

COBEC Research Committee Strategic Plan

(Last Revised: 06/20/2024)

Philosophy

The COBEC Research Committee (CRC) adopted eleven core beliefs and commitments. They were established to reflect CRC's commitment to:

- (1) empirical research, primarily action research,
- (2) conducting and supporting effective professional development programs, seminars, and workshops, and
- (3) financially support and assist deserving Belizean students in pursuing higher education opportunities in Belize and the U.S.

We value and encourage valid and reliable empirical inquiry, which may inform operational policies, initiatives, and projects. Moreover, we encourage varied professional development activities that support academic excellence and nurture effective instruction that furthers student learning. These beliefs serve as the foundation that guides our policy decisions and actions. Furthermore, these beliefs provide a systematic research foundation for sustainable productivity.

Core Beliefs and Commitments

- The CRC's raison d'etre (reason for being) is to implement Subgoals 1a and 1i of COBEC's first overarching goal:

Goal 1: Professionalize or design, develop and implement collaborative programs and activities that address higher education needs in Belize.

Subgoal 1a: Implement short-term programs that target specific professional development needs of higher education faculty, staff, and administrators

Subgoal 1i: Pursue active research agendas involving Belizean and non-Belizean faculty, administrators, and students

- The academic success of every student attending COBEC higher education institutions, and their affiliated K-12 school systems is a key priority of CRC.

- The greatest strength of a research entity is its members who are willing to collaborate on research initiatives that support school administrators, teachers, students, and support staff.
- All CRC participants contribute to COBEC's research mission and goals.
- Results from disparate research methods and approaches—quantitative, qualitative, mixed-method—can improve school leadership, instruction, and learning.
- CRC strives to be a high-performing committee through collaboration, camaraderie, and active participation by its members.
- Empirical research that is well designed and conducted informs well-designed and conducted professional development undertakings.
- CRC's research and professional development policies, initiatives, and projects aid students who attend COBEC institutions to attain their academic and career goals.
- CRC is a COBEC standing academic committee that values performance and results.
- Committed and concerned members believe in CRC research and professional development agendas.
- CRC pursues research and professional agendas that involve Belizean and non-Belizean faculty, administrators, students, and supporting staff.

Vision

As the research arm of COBEC, CRC conducts applied research and professional development that directly addresses COBEC higher education institutions' needs and their affiliated K-12 schools. Research results from CRC initiatives and projects support university faculty and K-12 administrators and teachers' academic work, who create academically safe and enriching environments that meet students' learning needs. Through the sustained collaborative work and commitment of its members, CRC plays an essential role while helping COBEC fulfill its mission.

Mission

The mission of CRC is to pursue and achieve COBEC's Subgoals 1a and 1i successfully. We exist to engage academicians and practitioners in active research that supports K-12 and higher education decisions in Belize.

Environmental Scan

Internal (SWOT): What are CRC's internal strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats?

Strengths:

- Members who are committed to the committee's mission and goals
- A diverse membership across gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, research interests
- Highly qualified academicians and practitioners

Weaknesses:

- Because of COVID, the committee is relegated to meeting virtually instead of in-person.
- Lack of time to develop and pursue a research agenda.
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Opportunities To:

- Participate in CRC's research and professional development initiatives and projects
- Collaborate virtually and in-person
- Conduct empirical research and publish accompanying results to global audience
- Contribute to the development of higher and K-12 education in Belize
- Broaden the base of Belizean institutions engaged in COBEC-sponsored activities
- Generate additional interest in COBEC in Belize and within non-Belizean institutions

Threats:

- Waning interest and follow-through
- Funding opportunities and financial assistance may be limited because of economic constraints in the US and Belize.
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External (SWOT): What are our external strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats?

Strengths:

- Support from COBEC's steering committee, member institutions, and general membership
- Support from Belize Ministry of Education

Weaknesses

- Reduced higher education funding
- Adverse political decisions
- Few businesses partnerships

Opportunities

- Acquire financial resources through grant funding
- Acquire donations from business and community organizations
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Threats

- Lack of support from some institutions and academicians
- Natural and biological challenges may impede the CRC's ability to conduct research within and across boundaries, which could limit research collaboration to a virtual setting.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies

A Culture of Research

Goal 1: To support, sponsor, and facilitate research-related activities that contribute to the development of a research culture in COBEC institutions.

Objective 1A: During each calendar year, CRC will contribute to COBEC's research capacity by identifying and clarifying the need for financial resources and essential research facilities.

Strategy 1A1: A member or members of CRC will conduct a needs assessment to identify financial resources necessary for developing or improving a culture of research.

Strategy 1A2: A member or members of CRC will conduct a needs assessment to identify facilities resources necessary for developing or improving a culture of research.

Objective 1B: During each calendar year, CRC will contribute to COBEC's **research capacity** by identifying individuals with expertise, experience, and interest in conducting quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-method research.

Objective 1C: During each calendar year, CRC will contribute to COBEC's **research utility** by identifying institutional and societal issues and problems that need to be addressed with relevant empirical research.

Objective 1D: During each calendar year, CRC will contribute to COBEC's **research productivity** by conducting, supporting, and facilitating empirical research that addresses institutional and societal problems and issues that are of interest to COBEC institutions.

Culturally Relevant Assessment Strategies

Goal 2: To conduct empirical research and continuing professional development that address problems and issues on culturally relevant assessment strategies.

Objective 2A: During each calendar year, CRC will conduct empirical research that addresses a problem relative to culturally relevant assessment.

Strategy 2A1: A member or members of the CRC will either conduct empirical research that addresses a problem relative to culturally relevant assessment OR identify an individual or a group of individuals who will conduct the research.

Strategy 2A2: A member or members of the CRC will apply for a mini grant from COBEC and use the funds to conduct empirical research that addresses culturally relevant assessment OR identify an individual or a group of individuals who will apply for the grant.

Strategy 2A3:

Objective 3B: During each calendar year, a member or members of CRC will conduct professional development workshops or seminars that address culturally relevant assessment in Belize schools.

Strategy 3B1: A member or members of the CRC will either conduct professional development workshops and seminars that address a problem relative to culturally relevant assessment OR identify an individual or a group of individuals who will conduct the workshops and seminars.

Strategy 2B2: A member or members of the CRC will apply for a mini grant from COBEC and use the funds to conduct professional development workshops and seminars that address culturally relevant assessment, OR identify an individual or a group of individuals who will apply for the grant.

Technology

Goal 3: To conduct empirical research and continuing professional development that address technology challenges and issues relative to virtual instruction and learning, digital literacy, language acquisition, and homeschooling.

Objective 3A: During each calendar year, CRC will conduct empirical research that addresses challenges and issues relative to virtual instruction and learning, technology literacy, language acquisition, or homeschooling.

Strategy 3A1: A member or members of the CRC will either conduct empirical research that addresses a technological problem relative to virtual instruction and learning OR identify an individual or a group of individuals who will conduct the research.

Strategy 3A2: A member or members of the CRC will conduct empirical research that addresses a problem relative to digital literacy OR identify an individual or a group of individuals to conduct the research.

Strategy 3A3: A member or members of the CRC will conduct empirical research that addresses a technology problem relative to language acquisition OR identify an individual or a group of individuals who will conduct the research.

Strategy 3A4: A member or members of the CRC will conduct empirical research that addresses a technology problem relative to homeschooling and the challenges and opportunities that homeschooling present OR identify an individual or a group of individuals will conduct the research.

Strategy 3A5: A member or members of the CRC will apply for a mini grant from COBEC and use the funds to conduct empirical research that addresses either virtual instruction and learning, digital literacy, language acquisition, or homeschooling in Belize, OR identify an individual or a group who will conduct the research.

Objective 3B: During each calendar year, CRC will design professional development workshops and seminars that address problems and issues relative to either action research, virtual instruction and learning, digital literacy, language acquisition, and homeschooling.

Strategy 3B1: A member or members of the CRC will conduct professional development workshops or seminars that address the process

and application of action research OR identify an individual or a group of individuals who will conduct the workshops or seminars.

Strategy 3B2: A member or members of the CRC will conduct professional development workshops or seminars that address a technological problem relative to virtual instruction and learning OR identify an individual or a group of individuals who will conduct the workshops or seminars.

Strategy 3B3: A member or members of the CRC will conduct professional development workshops or seminars that address a problem or an issue relative to digital literacy OR identify an individual or a group of individuals who will conduct the workshops or seminars.

Strategy 3B4: A member or members of the CRC will conduct professional development workshops or seminars that address a technology problem relative to language acquisition OR identify an individual or a group of individuals who will conduct the workshops or seminars.

Strategy 3B5: A member or members of the CRC will conduct professional development workshops or seminars that address a technology problem relative to homeschooling OR identify an individual or group of individuals who will conduct the workshops or seminars.

Strategy 3B6: A member or members of the CRC will apply for a mini grant from COBEC and use the funds to conduct professional development workshops and seminars that address either virtual instruction and learning, digital literacy, language acquisition, or home schooling in Belize OR identify an individual or group of individuals who will apply for the grant.

Mental Health

Goal 4: To conduct empirical research and continuing professional development workshops and seminars that address problems and issues on mental health.

Objective 4A: During each calendar year, CRC will conduct empirical research that addresses challenges and issues relative to mental health in Belize schools.

Strategy 4A1: A member or members of the CRC will conduct empirical research that addresses a technology problem relative to mental health in Belize schools OR identify an individual or a group of individuals who will conduct the research.

Strategy 4A2: A member or members of the CRC will apply for a mini grant from COBEC and use the funds to conduct empirical research that addresses mental health problems and issues in Belize, OR identify an individual or a group of individuals who will apply for the grant.

Strategy 4A3:

Objective 2B: During each calendar year, a member or members of CRC will conduct professional development workshops and seminars that address mental health problems and issues in Belize schools.

Strategy 4B1: A member or members of the CRC will conduct professional development workshops or seminars that address mental health problems in Belize schools, OR identify an individual or a group of individuals who will conduct the workshops or seminars.

Strategy 4B2: A member or members of the CRC will apply for a mini grant from COBEC and use the funds to conduct professional development workshops and seminars that address mental health problems and issues in Belize, OR identify an individual or a group of individuals who will apply for the grant.

Academic Scholarships

Goal 5: To financially assist deserving Belizean students with scholarships that will enable them to pursue higher education opportunities in Belize and the U.S.

Objective 5A: During each calendar year, a member or members of the CRC will implement fundraising strategies to raise money for scholarships and research grants, stipends, and honorariums.

Strategy 5A1: A team of CRC members will pursue and implement a Crowdfunding campaign, e.g., GoFundMe.

Strategy 5A2: A member or members of the CRC will identify grant opportunities and write and submit grant proposals for student scholarships.

Strategy 5A3: A member or members of the CRC will identify and pursue corporate partnerships to raise funds for student scholarships.

Strategy 5A4: A member or members of the CRC will engage in direct solicitation (i.e., phone-a-thon) to raise money for student scholarships.

Objective 5B: CRC will establish criteria and develop a process to identify and select deserving students who need financial assistance to pursue their higher education interests.

Strategy 5B1: A subcommittee of CRC members will develop and process and establish criteria for identifying and selecting deserving students who need of financial assistance to pursue their higher education interests.

Strategy 5B2: The subcommittee will submit the selection criteria and process to the CRC membership for discussion and final approval.

Objective 5C: During each calendar year, CRC will identify deserving students who need financial assistance to pursue their higher education interests.

Strategy 5C1: A subcommittee of CRC members will collaborate with Belize high schools and COBEC members to identify deserving students for scholarship awards.

Strategy 5C2: The CRC will award the scholarships during the COBEC winter or summer conference.

