the library will be able to purchase research databases and e-books. These materials are currently not able to load with such a slow internet speed.

The librarian is a member of the Executive Committee. This affords the librarian the opportunity to communicate with the leadership of other programs, departments, and divisions in the college, to participate in the Planning Review process, and to better understand the resource needs of all programs.

Also, to respond to the recommendation that the library needed additional resources, the college was able to obtain a grant for \$41,983 from the Institute of Museum and Library Services on July 16, 2009. Streamlined procedures allowing direct library access to this type of funding and procedures that facilitate spending these funds need to be initiated so that the library systematically can benefit from such external funds in a timely manner.

The librarian is working on establishing faculty order cycles that are user friendly for faculty, on a per semester basis, and on evaluating the process so as to ensure that faculty receive the book resources they need in support of student learning and success. Evidence shows that the librarian has given priority to catalogue non-fiction material, especially resources that relate to the academic curriculum. Current materials that directly support the curriculum and student learning are in the process of being ordered through grant resources.

The library is still in the process of implementing SLOs and has not yet reached the assessment stage. The library is coordinating its efforts with the institutional research office, which will help analyze the data for SLO assessments of all patrons. Evidence showed that the Online Lab survey was amended for the library computer lab to determine students' ability to use the online catalog and the EBSCO database, and to find valid internet resources. The Technology

Resources Committee plans to review the results of all computer lab surveys to determine priority areas for allocating college resources for the purpose of improving computer lab services in conjunction with the college's Technology Resources Plan.

**Conclusion:**

The team concludes that this recommendation has been addressed and is being met by the college. Although the college has not had the time to complete an assessment cycle and there are local technology barriers to immediate improvements in some areas, with the hiring of a head librarian and the planning, assessment, and improvement efforts of the librarian, the library staff, and a variety of committees involved in planning, review, implementation, and assessment, evidence shows that the college is well on its way to meeting all of the aspects of this recommendation.

**Recommendation #3:**

**Human Resources**

To increase the effective use of human resources and to assure a more equitable application of college policies and procedures, such as the Board Policies and the Personnel Rules and Regulations Manual, the team recommends that the college practice transparency, collaboration and communication in development, implementation, and review of all policies and procedures, and to assure that the administrative needs of the college continue to be met, the college needs to fill the key vacant administrative positions. (III.A.1, III.A.1.a, III.A.2, III.A.3, III.A.3.a, III.A.4)

**Findings and Evidence:**

The college has embraced the challenges set forth in this recommendation and has instituted several changes in structures, policy, and procedures. Although the college has advertised its vacancies for the Director of Finance and Director of Human Resources, it has yet to fill these positions. Realizing the difficulty of attracting qualified personnel, the college should make every effort to fill these positions as soon as possible. However, it has been noted that the college was successful in hiring a qualified librarian and has moved forward in that area.

The college presented evidence of addressing the issues raised by the comprehensive evaluation team concerning the Personnel Rules and Regulations Manual (PRRM), e.g., in dealing with hiring, contract status, and salary schedules. The college established a Personnel Rules and Regulations Committee that presented nine recommendations to the President via the

Executive Committee, and eventually to the Board of Trustees. These recommendations have been accepted and are available online and in the Human Resources office; they will be integrated into the manual on its next printing.

In addition, the newly established Policy Review Committee will continue the process of reviewing personnel policy, as its principal functions are to ensure compliance with PRRM, assessment of the effectiveness of PRRM, and review of PRRM for currency and relevancy of policy that is effectively and timely implemented. The college presented evidence that it addressed issues raised by the team, e.g., concerning limited term appointments, the college's grievance procedures, and the faculty evaluation process. Most importantly, the committees involved in the response utilized a collaborative process and were representative of college wide constituencies

In addition, a non-discrimination policy was added to the PRRM (12/09/10) and the college adopted a Code of Conduct for All Employees.

These and other changes made by the college illustrate the college is practicing transparency, collaboration, and communication in order to in develop, implement and review its policies and procedures, and to assure that the administrative needs of the college are met.

### **Conclusion:**

The team concludes that this recommendation has been addressæd and is being met by the college. Although the college has not had the opportunity to complete a cycle of institutional improvement, assessment, planning, and evaluation, the team concludes that the college has put appropriate structures, policies, and procedures in place; has initiated and supported the necessary dialogue concerning the effective use of human resources and the equitable application of college policies and procedures; is attempting to fill executive vacancies (in fact, advertisements for two positions are currently posted); and is making considerable progress toward fully implementing the recommendation as quickly as possible, especially given the difficulties of attracting qualified executive level personnel.

### **Recommendation #4:**

#### **Leadership and Governance**

To assure improvement and full implementation of the governance process created in response to Recommendation 6 of the 2004 report, the team recommends that the Executive Committee structure be formalized.

Furthermore, to assure that the mission and values statements are central to decision making, the team recommends that the college formalize, communicate, and implement all governance processes for faculty, staff, students, and administration, assess the effectiveness of those processes, and utilize the results for improvement. (I.A.4, IV.A.2, IV.A.3, IV.A.5, IV.B.2.b)

### **Findings and Evidence:**

Evidence was presented that the Executive Committee adopted a revised policy on July 16, 2010, and was formally organized in June 2010 and revised in January, 2011. In addition, the Faculty Senate Association, the Classified Staff Organization, and the Associated Students of PCC not only have representation on the Executive Committee but also are formally included on the Committee's agenda to ensure greater governance participation from faculty, students, and staff. Furthermore, the policy statement formalizing the Executive Committee states, "It serves to integrate and coordinate planning and decision-making at the institutional level. It also ensures that the college's mission and value statements are central to its decision-making processes." The college provided evidence illustrating the centrality of the college's mission statement (i.e., "PCC is an accessible public educational institution helping to meet the technical, academic, cultural, social, and economic needs of students and communities by promoting learning opportunities and developing personal excellence") to decision making, as it is included in the 15 Year Institutional Master Plan, which is an ongoing item on the Executive Committee agenda. Also, the college provided copies of its annual report of its progress toward the four strategic directions of its Master Plan which are directly connected to and based on its mission statement, e.g., "Strategic Direction 1: Student Success – Palau CC will intensify its effort to enhance existing programs and services, as well as develop new ones, all in an effort to improve student success."

The constituent organizations at Palau CC are formalized, i.e., the Classified Staff Organization, the Faculty Senate Association, and the Associated Students of PCC have by-laws, which include purpose, membership, officers' duties, terms of elected officers, meeting schedules, and finance. The college reports that it has begun to assess the effectiveness of its governance structure and processes. On January 25, 2011, the Executive Committee meeting was assessed with an evaluation tool that was later revised to better assess the structure on a regular basis. This process needs to be expanded to assess the effectiveness of all governance structures, not just for individual meetings but for overall effectiveness.

The college provided evidence that program planning and resource allocation are tied to established program review cycles; the budget process begins at the department/program level in conjunction with the program review process. The college showed that academic program reviews are first conducted by the

Academic Assessment Committee, a standing faculty committee, and that reports are disseminated to the Committee on Programs and Curricula and the Academic Affairs Dean. All purchase requisitions, including those from program reviews, require justification that links procurement to student learning outcomes. At the institutional level, the Executive Committee reviews departments/programs recommendations and resource allocations. Although this is a comprehensive and integrated planning process, no mention of its assessment was offered. The college purports to have a system, the F.A.M.E.D. process, for assessing its planning structures, protocols, and processes but did not include any information or evidence concerning this system in its Follow-Up Report or through its supporting documents.

**Conclusion:**

The team concludes that this recommendation has been addressed and is being met by the college. The college was able to formalize and improve the functionality of the Executive Committee and to utilize it as a governance structure and a conduit for college-wide dialogue and inclusion of all constituency groups. The college has begun to assess the effectiveness of the Executive Committee meetings, and has developed plans to assess the overall effectiveness of the committee as a governance structure. In addition, the college needs to apply this meta-assessment strategy to the functioning of other formalized governance structures such as the Faculty Senate, the Classified Staff Organization, and the Associated Students of PCC. An assessment system, utilizing the F.A.M.E.D. process, or any other comprehensive system of assessing planning processes, needs to be clearly delineated and results reported in the college's mid-term report. The college does provide evidence that its decision making is guided by its mission statement and its ultimate objective, i.e., student engagement, learning, and success. The team strongly encourages the college to follow through on its commitment to plan and implement an assessment cycle for its governance structures.