

## WSCUC Interim Report TEMPLATE

### INSTRUCTIONS

Interim Reports are limited in scope, not comprehensive evaluations of the institution. The report informs the Interim Report Committee about the progress made by the institution in addressing issues identified by the Commission.

The Interim Report consists of two sections:

- Interim Report Form and Appendices
- Additional Required Data (as specified on the Additional Required Data form)

Please respond completely to each question on the following pages and do not delete the questions. Appendices and Additional Required Data will be uploaded as separate attachments.

WSCUC is no longer using Live Text for receiving Interim Reports. Institutions will use a free Box.com account to upload the report. Instructions for creating the Box.com account and uploading the report will be provided by email.

### REPORT GUIDELINES AND WORD LIMITS

Because the number of issues reported on varies among institutions (the average is four to six issues), the length of a report will vary. However, a typical interim report ranges from 20 to 60 pages, not including appendices. Narrative essays responding to each issue should be no more than five pages each. **The total number of pages of appendices supporting the report should be no more than 200 pages** unless agreed upon in advance with the institution's staff liaison. Be sure that all attachments follow a consistent naming convention and are referenced the same way at appropriate places within the narrative. Please name them so that it is clear what they are and what section they refer to, with cross referencing in the narrative. For example, "Attachment 2-1: Mission Statement", would be used for Criterion 2. Attachments are preferred as PDFs.

Institutions that provide excessive information in their report will be asked to resubmit. You may wish to consult with your staff liaison as you prepare your report.

Some tips for providing evidence to support your findings:

- Put yourself in the place of a reviewer: what is the story that you need to tell? What evidence supports your story? What is extraneous and can be left out?
- Provide a representative sample of evidence on an issue, rather than ALL of the evidence.
- Consider including an executive summary or the most relevant points of supporting evidence, rather than the entire document.
- If you are referring to a specific page or set of pages in a document, include only those pages, not the entire document.
- If you are providing an excerpt of a document, include the title of the document, and a table of contents and/or a brief narrative to put the excerpt in context.

- If you provide a hyperlink to a web page, make sure the link takes the viewer directly to the relevant information on the page. Do not make your reviewer search for it.

## **REVIEW PROCESS**

A panel of the WSCUC Interim Report Committee (IRC) will review the report, typically within 90 days of receipt. Representatives of your institution will be invited to participate in the conference call review to respond to questions from the panel. Your WSCUC staff liaison will contact you after the call with the outcome of the review, which will also be documented in a formal action letter.

## **OUTCOMES OF THE REVIEW**

After the review, the panel will take one of the following actions.

- **Receive the Interim Report** with recommendations and commendations—No follow up required.
- **Defer action** pending receipt of follow-up information—The panel has identified limited information that may be submitted in a short period of time, such as audited financial statements or the outcome of an upcoming meeting of the board. The panel may authorize the WSCUC staff liaison to review these materials without the full panel being brought together again, depending on the nature of the supplemental information.
- **Request an additional Interim Report**—Issues reported on were not adequately resolved or need continued monitoring.
- **Request a Progress Report**—A progress report is less formal than an Interim Report and is reviewed only by the WSCUC staff liaison. A progress report may be requested when institutional follow-up on one or two relatively minor areas is desired.
- **Receive the Interim Report with a recommendation that the Commission sends a site visit evaluation team**—Serious, ongoing issues involving potential non-compliance with WSCUC's Standards and Criteria for Review may require follow-up in the form of a Special Visit. Note that the IRC panel makes a recommendation for a visit, and the Executive Committee of the Commission or the full Commission decides on whether or not to require the visit.

# Interim Report Form

Please respond to each question. Do not delete the questions. Insert additional pages as needed.

**Name of Institution:** University of Guam

**Person Submitting the Report:** Thomas W. Krise, Ph.D., President

**Report Submission Date:** November 1, 2019

## Statement on Report Preparation

Briefly describe in narrative form the process of report preparation, providing the names and titles of those involved. Because of the focused nature of an Interim Report, the widespread and comprehensive involvement of all institutional constituencies is not normally required. Faculty, administrative staff, and others should be involved as appropriate to the topics being addressed in the preparation of the report. Campus constituencies, such as faculty leadership and, where appropriate, the governing board, should review the report before it is submitted to WSCUC, and such reviews should be indicated in this statement.

To prepare this report the university reviewed its [2015 Institutional Report \(IR\)](#), the [2016 Report of the WSCUC Visiting Team](#), the [July 2016 WSCUC Action Letter](#), its [2017 Progress Report](#), and the WSCUC Interim Report template and instructions. The university also received data, feedback, comments and consultation from a variety of sources, to include the individuals listed below.

Materials and data tables from various campus units and committees were compiled by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. A timeline chart guided the process and specified when drafts would be reviewed by numerous campus constituencies, such as leaders of the Faculty Senate, senior administration, and the Academic Officers Council. The Board of Regents was briefed on the report at its regularly scheduled meeting. [\[See APPENDIX A - 2019 WSCUC Interim Report Timeline\]](#)

The following individuals and groups were involved in the review and preparation of the report (listed alphabetically):

### Academic Advising Specialists

Dr. Alicia Aguon, Dean, School of Education

Dr. Ann Ames, Chair, Graduate Curricula Review Committee (GCRC)

Dr. Suzanne Bells, Immediate Past Chair, Undergraduate Curricula Review Committee (UCRC)

### Board of Regents

Mr. Lawrence Camacho, Dean, Enrollment Management and Student Success\*

Dr. Michael Clement, Chair, Senate Standing Committee on Institutional Excellence

Ms. Remy Cristobal, Assoc. Dean, Enrollment Management and Student Success/Registrar

Dr. Mary Cruz, President, 19<sup>th</sup> Faculty Senate\*

Ms. Frances Danieli, Interim Comptroller

Dr. Anita Borja Enriquez, Senior Vice President, Academic and Student Affairs/ WSCUC Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO)\*

Dr. Margaret Hattori-Uchima, Dean, School of Health

Mr. Manny Hechanova, Interim Chief Information Officer (CIO)/Associate Director for Telecommunication and Distance Education Operation (TADEO)  
Dr. Thomas W. Krise, President, University of Guam  
Dr. Shahram Khosrowpanah, Interim Dean, School of Engineering  
Ms. Arline Leon Guerrero, Senior Student Academic Counselor, Student Counseling & Advising Services  
Ms. Deborah Leon Guerrero, Assistant Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness\*  
Dr. Troy McVey, Assistant Vice President for Academic Excellence/Director of Graduate Studies\*  
Dr. Kate Moots, Interim Associate Dean, College of Natural and Applied Sciences\*  
Dr. Gena Rojas, Associate Professor of Public Administration\*  
Mr. Roland San Nicolas, Chair, Senate Standing Committee on Evaluations  
Dr. Annette Santos, Dean, School of Business and Public Administration  
Dr. Michelle Santos, Parliamentarian, 19<sup>th</sup> Faculty Senate  
Dr. Sharleen Santos-Bamba Associate Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences\*  
Dr. James Sellmann, Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences  
Dr. Monique Storie, Dean, University Libraries\*  
Mr. Randall Wiegand, Vice President, Administration and Finance  
Dr. Lee Yudin, Dean, College of Natural and Applied Sciences

*\*Members of the Interim Report Ad hoc Advisory Group*

[See APPENDIX B – List of Acronyms]

## List of Topics Addressed in this Report

Please list the topics identified in the action letter(s) and that are addressed in this report.

The WSCUC Action Letter dated June 16, 2016, identified three of the Commission's five recommendations that shall be addressed in this report:

- a. Institutional research
  - i. Steps that have been taken to expand the university's institutional research function
  - ii. Progress in strengthening data coding and data management practices
  - iii. Examples of analyses undertaken since the 2016 visit related to student progress and degree completion at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, including a discussion of how the results have been used for improvement
  
- b. Student success
  - i. Progress of the Student Success Innovation Team (SSIT) in coordinating and monitoring retention, student achievement, and degree completion initiatives
  - ii. Description of ways in which campus initiatives focused on student success have been aligned in terms of goals and outcomes and integrated in terms of overlap and oversight
  - iii. Update on retention and graduation rates, both aggregated and disaggregated 6-year and 8-year graduation rates for off-island Micronesian students
  
- c. Program review
  - i. Description of changes to the program review process to enhance understanding of its purpose, simplify procedures, ensure timeliness, integrate priorities from Good to Great initiative into review criteria, and create accountability.

## Institutional Context

Very briefly describe the institution's background; mission; history, including the founding date and year first accredited; geographic locations; and other pertinent information so that the Interim Report Committee panel has the context to understand the issues discussed in the report.

The university was founded in 1952 as the *Territorial College of Guam*, primarily as a two-year teacher training school. By 1968, student enrollment had grown to 1,800; staff and faculty totaled more than 130; and the institution was renamed the *University of Guam* (UOG). Today, UOG is a public, open

### UOG PROFILE, AY2018-2019

- 3,744 students, 76% full-time
- 47% Pacific Islanders, 45% Asian; 58% female
- Academic structure: College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, College of Natural and Applied Sciences, School of Business and Public Administration, School of Education, School of Engineering, and School of Health
- 837 employees: 181 full time faculty, 156 part time faculty, 328 full time staff, 137 part time staff, and 35 administrators
- \$95 million in consolidated revenues

admissions, four year Land Grant institution that offers 25 bachelor's programs and 15 master's programs<sup>1</sup> to over 3,900 students annually, drawn primarily from Guam and the rest of Micronesia<sup>2</sup>. Its single, 100-acre campus is located in the village of Mangilao in Guam, the southernmost island in the Mariana Islands chain. A nine-member [Board of Regents](#) (BOR) governs the

university together with a strong administrative team, an involved Faculty Senate, Staff Council, and Student Government Association (SGA). Decisions are formulated, reviewed and executed under the guidance of BOR policy, Guam law, and federal statutes.

While based and evaluated on the standards and traditions of the American higher education system, UOG's character has been shaped by its sense of place and community. Its commitment to the distinct needs of the dynamic island societies it serves is in its institutional genetic fiber and marks the university as truly unique.

Strategically situated at the crossroads of Asia and the Pacific, these island societies face powerful forces that are changing their traditional way of life, shaping their geopolitical relationships and offering new economic pathways to the future. Within this environment, UOG has dedicated itself to promoting the social, economic, and cultural health of Guam and the region. The importance of the university to these island communities lies primarily in its 18,000+ graduates who serve as the professional and leadership backbone of Guam and the Western Pacific. Of equal significance, UOG conducts research and engagement activities which address regional challenges such as health disparities, coral reefs, climate change, sustainability, and economic development. Furthermore, UOG provides the venue for forums, lectures, conferences, and community conversations that focus on key island issues in all parts of the region, in cyberspace, and on campus. Through the establishment of special programs, Centers of

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<sup>1</sup> Including three fully online master's programs

<sup>2</sup> Including the U.S. territory of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the independent but U.S.-associated nations of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau

Excellence, and research units, the university examines regional social, economic and scientific issues as well as special topics.

The UOG mission of *Ina, Deskubre, Setbe* – To Enlighten, to Discover, To Serve – proclaims its role in the region and sets forth its commitments. UOG offers open, affordable access to quality higher education for a diverse mix of students, many of whom are first generation learners, come from school systems with a variety of standards, and most of whom require financial assistance. These academically and financially challenged students are brought together with the expectation that they will succeed. But the University must be flexible, creative, and responsive to both rigorous standards of quality as well as its island clientele, developing and experimenting with various approaches and programs consistent with the regionally based research agenda, accredited degree programs, and engagement responsibilities expected of a Land Grant institution.

### **Accreditation History**

UOG has been continuously accredited by the WSCUC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) since 1959. In 2016 the institution's accreditation was reaffirmed for an eight-year period. It is scheduled for the next reaffirmation review with the Offsite Review in Fanuchánan (Aug-Dec semester) 2023 and the Accreditation Visit in Fañomnåkan (Jan-May semester) 2024. The entire process of accreditation has been woven into planning and assessment processes, while island leadership acknowledges the importance and value of both the university and the WSCUC.

[See APPENDIX C - History of UOG WSCUC Accreditation]

## **Response to Issues Identified by the Commission**

This main section of the report should address the issues identified by the Commission in its action letter(s) as topics for the Interim Report. Each topic identified in the Commission's action letter should be addressed. The team report (on which the action letter is based) may provide additional context and background for the institution's understanding of issues.

Provide a full description of each issue, the actions taken by the institution that address this issue, and an analysis of the effectiveness of these actions to date. Have the actions taken been successful in resolving the problem? What is the evidence supporting progress? What further problems or issues remain? How will these concerns be addressed, by whom, and under what timetable? How will the institution know when the issue has been fully addressed? Please include a timeline that outlines planned additional steps with milestones and expected outcomes. Responses should be no longer than five pages per issue

There are three (3) issues specified in the Commission's June 2016 action letter that will be addressed in this Interim Report: (a) Institutional Research, (b) Student Success, and (c) Program Review.

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## Issue: Institutional Research

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### Description

The university will address the following three specifics regarding institutional research (IR):

- I. Steps taken to expand the university's institutional research function
- II. Progress in strengthening data coding and data management practices
- III. Examples of analyses undertaken since the 2016 visit related to student progress and degree completion at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, including a discussion of how the results have been used for improvement

### Actions Taken

#### I. Expanding Institutional Research Capacity

Two distinct actions have been taken to expand institutional research capacity in order to support the university's goals and strengthen a culture in which decisions are clearly informed by evidence: an elevation of IR leadership and an increase of staffing resources.

Elevation of IR leadership. In November 2016 by Board of Regents action,<sup>3</sup> the position of Director for Academic Assessment and Institutional Research (AAIR) was elevated to Assistant Vice President for the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (AVP-OIE) to recognize at the institutional level the significance of accreditation compliance, institutional research, and academic assessment of student learning.

The creation of this position confirms the university's interest and need to establish a value-added position at the assistant vice president level and IE structure particularly in terms of improving and monitoring accreditation compliance, evidence-based decision making and accountability and other IE functions. For example, the AVP-OIE was assigned to:

- Coordinate the 2017 Progress Report to WSCUC which was an in depth analysis of the matriculation of its off-island Micronesian students.
- Standardize and update the university's articulation agreements with the five regional colleges<sup>4</sup> which included video conferences to improve the partnerships.
- Improve academic and student affairs communication and collaboration across campus and with our education partners by representing the Senior Vice President on committees, for example:
  - Information Technology Academic Computing and Online Subcommittee whose charge is to provide strategic IT academic computing advice, develop priorities and policies pertaining to online instruction infrastructure (Vision 2025), research and education

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<sup>3</sup> Board of Regents Resolution 16-36, November 17, 2016

<sup>4</sup> College of Micronesia-FSM, College of Marshall Islands, Guam Community College, Northern Marianas College, and Palau Community College

networking cyberinfrastructure (GOREX), faculty development center, classroom technology refresh, active learning classrooms and active learning spaces (library).

- State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) team to partner with the Guam Department of Education and the Guam Community College to establish a shared research agenda focused on the transition and predictive analysis of student success of Guam's students from K-12 to postsecondary. A proof-of- concept SLDS project is currently in progress with the technical assistance of [Regional Education Laboratory \(REL\) Pacific](#).

Expansion of IR staff. From 2008 to 2015, AAIR was staffed with one FTE and on occasion one 0.5 FTE. To expand IR resources in the elevated Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE), one statistician was hired in June 2016, and one Research and Statistics Analyst was hired in December 2016. Both positions are full-time and permanent. Strong technical-analytical skills, contextual intelligence or deep institutional knowledge (or the ability to quickly acquire it), communication skills and statistical experience were critical factors which guided the selection among the applicants to fill these positions. The addition of these staff has yielded considerable value particularly to better inform decision making and strategic planning. For example:

1. Beginning November 2015, the university has participated with "[The Outcomes Survey](#)" which is an online tool for gathering employment and graduate school admissions data from new college graduates based upon prevailing national demands and standards. Graduates are surveyed regarding topics such as:
  - First destination occupation and graduate school admissions outcomes
  - Engagement in career exploration and job search activities
  - Experiential education's role in securing their first destination occupation

Prior to acquiring additional staff and establishing the OIE, results from the surveys were presented to the deans in lengthy hardcopy reports and briefly reviewed at Academic Officers Council meetings. Now, the results are posted on the OIE website in [an interactive dashboard](#) for better data visualization and broader distribution to faculty and the community at large which are used to support program review and tracking of alumni work placement. For example, the dashboard illustrates how soon and how many of the graduates were working full time after receiving their degrees; OIE staff were also able to design the dashboard to illustrate which industries and job functions the graduates obtained employment (and disaggregated by major). OIE is working to increase response rates in The Outcomes Survey to help determine if our graduates are gaining employment in their field of study.

2. Five years after withdrawing from annual participation in the National Survey for Student Engagement (NSSE) in part due to limited staffing, the university has now been able to rejoin NSSE and achieve participation rates above NSSE's average participation rate.<sup>5</sup> The 2018 survey was used to collect, report, and use the responses on student engagement of our freshmen and seniors. Results were shared with senior management and deans. Specific attention was paid to students responses regarding campus facilities, campus technology, student support services, and faculty-student interaction. OIE has also prioritized an AY2019-2020 research project that will increase disaggregated reporting, analysis, and use of NSSE data to support student success.

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<sup>5</sup> 2018 NSSE Survey Response Rates: UOG's Freshmen-44%; Seniors-48%; NSSE average response rate-29%.

## II. Data Coding and Data Management

The 2016 WSCUC Visiting Team Report stated: *“While the Office of Academic Assessment and Institutional Research has been instrumental in the development of student learning outcomes assessment and program review, it is in the nascent stage of responding to the deep analysis of data that will inform the student success efforts. The team believed that the current data on student retention and graduation does not accurately reflect the “story” of the UOG undergraduate experience. For instance, the current coding of data does not account for non-degree seeking students. Moreover, additional data analysis such as time to degree, attrition, and the graduation of transfer students (from the National Clearinghouse source) could portray a much clearer picture of student success.”*

The 2016 report further stated: *“...University faculty and staff are eager for growth in the university’s capacity for data reporting and analysis. As the university is aware, this will require improvements to its data management practices, its data systems, and to the professional development of the staff. The team strongly encourages investment in these areas,....examining why students don’t return, more detailed record keeping, including coding of non-degree seeking students, and more sophisticated analyses of attrition (CFR 2.10).”*

The first of five significant steps the university has taken to strengthen data coding and data management practices began in 2016 Fanuchånan (Aug-Dec semester) with an Information Technology (IT) Strategic Planning retreat which involved campus-wide representation and resulted in shared vision, collaborative participation, and honest feedback which resulted in five, 5-year IT goals aligned with university strategic initiatives to transform our technology culture and computing environment<sup>6</sup>

The development of the IT strategic plan led to the formulation of an IT Advisory Committee in 2017 Fanuchånan (Aug-Dec semester) which is the campus-wide body responsible for providing strategic, technical, and operational Information Technology advice to the Chief Information Officer (CIO) and senior leadership. The IT Advisory Committee provides strategic leadership, establishes campus-wide IT priorities and policies, and ensures transparency and accountability to the university community with regards to all IT activities on campus. Additionally, the IT Advisory Committee ensures that the campus IT strategic goals and efforts are aligned with the university’s strategic plan and goals.

The second significant step occurred in August 2018 when the Office of Information Technology, under the leadership of the CIO, coordinated a campus “discovery” visit for a 3-person team from Ellucian<sup>7</sup> “to (i) evaluate the university’s overall use of Ellucian solutions and (ii) identify opportunities for improving the University of Guam’s return on its technology investment. To maximize efficiencies and return on investment, the university continues to seek out opportunities to more fully utilize the Ellucian Colleague comprehensive integrated software while eliminating 3rd party non-integrated software and reducing reliance on expensive customized coding.

The discovery visit helped the university to recognize that its overarching goals are to increase staff efficiencies and automation to support a culture of continuous process improvement to facilitate student enrollment growth and successful outcomes. The university is enacting the following changes:

- Taking advantage of existing automation features within the system, to minimize customizations and/or manual paper-based processes;

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<sup>6</sup> CIO email to SVP, October 14, 2016

<sup>7</sup> Ellucian is a vendor which provides the [Colleague](#) product as an integrated comprehensive database system solution for the university’s fiscal, student, human resources, and financial aid functions

- Identifying key business owners across departments who are in authority to make process and system configuration decisions on behalf of the institution, taking advantage of baseline system functionality;
- Supporting and funding staff training initiatives to support continuous learning;
- Evaluating new Ellucian solutions that enhance the Colleague database.

The third significant step occurred with the assistance of Ellucian when the university conducted extensive user group meetings and workshops in April 2019 to strengthen its understanding of data governance and turning data collection into useful information for reporting results, running analysis, making decisions, and developing strategies. Data custodians, data stewards, and data consumers were identified as a result of this exercise.

The fourth significant step occurred when the Registrar’s Office arranged to utilize the “cohort” data field in the Colleague Student module as a mechanism to identify and track participants in various retention initiatives and grant funded programs to assess the effectiveness of those initiatives in terms of undergraduate and graduate student success and program completion. For example, the cohort field is being used to identify high school seniors participating in the university’s summer bridge programs to track their matriculation. Data coding is also increasing with the use of Ellucian Colleague Reporting and Operations Analytics (CROA) for statistical and operational reporting. Additional data fields have been identified and more continue to be identified for upload from the Colleague system to CROA. For example, the data code for the reason(s) why students withdraw from classes.

Lastly, the university signed a contract with the National Clearinghouse in April 2019 to utilize the [Student Tracker](#) product which will be used to identify more accurately the number of UOG students that stop out and subsequently transfer to another institution. The OIE staff are being trained on the product and piloting its use which will also assist with responding to the IPEDS Outcomes Measures Surveys.

### III. Analysis of Student Progress and Degree Completion

The [2017 Progress Report](#) submitted to WSCUC illustrated extensive statistics generated by OIE pertaining to retention and graduation rates of off-island Micronesian students. Some of the tables designed for the report regarding the matriculation of transfer student are now incorporated into our standard enrollment reporting.

To engage academic officers, a retention retreat was held in December 2018 at which OIE presented statistics and analysis using 3-year trend tables which identified the university’s top academic program performers in terms of program retention and completions as well as retention and completion rates for undeclared students. The retreat was an opportunity to share in depth program-level trend data on retention and completions and to identify high performing programs in order for other programs to review and consider effective retention and completion practices. For example:

The Accounting program attributes their consistently high graduation rates to:

- ✓ Their Internship course provides most of their students networking opportunities to secure employment at accounting firms
- ✓ Their program promotes student affinity to UOG via mentors and a UOG connection
- ✓ They rely on constant monitoring and intrusive advising
- ✓ They include part time faculty to promote student-college affinity
- ✓ They adopted a learning community

- ✓ They utilize a “Pathway” advising sheet

The Biology undergraduate program attributes their consistently high graduation rates to:

- ✓ They utilize an advising specialist to ensure program completion (graduation)
- ✓ Beginning Jr year, students take a small enrollment upper division course as a program requirement which builds a cohort environment and an affinity with a professor in the program.
- ✓ They also utilize a “Pathway” advising sheet
- ✓ They include a career opportunities section in their program booklet

Lastly, using its retention and graduation rates data, the university determined that the 2016 Fanuchánan (Aug-Dec semester) first-time, full-time freshmen cohort experienced a decline in retention. For example, the 2014 and 2015 cohorts have a 2<sup>nd</sup> Year retention rate of 77% and 76% respectively whereas the 2016 cohort has a 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Fanuchánan-to-Fanuchánan retention rate of 72%. To mitigate the decline, OIE generated detailed statistics and demographics about the 2016 cohort which was distributed to the deans for outreach activities to circumvent further decline in retention and to improve student success and graduation rates. For example, the Dean’s Office of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS) implemented a temporary phone bank to call students in the 2016 freshmen cohort declared in their programs to encourage them to continue attendance and to identify issues that pose challenges or barriers to enrollment. Findings included financial issues and class scheduling. Collaborative efforts to address financial issues are ongoing between CLASS and the Financial Aid Office. [See APPENDIX D - Retention and Graduation rates of 2009-2018 Cohorts] Also, EMSS is scheduling a “College Affordability Fair” before the end of the year to promote student awareness of the numerous scholarships, campus employment, and other grant opportunities available to offset college expenses.

### **Analysis of Effectiveness of Actions Taken with Institutional Research**

The following examples illustrate the effectiveness of the expansion of the institutional research function to support strategic initiatives:

- i. Expansion of existing reports and support:**
  - a. Scheduled more formal user training and technical support for OIE-administered systems such as the Colleague Reporting and Operations Analytics (CROA), Qualtrics online survey tools, and Power BI interactive dashboards.
  - b. Initiated use of CROA to automate and extract data for IPEDS surveys
  - c. Increased response time to data requests for program review data sets (#majors, degrees conferred, retention rates, graduation rates) ad hoc requests. For example, data sets for faculty-led student success research projects
- ii. New reports and support:**
  - a. Supported faculty research to conduct regression analysis to further identify matriculation of freshmen cohorts pertaining to graduation and stop out.
  - b. Conducted three Stop Out Student Surveys to identify reasons why students did not return or stopped out from the university. A focus group was also convened. These surveys became necessary in order for the university to address a decline in enrollment. The results of the surveys informed initiatives to increase student retention.
  - c. Designed and posted a web-based interactive data visualization of alumni data from the results of the “The Outcomes Survey”
  - d. Took the lead to implement institutionalized assessment of core competencies of quantitative reasoning, information literacy and oral communication with graduating seniors.

[See APPENDIX E – Examples of the Expansion and Productivity of the IR Function]

## **Description**

The university is required to address the following three specifics regarding student success:

- i. Progress of the Student Success Innovation Team (SSIT) in coordinating and monitoring retention, student achievement, and degree completion initiatives
- ii. Description of ways in which campus initiatives focused on student success have been aligned in terms of goals and outcomes and integrated in terms of overlap and oversight
- iii. Update on retention and graduation rates, both aggregated and disaggregated 6-year and 8-year graduation rates for off-island Micronesian students

## **Actions Taken**

### **I. Progress of the Student Success Innovation Team.**

The Student Success Innovation Team continued activities from 2016 to 2018, with a Steering Committee, HIPs Committee, and an Academic Advising Committee. The Steering Committee consisted of a dean or associate dean from each school or college and the two Assistant Vice Presidents. It met quarterly to discuss the progress of various student success initiatives and grant proposals.

[See [APPENDIX F - List of Student Success Initiatives and Innovations](#)]

The HIPs Committee consisted of faculty from disciplines across campus and the AVP for Academic Excellence. It developed models for Learning Communities, improvements to the first year experience, and conducted a survey of service learning activities across campus. Presentations from the work of this committee were made at the AACU HIPs in the States Conference (2017), CSDRE National Retention Symposium (2018), and IUPUI Assessment Institute (2018). The HIPs committee, with the help of the CNAS dean and coordination of the AVP Academic Excellence, was able to secure a keynote address in Student Engagement from NILOA Associate Director Jillian Kinzie at the February 2018 UOG Faculty Development Day. The entire day in 2018 featured Dr. Jillian Kinzie, who presented on and facilitated institution-wide conversations on student engagement strategies, including a panel discussion featuring examples of undergraduate research embedded in programs, and speaking directly to HIPs, especially in service learning and learning communities. A faculty development workshop on “HIPs at UOG” was hosted in October 2019, and the AVP Academic Excellence will be co-editing a special volume of *Micronesian Educator* focused on Student Success with Dr. Tracy Tambascia, University of Southern California Rossier School of Education. The volume is anticipated to be released in July 2020, to include a section on HIPs.

The Academic Advising Committee consisted of full-time counselors, professional advisors, and faculty mentors to peer mentoring programs. Trainings were held on appreciative advising, use of data management systems, and technologies for us in contacting students. This group developed an advising handbook, a table of the preferred General Education choices in each program, and 4-year academic plan templates for use in the First Year Seminar. This group did not prepare presentations, but several members have attended NACADA conferences.

Using funding from the Senior Vice President, SSIT was able to sponsor in-depth faculty research into four areas of concern: (1) non-cognitive factors affecting retention, (2) curricular and systemic roadblocks to completion, (3) predictive characteristics in early academic performance, and (4) an inquiry into why CHamoru males chose to stop out. Kawabata's (2019) study examined the associations between social-interpersonal, school, and cultural factors and academic motivation among Asian/ Pacific Islander students in Guam. The results showed that social-interpersonal (support from parents, peers, and partners), school (acceptance by faculty and peers, belongingness), and cultural (multiculturalism, enculturation – maintenance of heritage culture) factors were positively correlated with both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Pangelinan's (2019) report examined and revealed the achievement gaps of CHamoru male through a collective case study of CHamoru males who have taken coursework at UOG but were not taking classes during the term of data collection. The findings indicated that the biggest hurdles to completion were related to financial constraints, lack of self-motivation, and social distractions. Likewise, the intervention program most suggested by the study participants were improved access to financial aid.

The survey of **Service Learning Activities**, which began with Faculty Development Day forums in 2017 and 2019, includes information from each academic program, detailing the type of experience (community event outreach, internship, or a type of practicum), the types of community or professional organizations affiliated with the activity, the assessment of the student learning, the assurance of student participation, and when in their academic careers students experience the activity. The survey [See APPENDIX G - Listing of Service Learning Activities] demonstrates that all academic programs engage in some form of service learning. About half of the programs embed service learning requirements in coursework, a third of them require internships, and a few utilize their student groups to plan some sort of community outreach event related to their discipline. All of the programs requiring internships report collecting formal assessments from the field supervisors, and many of the programs requiring practicum-type experiences require a reflective essay from students.

Many efforts of SSIT have been institutionalized at UOG, including a new First Year Seminar, New Student Convocations, Academic Advising Specialists, and increased faculty awareness of HIPs. There are still efforts to institutionalize a linked-course learning community between our core competency courses in written and oral communication and opportunities for undergraduate research have improved. The framework of the **Para Hulo' Strategic Plan** which received board of regents approval in October 2019, uses HIPs as a benchmark for prioritizing goals and objectives within the strategic initiatives. These ties are most explicit in the Strategic Experience initiative of *Para Hulo'* and the emerging framework for the 2020-2025 Academic Master Plan, wherein all schools and colleges will define and self-regulate student success goals. [See APPENDIX L - Para Hulo' Strategic Plan 2020-2024 Framework Slide Presentation]

## **II. Alignment of Campus Student Success Initiatives**

With the arrival of a new President in August of 2018 and a new Enrollment Management & Student Success (EMSS) Dean in September 2018, student success initiatives transitioned to the EMSS Dean with an advisory Student Experience Committee. The Student Experience Committee, founded in October 2018, consists of many of the newly established student support positions, leadership from Student Government Association, TRIO programs, AmeriCorps as well as the directors of the University's Athletics and International programs.

During the transition from SSIT to the Student Experience Committee, there was a retention retreat of all deans and associate deans held in December 2018, led by the Senior Vice President and facilitated by the AVP for Institutional Effectiveness and EMSS Dean. This proved a useful session for sharing successful initiatives undertaken in exemplar programs, such as Biology and Business Administration, as well as for setting goals and priorities for the future. The transition activities culminated at Faculty Development Day in February 2019 with a joint session on Student Success from the AVP Institutional Effectiveness, AVP Academic Excellence, and EMSS Dean following an update from the Senior Vice President on the status of activities for this Interim Report.

Most Student Success Initiatives are now coordinated by the EMSS Dean. A **Strategic Enrollment Management Plan** [See APPENDIX H - Draft Strategic Enrollment Management Plan] is under development involving input and collaboration from all EMSS units, all deans, both AVPs, and several student and faculty constituencies. Likewise, broad campus participation was obtained in the development of the **Para Hulo' Strategic Plan**, which includes "Strengthening the Student Success Life Cycle" as a major initiative. Two major programs will unify future efforts, the Triton Advising Center and the Triton Ambassadors Program. Dr. Elizabeth Griego has been contracted to conduct a site visit review of the EMSS functions in February 2020, and she will facilitate focus group conversations with student groups, all EMSS departments, and academic stakeholders. She will also evaluate all existing plans, policies, and procedures, as well as co-curricular assessments, in the EMSS unit. Her report is expected to channel existing efforts into one cohesive direction and catalyze action across both academic and student affairs areas.

As mentioned above, the **Triton Advising Center** was identified by the deans as a highly desired, needed transformation on campus. A three-pronged conceptual frame work for the Center was developed in the course of a US DOE grant proposal, which would be under the direction of the Senior Vice President and EMSS dean. Academic advising would be improved by new software programs for student planning and expanded use of the Early Alert retention system, which included intrusive advising training for staff and appreciative advising training for faculty and staff. Financial advising would improve through financial aid training embedded in the new student orientations as well as financial literacy coursework in the first year seminar. The financial aid information would also be translated into many of the regional languages served by UOG, so that families would be better to understand and support their students. Finally, the Career Development Office would benefit from an infusion of software and career placement programs not currently being offered. Many elements of the framework will be embedded within the operations of EMSS, but the grant would leverage extra personnel and expertise to accelerate progress.

The **Triton Student Ambassador Program** is being established in the Fanuchánan (August-December) semester 2019 to cultivate UOG's next generation of campus leaders. It is a three-tiered scaffolding program: Triton Emerging Leaders (Tier-1); Triton Pathfinders (Tier-2); and Triton Trailblazer (Tier-3). This program is designed to achieve the following Student Experiential Learning Outcomes: (Understands and promotes UOG core values and mission; Understands and practices principles of leadership and team building dynamics; Values the meaning of volunteerism and community service; Values the concept of mentorship and serving other students; Improves communication skills; Understands the importance of promoting the university brand; Understands and practices the concept

of setting individual and organizational goals and objectives. This program reflects the University's commitment to improve students' sense of belonging as Tritons and leaders in our community. It also reflects our commitment to peer mentorship as a signature approach to improving the student experience.

### **III. Update on retention and graduation rates of off-island Micronesian students**

The university studied its 6- and 8-year graduation rates for off-island Micronesian student populations to determine if there were significant weaknesses in student success for this population. The study focused on 2016 – 2018 cohorts and was an opportunity for the university to generate new, more detailed statistical tables that reported on the matriculation status and 6-year and 8-year graduation rates of two types of entering cohorts (new freshmen and transfers) specifically from institutions in the U.S.-associated nations of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Marshall Islands, and Palau.

The study also resulted in increased collaborative efforts with the regional colleges to establish university advising specialists at those campuses and steps taken to present its 2017 General Education framework and updated articulation agreements to the regional colleges in order to support seamless transfer and provide a more standardize MOU articulation agreement format in terms of format, language, sunset periods, and required signatories.

[See APPENDIX I - Listing of Efforts and Activities to Improve Matriculation of Off-island Micronesian Student Populations]

More statistics have been added to the Fact Book on transfer student retention and completions, detailed matriculation and stop out information on specific freshmen cohorts are distributed to colleges and schools, Stop Out surveys deployed; and results of relaunched NSSE surveys have been shared.

#### **Analysis of Effectiveness of Actions Taken with Student Success Initiatives**

The actions taken above have helped change the culture of student success at UOG. Retention rates had dipped slightly in 2017 and 2018 but the retention rate for 2019 is the highest in years at 77%. Improved retention helped stabilize overall enrollment in 2017-19 as less full-time, first-time students were entering. Completion rates also demonstrate a positive trend, with the most recent 6-year graduation rate increasing three percentage points from 35% in 2016 cohort to 38% in 2019, with the largest number of degrees conferred in university history during AY2018-19.

The expansion of staff in the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and re-focused duties of the Assistant Vice President has allowed for more targeted information to be published related to student success initiatives. More statistics were added to the Fact Book on transfer student retention and completions; detailed matriculation and stop out information on specific freshmen cohorts were distributed to colleges and schools; Stop Out surveys were deployed; and NSSE surveys relaunched. Each of these efforts have begun to put the tools in the hands of deans and faculty so that future interventions can be more individually crafted to the students at risk.

These activities aimed at retaining individuals and the students most at-risk of stopping out, combined with continued vigilance from the student support services, will anchor future initiatives in student success. The creation of the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan as well as the Improving the

Student Success Lifecycle section of the Para Hulo' Strategic Plan position student completion initiatives much more prominently in the future. Similar alignments with the Academic Master Plan are expected in the upcoming year.

The most persistent obstacle facing our student population remains financial concerns however we recognize this and have addressed this with programs such as the College Affordability Initiative providing every student a 4 to 6 year financial advisement plan. More scholarship opportunities such as our Last Mile campaign and Bridge Scholarship, and changes to the Merit program are showing promise while increasing campus employment opportunities. We also work strategically to leverage more federal funding towards high-achieving financially challenged students, thus allowing local appropriations to be used on a larger group of students of financial challenged students.

Deans and faculty have become more entrepreneurial in finding financial resources for students. Grant proposals continue to provide funding opportunities for students, and there is hope of building a culture of the professional graduate student through a larger cadre of graduate assistantships in teaching and research. Peer mentoring programs are also becoming a source of funds for upper-level students while providing the social and cultural supports new students need.

To grow awareness of financial literacy and to encourage stop-out students to return:

1. Students will receive a Financial Literacy curriculum which may encompass doing a budget that depicts how much it will cost for each semester/AY or until they graduate and what funding source (scholarships, earned wages, etc.) they can use to pay their semester courses in order for them to graduate.
2. The Financial aid office will continue the calling students with a balance of \$2000 or less to encourage them to enter into a payment plan while assisting them with other ways they can pay previous and current balances.
3. Parents will be invited to attend the Student Orientations to hear what is presented to the students and maybe notifying them of University events.

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## Issue: Program Review

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### Description

The existing program review process is cumbersome and has a low participation rate. Although improved handbooks were created in 2012 for both undergraduate and graduate program reviews, many programs are 3-5 years late in submitting completed self-studies and it takes an additional year or two for the self-studies to be reviewed by all the appropriate review bodies. Also, the quality, comprehensiveness, and length of submissions vary wildly. It is not uncommon to receive binders of information 800 pages long as attachments to a narrative that is supposed to be limited to 20 pages.

The university is required to address these issues regarding program review, specifically:

*Description of changes to the program review process to enhance understanding of its purpose, simplify procedures, ensure timeliness, integrate priorities from Good to Great initiative into review criteria, and create accountability.*

As of this report, no undergraduate programs were current in submissions, except for the newly restructured Agriculture & Life Sciences program. Four graduate programs are current. The newly created SAFNR program will not have a review due until 2022. The primary motivational obstacle remains that faculty don't see the value in the process and don't feel a valued part of the process: the amount of work far exceeds credit in the service endeavor for a faculty member and there is little evidence that recommendations are being considered by administration.

### Actions Taken

Interim Measures. The Faculty Senate Undergraduate Curriculum Review Committee has self-identified as a major blockage point for program review process and a Program Review Sub-Committee has been established for AY2019-20. The biggest delays in the current system are related to difficulties finding external reviewers, delays in receiving external reviews, and difficulty in finding members of the Program Review Teams to evaluate the self-study submissions.

The SVP issued a memo in September 2019, requiring all programs more than 5 years past due to submit self-studies in December 2019 covering the years 2014-19 with expedited Faculty Senate review of these programs. This will place all academic programs within one five-year cycle of currency. The programs affected by this memo are the BA Education programs in Elementary and Secondary Education, the BA Health Sciences program, the BS Mathematics program, the Bachelor of Social Work program, the BS and MS Biology programs, the MS Clinical Psychology program and the MA Counseling program. Deans have offered faculty incentives for meeting this deadline, and all other programs have been excused from a December 2019 deadline.

Change in Administrative Oversight. In October 2018, upon review of the position description for the Assistant Vice President for Academic Excellence/Director of Graduate Studies and its alignment with supporting compliance with WSCUC standards and criteria for review (CFRs), and the transitioning of many of the Student Success Innovation Team (SSIT) under the purview of the newly hired Dean of Enrollment Management and Student Success (EMSS) and newly formed Student Experience Committee under the President's Council, the following functional changes were effectuated:

- On October 1, 2018, (2018 Fanuchánan or Aug-Dec semester) the oversight of the quality and substance of program review submissions was transferred from the Office of Institutional

Effectiveness (OIE) to the Office of Academic Excellence (OAE) to include tracking program review submissions and deadlines (OIE continues to generate the standard program review data sets).

- On January 16, 2019, (2019 Fañomnåkan or Jan-May semester) the chairperson role on the University Assessment Committee (UAC) transferred from the AVP-OIE to AVP-OAE/Grad Studies. Assessment of student learning at the program and institutional level is the crux of measuring institutional academic quality. OIE continues to administer and report on the results of institutional level assessments of graduating seniors (e.g. critical thinking skills test, qualitative reasoning test, information literacy test, oral communication recordings).

These alignments support and address the university's goals for academic quality with regard to the meaning, quality, and integrity of degrees and educational quality and rigor.

These alignments also allow OIE to capitalize on its resources to conduct more in depth institutional research, and conduct effective monitoring and support of compliance across all the WSCUC standards.

Proposal for Annual Program Review. One of the five faculty-led projects in the Leadership Development Program addressed this WSCUC recommendation resulting in a proposal and evaluation rubric for a revised program review process aligned comprehensively to the G2G program criteria. Program review would also include co-curricular programs. Senior administration deemed the proposal worthy of advancing it for campus vetting.

This **Annual Program Review** proposal [See APPENDIX J - Draft Annual Program Review Proposal and Rubric] incorporates the 'Good Practices' in Academic Program Review stipulated in the 2009 WASC Resource Guide. The basic approach for this revised academic program review is similar to that of the G2G initiative—a data-informed, synchronous review of all academic programs (and co-curricular programs) according to pre-determined criteria. The major difference is that only 1 criterion will be examined each year, such that all 5 criteria will be reviewed in a 5-year cycle. A rubric has been designed for evaluating the first stage of the program review.

The benefits of this revised academic program review are expected to be:

1. This system allows the evaluations of programs to be synchronous, such that all programs can be evaluated with respect to one another, strengthening the impact of the review, creating real accountability across the entire university, and ensuring timeliness of submission and evaluation of every program,
2. The priorities established with G2G are fully integrated into program review, thereby eliminating redundancy between the university-wide initiatives and program review,
3. The University of Guam will be able to adapt and respond to changes in institutional needs and initiatives, as well as changes in higher education, given that the criteria for evaluation for any given year will be able to adapt and respond to these changes,
4. The program review report for any one year is significantly shorter than previous reports, allowing more rapid evaluation and feedback, as well as reducing the burden to faculty and programs,
5. Colleges/schools are able to collectively examine and learn from their most successful programs, deans are provided with the comparative data that will increase their ability to make data-

informed decisions with regard to priorities within their college/school, the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Success will be provided with the comparative data that will increase her/his ability to make data-informed decisions with regard to UOG's priorities,

6. Feedback via reports and rubric completion on ways to improve and how the program performs with respect to other programs can be provided at both the college-wide and university-wide levels, and
7. This system ensures that the innovation and success of the highest-level programs can not only be celebrated across the campus but shared to enhance the quality and currency of all programs at the university.

The proposal has been endorsed by the University Assessment Committee and the Faculty Senate Standing Committee on Evaluations. In September 2019, the Assistant Vice President for Academic Excellence (AVP-OAE) began Information Sessions with every academic division on the Annual Program Review process, as well as the academic review committees of the Faculty Senate. These information sessions included a sample self-study for one program in the first year of the new reporting cycle, allowing for refinement of the policy, rubrics, and submission protocols. As a result of these sessions, it is now anticipated that a finalized proposal will be submitted in November 2019 for December 2019 endorsement by the Faculty Senate. This would provide the 2020 Fañomnåkan (Jan-May semester) to prepare for implementation in academic year 2020-2021.

### **Analysis of Effectiveness of Actions Taken with Program Review**

The conversations spurred by the interim measures, change in oversight, and annual program review model have been meaningful and robust. There is no better dialogue between faculty and administration in how to improve the situation as well as an agreement that the status quo may no longer be in the best interests of the institution.

This is not to say there is full agreement on the solutions. The proposal submitted in April 2019 met with virtually no support during the August meeting of the Faculty Senate, prompting the conversations with each division and the academic review committees. There were several valid problems that have been removed from the proposal:

- Programs were have been ranked into quintiles, as during the G2G system. This burden has been removed in favor of applying scores to the rubrics.
- Likewise, incentives for high-performing programs and sanctions for low-performing programs were removed from the proposal. Incentives to comply with submission requirements were left in place.
- Concerns over the timelines for shared governance review were remedied by shifting program submission deadlines from February to November, to allow time for full review by college committee, dean, university committee, and Faculty Senate.
- Concerns over bottlenecks in the review process were addressed by clarifying that during each year of the review, only one committee is responsible for utilizing the scoring rubric to evaluate each program.

- Anxieties over the belief this would create new work were lessened by the creation of a model of the submission for year 1, demonstrating what information would originate with the AVP Academic Excellence (AVP-OAE) and what information was expected of program faculty.
- Questions about logistics were answered by explaining that the Nuventive Improve database system would be used to streamline the process.
- Criticisms that the segmented nature of the review would damage the holistic nature of the existing process have been met with revisions that provide programs a narrative chance to respond to scores in the first four years of the cycle.

It seems likely, after the series of sessions and workshops that the proposal will pass. Whether or not the proposal passes, however, the detailed conversations have elevated faculty awareness of the program review process and its mechanics, and positioned the AVP-OAE to offer more directive solutions within the existing structure if necessary.

## Identification of Other Changes and Issues Currently Facing the Institution

**Instructions:** This brief section should identify any other significant changes that have occurred or issues that have arisen at the institution (e.g., changes in key personnel, addition of major new programs, modifications in the governance structure, unanticipated challenges, or significant financial results) that are not otherwise described in the preceding section. This information will help the Interim Report Committee panel gain a clearer sense of the current status of the institution and understand the context in which the actions of the institution discussed in the previous section have taken place.

1. All 205 tasks resulting from the Good-to-Great (G2G) initiative have been completed, implemented, or institutionalized. Among the accomplishments of G2G initiative were:
  - a. **Focus on improving graduation and retention rates:** graduation rates have increased by 8% (2017) and the student retention rate after the first year reached 77%, above the national average of 75%.
  - b. **Creation the Chief Information Officer (CIO) position, which** spearheads UOG's role in the Guam Open Research & Education Exchange (GOREX), making optimal use of Guam's undersea high-speed data lines to facilitate data-intensive and highly collaborative research and education activities engaging the Asia-Pacific region with the global research and education community.
  - c. The **establishment of the Research Corporation of the University of Guam (RCUOG), which** has allowed UOG to better manage and facilitate federal grants and contracts. Today, RCUOG manages over \$17M in over 90 grants and nearly 120 employees.
  - d. **The re-establishment of the UOG Press,** which now publishes an array of academic and creative books and journals with a specific focus on the unique history, environment, peoples, cultures, and languages of the islands that make up the Western Pacific region. In July 2009, UOG Press received the Independent Publisher bronze medal for its publication *Lina'la': Portraits of Life at Litekyan*.
  - e. **Creation of a seven-month Faculty Leadership Program** which identified and developed future leaders for the university. The program provided participants with an understanding of UOG governance structure and policies and the opportunity to contribute to the university through initiatives and projects developed during the program. This program has been upgraded effective the 2019-2020 academic year and is now based in experiential growth development and mentorship opportunities. There are 13 participants (5% of the full-time faculty population) in the current cohort.
  - f. **Triton One Stop Center.** This Office softly opened 2018 Fañomnakan (Jan-May Semester) and has hired a One Stop Technician/Cashier. The hiring of the cashier enables student to make payments, provide student information on student account, payments, and account holds. Additionally, the One Stop Technician/Cashier provides assistance with the Financial Aid front counter services by receiving financial aid documents, communicating with students, as well as performing registration and limited bursar duties.

A One Stop Program Coordinator was hired at the end of 2019 Fañomnakan (Jan-May Semester) to provide technical student services and cross-training will be provided by

the Admissions and Records Office, Financial Aid Office and with the Bursar Office so that the Program Coordinator is able to perform all functions.

The space for the Center has been identified at the front office of the Financial Aid Office in the Calvo Field House. Construction has been completed to configure the lobby to service students. Additionally, construction to separate the Financial Aid Office from the Triton One Stop Center has been scheduled. This construction project will involve a wall to divide the office with an access door to the FAO. Signage has been ordered and will be installed within the month to clearly identify the office.

2. After ten years (2008-2018) of presidential leadership by Robert A. Underwood, Ed.D., the university now has a new president effective August 2018 with [Thomas W. Krise, Ph.D.](#)
3. A major undertaking of President Krise is a strategic planning initiative dubbed *Para Hulo'* (CHamoru phrase for the University's Latin motto, "Excelsior" or "Ever Upward") which includes incorporating the goals of the Good-to-Great initiative as the foundation for the new *Para Hulo' Strategic Plan*, which focuses on building university excellence across academics, partnerships, student success, operations, resources, and infrastructure. [See [APPENDIX L - Para Hulo' Strategic Plan 2020-2024 Framework Slide Presentation](#) ]
4. The CIO resigned April 2019 for advancement at a higher education institution in California. The technology and online curriculum initiatives and projects that were in progress continue to move forward. The associate director of one of the divisions within the Office of Information Technology (OIT) has been detailed as the Interim CIO. The president appointed an ad hoc committee to review the OIT structure and functions and the CIO position in order to recommend any changes that may be required to best support the campus community. An assessment report was submitted on September 27, 2019 [See [APPENDIX K - 2019 OIT Assessment Report](#)]. The search for a new CIO will begin in 2019 Fanuchånan (Aug-Dec semester).

## Concluding Statement

**Instructions:** Reflect on how the institutional responses to the issues raised by the Commission have had an impact upon the institution, including future steps to be taken.

This interim report has afforded the university an opportunity to pause for an introspection to analyze how its initiatives with expanding institutional research, improving student success, and streamlining academic program review have progressed over the past three years.

The university better utilizes its student data to track matriculation in both aggregated and disaggregated forms and is sharing this information more broadly across campus at the college, program, and unit levels. Focus on the importance of academic advising has been raised. The university now conducts stop out surveys with its former students to identify the barriers most frequently articulated such as financial challenges and course scheduling to inform, adjust, and prioritize student success initiatives.

These initiatives have led to a 3 percent increase in its graduation rate from 35% to 38% which is the highest rate in this past decade. While we celebrate this accomplishment we recognize that more needs to be done to address barriers students experience in order to increase the graduation rate.

These initiatives have also led to a retention rate of 77% compared to its retention rate in 2015 of 76%. Many initiatives focused on academic advising, fostering a sense of belonging, and improved faculty-student engagement are being monitored for effectiveness.

This report demonstrates the numerous actions that are being taken to focus efforts on improving student success while recognizing that it will require careful and consistent monitoring.

Recognizing that student success is a pillar for the university's mission to serve Guam and the Western Pacific, the Para Hulo' strategic plan includes an initiative for "Enriching the Student Experience" to:

- Develop more "wrap-around" and "proactive" student support
- Enhance culturally-sensitive teaching, peer advising, and mentorship; Reform processes to ensure students can finish in a timely manner
- Expand the College Affordability Initiative
- Launch a Student Leadership Development Program.

The proposal for the Annual Program Review which has enhanced faculty appreciation of the purpose and value of review, will (i) simplify procedures, ensure timeliness, (ii) integrate priorities from Good to Great initiative into review criteria, and (iii) create accountability has been endorsed by the University Assessment Committee and the Faculty Senate Standing Committee on Evaluations. In September 2019, the Assistant Vice President for Academic Excellence began Information Sessions with every academic division on the Annual Program Review process, as well as the academic review committees of the Faculty Senate. These information sessions included a sample self-study for one program in the first year of the new reporting cycle, allowing for refinement of the policy, rubrics, and submission protocols. As a result of these sessions, it is now anticipated that a finalized proposal will be submitted in November 2019 for December 2019 endorsement by the Faculty Senate. This would provide the 2020 Fañomnåkan (Jan-May semester) to prepare for implementation in academic year 2020-2021.

The university is commitment to continuous improvement and excellence; moving ever upward as guided by its new Para Hulo' strategic planning efforts and being mindful of its ongoing alignment to student success and academic quality.

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