EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

College of Micronesia-FSM
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A confidential report prepared for
The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited the College of
Micronesia-FSM March 8 – 17, 2016

Rachel Rosenthal, Ed.D.
Chair

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SUMMARY OF THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

INSTITUTION: College of Micronesia-FSM

DATES OF VISIT: March 8–17, 2016

TEAM CHAIR: Rachel Rosenthal, Ed.D.

A thirteen-member accreditation team visited the College of Micronesia-FSM (COM-FSM) from March 8–17, 2016, for the purposes of determining whether the College continues to meet Accreditation Standards, Eligibility Requirements, Commission Policies, and USDE regulations. The team evaluated how well the institution is achieving its stated purposes, provided recommendations for quality assurance and institutional improvement, and submitted a recommendation to the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) regarding the accredited status of the College.

In preparation for the visit, team members attended an all-day training session on January 27, 2016, conducted by the ACCJC and studied Commission materials prepared for visiting teams. Team members read the College's Self Evaluation of Educational Quality and Institutional Effectiveness in Support of Reaffirmation of Accreditation Report and assessed the online evidence provided by the College. The team also reviewed Annual Reports and Annual Fiscal Reports submitted to the ACCJC by COM-FSM, interim reports submitted since the previous comprehensive review, and Commission action letters for this period. There were no complaints filed with ACCJC concerning COM-FSM for review by the team.

Prior to the visit, team members completed two written assignments in regards to COM-FSM's 2015 Self Evaluation Report and began identifying areas for further investigation during the site visit. Team members were also asked to identify individual and group interviews.

COM-FSM has six campuses on four island states of Pohnpei (2), Yap (2), Chuuk (1), and Kosrae (1). Three team members were assigned to visit the campuses on Yap, Chuuk, and Kosrae the week of March 7. These team members toured the four campuses, visited classrooms, held four open forums attended by 60-70 participants each, and interviewed faculty and staff based upon areas of inquiry and requests for additional evidence as provided by the Standard Team leads. The team chair visited the Yap and FMI campuses and met with the Yap Regent.

The thirteen-member team met in Pohnpei on Monday, March 14, sharing initial observations and coordinating the schedule for the week including visits to the two Pohnpei campuses, National and Pohnpei. During the course of the four-day on-site visit, the team met daily for team meetings, toured both campuses, held 61 interviews with regents, faculty, staff, administrators, and students and attended committee meetings, and attended open forums both at the National and Pohnpei campuses, attended by 60-70 members each, to allow for

comment from any member of the campus or local community. The team chair met with the COM-FSM president, regents, and various College administrators, faculty, and students.

The COM-FSM accreditation team found the Self Evaluation Report well organized and thorough, providing appropriate and sufficient information for the team to begin its review. The College was exceptionally well prepared for the team's visit and provided extraordinary logistical support both before and during the visit. The team's accommodations on each island, and both on-site and at the hotel in Pohnpei, were well equipped, with a large conference table, computers and a printer. College staff members were extremely helpful to team members and were readily available for interviews and follow-up conversations.

To conclude the visit, the team met in the hotel's team room on the evening of Wednesday, March 16, to review findings and evidence and to finalize the recommendations and commendations. On Thursday, March 17, the team chair met with COM-FSM President Daisy to provide an overview of the Exit Report. The visit concluded with the well-attended Exit Report, which occurred at 12:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 17, 2016 in the National Campus' Practice Gymnasium.

MAJOR FINDINGS

As a result of the March 2016 visit, the team recognized seven notable aspects of the institution:

Commendations

Commendation 1
The team commends the College for increasing the awareness of the ACCJC Eligibility Requirements and Standards as evidenced by 99 percent of employees on all campuses and 100 percent of the members of the Board of Regents completing the ACCJC online Accreditation Basics course, supporting its employees in this goal by taking such measures as translating the Standards into languages native to Micronesia, and by requiring all new employees to complete the course within their first month of employment.

Commendation 2
The team commends the College for the transformation that resulted in dramatically increased engagement and participation of faculty, staff, administrators, and Board of Regents in improving institutional quality and student learning.

Commendation 3
The team commends the College for fostering a culture of commitment to financial discipline and stability. Savings realized through the effective use of institutional and financial planning integrated with resource allocation have led to increased reserves that enable the College to further invest in student recruitment, success and completion.

Commendation 4
The team commends the College for its clearly articulated mission statement. The team further commends the College for the prominent display of and widespread familiarity with its mission.

Commendation 5
The team commends the College for providing transparent and accessible information related to program review, program student learning outcomes, data trends, and program assessment reports through its Program Assessment website.

Commendation 6
The team commends the College for its effective and culturally sensitive use of traditional conflict resolution practices as part of its commitment to the safety of its students, employees, and communities.

Commendation 7
The team commends the College for developing and publishing four-semester suggested schedules for every academic program. These suggested schedules provide clear pathways for students, encourage full time enrollment and timely completion, facilitate student success,

and provide an effective framework for administrators to use in scheduling course offerings to meet students' needs.

Recommendations

As a result of the March 2016 visit, the team made the following seven recommendations.

Recommendations to Improve Effectiveness:

Recommendation 1
In order to improve effectiveness, the team recommends that the College ensure that its personnel evaluation processes are sustainable and allow for systematic evaluation of all personnel at stated intervals. These evaluations should assess the effectiveness of personnel and encourage improvement, and actions taken following evaluations should be formal, timely, and documented. (III.A.5)

Recommendation 2
In order to improve effectiveness, the team recommends the College provide appropriate and adequate technology resources at all campuses in order to support the College's mission of being a learner-centered institution of higher education. (III.C.1, III.C.2, III.C.3, III.C.4)

Recommendation 3
In order to improve effectiveness, the team recommends the College seek continued commitment and financial support in addition to student tuition to ensure the College's ongoing ability to provide access to higher education for citizens and residents in all states of the FSM. The team further recommends that the College continue efforts to support its long-term operations and future planning by identifying additional alternative financial resources to supplement student tuition. (III.D.1, III.D.2, III.D.4, III.D.9, III.D.11)

Recommendation 4
In order to improve effectiveness, the team recommends the College develop ways to engage in systematic analysis of and collegial dialog concerning the large volume of data generated through course-level outcomes assessment in order to use these data more effectively in support of continuous improvement of student learning. (I.B.1, I.B.4, II.A.3, II.A.16)

Recommendation 5
In order to improve effectiveness, the team recommends the College implement assessment methods in the area of library services that more effectively measure how these services contribute to the attainment of student learning outcomes. (II.B.3)

Recommendations to Meet the Standards:

Recommendation 6
In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College ensure that evaluations of all faculty (including part-time faculty), academic administrators, and other personnel who are directly responsible for student learning outcomes include, as a component of those evaluations, consideration of how these employees use the results of the assessment of learning outcomes to improve teaching and learning. (III.A.6)

Recommendation 7:
In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the College establish, publish, and adhere to written personnel procedures that are widely available for information and review. (III.A.5, III.A.11)

INTRODUCTION

The College Of Micronesia – FSM serves the developing nation of Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) which is comprised of 607 islands spread across 2 million square miles of the western Pacific Ocean. The FSM maintains a relationship with the United States as a Freely Associated State and has a Compact of Free Association that defines that relationship. Higher education began in FSM in 1963 when in-service teacher training was offered through the University of Hawai'i. In 1970, this training was retitled and incorporated into the Community College of Micronesia along with expanded programming. In 1978, the Seventh Congress of Micronesia acted to form the College of Micronesia as a public corporation governed by a Board of Regents and the institution was accredited by ACCJC. In 1993 the College of Micronesia – FSM became the federation's national College.

From 1994-1998, the strategic vision was to establish comprehensive community colleges on the four island states of Pohnpei, Yap, Chuuk, and Kosrae. Due to an assessment of the resources necessary to implement such a plan, the vision was transitioned to a single, two-year degree granting institution and the College now has six campuses on the four island states. The National Campus on Pohnpei serves as the administrative center and as the primary delivery site for two-year degree programs. The four state campuses on Pohnpei, Yap, Chuuk and Kosrae focus on developmental and career and technical education, and the Yap Fisheries and FSM- Fisheries and Maritime Institute (FMI) provides specialize training in navigation, marine engineering, and fishing technology.

In fall 2014, COM-FSM offered 32 certificate and degree programs and served a total of 2,344 students. Student demographics for fall 2014 indicate that 99.4 percent of all students are native to FSM, 81.5 percent are between the ages of 18 and 24, and 68.5 percent attend full-time. The largest campus, National, served 1,017 students and the smallest, FMI, served 50. Despite the small size, however, traditional culture is robust with fifteen distinctive cultures and languages. The College offers a broad range of programs in traditional academic subjects for associate degrees, transfer preparation, workforce training, career technical education, and basic skills.

From 2011-12 to 2014-15, the College has experienced a 23.7 percent decline in fall enrollments due to declining FSM population, migration of out FSM, aging population, decline in fertility, high unemployment (16.2 percent as of the 2010 census), and increasing age at first marriage. In addition, citizens of Micronesia are eligible to join the US Military and do so at a high rate.

COM-FSM's accreditation was last reaffirmed in July 2013.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. **Authority**
   The team confirmed that College of Micronesia-FSM (COM-FSM) is authorized to operate as a post-secondary, degree-granting institution by authority of the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia by FSM Enabling Law Title 40, Chapter 7 Section 4 of the FSM Code. Continuous accreditation is granted by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). The ACCJC is a regional body recognized by the U.S. Department of Educational and granted authority through the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008.

   The College meets the ER.

2. **Operational Status**
   The team confirmed that the College is operational and provides educational services to 2,344 total unduplicated student enrollments within degree applicable credit courses for the fall 2014. For 2014-15, 1605 of those students or 68 percent were enrolled as full-time and 99.6 percent are pursing educational goals that relate to degree, certificate, or transfer.

   The College meets the ER.

3. **Degrees:**
   The team confirmed that the College offers 35 programs, 14 of which lead to an Associate of Applied Science, Associate of Arts, or Associate of Science degree, A majority of COM-FSM's students, or 65 percent, are enrolled in one of these 14 programs.

   The College meets the ER.

4. **Governing Board**
   The team confirmed that the Board of Regents employs a president as the chief executive officer of the COM-FSM. The CEO does not serve as a member of the Board of Regents nor as the board president. The team found that the Board of Regents vests requisite authority in the president/CEO to administer board policies. Since the last full accreditation visit, there has been one change in the president/CEO position, which was appropriately reported to the ACCJC.

   The College meets the ER.

5. **Financial Accountability**
   The team confirmed that COM-FSM contracts certified public accountant to conduct annual, certified, independent audits and financial aid program review are included.

The Board of Trustees review these audit reports annually. The financial audit and management responses to any exceptions are reviewed and discussed in public sessions. COM-FSM does not avail federal student loans under the federal aid program.

The College meets the ER.

Checklist for Evaluating Compliance with
Federal Regulations and Related Commission Policies

Public Notification of an Evaluation Team Visit and Third Party Comment
Evaluation Items:

_X_ The institution has made an appropriate and timely effort to solicit third party comment in advance of a comprehensive evaluation visit.

_X_ The institution cooperates with the evaluation team in any necessary follow-up related to the third party comment.

_X_ The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission *Policy on Rights and Responsibilities of the Commission and Member Institutions* as to third party comment.
[Regulation citation: 602.23(b).]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

_X_ The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

___ The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.

___ The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

Narrative (add space as needed):
COM-FSM posted information on its College website about the process for third party comment. The team found no third-party comment related to this visit.

Standards and Performance with Respect to Student Achievement
Evaluation Items:

_X_ The institution has defined elements of student achievement performance across the institution, and has identified the expected measure of performance within each defined element. Course completion is included as one of these elements of student achievement. Other elements of student achievement performance for measurement have been determined as appropriate to the institution's mission.

_X_ The institution has defined elements of student achievement performance within each instructional program, and has identified the expected measure of performance within each defined element. The defined elements include, but are not limited to, job placement rates for program completers, and for programs in fields where licensure is required, the licensure examination passage rates for program completers.

_X_ The institution-set standards for programs and across the institution are relevant to guide self-evaluation and institutional improvement; the defined elements and expected performance levels are appropriate within higher education; the results are reported regularly across the campus; and the definition of elements and results are used in program-level and institution-wide planning to evaluate how well the institution fulfills its mission, to determine needed changes, to allocating resources, and to make improvements.

_X_   The institution analyzes its performance as to the institution-set standards and as to student achievement, and takes appropriate measures in areas where its performance is not at the expected level.
[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(i); 602.17(f); 602.19 (a-e).]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):
_X_   The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
___   The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
___   The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

Narrative (add space as needed):
The College provided evidence that it established a broad range of institution-set standards as part of its Strategic Plan 2013-17 for full-time enrollment, earning 12 or more units, good academic standing, retention, course completion, course and program outcomes achievement, persistence, and graduation rate. Plans are in place for monitoring these student achievement measures and for communicating results.

Credits, Program Length, and Tuition
Evaluation Items:
_X_   Credit hour assignments and degree program lengths are within the range of good practice in higher education (in policy and procedure).
_X_   The assignment of credit hours and degree program lengths is verified by the institution, and is reliable and accurate across classroom based courses, laboratory classes, distance education classes, and for courses that involve clinical practice (if applicable to the institution).
_X_   Tuition is consistent across degree programs (or there is a rational basis for any program-specific tuition).
_X_   Any clock hour conversions to credit hours adhere to the Department of Education's conversion formula, both in policy and procedure, and in practice.
_X_   The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission *Policy on Institutional Degrees and Credits*.
[Regulation citations: 600.2 (definition of credit hour); 602.16(a)(1)(viii); 602.24(e), (f); 668.2; 668.9.]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

_X_   The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
___   The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
___   The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

Narrative (add space as needed):
Course credit calculations are prescribed by Board Policy 3119 and actual contact hours of courses have divisors to determine course credit as described in the Curriculum and Assessment Handbook.

Transfer Policies
Evaluation Items:
_X_ Transfer policies are appropriately disclosed to students and to the public.
_X_ Policies contain information about the criteria the institution uses to accept credits for transfer.
_X_ The institution complies with the Commission *Policy on Transfer of Credit*. [Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(viii); 602.17(a)(3); 602.24(e); 668.43(a)(ii).]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):
_X_ The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
___ The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
___ The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

Narrative (add space as needed):
The process for applying for admission and submitting transcripts to be evaluated for COM-FSM credit is described on the Office of Admissions, Records and Recruitment (OARR) webpage. To be awarded credit, students must submit official transcripts from each US-accredited college or university previously attended, and have earned grades of "C" or better to be given advanced standing at COM-FSM.

Distance Education and Correspondence Education
Evaluation Items:
_No_ The institution has policies and procedures for defining and classifying a course as offered by distance education or correspondence education, in alignment with USDE definitions.
_NA_ There is an accurate and consistent application of the policies and procedures for determining if a course is offered by distance education (with regular and substantive interaction with the instructor, initiated by the instructor, and online activities are included as part of a student's grade) or correspondence education (online activities are primarily "paperwork related," including reading posted materials, posting homework and completing examinations, and interaction with the instructor is initiated by the student as needed).
_No_ The institution has appropriate means and consistently applies those means for verifying the identity of a student who participates in a distance education or correspondence education course or program, and for ensuring that student information is protected.
_X_ The technology infrastructure is sufficient to maintain and sustain the distance

education and correspondence education offerings.

___ The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission *Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education*.
[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(iv), (vi); 602.17(g); 668.38.]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

___ The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

_X_ The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.

___ The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

Narrative (add space as needed):
The College currently offers only one course, ART 101, in a distance modality on an as-needed basis. The College's Course Approval Handbook does not have any reference to a distance education approval process and the Course Outline of Record for ART 101 does not indicate that it is approved for online modality.   The College should either develop a distance education approval process or discontinue offering the ART 101 course in an online modality.

Student Complaints
Evaluation Items:

_X_ The institution has clear policies and procedures for handling student complaints, and the current policies and procedures are accessible to students in the College catalog and online.

_X_ The student complaint files for the previous six years (since the last comprehensive evaluation) are available; the files demonstrate accurate implementation of the complaint policies and procedures.

_NA_ The team analysis of the student complaint files identifies any issues that may be indicative of the institution's noncompliance with any Accreditation Standards.

_X_ The institution posts on its website the names of associations, agencies and govern mental bodies that accredit, approve, or license the institution and any of its programs, and provides contact information for filing complaints with such entities.

_X_ The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission *Policy on Representation of Accredited Status* and the *Policy on Student and Public Complaints Against Institutions*.
[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(ix); 668.43.]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

_X_ The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

___ The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.

___ The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

Narrative (add space as needed):
The College has clear procedures for student complaints accessed through a link on the College's homepage that provides direct access to both the Commission's Complaint Policy and a College Complaint Form. Board Policy 4903, Student Complaint Policy, is also provided through the College's website and the Grievance. Complaint Procedures for students is provided through the College Catalog and Student Handbook and Board Policy 6021 Grievance Policy provides information for College personnel.

Institutional Disclosure and Advertising and Recruitment Materials
Evaluation Items:
_X_ The institution provides accurate, timely (current), and appropriately detailed information to students and the public about its programs, locations, and policies.
_X_ The institution complies with the Commission *Policy on Institutional Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Representation of Accredited Status*.
_X_ The institution provides required information concerning its accredited status as described above in the section on Student Complaints.
     [Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1))(vii); 668.6.]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):
_X_ The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
___ The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
___ The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

Narrative (add space as needed):
Information about programs, locations, and policies is communicated to the public and students through the College webpage, College Catalog, and Schedule of Classes. The College's webpage is extensive and includes information on planning, accreditation, information on locations and programs offered, program costs, and accreditation related documentation including annual reports.

Title IV Compliance
Evaluation Items:
_X_ The institution has presented evidence on the required components of the Title IV Program, including findings from any audits and program or other review activities by the USDE.
_X_ The institution has addressed any issues raised by the USDE as to financial responsibility requirements, program record-keeping, etc. If issues were not timely addressed, the institution demonstrates it has the fiscal and administrative capacity to timely address issues in the future and to retain compliance with Title IV program requirements.
_NA_ The institution's student loan default rates are within the acceptable range defined by the USDE. Remedial efforts have been undertaken when default rates near or meet a

level outside the acceptable range.

_NA_ Contractual relationships of the institution to offer or receive educational, library, and support services meet the Accreditation Standards and have been approved by the Commission through substantive change if required.

_X_ The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission *Policy on Contractual Relationships with Non-Regionally Accredited Organizations* and the *Policy on Institutional Compliance with Title IV*.
[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(v); 602.16(a)(1)(x); 602.19(b); 668.5; 668.15; 668.16; 668.71 et seq.]

Conclusion Check-Off:

_X_ The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

___ The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.

___ The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

Narrative (add space as needed):
The College provided evident in the Self-Evaluation Report (ER 5; II.B.4; III.B.4; III.D. 5-7, 10 14-16) to demonstrate it complies with all five items of the Title IV requirements.

STANDARD I
MISSION, ACADEMIC QUALITY AND INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, AND INTEGRITY

Standard I.A: Mission

General Observations

The College of Micronesia—FSM (COM-FSM) has a mission statement that meets the accreditation criteria in that it defines the institution's broad educational purposes, its intended population, the types of degrees it offers, and its commitment to student learning and student achievement.   Since its last full accreditation visit, the institution has moved to a more effective use of data to determine how well it meets its mission. The mission statement guides the strategic plan, is integrated into the educational master plan, informs the planning cycle, and the College has developed indicators to measure accomplishment of the mission statement.

The College has also implemented a five-year planning cycle. All programs are required to articulate how they align to the mission statement. The mission statement also is widely distributed, read at Board of Regents meetings, and published in various locations including the College's website, on all institutional documents, and is posted in classrooms and meeting rooms at all sites. The statement is reviewed at least every five years through the planning cycle.

Findings and Evidence

The Mission effectively describes the broad education purposes of the College, its intended student population, types of degrees and other credentials offered, and its commitment to student learning and student achievement. The Self-Evaluation Report (SER) effectively illustrates this alignment with a table illustrating what the College does, whom it serves, and how it does so. The College's broad educational purposes are met by the statement of commitment "to the success of the Federated States of Micronesia by providing academic, career and technical educational programs." The mission statement also indicates the degrees offered with the statement that it provides "academic, career and technical educational programs." The College's commitment to student learning is addressed by the identifying statement that the College is "a learner-centered institution of higher education" with "programs characterized by continuous improvement and best practices." (Standard (I.A.1, ER 6)

The institution has developed a set of indicators to measure the effectiveness in meeting its mission. Prior to this development, the institution had depended on indirect measure. In fall of 2015, the department for institutional effectiveness and quality assurance developed, in collaboration with the Cabinet and Executive Committee, twenty indicators to measure mission success. SER Table 1.A.2-1 demonstrates the alignment of measures of success with the criteria of the mission statement. The self-study indicates, "these indicators will be

reviewed again during the August 2016 Visioning Summit when the mission review process is next scheduled." The College intends a regular cycle of review and evaluation to determine how well the mission statement is being met. (Standard I.A.2)

The institution insures that its programs and services are aligned with its mission through a planning cycle that began with a review of mission, vision, and strategic plan and lead to the development of the Integrated Education Master Plan (IEMP). The current 5-year cycle ends in the summer of 2016 and by summer 2017, an updated process for mission, vision, strategic plan, and IEMP review and revision will be ready for implementation. The Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance has a direct responsibility to assess mission fulfillment, support student learning and success.

All units have developed a mission statement and goals aligned with the institution's mission. Resource allocations are justified by their ability to support achievement of existing plans. The Program Assessment and Program Review Manual delineates the planning cycle and asserts that resource allocation is driven by assessment of outcomes but does not specify how it informs resource allocation. The Budget Procedures Handbook does describe the budget process and the role of the Vice President of Administrative Services in compiling the budget assumptions, projecting revenues, and allocating resources, but it does not specifically indicate how outcomes are reflected in this process. Interviews with the management team, however, revealed that the resource allocation process is informed by program assessment and review and that management team members see the Integrated Educational Master Plan as the means for their input into resource allocation and as an excellent forum for breaking down the "silo-effect" on campus. The Integrated Educational Master Plan and the related matrix which is referred to as the "refinement of plans" indicate that resource allocation is tied to program assessment and review and supports the claim that "through the budget process, all programs must complete their annual program assessment to justify resource allocations for improvement implementation." (Standard I.A.3)

The institution effectively articulates its mission in a widely published statement that is approved by the governing board, Board of Regents, and is periodically reviewed. The mission statement is read at each Board of Regents meeting, at the president's Cabinet, and at various other meetings. It is published at various locations—the College website, General Catalog, Student Handbook, and in institutional documents. It is reviewed at least every five years and approved by the Board of Regents. (Standard I.A.4, ER 6)

Conclusions
The College meets the standard and Eligibility Requirements (ER 6).

Commendations

Commendation 4: The team commends the College for its clearly articulated mission statement. The team further commends the College for the prominent display of and widespread familiarity with its mission (I.A.1, I.A.4, ER 6).

Recommendations for Improvement
None

Recommendations to Meet the Standard
None

Standard I.B: Assuring Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness

General Observations

The College of Micronesia—FSM (COM-FSM) demonstrates a substantive and collegial dialogue about student outcomes, academic quality, institutional effectiveness, and continuous improvement of student learning and achievement. COM-FSM assesses all outcomes every semester, and has institutional, program, and course outcomes as well as administrative unit objectives. Program review is used to evaluate courses, programs, certificates, and degrees and these evaluations allow for academic integrity review, discussion on whether programs should be discontinued, and how embedded outcomes assessment results can guide refinement of teaching and learning to improve student success.

The College establishes priorities and sets minimum expectations for Institution-Set Standards (ISS) for student achievement, including required expectations of performance for course completion, job placement rates, and licensure examination passage rates. The College President has provided clear directives to improve the College's use of data and alignment with accreditation as noted in his initiatives. In summary, the College has many new and integrated planning endeavors that are guiding its process related to integrated planning, evaluation, resource allocation, and re-evaluation.

Findings and Evidence

There are structures in place that allow for purposeful dialog such as the Strengthening Purposeful Dialogue handbook, the Academic Quality Model, open all campus meetings, summits, and the numerous committee and Board of Regents meetings. A random sampling of minutes from the Board of Regents meetings and committee meetings indicates that dialogue is purposeful and meaningful and used for discussion and decision making. The subjects covered include those related to student equity, student learning outcomes, academic rigor, and academic honesty. The faculty members' work on student learning outcomes indicates a high level of engagement in the program assessment process including using the assessment findings to improve teaching and learning. As evidence of the relationship between outcomes assessment and resource allocation, the mathematics gatekeeper courses indicated the need for more resources to improve students' graduation rates which was funded by the College. A review of TracDat, a software platform which serves as a repository for assessment results, provides multiple examples of assessment efforts of varying quality. (Standard I.B.1)

COM-FSM assesses all outcomes every semester, and has institutional, program, and course outcomes as well as administrative unit objectives and the new course outline format requires a link to the aforementioned. There is, however, a need to provide more meaningful and authentic assessment of the General Education program. The Faculty Handbook 2015 outlines the responsibilities of the faculty in all areas including student learning outcomes and mandates the inclusion of outcomes on the course outliners and syllabi. Assessment reporting demonstrates a use of disaggregation of assessment results and the use of those results per Academic Assessment Report Academic Year 2014-2015. The report provides

comprehensive information as to progress being made in outcomes assessment and use of results. An approach to embedding assessment into the normal curricular and testing classroom set-up is making the process authentic, but the multitude of assessments that are required every semester for every course may be creating a backlog of work for faculty. Student learning outcomes are factored into institutional priorities through program review, as well as strategic planning and budget processes. Enrollment Management and Student Services is assessing outcomes using administrative unit objectives, a more indirect method of assessment.

Program review is used to evaluate courses, programs, certificates, and degrees. The evaluations allow for academic integrity review, discussion on whether it should be discontinued, and how embedded outcomes assessment results can guide refinement of teaching and learning to improve student success.

The Directors of Institutional Planning and Research Office (IRPO) and Information Technology met to review TracDat and the detailed data input for programs and courses as well as for Student Services. As a result, a 58-page TracDat report was created for outcomes where the target was not met. The team reviewed a random selection of outcomes and found inconsistency in the quality of the information. The College has one distance education course that is only offered when there are enough students to hold the course. Students who take the course are on campus and thus online support services are not needed. (Standard I.B.2, ER 11)

The College establishes priorities and sets minimum expectations for Institution-Set Standards (ISS) for student achievement, including required expectations of performance for course completion, job placement rates, and licensure examination passage rates. The Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance Department sets aspirational goals for ISS. The College monitors its progress through the Executive Committee, Cabinet, and Board of Regents. The Curriculum and Assessment Committee (CAC), as part of the governance system, felt that "doing 'no worse'" was equivalent to improving, and thus was opposed to stretch targets. ISS data are used to set 3-year and 5-year goals and guide institutional initiatives such as just-in-time tutoring and creating pathways for transfer and employment. Multiple measures of assessment are used including: enrollment (tied to Strategic Plan and Measures of Success in the College's Focus on Success Document), retention, course completion, learning outcomes, persistence, and graduation rate. ISS is part of the Strategic Plan and posted to the web, sent on campus email, and discussed at Cabinet and the Board of Regents' meetings. Although ISS is part of program review, there do not appear to be broad-based opportunities for the College employees and students to understand the priorities and processes to achieve the outcomes in question. Staff training is suggested relative to ISS to develop greater understanding of and be able to contribute to improving ISS from a program-level perspective. (Standard I.B.3, ER 11)

The College is utilizing ISS to work toward improving its certificate graduation rates and its efforts to track transfer rates. It is using national best-practices efforts to improve its effectiveness in addressing these and other institution-set standards such as the National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP). Based on ACCJC Annual Reports as

well as the College's other self-identified metrics, ISS is used to evaluate its current standing relative to its ISS goal. The College decides how well it is achieving its mission and determines if action as needed. For example, the graduation rate is lower than the established goal and the College is taking action by providing additional resources in support of increasing the number of graduates.

The team reviewed the College's robust set of institution-set standards for the fall semester which included: full time enrollment, earning 12 or more credits, average enrolled credits, average attempted credits, average credits earned, good academic standing, retention rates, course completion, withdrawals, Course Student Learning Outcomes, Program Student Learning Outcomes, fall to spring persistence, and graduation rates. The College set 1-3 year targets, as well as 5-year targets, for each standard as part of the 2013-2017 Strategic Plan. The team found the ISS were appropriate and that the College exceeded all ISS for fall 2014 semester, with the exception of Program Learning Outcome Completion.
There are many examples of how assessment data are incorporated into College planning to improve student learning and achievement: Assessment and Review Cycle, Educational Quality, and Planning Cycle. Student learning outcomes assessment is part of the Assessment and Review Cycle and learning outcomes are assessed each year. Within the College's Planning Cycle, assessment is used along with Program Review (as part of Evaluation Reports), the Strategic Plan, and the Integrated Educational Master Plan. Program reviews are conducted on a 2-year cycle so that academic program reviews are conducted one year and nonacademic reviews the next year. Programs are completing their evaluations on-schedule but there are so many outcomes being assessed it could potentially be overwhelming. In addition, the team found inconsistencies in how student services is uses student learning outcomes, as well as the quality of outcomes assessment in both course and program outcomes. (Standard I.B.4)

Accomplishment of the mission is guided by Mission Fulfillment Indicators, Institution Set Standards (ISS), and Strategic Plan Measures of Success and demonstrate the College's indicators of educational quality. The College conducts program review and data from program reviews is used to improve programs. Resource requests are only considered if program review and assessments are evident and are based on the evidence provided to support the request. There is evidence of work being done to measure outcomes assessment, but the use of the findings for improvement is inconsistent at the course level. TracDat reports indicated where assessment criteria for success were not met and a review of the actions for improvements found that the faculty were focused on improvement. Outcomes Assessment for Student Services is focused on both student achievement as well as student learning outcomes.

The College disaggregates data from its student information system in order to delineate the differences in student achievement and determine the appropriate response. For example, with graduation rates lower for both incoming students and the achievement of stackable certificates or those that build toward an Associate's degree, the College is currently engaged in dialog to identify next steps. The College also looks at subpopulations that are below the College average and has dialog about those differences and decides how they can be addressed. There is, however, no systematic and separate planning process for the one

distance education course although efforts exist for assessment. Students who enroll in this course are on campus students and thus avail themselves of the services provided on campus. (Standard I.B.5)

A Mini-Work Plan was developed in early 2015 based on the College's work as part of the High Performance Team Training for the American of Association Community Colleges. This work includes Student Completion and Success to increase the graduation rate, course completion rate, persistence rate, and retention rate. (Standard I.B.6)

In 2013, the College put into place a large project to review its paper-based policies and procedures resulting in a policy on policies (BP 2001). A participatory governance process was used to allow many across campus, including committees, to take ownership of their areas of responsibilities and to align this work with the Colleges' policies and procedures (BP and AP 2200). Over 350 policies were reviewed, evaluated, deleted or updated. Going forward, a five-year review cycle has been established. Allowing all employees to take leadership and ownership in the process will help to sustain the cyclical evaluation process and the quality of the work produced will excel. (Standard I.B.7)

Numerous methods are used to provide the public and College community with assessment and evaluation results, demonstrating the College's strengths and weaknesses. A review of the Strategic Plan and Program Reviews indicates a regular review and sharing of data focused on improving institutional effectiveness. Numerous groups review the assessment results and use the information for program improvement. In addition, news feeds, workshops, and the College President's regular updates provide information from other perspectives. (Standard I.B.8)

The College's benchmarks (as established by a national study) and ISS short- and long-term goals are used to guide the College in its work toward continuous quality improvement. Interviews with faculty and staff indicate, however, there is a need for more evidence to support this work. Goals are included in the Strategic Plan and posted on the web and staff indicated that training is still needed to better understand and utilize the Standards and dashboard.

The College President has a clear directive to improve the College's use of data and alignment with accreditation as noted in his initiatives. The College has many planning endeavors that are guiding its process related to integrated planning, evaluation, resource allocation, and re-evaluation and there is a need to continue to train employees on the policies and procedures for the aforementioned. This work is only a few years old and will require time to demonstrate that it is robust and engrained in the culture of the institution so that should there be a change in leadership in the future, the College's focus on continuous quality improvement will continue. (Standard I.B.9, ER 19)

Conclusions

The College meets the Standard and related Eligibility Requirements (ER 11 and ER 19).

Commendations

Commendation 2: The team commends the College for the transformation that resulted in dramatically increased engagement and participation of faculty, staff, administrators, and Board of Regents in improving institutional quality and student learning (I.B.1, I.B.7, I.B.9, I.C.3, I.C.14, II.A.16, IV.A.1, IV.B.1, IV.C.1, IV.C.4, IV.C.5, IV.C.8).

Commendation 5: The team commends the College for providing transparent and accessible information related to program review, program student learning outcomes, data trends, and program assessment reports through its Program Assessment website. (I.B.8, I.B.9, I.C.1, I.C.3, II.A.3, II.A.16, ER 19).

Recommendations to Improve Effectiveness

Recommendation 4: In order to improve effectiveness, the team recommends the College develop ways to engage in systematic analysis of and collegial dialog concerning the large volume of data generated through course-level outcomes assessment in order to use these data more effectively in support of continuous improvement of student learning (I.B.1, I.B.4, II.A.3, II.A.16).

Recommendations to Meet the Standards

None

Standard I.C: Institutional Integrity

General Observations

The College of Micronesia—FSM (COM-FSM), while it no longer has a printed catalog, does have an online catalog that is designated as its official catalog. In addition, the "Updates to the Catalog" section of the catalog page on the College website indicates substantive changes made during the academic year after the release of the online catalog. This catalog provides students and prospective students with accurate and current information. Board Policy and Administrative Procedure insure all components required by Eligibility Requirement 20. The institution provides transparent access to student learning assessment and achievement data but acknowledges some program assessments and summaries as well as program reviews lack sufficient quality and timely submittal.

Additionally, data and analyses are not always readily understandable to students and other stakeholders due to the many languages spoken in the Federated States of Micronesia. The College is currently hiring a new Dean of Assessment, who will ensure not only the timeliness of these processes but will also ensure results "communicated in a manner readily understood by prospective students and members of the public."

The College recently required the regular review of institutional policies, procedures, and publications to ensure that they are in accordance mission, programs, and services. Students and prospective students are also informed of the estimated total cost of education. Governing board policies make clear the institution's commitment to academic freedom and responsibility.

Findings and Evidence

The College produces an online catalog that provides students with clear, accurate, and truthful information to all stakeholders. The catalog is updated in the advent of substantive changes made after the publication of the online catalog through the publication of "Updates to the Catalog" on the College website as directed by BP 2000. Standards have also been established to guide the accuracy and clarity of information in the catalog. The College has also developed a *Communication Products Inventory* to review and streamline College communications and minimize inaccuracies. The College indicates that this has "resulted in annual review of the Table of COM-FSM Public Disclosure Communications" and additionally, "the process articulated in Section G on Content Updates of the revised COM-FSM Publications Standards Manual further assures the clarity, accuracy, and integrity of information provided to stakeholders." Currently there is no assessment of how effective this review process is. (Standard I.C.1)

The institution provides an annual catalog that is updated as warranted. Within the SER, Table I.C.2-1 illustrates that Eligibility Requirement 20 components are being met by the catalog. Board Policy and Administrative Procedures indicate that a process is designed to ensure that all information is precise, accurate, and current. (Standard I.C.2, ER 20)

The College has greatly increased the availability of documented assessment of student learning and student achievement and has communicated these results to the appropriate constituencies. The College does, however, recognize the need to improve the timeliness and quality of Program Assessment Summaries, Program Data Sheets, and Program Reviews and the need to ensure the presentation of information in a more accessible form. (Standard I.C.3, ER 13)

The College describes its certificates and degrees in the General Catalog. Additionally, Course Outlines that are provided in a website drop-down menu articulate program and course student learning outcomes. (Standard I.C.4)

The College has established a review process for all board policies, administrative procedures, and publications; however, it is too early to determine if this process is institutionalized as it was established in 2015 and first review is not until August of 2016. (Standard I.C.5)

The College communicates the total cost of education through its *Financial Aid* web page *Net Price Calculator*. Additionally, the *General College Catalog* and the *Gainful Employment* web pages for CTE programs provide such information. New students are provided a financial aid handbook. In the last four years as the College raised tuition and fees, it conducted public forums and "*All Campus Meetings*" to provide information and answer questions. (Standard I.C.6)

The College publishes policies on academic freedom and responsibility. A review of policies and procedures yielded the following related to academic honesty, responsibility, and academic integrity:
- BP 3116 and AP 3116 (Academic Honesty)
- BP 3120 and AP 3120 (Academic Freedom and Responsibility (Students))
- BP 6029 and AP 3116 (Faculty Code of Ethics)
- BP 6019 (Employee Discipline and Protection)

Board Policy 3116, the General Catalog on page 21, the Faculty Handbook on page 21-24, the Student's Guide on page 1, Board Policy 3120, the Student's Handbook 2015-2016, and Administrative Procedure 3120 all address academic freedom and responsibility. The Code of Ethics in Board Policy 6029 also contains the Faculty Statement of Professional Ethics and Faculty Code of Ethics, both of which are also provided in the Faculty Handbook and state clearly faculty responsibility to academic freedom, integrity, and inquiry. To ensure all faculty are aware of such policies, they are asked to sign a statement of professional ethics. If the policies are breached, there is a process in place that is followed. To date, there is at least one example of how a College followed this protocol when a breach occurred. In addition, a component of faculty evaluation, both full and part-time, includes a classroom observation which gives supervisors the opportunity to note any concerns for violation of this Standard. (Standard I.C.7)

The College has a Code of Ethics that guides faculty members' behaviors. This Code of Ethics is present in the Faculty Statement of Professional Ethics as well as within BP 6029. Policies are available on the web and in the handbook for faculty. The Student Guide has the students' Academic Honesty policy. (Standard I.C.8)

In 2014, all faculty signed the Faculty Statement of Professional Ethics which reinforces the distinction between personal conviction and professionally accepted views. The College has both a Faculty Evaluation as well as a Student Evaluation of the Instructor form. Both allow for evaluation of how well the faculty in teaching; however, there is no method for evaluating the separation of faculty members' personal convictions versus their professionally accepted views. In an effort to provide this information, the College will be modifying these forms. (Standard I.C.9)

The College's Code of Ethics (BP 6029) for all employees is found online as well as in both the Faculty Handbook and the Faculty Statement of Professional Ethics. These provide an opportunity for employees to be aware of the Code of Ethics and how they pertain to their conduct. There is no evidence that the College seeks to instill specific beliefs or world views on its employees or students.

This Code of Ethics is found in the Faculty Handbook and the Faculty Statement of Professional Ethics part of which states:

> Faculty members, guided by a deep conviction of the worth and dignity of the advancement of knowledge, recognize the special responsibilities placed upon them. Their primary responsibility to their disciplines is to seek and to state the truth as they see it. To this end, they devote their energies to developing and improving their scholarly and teaching competence. They accept the obligation to exercise critical self-discipline and judgment in using, extending, and transmitting knowledge. They practice intellectual honesty. Although they may follow subsidiary interests, these interests must never seriously hamper or compromise their freedom of inquiry. (Standard I.C.10)

The COM-FSM does not operate in foreign locations. (Standard I.C.11)

A review of the website indicates a variety of accreditation information that is publically available including information about COM-FSM as well as other accreditation Commission communications. The College provides one central location on its website for a full review of all accreditation information. (Standard I.C.12)

The College hired its President and Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance (VPIEQA) and leveraged their skills to help guide the work to meet the Accreditation Standards. These two positions have provided more guided structures for the College and allowed it to more clearly demonstrate how well it is meeting the Commission's Standards. Evidence of this work can be found in the President's directives as well as the Institution-Set Standards. These measures are conveyed to the public in a way that demonstrates the College's commitment to educational quality and institutional effectiveness. Based on the findings from these metrics, changes are made to improve student success (e.g.,

undertaking review of programs and program structures to create pathways for transfer and employment). The College website provides the latest general informational notices from the Accrediting Commission on actions taken and informational bulletins. (Standard I.C.12, ER 21)

Honesty and integrity are not only noted in policies and procedures, but also followed (BP 3116, AP 3116, BP 6029, and BP 6019). All faculty sign a statement of professional ethics. Communications are driven by Board Policy. Board Policy 2100 outlines the College's policy on public communications such as providing purposeful dialogue within an institution that is not merely a goal but also a reflection of the institution's values, culture and modes of governance. An example of how BP 2100 is put into action includes the President's use of the newsfeed to communicate important information.

Compliance with the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) regulations is evident in many pieces of evidence. The College's Institution Set Standards (ISS) demonstrate its commitment to setting standards to adhere to. COM-FSM uses the ISS to make many changes in its operations.

The College has an accreditation webpage that provides up-to-date information about its status and the activities of the Commission including its review of its policies and institutions. From its home page, accreditation is one click away indicating its compliance with the Commission's requirement. The College President has a strong agenda for moving the College forward with its adherence to ACCJC's requirements. Employees completed ACCJC's online Accreditation Basics Course, which was translated into local languages for non-English speaking employees, and Accreditation COM-FSM Boot Camp. The reports archive provides a public listing of the actions by ACCJC on the College and the College's good faith effort to respond as required. (Standard I.C.13, ER 21)

The College's plans and practices are centered on demonstrating the impact of its work on improving student success including high quality education, student achievement, and student learning. A random review of the Board of Regents minutes indicates this central focus. In addition, the College's 20 Mission Fulfillment Indicators, developed in fall 2015 in collaboration with the Cabinet and Executive Committee, demonstrate that the College is focused on institutional effectiveness and accomplishment of its mission. The first report on the Mission Fulfillment Indicators was presented to the Board of Regents at their December 2015 meeting, during which it was demonstrated that the College has made progress on 80% of the Indicators. (Standard I.C.14)

Conclusions

The College meets the Standard and related Eligibility Requirements (ER 19, 20 and 21).

Recommendations to Improve Effectiveness
None

Recommendations to Meet the Standards

None

STANDARD II
STUDENT LEARNING PROGRAMS AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Standard II.A: Instructional Programs

General Observations

The College of Micronesia-FSM has developed a strongly integrated approach to assessment of student learning, program review, and curriculum development. In the Program Assessment area of their website, each program is clearly linked to its program review, course SLO assessment data summary, program SLO assessment, and a data sheet for analysis. The College's *Curriculum and Assessment Handbook* provides clear and thorough guidelines for course and program development, assessment of the full spectrum of student learning outcomes, and review of their programs to ensure they are effective and assist their students in reaching their educational goals. The College catalog is well constructed and provides clear guidelines in most cases. Of particular note, programs in the catalog display a four-semester (plus summer) suggested schedule, providing guided pathways for students to follow in order to achieve their educational goals within two years.

The College's facilities, including classrooms, labs, offices, services, infrastructure, and grounds, are well maintained, appropriately constructed, and designed in such a manner as to support the instructional programs of the institution. At the National Campus, facilities are especially well developed and modern. At the College's other campuses, including those in Pohnpei, Chuuk, and Kosrae, the facilities are older and in some cases in disrepair, particularly on the outside. The inside learning spaces, however, are maintained to be conducive to learning.

Team members visited several classrooms in session and found a learning environment quite similar to what would be experienced in comparable classrooms in the USA. In lecture classrooms, the faculty members were presenting information using a combination of board work, PowerPoint presentations, and YouTube videos. In the laboratory environment, students engaged in hands-on activities following lab prep manuals and worksheets. During the lab, instructors moved from station to station providing advice, answering questions, and helping the students learn.

Important note about distance education: The College offers one course via distance education, an art course that is required for all students pursuing a teacher-prep degree. This degree is offered on all four island campuses and all course requirements for the degree must be completed at each site, without the need to travel to the National Campus on Pohnpei. However, it has proven particularly difficult to find adjunct faculty members to teach the art class on each island. At times, the College has hired an adjunct faculty to teach the course in a three-week short-term format at one island, then travel on to the second and third campus in three-week intervals, in order to meet students' needs. This has also presented challenges, including the intensive time period and the challenges of travel.

The College hired an adjunct faculty member to develop an online version of the class to address some of the concerns. When that person departed the island, the Vice President for Instructional Affairs took on the teaching of this class as a component of her load, based on her qualifications in the discipline.

The class is offered in the online modality on an as-needed basis when a sufficient number of students across the three remote islands have arrived at a point in their curriculum where they need to complete the course. Course content is presented via a Wiki page, with sixteen individual lesson plans covering the breadth of course content. Students enrolled in the course are granted permission to view and post to this page by the College. The requisite interaction between and among faculty and students is provided through a blend of comments on each lesson page, with postings from both instructors and students, and a Flickr page on which students post photographs of their completed course assignments and which also provides an opportunity for comment and discussion. This learning environment is typical of text-based, first-generation online courses, but is less robust than the typical learning management system utilized in the United States (e.g. Blackboard, Canvas, Moodle). Yet the technological infrastructure of the FSM may not adequately support the broadband needs of video lessons, two-way audio and video, and other commonly used approaches on the mainland. The Wiki/Flicker methodology provides the essential elements of knowledge transmission, exercises to develop understanding, inter-student discussion, instructor-student contact and communication, and submission of assignments. As such, the class itself is adequate to meet the expectation of the standards, but a more thorough learning management system would provide a more effective platform for student learning.

In reviewing the College's Board Policies, *Curriculum and Assessment Handbook*, course outline template, and the course outline of record for the Art 101 course in question, the team found that there is no reference to or special approval processes to offer courses in the online modality.

This single, occasionally-offered course constitutes the full totality of online offerings. The clientele are not "online students" in the traditional sense, those who are trying to complete a program via distance learning in order to minimize their physical presence on campus. By contrast, those enrolled in the course are on-the-ground students at one of the islands where the College has found it impossible or highly impractical to find a teacher for an essential course requirement. Because of unreliable and slow internet connectivity on these islands, the bulk of course activity occurs on the grounds of the campuses themselves, versus "at a distance" or "from home" as a more typical American online course might do.

It is important to recognize that because the students themselves are not online students, but rather on-the-ground students present at the campus site on a regular basis, those students can avail themselves of all the necessary services on the ground at the College campus. For this reason, the College has not invested its resources to provide all student services in the online environment as would be expected of those Colleges with robust online learning environments in the United States.

Findings and Evidence

The team reviewed the College's Integrated Education Master Plan, Strategic Development Plan, Catalog, *Curriculum and Assessment Handbook*, course outlines, program descriptions and requirements, student learning outcome assessment results, program reviews, and evidence of rationale used for development of new programs. Programs offered are consistent with the College's mission and are designed to serve the needs of the citizens of FSM. Only one course is offered via distance education (none via correspondence education). This is a general education art course that is occasionally provided via distance education, taught to the same expectations and assessed in the same manner as if taught face-to-face (as outlined in the Policy on Distance Education on page 55-56 of the self-study). Both course- and program-level student learning outcomes are assessed regularly and faculty actively input assessment results on an ongoing basis. Program review is done every two years and incorporates extensive data analysis and reflection for improvement. (Standard II.A.1, ER 9, ER 11)

Faculty, including full time, part time, and adjunct faculty, ensure that the content and methods of instruction meet generally accepted academic and professional standards and expectations. Faculty and others responsible act to continuously improve instructional courses, programs and directly related services through systematic evaluation to assure currency, improve teaching and learning strategies, and promote student success.

The team reviewed course outlines of record, minutes of CAC meetings, program descriptions, the College Catalog, and results of course, program, and institutional learning outcomes assessment. Team members visited all instructional sites on Pohnpei, Yap, Kosrae, and Chuuk to examine to determine if instructional equipment and facilities were sufficient to meet general accepted standards and expectations, including facilities in agriculture, hospitality, building/carpentry, and standard classrooms for courses such as mathematics and nursing. Team members reviewed minutes of industry advisory committee meetings to examine evidence that the College's programs are designed to meet the needs of the community they serve and provide effective pathways to completion. Course contact, methods of instruction, and classroom equipment meet generally accepted academic and professional standards and expectations. Course outline and program description review dates indicate recent review. Assessment data is comprehensive for all types of student learning outcomes, and both program reviews and program student learning outcome assessments provide evidence that the College has reviewed, analyzed, and acted upon the results in order to improve teaching and learning and promote student success. Industry advisory committee meeting minutes provide evidence that the College's CTE programs are reviewed by the business community to ensure they meet area needs. (Standard II.A.2)

The team reviewed course, program, institutional, and general education student learning outcomes assessment results. Course learning outcomes are thoroughly documented on the official course outline of record. Program learning outcomes are listed in the catalog alongside each program. The learning outcomes for each course are assessed each time the course is taught, as evidenced by the extensive data files in TracDat. The team also reviewed a broad sampling of section-level course syllabi and found that students were provided

current SLO statements. Data from course and program assessments are presented as part of the biennial program review. Each program review includes analysis of the collective meaning of program learning outcomes data and provides a field to record plans for improvement. The team is concerned that the College community appears to be "buried under a mountain of course-level data" and needs to develop strategies to aggregate data in order to analyze and contextualize their broader meaning and also disaggregate these broader categories of data by demographic group to understand impacts on various subgroups of student learners. The College meets the standard, but is encouraged to find ways to streamline the large quantity of course-level assessment data being collected. (Standard II.A.3)

COM-FSM distinguishes pre-collegiate from collegiate courses via course numbering; those between 001 and 099 are pre-collegiate, while those 100 and above are College-level courses. The College provides pre-collegiate curriculum in English and mathematics in two ways. For students placed into degree programs but still needing to build College level skills, the College provides course outlines comparable to developmental algebra and English at other colleges and universities, as evidenced by the course outlines of record reviewed by team members.

The College also offers a program called Achieving College Excellence (ACE) for those students needing remediation in both mathematics and English before beginning most college-level coursework. The ACE program consists of guided instruction in math and English four days per week, with Fridays devoted to self-paced modules, life-skill seminars, and specialized tutoring. Several designated College courses may be taken concurrently with ACE, and those students who do so are provided additional tutoring to assist them. Overall success rates in the ACE program fall below the COM-FSM institution set standard, and overall the pass rates in both math and English range from as low 41.9% to as high as 71%, depending on the cohort. Team members met with coordinators of the ACE program to learn how students are placed, how they progress, and how successful they are in college-level coursework upon completion of the ACE program. Despite the additional supports provided in the program, enrollment is declining significantly. Further, student success in the program continues to lag. The enrollment decline and success gap may provide evidence of deeper concerns about the College's developmental students, whose struggles may contribute to the overall enrollment decline reported elsewhere in the self-study. The College is encouraged to continue developing interventions and approaches to assist their ACE students to succeed in their remedial coursework in order to advance to college-level work. (Standard II.A.4)

Team members reviewed the College's requirement for hours per unit of credit, and found them to be in alignment with other semester-based colleges. The team then reviewed program requirements in the College catalog, course outlines, general education requirements, program learning outcomes, and assessment results. Most degrees across the institution incorporate a 29-unit general education core, while a few (e.g. Nursing) specify a more prescriptive pathway consisting of both major and general courses. The Associate of Applied Science programs utilize a shortened 22-unit GE core. For each type, the GE core provides appropriate breadth, depth, and rigor for an associate's degree. The requirements for each major represent a body of coursework of the appropriate depth and breadth within

the field of study commensurate with associate-level programs in American higher education. Regularly, each program conducts an analysis of PSLO data and develops a list of "What we are planning to work on" and "Recommendations for students." This regular review provides evidence of the type of institutional dialog about the synthesis of learning required in American higher education, and the two types of action plans facilitate adjustments to course sequencing to improve time to completion. (Standard II.A.5, ER 12)

The team reviewed the College catalog's suggested schedule for each degree and certificate, as well as the MyShark web-based portal for class registration and timelines for registration for continuing and new students. Students are required to declare a program of study, which is validated by a counselor, and then establishes a sequence of courses to follow. As mapped out in the catalog, each degree can be completed within two years and each certificate within approximately one year, in keeping with established expectations in higher education. The VPIA and Deans utilize these two-year plans as essential data as they develop course schedules. Students then follow these plans in a more prescriptive manner than the "cafeteria model" broadly utilized in the US. While not a true cohort/block schedule model at this time, the College is engaged in discussions about adopting such a block approach, requiring students pursuing a particular program to enroll in a prescribed 15-unit collection of courses. COM-FSM students do encounter struggles with class cancellations due to insufficient enrollment or the inability to find appropriate educators to teach classes. The team reviewed class cancellations for a one-year period of time and found that approximately fifty sections per term were cancelled, including several ACE courses and several Education courses. Faculty in areas of such cancellations comment on these trends in their program reviews, where they provide suggestions for modified offerings and sequencing to maximize student progression. In its self-study, the College described its program elimination process, citing as an example its decision to transform an "agriculture" degree to a broader "agriculture and natural resources" degree, presumably with a broader base of student interest and employment opportunities.

In January of 2016, the College submitted a letter to ACCJC asking whether deletion of four degree programs and eight certificate programs due to lack of enrollment required a Substantive Change Report to the Commission. The response from ACCJC indicated that program deletion did not require such a report. This exchange provides evidence that the College has analyzed its enrollment trends and removed a collection of degree programs that did not have sufficient enrollments to remain viable, in keeping with the expectations of this standard. It is not clear from the evidence reviewed which factors of course enrollment, class cancellation, and major declaration led to discontinuance of these programs. However, with the overall decline in enrollment at COM-FSM, it would be advisable to develop clear criteria to that end, in keeping with the example.

Art is a required general education course for all students; however, the availability of art instructors on each island is very limited. Consequently, in order to meet this standard, the College developed a single online art course that is offered on an as-needed basis to students enrolled across all remote island sites. The course is designed around text instructions, internet links, chat rooms for discussions and student-teacher interaction, and a Flickr page for submission of photographs of student work. As such, the course meets minimal standards

for online instruction. However, in reviewing the College's Board Policies, *Curriculum and Assessment Handbook*, course outline template, and the course outline of record for the Art 101 course in question, the team found that there is no reference to or special approval processes to offer courses in the online modality. The College must review and act in accordance with the *ACCJC Policy on Distance Education and on Correspondence Education*. In so doing, the College will need to augment its Board Policy, *Curriculum and Assessment Handbook*, course outline template, and curriculum approval processes to ensure courses taught in the online modality are reviewed and approved according to expected standards, and submit a substantive change report to the Commission notifying them of this new instructional modality. (Standard II.A.6, ER 9)

In their self-evaluation report, COM-FSM explained that the majority of their instruction "is delivered in the traditional mode (face-to-face in a classroom) and is delivered in the usual methodology (lecture and demonstration)." To examine the effectiveness of these approaches, the team observed portions of a biology lab session, a chemistry lab session, a nursing lecture, an electronics lecture/lab, a carpentry lab session, and an automotive repair lab session. Team members found that, as reported in their self-study, faculty members employed a variety of modern approaches to promote student learning, including board presentations, PowerPoint demonstrations, YouTube videos, worksheets, and hands-on learning activities. The team also reviewed the College's analysis of CCSSE data. These data demonstrate that COM-FSM students' responses exceeded similar small colleges by significant amounts on such ratings as "active and collaborative," "student effort," "academic challenge," "student-faculty interaction," and "support for learners." The data provide evidence that the teaching methodologies and delivery modes of the College reflect the diverse and changing needs of its students. The team also visited tutoring centers, libraries, and counseling centers on each campus site and found that they too attend to the diverse and changing needs of its students. (Standard II.A.7)

In their self-study, the COM-FSM stated that they do not employ department-wide course or program examinations. The team reviewed the COMET-College of Micronesia-FSM Entrance Test, including its test components in math and English and the College's work on validation of this instrument. The team also reviewed the structure of the ACE Math and English course and found that they include a common final exam required of all students, providing the appearance that they are across-the-board exit tests. However, the team determined that the final tests for the ACE courses constitute a retesting of students using the COMET placement instrument. That is, the ACE program is designed to enable students to reinvigorate their English and mathematics skills and then demonstrate their revised knowledge on the College's assessment and placement test, the COMET. In that context, the COMET does not serve as an exit test for any course or program, but rather as a second attempt at the College's regular assessment test. (Standard II.A.8)

The team reviewed board policy regarding the requirements for degrees and certificates and the award of credit for courses. Board Policy 3101 clearly laid out a 30-unit minimum requirement for a certificate and a 60-unit minimum, with appropriate general education and a specified major, for an associate's degree. Likewise, Board Policy 3119 aligned with the Carnegie unit utilized throughout higher education. The team reviewed programs in the

catalog and a sample of course outlines and found that degrees components and the actual hours of coursework aligned with board policy. Each course outline includes a content section in outline format but also Specific SLOs (what other colleges would call "Objectives"), General SLOs (which are mapped to the Specific SLOs), and Program SLOs (which are in turn mapped to the course's General SLOs). This mapping structure, coupled with the evaluation and assessment measures recorded on the course outline, provide evidence that the students completing the course with a passing grade have met the performance expectations for the course's learning outcomes. (Standard II.A.9, ER 10)

The team reviewed Board Policy, the catalog, and the College website. All provide clear guidance for transfer of credit and articulation agreements in place. The Articulation Table found prominently on the College website includes signed MOUs between COM-FSM and other institutions, most frequently general in nature. For colleges with frequent transfers, including Guam Community College, University of Hawaii-Hilo, and the University of Phoenix Online campus, the College posts course-by-course equivalency lists. In addition, four prominent transfer pathways are posted for students transferring from COM-FSM to the University of Hawaii-Hilo. According to the self-study, the transfer of credit into COM-FSM is based on a comparison by the VPIA and registrar of the learning outcomes of the previously completed course and the course outline at COM-FSM. However, this process is not clearly described in the evidence reviewed. The College meets the standard, but is encouraged to clarify the process for transferring credits into the COM-FSM in board policy and in the Articulation Table on the College's website. (Standard II.A.10, ER 10)

The team reviewed course outlines, College assessment webpages, course-level assessment results, program learning outcome statements and results, institutional learning outcomes, and general education learning outcomes. Each course outline effectively maps specific objectives to general SLOs and general SLOs to program SLOs. Course-level assessment results are compiled and reviewed as program SLO assessment data. Results of the program SLO assessment are incorporated into program reviews. According to the self-study, the College is mapping its CSLOs to its ISLOs to further align their purposes and track data from course-level assessments to institution-wide impacts. Collectively, the ISLOs incorporate all of the specific competencies noted above. Program SLOs include those components deemed most appropriate and, in the review by team members, each aligned with one or more of the categories noted above. Associate's degree programs incorporate the full GE core and, consequently, the learning outcomes of the GE program. As a result, each of the degree programs clearly meets all expected criteria. Certificate programs provide evidence of learning in some, but not all, categories. Overall, the programs of the COM-FSM appear to be clearly and thoroughly aligned across CSLOs, PSLOs, ISLOs and GESLOs. Assessments are carried out, data is analyzed, and improvements are charted based on results. (Standard II.A.11)

The team reviewed the College catalog on their website, program assessment page for the general education program, and the *Curriculum and Assessment Handbook*. The catalog clearly defines the purpose of the College's general education curriculum and provides delineated General Education SLOs to specify the purpose of each category. These GE learning outcomes attend to each of the required components listed above. The GE core, 29

units for associate's degrees and 22 units for associate of applied science degrees, is fixed in the curriculum and seldom adjusted. In the curriculum handbook, the new course submission form provides a clear way to indicate which ISLOs the new course will meet. However, it is not evident in the curriculum handbook how a course can be added as an option within the general education categories. Team members interviewed the Vice President of Instructional Affairs and learned that the College's general education courses are indeed fixed categories. The College does not provide a mapping of course-level SLOs versus GE SLOs because the courses themselves are carefully designed to directly meet those GE SLOs. That is, each course satisfies a unique subset of the GE SLOs, so a map would be trivial. In addition, the VPIA stated that when faculty members demonstrate that two-thirds of a course's SLOs match a specific subset of the GE SLOs (e.g. a humanities class's SLOs match the Humanities GE category), the faculty may apply to the Curriculum and Assessment Committee to have the course added as an option to satisfy the GE category. This procedure, however, was not found in the evidence reviewed by the team. The team also met with the Curriculum and Assessment Committee (CAC), whose members indicated that the College treats the GE curriculum as an instructional program, so additions or modifications to its components would be made via program modification procedures in the *Curriculum and Assessment Handbook.* These two responses provide contradictory approaches, yet both represent reasonable procedures to follow. The College meets the standard, but is encouraged to add clarity regarding the procedure to add a course to a general education category to its *Curriculum and Assessment Handbook.* (Standard II.A.12, ER 12)

The team reviewed the College catalog, the *Curriculum and Assessment Handbook*, and Board Policy 3101. Board policy clearly requires focused study on a major for each degree, and a specified number of units of focused study for each of three different types of certificates. The *Handbook* includes a template for proposing a new program and an example of a completed narrative. The example is extremely thorough, including an analysis of expected costs for several years, a proposed schedule for several years to enable students to meet the program requirements, a discussion of the primary purpose of the program, and an analysis of the need for this program for the citizens of the FSM. The form includes a field for PSLOs and another for "Schedule of courses," however the sample does not clearly incorporate PSLOs, the sample includes multiple years of schedules but not the one simplified map as shown in the catalog, and neither the form nor the sample includes a field for the actual program requirements. Despite this absence, the catalog is very clear and thorough. Every program has a clearly defined focus of study, a well-structured list of course requirements and elective options, clearly stated PSLOs, and a four-semester (plus summer) suggested student schedule.

In order to improve the clarity of the development process for a new program, the College should modify the form and example in the *Handbook* to include each of the specified sections as they will appear in the catalog. Doing so will help authors focus on clarity of the end product that is presented to students, and will help reviewers examining how the new program will fit in among other existing COM-FSM programs. (Standard II.A.13)

The team reviewed surveys from employers as to the preparedness of COM-FSM graduates, course outlines of record for technical courses after which graduates are reported to pass

external certifications (e.g. Cisco IT Essentials), and the College catalog's listing of technical programs. The employer survey was administered to those supervising graduates of the College's technical programs, some 60 students whose careers had been tracked. Response rates were low, but indicated high levels of satisfaction with graduates. The College, in their self-evaluation, endeavors to maintain and strengthen partnerships with local establishments or businesses, however evidence of those partnerships was not plentiful in the self-study report. Team members discussed community relations and sources of external input for the hospitality and tourism, agriculture, carpentry, and other CTE programs during tours of the facilities and follow-up meetings. The Director of CTE provided meeting minutes as evidence of ongoing discussions with industry representatives as to the effectiveness of the College's CTE programs. (Standard II.A.14)

The team reviewed the *Curriculum and Assessment Handbook*, which delineates the process for program deletion, as well as a 2008 ACCJC Substantive Change proposal that was the culmination of a deletion of a general Agriculture program and a replacement Agriculture and Natural Resources degree. These date indicate that the process outlined in the *Handbook* is effective and thorough and that the College followed its process. In addition, the team reviewed evidence associated with a significant change in the Teacher Education program, finding that discussion was held with interested parties and that students were able to complete their educational plans subsequent to the change. Finally, the team found that the College has an appropriate substitution policy in place providing the VPIA the ability to adjust program requirements on a case-by-case basis to ensure students can complete their programs with a minimum of disruption by substituting a course other than the one prescribed by a program. (Standard II.A.15)

The team reviewed the *Curriculum and Assessment Handbook*, finding a description of the program review process and a well-defined rubric for evaluating the effectiveness of a submitted program review. The team also reviewed the Program Assessment Area of the College website, finding program reviews, most submitted in spring 2014, following the structure listed in the *Handbook* and compliant with its rubric. Included on this page are program reviews for each Degree program at the College, including each Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, Associate of Applied Science, Third-Year Certificate of Achievement, and Career-Technical Certificates of Achievement. The site also refers to student learning assessment data pages associated with three other College programs: Achieving College Excellence (ACE) pre-collegiate pathway, General Education, and Institutional Student Learning. None of these three include a full program review, yet neither do any constitute a complete course of study. Each program review included a review of data regarding student progression, program effectiveness, and an environmental scan. Each program review concluded with section for Analysis and Recommendations. The collection of program reviews provide evidence that the institution systematically strives to improve programs to enhance learning outcomes and achievement for students. By contrast, the large volume of course-level assessment data appears to be very difficult for the College to cumulatively analyze and discuss, making it difficult to use for course and program improvement. The College meets the standard, but is encouraged to find ways to streamline and synthesize course-level assessment results so that their meaning can more readily lead to course and program improvement. (Standard II.A.16)

Conclusions

The College meets the Standard and related Eligibility Requirements (ER 9, 10, 11, 12, 13).

Commendations

Commendation 7: The team commends the College for developing and publishing four-semester suggested schedules for every academic program. These suggested schedules provide clear pathways for students, encourage full time enrollment and timely completion, facilitate student success, and provide an effective framework for administrators to use in scheduling course offerings to meet students' needs (II.A.5, II.A.6)

Recommendations to Improve Effectiveness

None

Recommendations to Meet the Standards

None

Standard II.B: Library and Learning Support Services

General Observations

COM-FSM provides an array of library resources, equipment, and services to meet the educational needs of students at all campuses. There is a single administrator, the Learning Resources Director, who is located on the National Campus, but provides oversight for library services at all locations. Additional staff members include faculty librarians and/or library technicians depending on the size of the campus. National Campus library has the largest staff, with 4 librarians and 6 library technicians, while Yap Campus library has a single librarian as staff and Pohnpei Campus has just a single library technician. In addition to library services, COM-FSM provides media support services in the Media Instructional Technology Center (MITC) at the National Campus.

The National Campus library is open 64 hours per week. Hours at the state campus libraries vary depending on available staffing; Chuuk Campus library is open 53 hours per week, Kosrae and Yap Campus libraries are open 45 hours a week, and Pohnpei Campus library is open 40 hours per week. Size of the facilities also varies considerably, from the large two-story facility at National Campus to much smaller libraries at the state campuses.

The College provides additional learning support services which were discussed in other sections of the Self Evaluation Report. Tutoring services are covered within Standard II.C, as part of counseling services, and student computer labs are covered within Standard III.C.

Findings and Evidence

Library collections and services are available at all campus locations, with the largest array of library materials and services at the National Campus. The team reviewed the National Campus library website and utilized online access to the OPAC and electronic resources to review the library collections (both print and electronic) in advance of the visit, as well as physically reviewing the collections during the team visit.

The combined general library collections at all campuses total almost 100,000 volumes (print and media materials). The collection sizes range from 2,000 items in the smallest of the state campus collections (Kosrae Campus) to 68,000 items in the National Campus collection. Students at any campus can search the online catalog for the National Campus and request materials from this collection. In some cases, the physical item is delivered to the student, but often a scanned copy can be created and delivered electronically instead (approximately 90 items were requested and sent to state campus locations last year). A number of new materials have been added to the collections since 2011 (almost half of which were purchased while the remainder were donated) and a number of outdated materials have been withdrawn. Despite the weeding that has been done, the team observed that the print collections still contain a number of outdated materials. In addition to the general collections, the National Campus holds a substantial number of items in the Pacific Collection, including many archival materials from the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands (TTPI) era, and has a substantial government documents collection.

The College also has subscriptions to a number of electronic resources including databases and collections of full-text journal articles. Another electronic resource available to students is an eBook collection containing over 30,000 titles. These electronic subscriptions are particularly important in providing access to a substantial number of academic materials because students from any campus can access these resources. In several informal conversations with students during the team visit, students mentioned how pleased they were with the number of electronic materials available for their research. Students at any campus can utilize the links on the National Campus library website to access all electronic materials. However, students must first go to their library to obtain a login and password for each database they want to access.

All of the libraries provide computers for students to access library resources and to do other educationally related work. The number of computers provided varies substantially, based on space available in the library and also how many other computer labs are available to students at a particular campus.

At the National Campus, media support services are provided. These include a collection of media materials, media playback equipment, and media production services. Students can use media materials in the MITC while faculty can check materials out for classroom use. The two MITC staff members can provide playback equipment to classrooms and provide support and instruction to faculty on using equipment. MITC staff record campus events on a regular basis and produce media materials for use by College staff at off-campus events (recruiting materials, for example). Media support services at the state campus libraries are more limited; only Chuuk Campus has a dedicated media staff position. Media materials can be loaned from the National Campus to any of the state campuses upon request by faculty, staff or students.

The question of whether library collections are sufficient, at all locations, is not directly addressed in the Self Evaluation Report. In the library's program review, a target ratio of 30 volumes per student was identified as a minimum collection size. In interviews, staff stated their belief that all collections are adequate even though some collections do not meet this size target. In the library's program review, a contradictory statement is found: "Librarians at the state campuses have insufficient resources ..."   Library users have been queried about the quality of the library collections in surveys done over the past several years at all campuses. While not all survey responses have been fully tabulated, it appears that most users rated the collections at their campus as either Good or Excellent. The team suggests that the College review the target collection size and analyze collections at all locations for quality as well as size. The team strongly supports the need to complete work identified in the Actionable Improvement Plan to "determine the materials needed for supporting the curriculum by accessing the course outlines …" (p. 157). The focus of collection development work must address currency, depth and variety to support educational programs, at all locations, and not simply focus on measuring the quantity of materials available.

The library provides instruction for users at the National Campus through individualized assistance at the reference desk, in library orientation sessions offered to new students each fall, and in library instruction class sessions. The class sessions are taught at the request of

classroom faculty and cover instructional topics identified in collaboration with the faculty member. Instruction is also provided at each of the state campus libraries at the reference desk, and in library orientation sessions; the availability of library instruction class sessions depends on the level of staffing available and on the needs of classroom faculty at the particular campus. At the end of instruction sessions at the National Campus, students fill out a satisfaction survey in which they provide their feedback on the instructional session. Although the College has identified a broad Institutional Student Learning Outcome related to information literacy, specific student learning outcomes for library instruction sessions have not been identified and assessments beyond the satisfaction survey are not currently in use.

Basic instruction is also delivered through handouts that provide information on a variety of library instructional topics such as searching the OPAC, how to use various electronic databases, and tips for effective internet searching; these handouts are currently only available in hard copy. The team suggests that the College consider making these instructional materials available online in order to better serve students at all campus locations. (II.B.1, ER 17)

Relying on appropriate expertise of faculty, including librarians, and other learning support services professionals, the institution selects and maintains educational equipment and materials to support student learning and enhance the achievement of the mission.

The growth in collections is guided by a Collection Development Policy which was drafted in 2012 but has not yet been finalized. While the College asserts in the Self Evaluation Report that "The COM-FSM libraries evaluate both print and non-print materials on a continuous basis …" (p. 156), the team found little evidence of this evaluation. In interviews, library staff did provide some additional information, such as lists of topics gathered from students' research questions which are then used to help select areas where additional materials are needed. Also, library staff commented that they work informally with classroom faculty both for selection and weeding of materials. One project mentioned was the collaboration with Health/Nursing faculty. The results of this informal collaboration are seen in the National Campus collection of materials in this area (call numbers R and RT) where there are new materials on a variety of topics and at appropriate levels, and where outdated materials have all been removed. In other areas of the collections reviewed by team members at the National Campus (call numbers KF and TK) and Pohnpei Campus (reference collection), the team observed a number of outdated materials which should be considered for weeding. The team encourages the College to pursue and document activities involving library staff and classroom faculty to select and weed materials to more effectively support student learning.

The Self Evaluation Report acknowledges "Improvements can be made on collaborating with faculty on selection and acquisition of resources and equipment …" (p. 157). In particular, the Report notes that there is no longer a Library Committee which would provide a venue for discussion of library collections and services. In addition, there is no longer representation from the library on the Curriculum and Assessment Committee which might offer a natural place in which to consider the need for library materials to support new or revised curriculum. The team supports the Actionable Improvement Plan that suggests the

College would add library representation to the CAC, and encourages library staff to document all efforts to ensure that library materials support the curriculum and student learning. (Standard II.B.2)

The team reviewed program review, annual assessment reports and TracDat data, as well as the data available in the Self Evaluation Report and in the evidence files. Most of the data provided as evidence was basic statistical data relating to library collections and services (user counts, circulation counts, number of books reshelved, number of instructional sessions taught, etc.). The team could find little evidence that this data has been analyzed, broadly discussed, or utilized in planning for improvement.

The library submitted its first program review in 2015, so there is not yet a clear record of evaluating the library's collections and services to assure that they meet student needs. Although short and long term goals were identified in the program review, most work on these activities is just beginning so it is too soon to see evidence of the cycle of planning, activity, assessment and improvement being followed all the way through within the library program areas. Additionally, the team found that program review has been largely focused on the National Campus library while the state campus libraries have not participated in the process. Program reviews are done at each of the state campuses for other program areas; it is vital that all of the state campus libraries follow this example and participate fully in the College's program review process.

Currently, the assessment of administrative unit outcomes seems to be done only for the National Campus; the College should ensure that all state campus libraries participate in standard College assessment activities. The libraries have relied almost exclusively on user surveys for assessment of collections and services in the past. User satisfaction surveys were conducted in the libraries at all campuses in 2012-13 to gather feedback from both students and faculty/staff. However, only some of the state campus libraries have continued to survey their users regularly. In addition, only a portion of the survey responses were fully tabulated, and no evidence was provided to demonstrate that results of these evaluations have been regularly used as the basis for improvement. The Self Evaluation Report acknowledges "Library surveys alone may not be sufficient to make improvements in the operations of the LRC" (p. 159). The team strongly encourages the College to explore additional strategies for assessing library collections and services at all locations that would provide evidence that they contribute to the attainment of student learning outcomes.

The College has identified information literacy as an institutional student learning outcome (ISLO). This ISLO specifies that students will be able "to know when there is a need for information, to be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively and responsibly use and share that information for the problem at hand." (ISLO 6) At the end of library instruction sessions, students fill out a user satisfaction survey in which they evaluate the instructional session. At this time, the student satisfaction survey serves as the only method of assessment for evaluating student learning during the sessions, and as the only assessment method for this ISLO. The team encourages the College to identify additional assessment methods which would more effectively measure student learning outcomes and the development of information literacy skills. (Standard II.B.3)

The libraries contract for database subscriptions and for the library information system software. In addition, the National Campus is in the process of developing MOUs for enhanced interlibrary loan arrangements with several regional colleges and universities. These arrangements are all standard practice in libraries; however, the report offers no evidence that the College has evaluated the usefulness of these specific contracts and agreements. In particular, the team suggests that the College regularly review data related to the usage of each of the electronic resources prior to the renewal of the subscription contracts.

Security officers at each campus include the libraries in their routine activities to ensure safety for staff and users. Maintenance of the libraries' facilities is handled in accordance with maintenance of all facilities at each campus. Security for library materials is enhanced by the use of library security system gates at the National Campus. At the other libraries, staff members attempt to ensure the security of materials by controlling library exits. (Standard II.B.4)

Conclusions

The College meets the Standard and Eligibility Requirements (ER 17).

Recommendations to Improve Effectiveness

Recommendation 5: In order to improve effectiveness, the team recommends the College implement assessment methods in the area of library services that more effectively measure how these services contribute to the attainment of student learning outcomes (II.B.3).

Recommendations to Meet the Standards
None

Standard II.C: Student Support Services

General Observations

Student Services are organized into seven areas noted below:
- Admissions, registration, and records
- Financial aid, work-study, and scholarships
- Guidance and peer counseling including tutoring services
- Health services
- Sports and recreation
- Residence halls
- Student activities, clubs and organizations

Findings and Evidence

The College uses annual assessments, biennial program reviews and surveys (e.g. CCSSE) to assess student services. Biannual program reviews are conducted at the National Campus for each area of student services. The state campuses include annual assessment of student services within their annual campus assessments. Evidence is shown for all student service areas. In many areas only one biennial review has been conducted since their inception. Annual assessments and program reviews appear to be complete. In some cases benchmarks for success are set unusually low such as tutoring services benchmark stating that "10% of students who utilize tutoring services will pass the courses tutored." In 2012-3, 73% who utilized tutoring services passed the course. The improvement documented as a result of the assessment did not indicate adjusting the benchmark. (Standard II.C.1, ER 17)

The student support services outcomes are assessed annually and during biennial program reviews. The annual assessments and biennial program reviews cite improvements plans based on assessment for areas requiring improvements. All services have conducted one biennial program review since such reviews were established. The assessment cycle established by the College requires analysis of the results for program improvements. The College administered a Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) in the 2013-14 academic year. In addition the College conducted student satisfaction surveys by major in spring 2014, annual student orientation surveys, and student registration surveys each semester. (Standard II.C.2)

Services such as registration, financial aid, counseling, health services, reside at the national campus and all four state campuses. There is a student body association at each campus and student clubs and activities. The National Campus in Pohnpei has residences halls, a dining hall, a gymnasium and intramural sports that service both campuses on the island of Pohnpei. College shuttles operating between the National and Pohnpei campuses allow students to use the National Campus services and to attend classes at either campus. Student services surveys are conducted routinely and are taken by a representative sample of the student population. The surveys show that a vast majority of the students are satisfied with the student services available to them. The counseling, financial aid, admissions and records, and health services on each campus are sufficiently staffed with knowledgeable professionals and have appropriate offices and operating hours. (Standard II.C.3, ER 17)

The College notes myriad co-curricular activities: workshops on test taking, resume writing, and job interviews; health fairs and workshops, and intramural sports. The College has gymnasiums at the Pohnpei Campus and the National Campus. The College produced evidence of schedules for all of the co-curricular programs. The types of activities are well suited for a College and in line with its mission statement. The College has no athletic programs but provides sport activities (e.g. intramural sports) for students at all campuses. The College allocates and manages the finances for all co-curricular activities. (Standard III.C.4)

The College provides ongoing counseling and advising on all campuses, which includes orientation for new students. Students understand graduation and transfer requirements. Many students discussed their transfer and career objectives with team members, several stopping to talk to team members as they walked around campus and one unexpectedly coming to the hotel to meet with a team member to discuss transfer to the University of Hawaii for an education bachelor's degree.

The College has an Advisement Handbook, which covers all important areas for counseling and advising students. This handbook contains counseling guidelines and checklists and advising sheets for all academic programs. Counseling services are available on all campuses. Academic advising is conducted by faculty. Faculty are assigned advisees as new students are admitted into programs. Faculty are trained for advising functions by student services personnel during faculty meetings at the beginning of the academic year, though quick guides emailed out, and through guidance provided in the Faculty and Advising Handbooks. (Standard III.C.5, ER 17)

The College has admission policies consistent with its mission. The College has a Committee on Recruitment, Admissions, and Retention that oversees the policy. The Office of Admissions, Records and Retention (OARR) processes all applications for admissions. Admission policies and procedures are published in the College's General Catalog and the OARR website. Students are tested and placed in a major prior to admission to ensure student success. All students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid and have high school or GED transcripts sent to the College prior to admission. Board of Regents Policy 4000 defines the reason for admitting students. All new students are assigned and meet with an academic advisor. Clear pathways to certificate and degree completion are outlined in the College catalog. (Standard III.C.6)

The College uses the College of Micronesia-FSM Entrance Test (COMET) for admission and placement of all students. Math and English sections are scored by machine while a faculty team, using an established rubric, scores essays. The Committee on Recruitment, Admissions, and Retention is charged to "Preview and evaluate the reliability and validity of COM-FSM Entrance Test (COMET) and make recommendations if need." Detailed information about COMET is found on the College's website. (Standard III.C.7)

The College maintains paper and electronic student records and access is limited. Paper records are maintained in locking file cabinet in the Office of Admissions, Records and Retention (OARR) at the College's National Campus and at the state campuses. The state campuses transfer paper records to the national campus for permanent archival after they are

no longer needed on the state campuses. Electronic records require proper login to access them (faculty, students and staff) on a web-based electronic system. This system keeps track of when it is accessed and is backed up nightly in another building. (Standard III.C.8)

Conclusion
The College meets the Standard.

Recommendations to Improve Effectiveness
None

Recommendations to Meet the Standards
None

STANDARD III
RESOURCES

Standard III.A: Human Resources

General Observations

The self-study reports that the College employs 42 administrators, 99 faculty members and 299 staff serving a student body of 2,344 at six campus sites. The College has made significant progress in establishing written Board human resource policies. However, written personnel administrative procedures are still under development and were not available at the time of the team visit. The Director of the Human Resources Office anticipates that written administrative procedures will be completed this year, most likely by April 2016. The College is also preparing a request for proposals for a comprehensive Human Resource Manual with the anticipation that the document will be completed in 2016. The self-study for this Standard is generally complete, although there are some differences in figures (in particular the number of administrators) reported from one section to another.

Findings and Evidence

Board Policy 6009 sets forth minimum qualifications for full-time instructional/vocational faculty, but does not specify minimum qualifications for administrators or staff. The minimum qualifications for administrators and support staff are established in their job descriptions. Board Policy 6007 specifies the policies for employee recruitment, initial employment and work assignments, and Board Policy 6008 specifies the types and duration of employee contracts. All these policies are publicly available on the College website.

Requests for new or replacement positions are initiated when immediate supervisors submit a Vacancy Review form to vice presidents or second tier administrators. The Vacancy Review includes a rubric to justify the position request. Vice presidents or second tier administrators turn submit approved requisitions to the Human Resources Office (HRO). The HRO then submits approved requisitions to the Business Office, which determines the availability of funds to support the request. Cabinet has the ultimate responsibility for prioritization of positions. Board Policy 6007 outlines general procedures for recruitment of new employees. (III.A.1, III.A.7, III.A.9, III.A.10)

Board Policy 6009 establishes a master's degree as the minimum qualification for full-time faculty, but allows for initial hire of Micronesians with a bachelor's degree in divisions with less than fifty percent Micronesian faculty. After an initial probationary year such faculty are expected to attain a master's degree, with support from the College. The policy does not specify minimum qualifications for temporary (part-time) faculty, but the Director of the Human Resources Office, the *Faculty Handbook* and the *Curriculum and Assessment Handbook* indicate that they are the same as for full-time faculty. The self-study reports that, in 2014, 68 instructional faculty members possessed at least a master's degree in their primary discipline, seven had a master's degree not in their primary discipline, and seven had a bachelor's degree in their primary discipline (p. 188). In 2015, seven vocational instructors

possessed a master's degree, eight had a bachelor's degree, and nine had "other" qualifications. The College has only one course offered through distance education and does not indicate specific faculty qualifications, or special hiring or evaluation procedures in this respect.

Basic faculty job duties are presented in Board Policy 6026; these duties include development and review of curriculum and as well as assessment of learning outcomes. Board Policy 6017 establishes policies and processes for performance evaluations of existing academic instructors. The College's Instructional Faculty Evaluation Form defines effective teaching in terms of thirteen specific criteria, including student learning outcomes. The faculty member's primary supervisor or coordinator and the vice president for Instructional Affairs review and confirm teaching effectiveness. The College provides evidence of classroom observations and student evaluations. (Standard III.A.2, ER 14)

The minimum qualifications for administrators and support staff are established in their job descriptions but are not specified in Board policy. The minimum qualification for vice presidents is a master's degree, and the minimum qualification for other administrators is a bachelor's degree. The self-study indicates that there are four current administrators who do not hold a bachelor's degree (p. 201), although at least two of them working towards the required degree. The other two administrators, who were hired before the establishment of minimum qualifications, have associates degrees and 20 to 25 years of experience at the College. The College has "grandfathered" these administrators but anticipates that all future administrative hires will meet minimum qualifications. (Standard III.A.3)

The self-study states that new employees bear the burden of verifying their own credentials. Board Policy 6009 provides that credentials earned in institutions outside the United States must be verified by an independent organization recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. The self-study states that the College relies on World Education Services as the "evaluating agency of choice" (p. 194). (Standard III.A.4)

Board Policy 6017 establishes policies and procedures for annual evaluation of support staff, academic administrators, and instructional faculty. However, the self-study indicates that in recent years a significant portion of evaluations were completed more than one year after the due date (Table III.A.5-1, p. 196). Human Resources personnel indicate that they became aware of the extent of the problem as part of their preparation for the self-study and through significant efforts the College has now completed the overdue evaluations. The self-study states that the College's current process of annual performance evaluation for all employees may be unrealistic and that the College plans to modify its evaluation timelines, policies and practices as well as provide training for managers who are responsible for conducting performance evaluations. (Standard III.A.5)

Faculty duties specified in Board Policy 6026 include assessment of student learning outcomes. Factors included on evaluation forms for full-time instructional faculty include communication of learning outcomes to students, responsibility for student progress toward achieving stated learning outcomes, and commitment to effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes. However, the classroom observation forms for part-time faculty and the employee progress reports for academic administrators do not explicitly evaluate how these

employees use the results of assessment of learning outcomes to improve teaching and learning. The College also notes that there is currently no formal evaluation of tutors. (Standard III.A.6, ER 9)

The College has sufficient faculty to maintain its educational programs, with 99 full-time faculty and 45 part-time faculty resulting in an average ratio of 17 students per faculty member. (Standard III.A.7, ER 14)

The College's *Faculty Handbook* describes policies regarding the duties, compensation, and evaluation of part-time faculty (pp. 28-32). The College's *Curriculum and Assessment Handbook* provides that part-time faculty must meet minimum qualifications for teaching positions and presents application materials (pp. 113-6). Board Policy 6017, "Performance Evaluation," makes no distinction between full- or part-time faculty members; however, full-time faculty evaluations are based on a specific faculty evaluation form as well as classroom observation and student evaluations, while part-time faculty evaluations are based only the classroom observation form and student evaluations. Initial orientation for part-time faculty is similar to that provided to full-time faculty. The "By-laws" of the Faculty/Staff Senate expressly includes part-time faculty among its members, although only full-time personnel can hold Senate offices. (Standard III.A.8)

The College employs 299 support staff. In 2010, an outside consultant produced a "Job Audit Study" that concluded special contract services should be reduced, and compensation for all employees placed on a unified salary schedule. Following this study some special contract positions were converted to permanent staff while others were eliminated, resulting in a net reduction in staffing. Some staff levels, such as maintenance and security, were partially restored in subsequent years. Interviews on campus indicate that staffing levels are generally seen as adequate to fulfill the College mission, though not optimal. (Standard III.A.9)

The self-study cites varying figures for the number of administrators: 26 (p. 187), 21 (p. 92), 42 (p. 202) and 23 (p. 202). However, a roster provided by the College confirms that the number of administrators (at the coordinator level or higher) is 42. The self-study notes that the number of administrators is large compared with other institutions in the region, but states that the number is appropriate given the number and geographic dispersion of its campuses. (Standard III.A.10)

The College has a range of human resources policies set forth in Board Policy Chapter 6, "Human Resources." These policies are available on the College website as well as in unit offices. Most of these policies appear to have been reviewed within the last year, and many have been updated within the last five to seven years. However, personnel administrative procedures are currently under development. Nine procedures were available on the College website in early 2016 but subsequently removed. The director of the Human Resources Office (HRO) indicates that revised personnel administrative procedures should be completed by April 2016. A hard-copy Personnel Policy Manual is has been widely distributed on campus, but this consists primarily of print-outs of the board policies along with personnel forms. The College is preparing a RFP for a consultant to develop a comprehensive human resource manual, noting that the HRO director currently spends

considerable time each week answering routine questions from her staff, unit managers and employees. The manual is expected to be completed in 2016. The College also acknowledges that it has hired individuals repeatedly on one-year contracts, contrary to its own policy BP 6006 on limited-term appointments. To address this, full-time positions were created in November 2015 in areas where this has been an issue. (III.A.11)

Diversity in the Federated States of Micronesia is framed in different terms than in the United States. The College reports that 99.4% of its student body and 72% of its employees are Micronesian or other Pacific Islanders. Board Policy 6009 provides that divisions with less than fifty percent Micronesian faculty may hire Micronesians with bachelor's degrees rather than a master's degree. After the faculty member completes a probationary year the College establishes a timeline and provides support for the faculty member to reach minimum qualifications. The Human Resources Office regularly assesses and reports on its employment diversity and equity processes to the Cabinet and the Board of Regents. (Standard III.A.12)

As required by the Standards, Board policy BP 6019 provides a written code of ethics that specifies consequences for violation. (Standard III.A.13)

The College's general philosophy of professional development is set forth in Board Policy 6015. The College reports that it holds one professional development day on each campus during the spring semester. Review of assessments from previous events resulted in separation of faculty and non-faculty development days, and the College reports that overall participation has increased. Board Policy 6027 provides a tuition and fee waiver to full-time employees for up to six credit hours of coursework per semester. (Standard III.A.14)

The College has eliminated its staff development committee and tasked its vice presidents with determining training needs in their departments. The College cabinet reviews individual professional development requests and establishes College wide training priorities, but coordination and logistics for professional development events are provided by ad hoc committees at the state campuses and by the Human Resource Office at the National Campus. The self-study indicates that the professional development expenditures have decreased significantly in recent years. The College attributes this to savings produced through Cabinet leadership linking College wide professional development priorities with the budget. In addition, the director of Human Resources and vice president for Instructional Affairs indicate that some professional development activities are funded by other divisions and that those expenditures are not reflected in the self-study figures. (Standard III.A.14)

Board Policy 6031, adopted in 2013, replaces earlier "unwritten rules" regarding confidentiality of personnel records. Personnel files are maintained in locked cabinets in the Human Resources Office at the National Campus and at the state campus sites. Supervisors and employees must fill out a form to obtain access to personnel files, and may only view the files in the Human Resources Office. Files for inactive employees are sent from the state campuses to the National Campus for storage. (Standard III.A.15)

Conclusions

The College meets the Standards and related Eligibility Requirements (ER 9, 14) with the exception of Standards III.A.5, III.A.6, and III.A.11.

Recommendation to Improve Effectiveness

Recommendation 1: In order to improve effectiveness, the team recommends that the College ensure that its personnel evaluation processes are sustainable and allow for systematic evaluation of all personnel at stated intervals. These evaluations should assess the effectiveness of personnel and encourage improvement, and actions taken following evaluations should be formal, timely, and documented (III.A.5).

Recommendation to Meet the Standards

Recommendation 6: In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College ensure that evaluations of all faculty (including part-time faculty), academic administrators, and other personnel who are directly responsible for student learning outcomes include, as a component of those evaluations, consideration of how these employees use the results of the assessment of learning outcomes to improve teaching and learning (III.A.6).

Recommendation 7: In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the College establish, publish, and adhere to written personnel procedures that are widely available for information and review (III.A.5, III.A.11).

Standard III.B: Physical Resources

General Observations

The self-study for Standard III.B is generally complete and provides appropriate evidence to support its assertions. Since the last full accreditation visit the College has made substantial strides in facilities planning, developing a comprehensive Facilities Master Plan and establishing five-year plans for major repairs and renovation as well as regular schedules for preventative maintenance. A student facilities fee has been implemented to help offset facilities total cost of ownership.

Findings and Evidence

The College maintains six campus sites on four geographically dispersed islands of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), with at least one site in each of the four FSM states: Pohnpei, Kosrae, Yap, and Chuuk. The College holds the deed for the National Campus and leases the remaining sites. In the absence of national, state or local building codes in the FSM, the College has adopted a range of US and international codes and standards, but sometimes waives standards in certain areas, such as Americans with Disability Act (ADA) standards regarding wheel chair lifts and elevators. Repeated power outages and low voltage episodes of one hour or more led to the installation of backup generators at the National Campus in 2013. The College reports that security and janitorial services are provided to all campuses. Security procedures have adapted to local needs, including use of traditional apology practices as a means of resolution of disputes arising from incidents on campus. These practices involve family stakeholders and section chiefs in the resolution process and have been effective in reducing tensions both on campus and in the surrounding communities. (Standard III.B.1)

The College has established a rolling five-year major repair and renovation plan. The most recent update of this plan outlines repair and renovation projects through 2021 at all six campuses. The College has also established a preventative maintenance program and conducts yearly preventative maintenance workshops. However, outside the National campus, data on campus maintenance are not always collected and submitted on a regular basis due to funding challenges. As a result of the College's 2010 Job Audit Study, a decrease in special contract services resulted in a significant reduction in force for security and maintenance. Some of the lost positions have subsequently been restored with permanent employees, but staffing levels remain below those of 2010. The director of Security and Maintenance reports that staffing is now adequate, though not ideal. (Standard III.B.2)

The *Space Utilization and Facilities Master Plan Study* incorporated into the College's 2013 Facilities Master Plan rated space utilization at an average "high moderate" level of 68%, while utilization rates for individual facilities ranged from 20% to 120%. However this is a single-year "snapshot" which may no longer be current in light of recent declines in enrollments. The College has achieved substantial energy savings following the energy audit component of the Facilities Master Plan, but the self-study indicates that inconsistent reporting is an obstacle to close monitoring and usage of energy conservation plans at some campuses. (Standard III.B.3)

In response to a recommendation from the 2010 visiting team, the College completed a comprehensive Facilities Master Plan (FMP) in February 2013, using the services of consulting firm Beca, Ltd., linked to the College's Integrated Education Master Plan. The College has developed a Phased Implementation Plan, submitted to the FSM government in May 2015, which anticipates $24.7 million in expenditures over five years to implement the first phase of the FMP, including projects at all six sites. A letter sent to the College from the FSM Department of Education on March 1, 2016 indicated that some funds allocated to the College but frozen by the Joint Economic Management Committee (JEMCO) in 2011 have now been unfrozen, allowing the College to proceed with an initial portion of the plan. However, full implementation of the FMP is dependent on continued funding through the FSM Infrastructure Development Plan. The College's request for FY 2017 is currently under review by the FSM Government.

In 2013, the College instituted a facilities fee to help support the total cost of ownership (including utilities, maintenance, and technology upgrades). In fiscal year 2015 the fee of $200 per student per semester provided revenues of $646,000 in fiscal year 2015. While this is just over one-third of the $1.8 million annual cost of ownership estimated in the FMP, it has allowed for significant repairs and renovation projects, documented in the College's five-year major repair and renovation plan, as well as the establishment of a $50,000 contingency fund for unforeseen facilities needs. (Standard III.B.4)

Conclusions

The College meets the Standards.

Commendations

Commendation 6: The team commends the College for its effective and culturally sensitive use of traditional conflict resolution practices as part of its commitment to the safety of its students, employees, and communities (III.B.1).

Recommendations to Improve Effectiveness

None

Recommendations to Meet the Standards

None

Standard III.C: Technology Resources

General Observations

The COM-FSM has made significant improvements since its 2010 Comprehensive Visit. Transformational efforts in its planning process since 2012 have addressed significant accreditation deficiencies related to Standards III.C. The Integrated Educational Master Plan includes Tech Plan and resource allocation processes that have assisted the College in addressing its planning and appropriate allocation of resources. Budget and financial information is routinely shared with the College community through open forums and through the Finance Committee. The 2017 Budget includes a request for increased funding from the national government so the College can address the total cost of ownership (TCO), increased funding for urgently needed utility and maintenance costs. The COM-FSM is experiencing declining enrollment due to students leaving the FSM and competition from other Colleges. The economy in FSM has been in decline recently and the College will be challenged to accommodate the effects of declining student enrollments.

Findings and Evidence

The Technology Plan located in the Integrated Educational Master Plan (IEMP), with supporting detail in a matrix, and is used to guide the planning and allocation of institutional technology resources. The IT Director, through the Information Technology Office (ITO) at the National Campus, provides planning and management oversight for the technology, hardware, software, and tech support needs to all six campuses. COM-FSM is addressing technological needs throughout its campuses and educational locations, through broad participation in the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) committee consisting of staff, student, and faculty whose charge is to review and approve technology related purchases funded through the technology fees. Technology fees are charged to students each semester, $100 per semester, and are used to purchase computers for lab upgrades, and other related instructional technologies. Learning media and Instructional technologies, such as student computer labs, Smartboards and faculty technology needs are given priority funding. Technology needs are identified through research, requests from faculty, staff, and administrators. Instructional needs are transmitted through the curriculum committee to the Director of IT for approval and/or funding. The distribution of computer labs and desktop computers in addition to providing the underlying infrastructure for distribution and access to the Internet and administrative systems appear to be in accordance with their technology plans.

COM-FSM purchases access to the Internet for communications connectivity though the fiber that is provided by the only local public telecom company, FSM Telecommunications Corporation, who utilizes Submarine Fiber from Guam to Pohnpei. FSM Telecommunications provides an underground cable to connect from its office to the National Campus. There are limited fiber connections to the Pohnpei Campus due to only having access to ADSL by satellite feed. At the National campus, access to the Internet and servers are provided through either a wireless or a wired setup. Wired computer systems are mainly used for labs. For the Yap, Kosrae and Chuuk campus locations, only slower DSL

connections are utilized, as fiber is not available to those islands. DSL connections link to satellites and then will bounce back to the National Campus. Therefore, there are delays and restrictions in Internet speeds and connections with those campuses. Limitations for all campuses include cost; provider capacity limitations due to availability and growth; political and legislative constraints. (Standard III.C.1)

The Technology Plan, embedded within the IEMP and supported by the matrix, appears to provide the necessary technological resources and support structures in order to provide appropriate replacement and upgrades to the technology needs of the students, faculty and staff. The student technology fee provides funding for necessary equipment and software purchases. (Standard III.C.2)

The geographical challenges and lack of available infrastructure at the various campus locations are a defined challenge to providing technological resources, in an appropriate balance of technology services, to all campus locations. Fiber optic connections are not available at the Kosrae, Yap, Chuuk and Pohnpei state campuses due to lack of telecom vendor availability. There are opportunities for fiber infrastructure improvements; however, this would require legislative policy changes and funding by the telecom company. These geographical challenges also create financial challenges based on the distribution of funding needed to address the technological needs of students at the vast and various locations. The implementation of a technology fee assessed to students greatly assists the continuing funding to provide the students and staff with current, up to date technology for their learning, teaching and administrative needs. Appropriation of technology fees to the campuses is based on student enrollment at each of the campus locations, which could be problematic for those campuses with declining enrollment and smaller population of students. Server backups are automatically conducted on a daily basis and backups are kept up to one month in a secured location, separate from the main server. Due to power fluctuations and outages that occur at least once a day, a large supply of battery backups, UPS, are kept on hand to ensure that reliable systems are maintained. Additionally, the campus has three operational generators that will run the servers should there be an extended power outage. Generators are tested daily due to power outages. (Standard III.C.3)

The ITO provides appropriate support services to support faculty, staff, students and administrative functions based on their efforts to continuously update and upgrade their IT systems. The ITO provides technical support for all hardware, software, infrastructure, telephone and VoIP, and security cameras for all campuses. The ITO provides training to faculty and staff for implementation and use of new software, technology, and system modules on an as needed basis. ITO staffs receive online and in person training for new software and hardware implementations. For the Chuuk, Kosrae, and Yap campuses, the Technicians available at each campus provide technology support. Any complex technical issues are either teleconferenced through for the fix or require travel of the technician to the site for actual support. The ITO user satisfaction surveys are conducted through the Assessment Office. Efforts to support and train faculty, staff and students are demonstration through staff development days, focused training on various software and programs as implemented. Technical staff training and certifications are primarily conducted online through the internet due to logistical and cost challenges. (Standard III.C.4)

The COM-FSM has Board policies and procedures that clearly address the use of Information Technology for students and staff. Board Policies and Administrative Procedures 8000 through 8910 addresses various Information Technology issues such as the Technology Fee, intellectual property, use of the Internet and minimum equipment standards. The Director of ITO will generate any needed policies and regulations for discussion and consideration by the ICT. The Information Technology Office (ITO) sets minimum computer specifications based on curriculum needs. (Standard III.C.5)

Conclusions

The College meets the Standards.

Recommendations to Improve Effectiveness
Recommendation 2: In order to improve effectiveness, the team recommends the College provide appropriate and adequate technology resources at all campuses in order to support the College's mission of being a learner-centered institution of higher education (III.C.1, III.C.2, III.C.3, III.C.4).

Recommendations to Meet the Standards
None

Standard III.D: Financial Resources Planning

General Observations
Consistent with Standard III.C, COM-FSM has made significant improvements since its 2010 Comprehensive Visit. Transformational efforts in its planning process since 2012 have addressed significant accreditation deficiencies related to Standard III.D. The Integrated Educational Master Plan includes Tech Plan and resource allocation processes that have assisted the College in addressing its planning and appropriate allocation of resources. Budget and financial information is routinely shared with the College community through open forums and through the Finance Committee. The 2017 Budget includes a request for increased funding from the national government so the College can address the total cost of ownership (TCO), increased funding for urgently needed utility and maintenance costs. The COM-FSM is experiencing declining enrollment due to out-migration, declining fertility rates and competition from other colleges. The economy in FSM has also been in decline recently and the College will be challenged to accommodate the effects of declining student enrollments.

Findings and Evidence
COM-FSM revenues are derived from a combination of funds from the FSM Government, Education Sector Grant Compact Funds, tuition, technology fees and facilities fees and other operational fee revenues. Government Compact Fund reductions for FY2012-2016 have necessitated that the College seek additional subsidy from the FSM Government to maintain the $3.8M funding level. A tuition increase of $10 per year from $105 in fall 2013 to $135 in fall 2015 was implemented to counter the declining student enrollment. Additionally, due to ESG restriction on capital funding support, the College in fall 2014 implemented a facility fee of $175 per full time student (subsequently increased to $200 in 2015) and $50 per part time student to provide supplemental funding for facility plans. Established budget procedures are followed and the College prepares an annual budget approved by its Board of Regents and forwarded to the FSM Government for approval and funding. The FY2016 budget reduction of ESG Compact funds to $1M has required the increase in FSM Government subsidy at $2.8M. The Board of Regents at its December 2015 meeting passed the FY2017 budget. Compact Funding will remain at $1M and FSM Government subsidy requested is $3.6M. Future ESG Compact Funds and FSM Government funds are allocated annually. FSM Government offsetting increase in funding is critically needed for because of declining Compact Funds. Alternative funding resources should be researched to ensure continuity COM-FSM programs, services, and operations. (Standard III.D.1, ER 14)

Budgets are prepared and approved on an annual basis to determine financial resources available to meet the needs of the College for the upcoming fiscal year. Revenues and expenditures are budgeted based on assumptions and revenues sources. Budget assumptions and guidelines are tied to the priorities established in the Integrated Educational Master Plan (IEMP) and the five-year financial plan. The IEMP clearly identifies the mission that is the foundation for allocation of resources to support of institutional effectiveness. COM-FSM implements a twelve-step process in its budget development as detailed in its Budget Procedures Handbook. Budget guidelines are prepared and determined by the Vice President

for Administrative Services, with input and participation from other Vice Presidents. Department and divisional budgets are linked to program review, assessment and established goals in the IEMP matrix. In 2015 and 2016, several meetings were held following the budget 12 step process with broad participation from the Vice Presidents, the Finance Committee, Executive Committee, and the Cabinet. Budget increases have remained minimal from FY2012-FY2016 and are mainly related to inflation and employee cost increases. Planning initiatives are discussed and funding provided to address student success. As an example, the FY2017 budget requests include growth requests, including faculty hires, to launch the success initiatives such as the writing initiative. (Standards III.D.2, III.D.6)

On an annual basis, COM-FSM prepares an annual budget following the established budget procedures in the Budget Procedures Handbook. Quarterly financial information is provided to departments and divisions to facilitate budget management, planning and future planning. The annual budget process includes broad participation in the development process of revenue and expenditure assumptions. Estimates are compared against current budgets and adjustments are made based on increases or decreases to previous projected revenues and expenditures. Budget hearings held by each Vice President within their respective departments provide opportunities for participation and inclusion. (Standard III.D.3)

The Board of Regents at its May 23, 2012 meeting approved the 2013-2017 five year financial plan. The five-year financial plan was established as the basis for planning and allocating future financial resources and is integrated into the IEMP. The College plans for its availability of financial resource on an annual basis through the budget development process. The Vice Presidents are involved in the preparation and review of budget guidelines and are responsible for holding public hearings for their departments. Academic and nonacademic program priorities were established in 2012 and 2013 and are reflected in budget development. Budget updates, assumptions, and developments are provided to the College at the All Campus Meeting. The College has an annual independent financial audit conducted. Financial updates are provided to Cabinet and the Board of Regents on a regular basis. The College is in the process of preparing the 2018 – 2022 Five-Year Financial Plan. (Standard III.D.4)

The Board of Regents reviews and approves financial policies and corresponding Administrative Procedures are written to comply with these policies. Budgets follow approved procedures and budgets are tied to College set priorities and are based on department assessments and program reviews. Approved budgets allocate funds that will support the IEMP strategic goals and five year financial plans. Formal financial updates are provided to departments, division heads and the Board of Regents on a quarterly basis. The 2013 and 2014 audit reports issued an unmodified opinion on the financial statements and internal control and compliance. The College achieved ten consecutive years of clean audits. The resignations of the prior Comptroller and the general accountant occurred in 2013 and 2014. The Comptroller position was filled in July 2015. In the April 2015 an external consultant conducted an administrative review and assessment of the Business Office functions. Portions of the review have been subsequently implemented, with plans for computer system module implementation to occur in the near future. (Standard III.D.5)

An independent audit of the College financial statements and internal controls was performed for fiscal years 2013 and 2014. For fiscal year 2013, the College received unmodified opinions on their financial statements and internal controls and compliance of federal grant awards. There were no material weakness findings and there were two significant deficiencies findings noted for the Federal Pell Grant Program. These findings were responded to. For fiscal year 2014, the College received unmodified opinion on their financial statement and internal controls and compliance of federal grant awards. There were no material weaknesses found, however there was a contract procurement noncompliance finding that was material to the financial statements. Also, a significant deficiency finding related to the Federal Pell Grant Program regarding timely disbursement noted for in 2013 and 2014 was resolved with a person hired to oversee the student refunds. The procurement finding was resolved with the hiring of Director of Procurement and Property management to oversee the College procurement and property management areas. For fiscal year 2013 and 2014, there were no questioned costs related to procurement. (Standard III.D.6)

The College has had clean audits for the past several years.   Recommendations for improvements from audits have been addressed. The audit recommendation for improving procurements led to the creation and hiring of a Director of Procurement and Property Management. The College has responded to audit finding and recommendations in an appropriate manner. The College just hired an experienced Director for Procurement and Property Management. (Standard III.D.7)

The College contracted an external consultant to review the Business Office processes and procedures. Based on an April 2015 Business Office Administrative Review report, recommendations related to creation of new positions, implementation of online bank account features, monitoring of student collections and accounts, physical office setup and updates of business function procedures. . The College uses Abila MIP Funding Accounting for its accounting system and contracts a Systems consultant performs upgrades, improvements, and enhancements as needed. Abila module functionality and new software integration are being reviewed and implemented within the near future. (Standards III.D.8, III.D.10)

The College has made tremendous effort in order to balance its budgets and live within their annual revenue sources and budget allocations over the past five years. Liquidity is a vital part of fiscal solvency. The College states that this fiscal solvency in addition to an established contingency reserves fund will help support the total cost of ownership, construction of facilities, procurement of equipment and fund major renovations and repairs. The College appears positioned financially to address any liquidity issues in the near future. (Standard III.D.9)

The Business Office provides quarterly financial information and updates to department and division heads. Financial information includes tracking of budgeted revenues and expenditures against actual revenues and expenditures. Actual financial information is used in the development of future budgets. Proposed implementation of upgrades and functionality to the ABILA system will provide more timely and useful financial and budget information and tracking of assets. (Standard III.D.10)

The College has sufficient reserves to meet cash flow requirements, with a 47% reserve in fiscal year 2014 and an average of 43% reserve from fiscal years 2010-2014. Based on the FY 2015 draft audit financial statements, the reserve is expected to increase to 62%. The College current liabilities are minimal and cash balances are sufficient to cover liabilities. The current ratio of cash to liabilities for fiscal year 2014 is 5.82. Long-term liabilities consist of accrued annual leave and cash reserves are more than sufficient to cover this balance. The College has adequate cash liquidity with $2.9 million set aside for expected short and/or long term financial solvency. The Foundation endowment fund, started in 1997, has now grown to approximately $4.4 million. (Standard III.D.11)

The College does not have any material liabilities and future obligations, including OPEB obligations. The only measurable future obligation is accrued annual leave, consisting of 240 maximum hours of accrued annual leave that would be paid out to the employee upon termination or resignation from the College. This annual cost is treated as current obligation in the annual budget cycle. The acknowledged long-term liability is stated as $340,000. FY15 draft audit financials are consistent with the liabilities noted above. Current reserves are more than adequate cover possible annual accelerated uses of leave. (Standard III.D.12)

The College does not have any locally incurred debt instruments. (Standard III.D.13)

The College does not have any short or long term debt obligations (bonds or Certificates of Participation). The auxiliary operations of the College, Dining Hall and Bookstore are self-sustaining operations. However, the Dining Hall operations are currently in a deficit due primarily to lower student enrollments. The Comptroller is working with the Dining Hall Administrator to decrease budgets based on actual student/customer usage and to align budgeted revenues and expenditures with accurate targets. The Friends of COM-FSM Foundation, a 501(c)3 nonprofit, was recently created to raise funds. The College recently contributed approximately $625,000 to the foundation. The Foundations goals are to provide scholarship to COM-FSM students and to provide supplemental support for the College operations on an as needed basis. (Standard III.D.14)

The College does not participate in providing federal student loans and therefore there are no default rates. (Standard III.D.15)

The College's major contractual agreements are with the FSM National Government, state governments, federal government, Colleges and universities providing services to the College. There are no contracts that provide direct student services or operations. HR manages contracts for off-island faculty hires. Contracts with external agencies are consistent with the College's mission and goals as well as, the College's policies and procedures. Contracts are reviewed by the requesting office and then provided to a standing committee for review of compliance with the College policies. Upon approval the contract is forwarded to the President and/or the attorney is necessary. In February 2016, COM-FSM hired the Director of Procurement and Property Management, who has proposed a plan to centralize purchases of supplies, goods, and services with the Procurement Office and to update procurement policies and procedures. Included in this proposal will be restructured procedures for bid and request for proposals, and oversight of these procedures by the Procurement Office. Additionally, the Director of Procurement will implement the use of

Abila module and a new compatible system, which will have asset management, requisition, procurement, and asset tracking capabilities. (Standard III.D.16)

Conclusions

The College meets the Standards.

Commendations

Commendation 3: The team commends the College for fostering a culture of commitment to financial discipline and stability. Savings realized through the effective use of institutional and financial planning integrated with resource allocation have led to increased reserves that enable the College to further invest in student recruitment, success and completion (III.D.1, III.D.2, III.D.3, III.D.4, III.D.5, III.D.9).

Recommendations to Improve Effectiveness

Recommendation 3: In order to improve effectiveness, the team recommends the College seek continued commitment and financial support in addition to student tuition to ensure the College's ongoing ability to provide access to higher education for citizens and residents in all states of the FSM. The team further recommends that the College continue efforts to support its long-term operations and future planning by identifying additional alternative financial resources to supplement student tuition (III.D.1, III.D.2, III.D.4, III.D.9, III.D.11).

Recommendations to Meet the Standards
None

STANDARD IV
LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

IV.A: Decision-Making Roles and Processes

General Observations

Since its last site visit in 2010, the College of Micronesia-FSM has made tremendous strides in ensuring that administrators, faculty, staff, and students have substantial roles to play in decision-making and proposing changes to policies and procedures. The board policies and administrative procedures on governance structures and shared governance now include greater detail about the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders in the campus community. Administrators, faculty, staff, and students have clearly defined roles under board policies and procedures for participating in the decision making processes of the College. In recent years, committee structures have undergone substantial revision to clarify roles and responsibilities of members and of the committees themselves. Governance processes, particularly the effectiveness of the various committees, undergo annual self-assessments, the results of which are reviewed by the Executive Committee.

Findings and Evidence

The College of Micronesia-FSM has a range of committee structures and processes in place to ensure the widespread involvement of various stakeholders in proposing ideas for innovations and in College decision-making. Under Board Policy 2200 on Participatory Governance and the current Organizational Chart, the existing committee structure typically moves proposals through various levels of the campus to either or both the Executive Committee and the Cabinet for consideration before the Board of Regents receives the proposal for approval or endorsement, if necessary. In numerous public addresses and his monthly messages to the College community, the President has encouraged suggestions for improvements and changes, and he has responsibility under BP 2200 and its accompanying Administrative Procedure 2200 for ensuring participation in planning processes and implementation strategies by all stakeholders in the community. The College's self-evaluation lists a series of innovations that have occurred under the President's leadership and includes various individuals who were responsible for initiating each of the innovations. Among them are the creation of a Student Success Committee started by the faculty, the development of a career technical education service plan proposed by the Director of the Career and Technical Education Center, and the first-ever FSM Congress Election Forums developed by the faculty, students, and the Chief of Staff for the President. These examples and others, including the development of various reports and handbooks, demonstrate a welcoming culture of innovation at the campus. (Standard IV.A.1)

BP 2200 on Participatory Governance was revised in February 2015 to ensure that administrators, faculty, and staff are given opportunities to participate in the decision making processes of the College and to encourage student participation. It states that the Board of Regents will typically not take action on an item without involvement from College stakeholders, and AP 2200 on Participatory Governance requires administrators to seek a

variety of perspectives from appropriate constituents, including students, in making recommendations or policy changes. Decision-making at the highest level of the College involves both the Cabinet and the Executive Committee. The Cabinet consists of the president, the five vice presidents, and the Chief of Staff while the Executive Committee includes the Cabinet members as well as representation from the faculty, staff, students, and additional administrators. Some members of the Executive Committee serve by virtue of their position: e.g., Faculty Staff Senate President and Student Body Association President. The Executive Committee also has members who represent all four island states served by the College of Micronesia-FSM. Proposals or suggestions may reach the Executive Committee for consideration through a variety of means, which may include but are not limited to division chairs, standing committees, or the vice president who supervises a program or service. Employees and students at the College indicated during interviews a clear understanding of the multiple ways that they can be involved in the College's decision-making processes. (Standard IV.A.2)

AP 2200, which accompanies BP 2200, lists the College's standing committees with representative membership and encourages recommendations for changes in policy or procedures from various bodies, noting that the final decision rests with the President. Under AP 2200, faculty members must serve on at least one standing committee, and the procedure describes the processes for designating staff and student representatives. All of the College's standing committees also have Terms of Reference that describe the scope and goals of the committee as well as the membership and to whom the committee reports. Some TORs list the positions held by members while others list names of members. Under the TOR, all committees have administrators, faculty, staff, and students, and members of the campus community have other methods for ensuring their voices are heard. For example, members of the Faculty/Staff Senate (FSS) noted in interviews that when they have made proposals and raised issues, the college administration has responded in a timely manner and supported their requests. (Standard IV.A.3)

Faculty members, in particular, have well defined roles in making recommendations about curriculum and student learning programs and services. The Terms of Reference for the Curriculum and Assessment Committee and the Curriculum and Assessment Handbook reveal that membership on the committee is primarily composed of faculty members, particularly instructional division chairs and faculty representatives from each instructional site. Similarly, the Terms of Reference for the Student Success Committee, which was created three years ago, specify the role of faculty and academic administrators in overseeing and evaluating various programs and services designed to increase student success at COM-FSM. (Standard IV.A.4)

Board Policy 1600 on Governance Structure identifies the roles and responsibilities of the various segments of the community in ensuring that various perspectives are heard in the decision-making processes of the College. Combined with BP 2200 on Participatory Governance, this policy and its accompanying administrative procedures specify how proposals and decisions progress through the campus committee structure to the Executive Committee and the Cabinet for approval and to the Board of Regents if necessary. Additionally, Board Policy 2100 on Communications Policy states as a goal "purposeful

dialogue" throughout the College, and the College adopted in 2014 the document entitled *Strengthening Purposeful Dialogue: A Handbook of Guiding Principles, Protocols, and Strategies* to assist members in participating in the campus processes and procedures. Representatives from the state campuses noted during interviews that they participate regularly in the governance of the College, primarily through teleconferencing and scheduled site visits with vice presidents, and they are given appropriate autonomy to make decisions regarding the operations of their sites. The College also hosted a two-day Governance Summit in January 2016 at the National Campus and a series of mini-summits on participatory governance at three state campuses. Almost 250 participants throughout the College system engaged in discussions and presentations on decision-making and committee structures; roles and responsibilities of faculty, staff, and administrators in governance; and board policies and procedures on shared governance. (Standard IV.A.5)

All standing committees of the College use the Committee Minutes Reporting Form template. These minutes, which are posted online for campus-wide access, reveal actions taken and what members are expected to do as a result of the meetings and to whom they must convey information about the results of the meeting. Minutes of the various committees also reveal that they provide forums for discussion and recommendations regarding a wide range of College issues such as construction projects, the mission statement, planning, budgeting, proposed policies, budgets, and contracts. Dialogue and widespread involvement in the development of recommendations appear to happen throughout the College community, and reports from the various summits, conferences, convocations, and other events provide additional information to the College community. The College's five vice presidents have responsibility for sharing information from these committee meetings throughout the College, and the deans of the various campuses also have responsibility for sharing information with their constituents at different sites. (Standard IV.A.6)

Each standing committee must complete an annual self-assessment of its effectiveness and integrity and a biennial collective participatory governance assessment every two years, and the results of these self-assessments are reviewed by the Executive Committee. Suggestions for improvement, including any proposed changes to the Terms of Reference, begin with the committee itself and move through the structure provided by the Organizational Chart until reaching the Executive Committee or, if necessary, the Board of Regents for final action. (Standard IV.A.7)

Conclusions

The College meets the Standards.

Recommendations to Improve Effectiveness
None

Recommendations to Meet the Standards
None

Standard IV.B.: Chief Executive Officer

General Observations

The current President of the College of Micronesia-FSM, the fifth in the College's history, has been in office for four years. Since his arrival in 2012, the President has overseen vast changes in the operations of the College, including the development of a range of documents regarding planning, fiscal matters, and long-range facilities projects, most notably the Integrated Educational Master Plan. He has also worked closely with the revised administrative structure to involve greater numbers of the campus community in the governance and decision-making processes. Given the geographical challenges of serving as President of six campuses located on four different island states, he has also established a series of methods for communicating with the wider Federated States of Micronesia community.

Findings and Evidence

The President has the authority to oversee the quality of the College through various means. The authorizing legislation that founded the College and subsequent governmental regulations also specify the role of the President in supervising the day-to-day operations of the College. Board Policy 1220 on Officers of the Board and the President, as well as the by-laws of the Board of Regents, gives the President the authority to be the educational and administrative head of the College. The Board of Regents outlined a series of challenges and opportunities and listed various duties and responsibilities in the job announcement for President used for the search process, and his reports to the Board indicate that the President regularly reports on his progress in meeting the challenges and opportunities. The Regents evaluate the President on an annual basis regarding his duties and responsibilities as well as his and the College's effectiveness in meeting the challenges and opportunities (Standard IV.B.1, ER 4).

Under Board Policy 2200 on Participatory Governance, the President is given overall authority for ensuring the participation of the various stakeholders in the governance and decision-making processes of the College, including its various administrators. The College of Micronesia-FSM currently has five vice presidents with different areas of responsibility, a dean for each state campus, and other administrative positions to oversee the various functions of the College. As the chief executive officer, the President conducts and/or reviews the performance evaluations of the administrators and oversees the regular evaluation of administrative processes and procedures. Since the President assumed office in early 2012, the College has revised and simplified its organization structure. Chief among the changes since the President began his tenure were the creation of the position of Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance and the establishment of the Executive Committee. The College's five vice presidents and its deans and directors report to the President regularly during bi-weekly Executive Committee meetings. Under its Terms of Reference, the Executive Committee includes representation from administrators, faculty members, staff members, and students. This committee and the Cabinet, which includes the President and all of the vice presidents of the College, share information about what has

happened in the various standing committees and both offer a place for everyone to learn more about what's happening in different programs and at different sites. Among the responsibilities of the President outlined by the Board of Regents in the job description for the position is the delegation of appropriate responsibilities to the members of the administrative team. Under their job descriptions, the vice presidents and the deans and directors of various sites and operations have responsibility for providing oversight for their areas of responsibility and reporting back to the President, and minutes reveal that they also directly report to the Board of Regents on a regular basis. (Standard IV.B.2)

Among the opportunities or challenges described in the job search announcement for president was the assurance of academic excellence of the College. Within months of his arrival at the College, the President released a white paper entitled *COM-FSM Quality, Sustainability, and Success: A Framework for Planning and Action*. In this document, he set a series of priorities for the College, including greater attention to planning, program review, and student learning outcome assessments. Additionally, this document calls for a College-wide dialogue about institutional effectiveness, particularly a greater emphasis on student success. In 2013, the Board of Regents identified five Strategic Institutional Outcomes (SIOs) for the President and the College to meet, and later that same year, the Board selected six Strategic Directions from which the College developed a series of specific goals to achieve. The outcome and/or goal that was selected for highest priority was student success, and the College has dedicated financial resources and planning efforts to improve in this area. Another of the directions was to develop and support academic offerings appropriate to the needs of the community. The president's contract was renewed for an additional four years in January 2016 and included overseeing the successful completion of the existing strategic plan and the development of the next two strategic plans. He was also charged with enhancing the overall standing of the College, advocating on its behalf, and ensuring an efficient and effective institution. A variety of documents and minutes of standing committee meetings reveal that student success, including the establishment and analysis of the progress on institution-set standards for student achievement, has been the subject of much of the College's attention in recent years. For example, the Strategic Plan 2013-2017 adopted by the College requires evaluation reports on the progress made on the Board's Strategic Directions, and student success is central to the annual updates to the Strategic Plan. Similarly, the Integrated Educational Master Plan (IEMP) provides a framework for the use of these strategic plans and of program review to ensure the quality of academic and nonacademic programs. (Standard IV.B.3)

One of the seven challenges identified by the Board of Regents in 2012 that the incoming President must address was getting the College fully in compliance with Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges Standards. One of the President's duties and responsibilities, also outlined in 2012, was maintaining fully accredited status from ACCJC. When the president's contract was renewed in January 2016, one of his primary duties was identified as maintaining the College's accredited status. The President has selected the Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance to be the Accreditation Liaison Officer for the College, and minutes of the Board of Regents, the Cabinet, and the Executive Committee reveal that the ALO provides regular updates on ACCJC issues and progress toward meeting the Standards. Through its Cabinet, the College

has also asked all employees and even the Board of Regents to take the online accreditation basics workshop. To date, almost 99 percent of the employees throughout the College and 100 percent of the regents have successfully completed the online course. The College leaders also had the ACCJC Standards translated into two of the predominant native languages in the Federated States of Micronesia to provide greater awareness of the Standards and of the purposes of accreditation. The ALO, under the direction of the President, has presented workshops on accreditation throughout the islands served by the College. Knowledge about accreditation processes and Standards has substantially increased throughout the College community. The president noted in interviews that the Accreditation Standards have served as a framework for everything that the College does. (Standard IV.B.4)

A series of Board of Regents documents reveal that the President has the responsibility for ensuring that laws, regulations, and board policies are followed at the College. Ensuring that the activities of the College are consistent with its mission and overseeing the financial status of the College are among the President's duties and responsibilities included in these documents. The President regularly reports to the Board at their quarterly meetings and through his Letters to the Board about the College's activities, and he is required by law to report to the President and Congress of FSM on such matters as the financial status of the College. Through the Executive Committee and the Cabinet, the President has overseen the development and adoption of a range of planning documents that ensure compliance with laws, regulations, board policies, and board directives. Among the numerous documents that have been created during the President's tenure are the Five-Year Financial Plan, the Integrated Educational Master Plan, the Budget Procedures Handbook, and the Strategic Plan 2013-2017. These documents and others supplied by the College reveal that the President maintains responsibility for compliance with various statutes, regulations, and board policies and that he assures, with the assistance of the administrative leadership of the College, consistency with the College mission and responsible oversight of financial matters. (Standard IV.B.5, ER 4)

One of the duties of the President, according to the Board of Regents description of the position, is ensuring effective communication throughout the community. To that end, the President sends out a President's Monthly Message to the entire college and hosts monthly campus-wide meetings; the monthly messages are archived on the College's website. He has also submitted articles to the local newspaper and made appearances on local television. One of the presidential duties prescribed by the Board of Regents by-laws is to keep the Regents updated on the activities of the College and his progress on meeting the challenges and opportunities outlined when he was initially hired. According to minutes of the Board's meetings, he regularly does so at their quarterly meetings and through his Letters to the Board. Under the authorizing legislation for the College, he is also expected to report to the FSM President and Congress on an annual basis about the status of the College. Since taking office, he and the College have hosted a series of summits on various topics, and a report to the community on the results has followed each of these summits. These reports indicate widespread involvement of both internal and external stakeholders. For example, the Visioning Summit in 2012 had 148 participants over two days of breakout sessions. The report from that summit included information collected during the various sections and

summaries of the comments and recommendations made at the summit. Similar reports have emerged from the other summits. The President has shared information about the College widely throughout the communities served by the six campuses of the College of Micronesia-FSM. (Standard IV.B.6)

Conclusions

The College meets the Standards.

Commendations
Commendation 1: The team commends the College for increasing the awareness of the ACCJC Eligibility Requirements and Standards as evidenced by 99 percent of employees on all campuses and 100 percent of the members of the Board of Regents completing the ACCJC online Accreditation Basics course, supporting its employees in this goal by taking such measures as translating the Standards into languages native to Micronesia, and by requiring all new employees to complete the course within their first month of employment. (IV.B.4, IV.C.13).

Recommendations to Improve Effectiveness
None

Recommendations to Meet the Standards
None

IV.C. Governing Board

General Observations

Since the College of Micronesia-FSM's last comprehensive review in April 2010, both the President and the Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) have focused on accreditation matters at a majority of the meetings of the Board of Regents in order to improve the board's understanding of proposed and revised policies. With three new regents completing the ACCJC's Accreditation Basics online course, all of the current regents have passed the accreditation course. The board has shown a commitment to board development as evidenced by the hiring of an external consultant, Sandy Pond Associates (SPA), beginning in August 2012 and continuing to 2017. The hiring of the consultant was in response to the 2010 accreditation team recommendation on Decision-making Roles and Processes that states, "to fully meet this standard, the team recommends that the College evaluate its organizational structure and governance processes to ensure that College stakeholders are involved in decision-making processes and that the results of systematic evaluations, meetings, and decisions are broadly communicated."

Findings and Evidence

The Board of Regents (BOR) oversees the College of Micronesia-FSM, the only national public institution of higher education in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). The COM-FSM Board of Regents was created as a result of Public Law 7-79 (also known as PL 7-79 or Enabling Law) of the Federated States of Micronesia as the governing body for the management of the College. To ensure academic quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the student learning programs and services as well as the financial stability of COM-FSM, the Board mandated in August 2014 that all policies be reviewed in five-year cycles. The Board also approved in March 2014 a five-year master planning calendar, covering 2013-2018, that addresses timely review of policies and important documents. During interviews, regents stated that among their responsibilities are to provide leadership for the College, establish policies governing the College, ensure its financial stability, advocate on behalf of the College on a national and local level, guarantee that the relevant federal laws and other mandates are met, and select and evaluate the president. They noted, however, that regents restrict their involvement to the policy level rather than the day-to-day operations of the College. To ensure that decisions governing the College are made appropriately, the quarterly meetings of the Board of Regents sometimes last two to three days and include reflection time before the official board meetings where regents take actions. Additionally, community meetings allow regents to become familiar with the needs of the different states, and courtesy visits with government and education officials provide opportunities to advocate on behalf of the College. (Standard IV.C.1, ER 7)

The Enabling Law and the Board's bylaws require the Board to act as a whole and stipulate that no member or committee created by the regents may act in lieu of the Board. Even though regents are selected to represent individual states and the national government, they state that they represent all of the residents, particularly the students, of the Federated States of Micronesia. Prior to every quarterly meeting, the Board holds reflection meetings designed

for informal discussions and shared understanding. The reflection meetings allow the Board to discuss and reach consensus on issues outside of their formal meetings, as well as to build a more cohesive team. Regents stated during interviews that the reflection meetings provide them with opportunities to maintain a professional demeanor during discussions of issues that could lead to potential disagreements, and they noted that these reflections allow members to understand the different perspectives on issues. A September 2015 survey of the regents revealed that members felt reflections were particularly helpful in addressing issues in a more relaxed atmosphere. Board minutes from 2009-2015 note that the majority of decisions are unanimous, and during interviews, regents confirmed that between 80-90 percent of the decisions they make are unanimous, but that they all agree that once decisions are reached, the board understands that they act as one body. (Standard IV.C.2)

The Board selected the current College President as the fifth chief executive officer of the College on February 6, 2012. The Enabling Law entrusts the Board to appoint and evaluate the performance of the President. At their April 2015 meeting, the regents adopted Board Policy (BP) 1211, Administrative Procedure (AP) 1211, BP 1212, and AP 1212. BP 1211 on Appointment of the President/CEO includes the appointment of a presidential search committee to assist the Board, allowing the search for a President to begin quickly. The committee oversees the presidential search and recommends candidates to the Board, which makes the final selection and appointment. BP 1212 on Assessing the President mandates the Board to review the President's stewardship on an annual basis and conduct a comprehensive review every four years. In August 2015 the Board adopted the Leadership Assessment Inventory as a new assessment tool for evaluating the performance of the President. (Standard IV.C.3)

The Enabling Law, including sections on organizing principles, board membership, and powers and responsibilities, notes that the Board is an independent, policy-making entity reflecting the public interest, including advocating for and defending the College, and protecting it from undue influence or political pressure. The President of the Federated States of Micronesia appoints regents with the advice and consent of the Congress. Regents, as representatives of the states that comprise the FSM, are to reflect the diverse components of the populations of their unique states. Regents represent the four states and the national government. While all five regents are currently males, the previous regent from Yap was female. In meetings with the regents and the College president, they expressed hope, given the guidelines for how regents are appointed, to fill a current opening on the board with a woman. The Board attempts to rotate its quarterly meetings among the four individual states and meets with leaders and individuals from the local communities, sharing College accomplishments and asking for input. When possible, regents attend hearings called by the national government and/or Congress. The Board advocated for the College when the Joint Economic Management Committee (JEMCO) in September 2011 declared a decrement of $700,000 annually for five years, cumulative to $2.8 million. Due to Board efforts, the FSM President requested domestic revenues, and Congress continues to appropriate $3.8 million to the College, maintaining a stable source of funding. (Standard IV.C.4, ER 7)

To ensure consistency with the College's mission, the regents read the mission statement at the start of every board meeting. The Enabling Law empowers the Board to clarify the

mission, ensure financial resources and strong fiscal management, approve programs of instruction and research, and annually review and approve long-range goals. BP 2001 on Policies, adopted February 2015, provides the criteria for evaluating new policies or revising existing policies, which include conforming to the COM-FSM mission, level of risk to the institution, and strategic directions in the 2013-2017 Master Plan. As part of the College President's regular reports to the regents, the College vice presidents submit reports for their areas of responsibility, including substantiating that the College is at the proficiency level on student learning outcomes (SLOs). The Enabling Law notes that the Board is to provide full disclosure of the results of financial operations, including the formulation and execution of the annual adopted budget. (Standard IV.C.5)

The Board's duties and responsibilities come from the Enabling Law. BP 1200 on Membership and Terms of Office and BP 1210 on Powers and Responsibilities note the Board's size, duties, and responsibilities. The College posts the board bylaws and policies on the Board's page on the College website. (Standard IV.C.6)

In August 2014 the Board mandated that all College policies be reviewed in five-year cycles. BP 2001 on Policies, adopted by the Board in February 2015, notes that all College policies must facilitate the ability of the College to fulfill its mission. The Board of Regents Five-Year Master Planning Calendar, 2013-2018, adopted in March 2014, addresses assessment of its policies and bylaws. Since August 2012, the Board has attended seven development workshops, and the Board's planning calendar assures biyearly assessment of policies and bylaws. At the March 2014 meeting, the Board approved revisions to its bylaws and policy manual. (Standard IV.C.7)

At every Board meeting, the College vice presidents report on student success goals and plans for improving academic quality. BP 1101 on Strategies, Measures, and Benchmarks, revised in March 2014, created a review cycle for strategies, measures, and College benchmarks. BP 1110 on Assessment, revised in March 2014, created a program evaluation cycle to improve student learning and success. The College's and the Board's five-year master planning calendars include annual review of the assessment of the strategic plan and the Integrated Educational Master Plan. During the March 2015 meeting, the Board received the Strategic Plan Evaluation Report (SPER). (Standard IV.C.8)

The Board has shown commitment to ongoing training for board development as evidenced by the hiring of Sandy Pond Associates (SPA), an external consultant, beginning in August 2012. SPA provided board development workshops in August 2012, January and December 2013, May 2014, and February, April, and August 2015. Topics included roles and responsibilities of the board, academic quality, fiscal integrity, mission, vision, and strategic planning, and College governance. New regents received a board orientation in April 2015. The Board has budgeted for annual board training, and it has committed to receiving board professional development from SPA for an additional two years. In meetings with the regents, they expressed a goal of utilizing the external consultant not solely for initial board training but also for long-term capacity building. The Board is a member of the Association of Governing Boards (AGB) and the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT), higher education board associations. The chairman of the Board of Regents attended the

annual AGB convention in April 2015, and a regent attended the ACCT Leadership Congress in October 2015. In August the Board approved the COM-FSM Board Development Plan, August 2015-July 2017. The Enabling Law provides for continuity of board membership, with board members serving no more than two consecutive terms. At the initial board meeting the four regents representing their respective states drew lots in order to ascertain their terms of office. Two states had an initial two-year term and two states had an initial three-year term, resulting in three-year staggered terms of office. The initial terms of office were counted towards the overall limitations of terms. The Enabling Law requires written notification of terms scheduled to expire to the FSM President ninety days in advance of the expiration date. However, regents are able to serve beyond their terms until their successors are appointed, allowing for board continuity, and two of the current regents have continued to serve beyond their terms while replacements are being secured. In conversation with regents, they report that the consultant has provided benefits to the entire College as a whole and not just to the regents. (Standard IV.C.9)

The Enabling Law mandates board evaluation. BP 1330 on Board Self-Assessment, revised August 2015, requires annual evaluation using the COM-FSM Board Self-Assessment Survey. AP 1330 on Board Self-Assessment, approved August 2015, delineates the components of evaluation, including academic quality, institutional effectiveness, board performance recommendations for improvement, and posting of assessment results. Board evaluations take place during the annual meetings, typically in the month of December. During the March 2014 board meeting, the Board reviewed its progress on self-assessment recommendations. All regents complete the board survey, yet the analysis and recommendations have not always been tabulated in a timely manner. AP 1330 on Board Self-Assessment was created in August 2015 to address timelines. The Board of Regents Five-Year Master Planning Calendar, 2013-2018, was designed to assure consistent reviews of board performance. (Standard IV.C.10)

The board bylaws, adopted in March 1993, include a statement of ethical conduct that has since been revised twice to assure compliance with Accreditation Standards. In January 2013, the Board revised the statement to include a well-defined policy for dealing with behavior that violates the code. No charges of violation of this code have been noted. The Board revised the statement of ethical conduct again, requiring the regents to sign a disclosure of conflicts of interest. The Enabling Law notes the need for bylaws that include a statement of ethical conduct prohibiting board members from any possible conflict of interest or from obtaining financial gain in their position as regents. The statement of ethical conduct addresses the standard of conduct, disclosure, abstaining from voting, employment with the College, and ethical violations. (Standard IV.C.11, ER 7)

The Board's delegation of full responsibility and authority to the President to implement and administer board policies without board interference is found in the Enabling Law, which includes a component for the President to then be accountable to the board. Board bylaws note that the President is the CEO and official advisor to and executive agent of the Board. As CEO, the President has the power, on behalf of the Board, to perform all acts to make effective the actions of the Board. The institution has adequate staff with the appropriate training and experience to provide the administrative services necessary to support its

mission and purpose. There have been no incidents noted of the Board interfering with the role and responsibility of the President. The President regularly reports on the activities of the College at board meetings. He provides a written report that includes his progress on the challenges and opportunities identified by the Board prior to his appointment as CEO as well as the duties and responsibilities outlined in the job announcement for his position. While the president is required to provide quarterly reports to the Board, he also gives monthly updates not only to regents but also the campus community and the community-at-large. The Board assesses the performance of the President on an annual basis. In April 2015 the Board separated assessing the President from BP 1330 by approving a new policy, BP 1212, on Assessing the President. This policy includes a more comprehensive review of the President every four years. At the same time the board approved AP 1331 on Assessing the President. (Standard IV.C.12, ER 8).

To ensure that the Board is informed about the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, Commission policies, accreditation processes, and the College's accredited status, the President and or the ALO have reported on accreditation matters at the majority of board meetings, including professional development sessions. In September 2013, the ACCJC President met with the Board and discussed proposed changes to Accreditation Standards, including those that pertained to the Board. The Board met with a writing group for Standard IV in August 2015 to review subsection IV.C and to evaluate board roles for accreditation. During interviews, regents noted that they had been more involved in the current accreditation process and were given multiple drafts of the College's self-evaluation report so that they could ask questions and provide feedback. In August 2015, the Board added a criterion to its self-assessment survey to make certain the Board regularly evaluates its roles and functions for accreditation. There is evidence of many board actions to ensure Accreditation Standards, which include but are not limited to the Five-Year Integrated Educational Master Plan (May 2012), the five-year financial projections (May 2012), the revised board code of ethics (January 2013), the Human Resources record access and confidentiality policy (March 2013), the academic freedom and responsibility policy for students (March 2013), the revised communication policy (March 2013), the revised mission statement (March 2014), the board development and orientation program (May 2014), the cycle of review for all College policies (August 2014), the policy on policies, revised roles of board officers, and revised participatory governance policy (February 2015). (Standard IV.C.13)

Conclusions

The College meets the Standards and related Eligibility Requirements (ER 7, 8).

Recommendations to Improve Effectiveness
None

Recommendations to Meet the Standards
None

QUALITY FOCUS ESSAY
TEAM RESPONSE

The College of Micronesia -FSM's Quality Focus Essay (QFE) is provided as a six page section included as part of the Self Evaluation of Educational Quality and Institutional Effectiveness Report. The College provided a history and justification for the development of the projects contained in the QFE; a QFE Rubric Self Assessment with specific outcomes, timelines, and steps for implementation; and multiple embedded links to a Mini Work Plan, related strategic plans, and support documents.

The team found that the projects included in the Quality Focus Essay were based on data and self-identified areas of needed change, and emerged from the College's own examination of its effectiveness in meeting its mission. The College identified aggressive goals to increase graduation, course completion, persistence, and retention rates through three major projects: Student Success Study (SSSP), Retention, and Pathway to Graduation programs. These programs were designed in response to COM-FSM student performance data that indicated decreasing persistence and retention rates, and a COM-FSM graduation rate of 13.2% as compared with the "US mean graduation rates for two-year rural small Colleges [of] 33.3%." The SSSP is designed to produce "a structured, evidence-based self-evaluation of first year student success using best practice criteria." The Retention Plan will analyze data and provide a plan for continuous monitoring of the retention process, as well as associated professional development activities. The Graduation program is a comprehensive institutional approach to "identifying and improving student success in high-risk gateway courses" based upon predictive analytics of programs, services, and student course taking behaviors that correlate with student success.

The team found that the projects were well defined, with action steps, outcomes and defined timelines within the March 2015-January 2017 project span detailed month-to month as outlined in the College's Mini-Work Plan and Timeline. Responsible parties are clearly identified, consistent with the College's statement in their QFE that, "articulating expectations, clarity in responsibilities, clear timelines, and holding individuals accountable is critical toward achieving the overarching goal."

The team confirmed that the College has already committed significant effort in terms of human and financial resources in the development of these plans. In 2015, the College sent a seven-member team to Washington D.C. to complete the American Association of Community College's High Performance Team Training and partnered with Dr. Byron McClenney, a community college chief executive of thirty-three years and National Director of Leadership Coaching for Achieving the Dream, as a mentor and coach. In addition, budget priorities have been re-aligned to support the Mini Work Plan for both 2015-16 and 201-17, and assessment has been aligned with institutional planning cycles. In summary, the team found the three projects well structured, thoughtfully planned, and aligned with current processes. The team commends the College for its acknowledgement of the need to narrow

its focus relative to student success as the QFE represents a more focused, albeit still ambitious, plan to provide additional clarity to and institutional emphasis on student success. The team suggests that the College carefully integrate and align new processes and protocols implemented through these three new programs into existing governance structures and practices to increase effectiveness, ensure institutional alignment, and minimize impacts on workload to faculty and staff.