

# PPEC

Pacific Postsecondary  
Education Council

Report to

# ACCJC

Accrediting Commission of  
Community & Junior Colleges

July - December

# 2020

STUDENT CENTER

# American Samoa Community College

## ***Introduction***

The American Samoa Community College (ASCC) was established in 1970 to provide post-secondary education opportunities in the liberal arts, teacher training, vocational-technical education and general education to the residents of American Samoa. ASCC received its initial accreditation in 1976 and continues to remain accredited under the purview of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC). ASCC offers Associate of Arts, Associate of Science degrees and a Bachelor's in Elementary Education, as well as certificate programs in a variety of academic and technical areas.

## ***Accreditation Updates***

### Institutional Self-Evaluation Report 2021:

The College continues to finalize its draft of the Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER). The College submitted its Annual Report and Fiscal Report to ACCJC in April 2020.

## **Governance:**

The American Samoa Community College continues to follow the “Code Blue” status set forth by the American Samoa Government in response to COVID-19 epidemic with some restrictions relaxed. In accordance with the code blue level, the College is now allowed to operate under a hybrid model whereby 33% of all its course offering is online and 67% face-to-face in delivering its instructional services to the students. In compliance, the College must adhere to social distancing measures, mask wearing, and hand washing/sanitizing. The College was able to furnish the entire campus with hand sanitizing dispensers for students, ASCC employees and all visitors to the campus. In addition to these relaxed restrictions, all government employees are back to the normal 40-hour work week from the 20-hour work week that was had been set with previous restrictions on COVID-19. The College is planning its first face to face graduation this Fall after two semesters of a virtual ceremony of conferring of degrees and certificates due to the Measles outbreak and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The College continues to follow the approved Plan of Action in compliance with the levels of declaration set by the Governor of American Samoa.

## ***General Highlights:***

- In July, ASCC Agriculture Community and Natural Resources (ACNR) started its STEAM Academy with 53 youth registered. In coordination with its 4H Youth Program and the STEAM committee, the participants were able to explore and participate in various areas of STEAM content through activities planned by the coordinators.
- In August, ASCC was able to distribute smart phones to students through the various departments. These phones were assigned to students who lacked access to other devices to access the internet for online components of their courses. The College was able to fund this effort through the CARES Act Funding from the US Department of Education. In addition, ASCC continues to provide refresher training on MOODLE for returning faculty

and new training sessions for new faculty. This is done as part of the College plan in preparation for any changes in the territory emergency declaration status that will result in a close down and movement to online only in instruction and services.

- In September, the College administration with the approval of its Governing Board of Higher Education submitted and testified in our Legislature (Fono) for the College Budget.
- In October, ASCC presented to the Board of Higher Education the last two chapters of nine chapters in the College's Governance Policy Manual for review and approval. The Board of Higher Education in its annual retreat approved the final chapters. The College is preparing this document for the promulgation process as required by law.
- In November, ASCC in collaboration with the Governor's Office held a Ground Breaking Ceremony for the construction of its new Cafeteria Building on campus. This will be a two-story building housing food vendors, a dining area, offices and technical training rooms for the students and faculty.
- In December, ASCC is planning its Fall graduation with a face-to-face setting since the last two graduation ceremonies conferred degrees and certificates in a virtual format.

## **The College of the Marshall Islands (CMI)**

### ***Mission***

*The College of the Marshall Islands will provide our community with access to quality, higher and further educational services, prioritize student success through engagement in relevant Academic, Career and Technical Education, and be a center for the study of Marshallese Culture. It will also provide intellectual resources and facilitate research specific to the needs of the nation (Approved December 1, 2020)*

### ***Introduction***

The College provided educational services to 1161 students in the Fall semester, 2020. Of those, there were 571 full-time and 384 part-time students from across the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), the Micronesia region and further afield. The following report covers the period from 1<sup>st</sup> June – 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020. Dr. Irene J. Taafaki succeeded Dr. Koroivulaono as new CMI President. Dr. Taafaki worked as the Director of the University of the South Pacific Campus in the Marshall Islands for twenty-one. She began work at CMI on 18<sup>th</sup> May and inaugurated her Presidency on June 2.

### ***General Accreditation Updates***

CMI continues to enjoy the longest period in its history of regional accreditation without sanctions. Internally, preparation for CMI's 2021 comprehensive review extended through to December, with widespread participation from the College community, including a full day retreat on September 12. College committees integrated the examination of standards into their agendas, and compiled evidence to support assertions. The formal notification of the site visit by

the ACCJC peer review evaluation team, scheduled for March 15 – 18, 2021, will be virtual was received on November 19. The CMI internal ISER website can be viewed at: <https://sites.google.com/cmi.edu/2021-iserworking-site/>

### ***Response to the Coronavirus at CMI***

To date are no confirmed COVID-19 community cases in the RMI, although four boarder cases on Kwajalein this Fall caused some alarm. National borders remain closed and only a few strictly managed groups of citizens and critical workers have been repatriated to date, including three CMI Faculty and Researchers. Throughout the year, CMI classes have been held as usual but the College remains vigilant and prepared with 81% courses ready for full migration online. Once lockdown is announced by the RMI Government, classes will continue as distance learning courses. Based on the experience of the first six months of the pandemic, the first Memorandum of Understanding of the College with the Ministry of Health and Human Services for the use of the Arrak campus was extended and revised to a more formal Memorandum of Agreement. This clarified and formalized the designated roles and responsibilities required for the smooth operation and security of the Majuro quarantine center.

### ***General Highlights***

The fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget Portfolio was affirmed by the Board of Regents on September 29<sup>th</sup>.

The CMI Financial Aid Policy was approved by the Board of Regents at its October 6 session, and the associated Procedures recognized.

At its 4<sup>th</sup> quarter meeting in December, the Board of Regents approved a new policy that recognized the distinction between the Governance Policies articulated and approved by the Board of Regents, and those administrative policies that are the responsibility of the President. It established a process for the development, approval, review, and dissemination of all College Policies to assure consistency and compliance with the RMI law, accreditation standards, and certain, applicable federal laws. This policy now ensures that the policy development process is clear, the policies are comprehensive, consistent and easily accessible to the appropriate stakeholders, are widely disseminated, and appropriately reviewed.

New Online Learning Policy an Online Learning Framework was submitted to the Board of Regents for its approval in December.

A new week-long New Student Orientation was implemented at the start of the Fall Semester, along with an online student orientation for new students unable to attend in person. NSO includes information on financial aid, money management, Title IX, Moodle basics, reading a syllabus, and available support services. Faculty advisors assist new students with registration.

A new Distance Learning Center on Wotje Atoll was opened in September in a remodeled WWII bunker close to the Northern Islands High School. CMI now has three DE Centers operating on Kwajalein, Jaluit and Wotje.

13% for Fall 2017 First Time Full Time Cohort. 10% of students who started in Fall 2018 have already graduated. 48 students who began in Fall 2018 and are on track to graduate have been identified as CMI Champion Navigators and are meeting in small groups with peers from their majors to discuss challenges and opportunities, facilitated by staff or faculty. Other efforts to improve this rate include: redesign of the First-Year Experience course, continued improvement of New Student Orientation with particular focus on early advising, and efforts to motivate highly capable students to complete their CMI programs.

100% of students who attempted the National Career Readiness Certification (Work Keys) achieved the bronze level.

The Governmental Accounting courses that were piloted earlier this year are being developed into a 15-credit certificate program.

The agroforestry courses developed with support from Ridge to Reef are continuing, and plans exist to revise and migrate these courses into a degree in Agriculture and Sustainable Livelihoods.

CMI collaboration with the National Training Council, Ministry of Transportation and Communication and the GIZ Low Carbon Transport project staff have assisted advance the planning for two new programs to train deck hands and engineers. This included the development of a request for funding from the project Preparation Funds allocated to the Education and Skills Project (P171924) to support needs assessment and curriculum verification. Once completed, this will form the basis for a larger project to develop CMI curriculum that meets accreditation standards, with programs and courses commencing Fall 2021.

## **College of the Micronesia - FSM**

### ***Introduction***

The College of Micronesia-FSM Mission Statement reads, *“The College of Micronesia-FSM is a learner-centered institution of higher education that is committed to the success of the Federated States of Micronesia by providing academic and career and technical educational programs characterized by continuous improvement and best practices.”*

The College of Micronesia-FSM (COM-FSM) is a multi campus institution with the National Campus located in Palikir, Pohnpei, and a State Campus in each state. COM-FSM also includes the FSM Fisheries and Maritime Institute located in Yap. The area most directly served by the college is the Federated States of Micronesia, which includes approximately two million square miles of the western Pacific Ocean and a population of over 110,000. The college offers 1 baccalaureate degree, 14 associate degrees, and 17 certificate programs. The college also offers fisheries and maritime instruction for fishing, navigation and engineering that meet Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) regulations.

## ***Accreditation Updates***

The search committee for president and CEO prepared a shortlist of six (6) candidates on 4 August 2020. Human Resource office completed reference checks that were submitted to the search committee on 31 August 2020. The steering committee has narrowed the search to three (3) finalists and a virtual tour of the college is planned for the three finalists. The Board of Regents still plans to meet the deadline of offering the position by the end of December 2020.



COM-FSM held a “kick-off” event to start preparation of the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER) November 18, 2020, with a short accreditation quiz and raffle. The ISER is due to ACCJC by August 1, 2022. The Steering Crew has adopted the logo “Welewel”, a Yapese traditional navigation term that refers to the constellations of the North and South stars. Welewel means “straight” – on this long voyage we will follow the straight and honest path. During our voyage, we plan to sponsor various events to help make this a great learning and enjoyable experience.

COM-FSM will be submitting a substantive change proposal spring 2021 to allow the college to offer courses through distance education. The college has been planning for distance education for many years and our response to the global pandemic has given the college a chance to collect data and become better prepared for the approved move to offer distance education.

## ***General Updates***

- COM-FSM held the annual summit virtually in August 2020. The summit consisted of two parts – “Institutional Check In” for strategic planning and training on “*COVID-19 Preventive Measures & Framework*”.
- FY 2019 Audit Report is complete and the college rated as an unmodified opinion for that fiscal year and has now achieved the status of low-risk audit institution.
- COM-FSM donated \$15,000 to the Young Island Readers program, Habele NGO. The program offers all children born on Yap one, new, age-appropriate book each month until their fifth birthday. Books are mailed, individually wrapped, to the family’s post office box. The program is due to expand across all FSM states in the coming years.
- Student Services has worked diligently to provide alternative ways to ensure delivery of appropriate and equitable services and programs that support student learning. These alternatives include: virtual orientations, virtual and in-person counseling and tutoring services, and a series of online video tutorials and guides.
- The college was awarded the National Institute of Food and Agriculture Grant/ Resident Instruction for Insular Areas in the amount of \$170,965 for 2020-2021. The college will use this funding to support agriculture students through job shadowing, mentoring, seminars and workshops.

# Guam Community College

## *Introduction*

Since its inception through the Community College Act of 1977 (as amended by Public Law 31-99 in 2011), Guam Community College continues to fulfill its mission to be a leader in career and technical workforce development, providing the highest quality, student-centered education and job training for Micronesia. GCC serves as Guam's State Agency for Career and Technical Education under the United States Vocational Education Act of 1946 (and subsequent amendments). As a multi-faceted, public, career and technical education institution, the College currently offers 26 associate degrees and 18 certificates. GCC delivers postsecondary education on campus in fall and spring semesters and during summer. Off-site, the College primarily delivers secondary career technical education at six Guam public high schools, as well as short-term, specialized training at local businesses. Additionally, GCC offers adult education programs and services, namely English as a Second Language, Adult Basic Education, High School Equivalency preparation and testing, and Adult High School Diploma.

## *General Updates*

Enrollment for the fall 2020 semester dropped by approximately nine percent (9%) to 1796 when compared to the enrollment in the prior year fall 2019 semester. When compared to the enrollment ten years ago in fall 2010, the fall 2020 semester enrollment dropped by approximately twenty-nine percent (29%)

With the continuing closure of the campus due to the coronavirus pandemic since March 16, 2020, faculty and students were still engaged in remote instruction through the use of Moodle, Google Classroom and other remote learning tools available to them. The College remains vigilant and steadfast in its efforts to ensure students' needs are met during this pandemic and every avenue exhausted to provide the education and support necessary to achieve our educational mission.

Courses continued in the online environment, where appropriate. Student services continued completely online via remote formats. Grading procedures continued to be communicated widely through MyGCC, and the College continues to address the challenges and opportunities as a result of COVID-19.

In an effort to equip our students for success during the pandemic, GCC conducted various assessments, including a Student Resources Survey and a Laptop Survey. Based on the results of the survey, the College initiated a laptop and my-fi loaner program for students. Additionally, the College also established an appointment-based campus access process for students needing dedicated space for studying and completing course projects. The College also included customized questions into the IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction Survey for the fall administration. The questions included in the survey asked students about their perceptions of

remote learning, if they had access to a device and what device they use for remote learning, how much time they spent on average on remote learning, their assessment of their overall health and safety, if they had the tools and resources needed to be successful, do they feel connected in the remote learning environment, if they understood what was expected of them in their remote learning environment, and how the College could improve their remote learning experience. The results of these customized questions are being reviewed by the Faculty Senate in an effort to share the challenges the students are facing so that immediate action can be taken by faculty in their courses.

The Center for Student Involvement transitioned student activities to a virtual environment. New Student Orientation was held virtually with 297 participants in August. The Meet the President sessions were delivered virtually with 188 attendees during the first session and 169 attendees during the second session in September. The *Need to Lead* student conference was held virtually with 81 attendees in October. Finally, the COPSA Cares social media campaign was delivered during the month of November with a focus on mental health awareness and included a health and safety awareness pledge which invited student leaders and the entire student body to pledge commitment and compliance with the COVID guidelines for safety and prevention.

The Fall College Assembly was held virtually in November. Campus updates were provided by the College President and the results of the pandemic-related surveys were presented by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The faculty, administrators, and staff in attendance were provided informational sessions on pandemic-related care, Moodle and Google Classroom, Customer Service, and addressing employee fear during the pandemic. An assessment of the assembly was completed by attendees and the results will be used in planning and preparing for the next College Assembly.

### ***Accreditation Updates***

The College continues to prepare all necessary requirements to offer selected courses and to pilot one program entirely through distance education as guided by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges.

GCC congratulated Dr. Virginia C. Tudela on her promotion to Vice President for Academic Affairs and appointment as the GCC Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO). GCC also congratulated Pilar Williams on her promotion from Associate Dean to Dean of the School of Trades and Professional Services. GCC welcomed a new Vice President for Finance and Administration, Rodalyn A. Gerardo.



# Palau Community College

## *Accreditation Updates*

RPPL 4-2, Palau Higher Education Act requires Palau Community College to be an accredited institution. Today, Palau Community College (PCC) has been an accredited institution for 43 years by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) – Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). It received its first accreditation status in 1977 and has continued to be an accredited institution of higher learning since then. PCC submitted its last required report, the College Midterm Report 2020 to the ACCJC-WASC in March 2020. On June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the Commission commended the College for its evident achievement and charged the College to continue its efforts in the best interest of its students.

The next required report by the College to the Commission is the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER) which is required for submission to the Commission in August 2022. The period to be reported in the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report covers seven years from 2016 to 2022. After the submission of ISER to the Commission; the Formative/Summative Comprehensive Review will take place in October 2022; and the Focus Site Visit (campus visit) will be held in April 2023. With the responsibility of the required ISER, the College re-affirmed the membership of its Accreditation Steering Committee (ASC) on August 25<sup>th</sup> and has its initial organizational meeting on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020. On September 18, 2020, the ASC members attended a half-day virtual training with ACCJC re – Institutional Self-Evaluation Report.

The College Accreditation Steering Committee is comprised of members representing the Office of the President, Administration & Finance Divisions, Academic Affairs Division, Student Services Division, Continuing Education Division, Library Resources Division, Faculty representatives, student representatives and classified staff representatives. The ASC is divided into four sub-committees representing each of the four Standards of Accreditation. Different sub-committees have begun working tackling their responsibilities within the overall ISER. The first draft of the College Institutional Self-Evaluation Report is due to the College Accreditation Office on September 16, 2021. The Committee will continue its work until the completion, approval and submission of the College ISER in 2022.

A newly developed associate of science two-year degree program – General Maintenance Program was approved in October 2020 by the College President and the College Board of Trustees. The General Maintenance Program substantive change proposal will be submitted to the ACCJC Substantive Change Committee for review and approval to be implemented as an accredited degree program eligible to receive Title IV aid. The College is putting its substantive change proposal together and will be requesting the Commission to be in its spring 2021 agenda. Once approved, the General Maintenance Program will be the 22<sup>nd</sup> degree program offered by Palau Community College.

With the global pandemic, ACCJC-WASC has cancelled every scheduled in-person meetings, workshops and trainings with its member institutions; ACCJC continues to provide virtual trainings, webinars and required meetings with its member institutions. Palau Community College Accreditation Steering Committee, Accreditation Liaison Officer, and the College President continues to attend accreditation trainings, webinars and meetings virtually to ensure

College continued compliance with Accreditation Standards, Eligibility Requirements, and Commission policies.

### ***College Program Highlights***

- In July 2020, the U.S. Ambassador to Palau, His Excellency John Hennessey-Niland visited Palau Community College and met with President Dr. Tellei. Ambassador Niland was recently appointed ambassador to the Republic of Palau in March of this year. He is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service with over thirty years of service. In August, Palau Community College (PCC) President Dr. Tellei also met with Republic of China-Taiwan Ambassador to Palau, His Excellency Wallace M.G. Chow and Secretaries. Ambassador Chow briefly introduced embassy diplomatic staff and the works of embassy and future ROC-Taiwan initiatives while at the same time discussed relevant future programs and initiatives available to Palau Community College.
- On August 24 - 26, 2020, Palau Community College Continuing Education, Palau Area Health Education (AHEC), and Ministry of Health hosted a three-days training on COVID-19 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), Body Temperature Assessment (BTA), and First Aid/CPR Training for law enforcement officers from Bureau of Immigration & Labor and Biosecurity office at Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment, and Tourism. Trainees learned various COVID-19 health and safety practices including steps in managing care for infected person. Palau Red Cross Society instructor also trained participants on the basic of cardiopulmonary resuscitation and first aid treatment.
- Palau Community College held its Swear-in & Induction Ceremony for Student Trustee and Associated Students of Palau Community College in October of this year. Present to administered oath of office to ASPCC officers and senators was PCC President Dr. Tellei while BOT Chairman Billy G. Kuartei gave an oath of office to the Student Trustee. The student association comprised of fourteen (14) students elected and inducted this year to conduct official business of ASPCC.