

Substantive Change Report

Proposal Information:

Proposal Review Date	January 27, 2025
Institution	Northern Marianas College
Type of Substantive Change	Distance Education
Program Name/Location	Associate of Arts in Liberal Arts Online
ALO	Charlotte Cepeda
WSCUC Staff	Karen Graham
Committee Reviewers	Fran Horvath PhD Sonny Calderon

Committee Recommendation and Date

Additional Information¹

Interim Approval on 1/27/2025	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notification of Implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Federal Site Visit Required <input type="checkbox"/> International Visit Required <input type="checkbox"/> Fast Track <input type="checkbox"/> Non Compliance <input type="checkbox"/> Competency Based Degree ¹ Items listed above must be fulfilled in order to finalize Substantive Change Approval.
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Commission Approval and Date (for Institutional Tracking)^{2,3}:

Implementation of an approved change must occur within two years of Commission approval. If the change will be implemented more than two years after the approval date, contact your WSCUC Staff Liaison to determine if the change requires re-approval.

² Commission approval of a new degree program signifies that the program is covered by the accreditation of the institution as a whole. Approval by WSCUC should not be represented, in marketing materials or other forms of communication, as program-specific accreditation, such as that bestowed by specialized professional, or programmatic accrediting organizations.

³ Record the date that the Commission took action on this Substantive Change proposal for your records.

Findings of the Committee:

Commendations:

1. The institution is commended for its clear and demonstrated student-centric approaches to policies, decision-making, and protocols.

Recommendations:


1. The program faculty must strengthen the Program Learning Outcomes to clearly indicate how students will demonstrate PLOs to ensure PLO measurability. (CFRs 2.3, 2.7)

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2. Academic administration must carefully monitor the enrollment projections accuracy to enable early adjustments when needed. (CFRs 3.4, 4.2)
3. Future Substantive Change proposals must more comprehensively and definitively explain assessment plans and protocols. Plans must include how individual student learning is assessed annually and how Program Review is conducted on a multi-year schedule. Student learning of PLOs at all developmental levels must be assessed using multi-level rubrics indicating the level of PLO achievement rather than assignment completion. (CFRs 2.1, 2.4, 2.6)
4. Academic Administration is encouraged to review IPEDS requirements for reporting FTE correctly. (CFR 1.4)
5. Course syllabi need additional specificity and clarity regarding reading assignments and project assignments. Syllabi should also clearly indicate the modality of the course as asynchronous. (CFRs 2.1, 2.3)
6. Program administrators should closely monitor the anticipated enrollment trends for the proposed program modality. While the budget is based on a 3% increase per year, no evidence is provided related to population increase during that time and institutional enrollment trends have been declining. (CFR 3.4)
7. Program administrators should assess and monitor the degree to which the various assignments of course delivery modality impacts program completion time for students. (CFR 2.10)

WSCUC Liaison Signature:



Date: 2/6/2025

Additional Information (if applicable):

Notification of Implementation:

Under Standard One, it is the institution's responsibility to notify WSCUC when a program begins. You are required to confirm implementation of the program in order for the

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program or location to be listed on the WSCUC website for purposes of financial aid eligibility verification by the U.S. Department of Education.

Login to the Accreditation Management Portal and mark this program as Active within 30 days of implementation. Failure to report implementation may result in the suspension of financial aid eligibility for enrolled students. Repeated non-compliance with this requirement could also lead to a sanction of the entire institution under Standard One.