



COLLEGE OF MICRONESIA-FSM

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Office of the President

Date: February 28, 2023

To: Dr. Rosevonne Pato, Team Chair
Dr. Ardis Eschenberg, Vice Chair
Dr. Catherine Webb, ACCJC Staff Liaison

From: Dr. Theresa Koroivulaono, President, College of Micronesia-FSM

CC: Jennifer Helieisar, Accreditation Liaison Officer

Re: College Update on Core Inquiries

The College of Micronesia-FSM is looking forward to the upcoming Focused Site Visit. In order to facilitate the team's review process, please see below pertinent college developments pertaining to the core inquiries, in addition to evidence the team may find helpful in advance of the visit.

Core Inquiry 1: Library

The team would like clarification on the implementation and frequency of implementation of library, tutoring, and computer lab assessment tools, as well as the frequency and depth of analysis of the assessment results, and whether those analyses led to continual improvements. The team would also like to learn more about how the College determines sufficiency for quantity of librarians, tutors, and student computers across campuses. The team would like to learn more about library services to distance education students.

Standards or Policies: II.B.1, II.B.2, II.B.

Briefly describe any institutional improvements, strengthening of processes, documented outcomes, discussions or reflections which have occurred pertaining to Core Inquiry 1.
(300 words max.)

The Learning Resources Center (LRC) conducts assessments of its services and operations with program reviews and annual assessment plans developed in TracDat. Following the college's program review cycle for administrative units, the LRC conducted program reviews of its services in 2015 and in 2020 ([CII.1](#)) to assess its services and make recommendations for improvements. Annual assessment plans are developed in line with the annual budget development to ensure that budget allocations are prioritized. A one-on-one in-depth training session in TracDat on how to analyze and generate assessment data was conducted with the college's TracDat expert, who is also a teaching faculty member in computer information systems ([CII.2](#)).

The LRC, through the college's Management Team, was involved in the review of the college's Campus Enrollment Indicators ([CII.3](#)). The LRC was tasked to review its staff ratio, volume capacity, and seating capacity. The quantity of staffing at the LRC is guided by the college's enrollment indicators. LRC has maintained its computer services to students by providing 40 computers. During COVID-19 all computer labs were decreased to providing only 10 computers to meet social distancing requirements.

With the college's adoption of Canvas, the LRC will be able to provide library services and resources with the help of the Director of ISLET who is an Instructional Designer by profession. The Director is also reviewing online courses to ensure user-friendly navigability for students and that appropriate resource bases are included ([CII.4](#)). To facilitate sharing of resources across the campuses, the LRC is currently piloting the use of KOHA, an open-source library automation program with the help of the IT office. Training sessions on the use of its features were partially completed for state campus librarians pre COVID, and will resume later this spring 2023 after the latest update has been completed.

Evidence: Provide the list of evidentiary documents which will assist the team to better understand college processes, outcomes, and activities pertaining to Core Inquiry 1.
(documents should be separate pdf files on submitted flash drive)

1. [Administrative Unit Program Review-LRC 2020](#)
2. [TracDat Training Worksheet Email-LRC](#)
3. [Campus Enrollment Indicators](#)
4. [COMFSM Formative Tool Canvas Course Design and Evaluation Checklist](#)

Context/additional information (if applicable): Please feel free to provide any additional relevant information that provides context for the college's work. (300 words max.)

Core Inquiry 2: Course Level Student Learning Outcomes Assessment/Improvement, and Sustaining Campus-wide effectiveness practices.

The team would like to learn more about SLO assessment practices as they inform course-level changes that lead to improving student learning. Additionally, the team would like to learn more about the progress made in ensuring that the structures and practices that inform campus wide program effectiveness measures.

Standards or Policies: II.A.3; II.A.16

Briefly describe any institutional improvements, strengthening of processes, documented outcomes, discussions or reflections which have occurred pertaining to Core Inquiry 2. (300 words max.)

Course level assessment results ([CI2.1](#)) ([CI2.2](#)) ([CI2.3](#)) ([CI2.4](#)) are used to support and inform work being done on the Program Assessment Summaries (PAS) that are provided by both certificate and academic programs at the conclusion of each school year, typically in the spring semesters. In addition to the annual PAS reports, both certificate and academic programs engage in a review of these yearly assessments. The certificate programs work on a 2-year program review, while the degree programs work on a 4-year program review. COM-FSM uses the Nuventive TracDat as the tool for its assessment of Student Learning Outcomes.

In line with improving student learning outcomes system wide, course outlines posted on the website were reviewed in January 2023 for consistency and currency. Out of 339, there were 242 course outlines that are outdated and 97 are up to date. One reason for this is that some of the outdated course outlines belong to the A.S degree in Business Administration Program, Third-year Certificate in General Business and Third-year Certificate in Accounting. The courses in these programs are phasing out and will be replaced by the courses in the baccalaureate of science degree in business administration with an emphasis in accounting that the college incorporated in fall 2022.

Evidence: Provide the list of evidentiary documents pertaining to Core Inquiry 2 which will assist the team to better understand current college processes and outcomes.

(documents should be separate pdf files on submitted flash drive)

1. [CLA CampusWideSubmissionStatus - AC21-22 CLA QUANTITATIVE EVIDENCE PER MODE OF DEL](#)
2. [CLA CampusWideSubmissionStatus - AC21-22 CLA QUANTITATIVE EVIDENCE PER CAMPUS](#)
3. [CSLO Assessment Results National Campus \(Distance Learning and Face to Face\)](#)
4. [CSLO Assessment Results CTEC Spring2020](#)
5. [UPDATED COMFSM Formative-Tool-Canvas-Course-Design-and-Evaluation-Checklist](#)

Context/additional information (if applicable): Please feel free to provide any additional relevant information that provides context for the college’s work. (300 words max.)

The college has gone a long way from paper reporting to TracDat input and compilation of reports. While there have been challenges and gaps in identifying how assessment data could be used to implement objectives and goals, these shortfalls have led the Vice President of Instructional Affairs’ (VPIA) office to find ways to address the gaps. One significant response to this involved contracting a faculty member from this college to configure TracDat and link Student Learning Outcomes assessment to Institutional Learning Outcomes. Part of the on-going work also involves aligning goals, mission, and objectives all the way from Course Learning Outcomes to Institutional Learning Outcomes.

Core Inquiry 3: Long Term Facilities Planning

The team would like to know more about how the college plans for long-term facilities planning, especially in relation to national infrastructure planning.

Standards or Policies: III.B.1, III.B.4

Briefly describe any institutional improvements, strengthening of processes, documented outcomes, discussions or reflections which have occurred pertaining to Core Inquiry 3. (300 words max.)

After the completion of its facilities master plan in 2013, a total of \$8.5 million was appropriated consequently leading to JEMCO (Joint Economic Management Committee) lifting the suspension of funding to the college. Prior to this in 2004, JEMCO had suspended funding due to the absence of the Integrated Educational Master Plan.

The implementation of infrastructure projects across the FSM has been a major challenge both at the National and State levels with delays in project implementation. This dilemma resulted in the termination of the project management firm. Despite this setback, the college was able to complete the Yap Campus Student Center and the Classroom building with computer labs in 2013. New project management staff was recruited and the Project Management Unit Office (PMU) was reorganized in 2018, resulting in the current construction of the CTEC Multi Technical Building. Contract documents for the New Student Center and the Teaching Clinic

were being routed for signatures at the time of this report. Construction of the projects is expected to commence within three months.

In July 2021 the college submitted its infrastructure plan to the FSM National Government to ensure that the college's infrastructure plan and budget are included in the upcoming 2024 onward compact funding negotiations. A total of \$93.7 million of which \$60.7 is for new buildings and \$33.0 million for maintenance and renovation of existing facilities and infrastructure have been submitted. Attached is the list of projects extracted from the 2013 COM-FSM Facilities Master Plan.

Updating the Facilities Master Plan was not implemented due to the delay in completing the first five-year projects list. The master plan has been recommended for review and if necessary revised following the revision of the Integrated Education Master Plan and the development of the new COM-FSM Strategic Plan which will be led by the new President.

Evidence: Provide the list of evidentiary documents pertaining to Core Inquiry 3 which will assist the team to better understand current college processes and outcomes.

(documents should be separate pdf files on submitted flash drive)

1. [COM-FSM Development Strategy](#)
2. [COM-FSM Project List 2024](#)
3. [FSM IDP Plan 2004-2023](#)
4. [President's Work Plan](#)

Context/additional information (if applicable): Please feel free to provide any additional relevant information that provides context for the college's work. (300 words max.)

Core Inquiry 4: Human Resources

The team would like to know more about how the college effectively staffs the college including how it determines sufficiency of staffing, both institutionally and per campus, and how personnel are evaluated through processes that are cyclic and systemic.

Standards or Policies:

I.B.4

III.A.1, III.A.3, III.A.5, III.A.7, III.A.9, III.A.14

IV.B.1, IV.B.2, IV.B.3

IV.C.3

Briefly describe any institutional improvements, strengthening of processes, documented outcomes, discussions or reflections which have occurred pertaining to Core Inquiry 4.

(300 words max.)

Thirty-five core administrator positions remain essential and sufficient and though five are vacant, the duties are assigned to existing staff members who are most familiar and

experienced in the area. The closures of borders due to the pandemic affected the college's ability to fill a number of critical positions including the management positions. When the borders were opened late last year, we started to slowly fill these positions ([CI4.1](#)) ([CI4.2](#)) ([CI4.8](#)). While the Enrollment Management/Campus Standards Key Indicators (2006) do not include all areas of staffing at the college, the steps to establish appropriate staff and faculty levels are described in the HR Manual (2017) 'How to Request for an Additional Position' ([CI4.5](#)) for full time and 'How to Request for a Personal Services' ([CI4.4](#)) contract for part time staff. The college finds that these measures support careful position reviews and assurance of sufficient staffing ([CI4.3](#)). When positions are vacant, responsibilities are delegated to existing staff and/or shared between two or more staff members knowledgeable in the same field or familiar with the responsibilities-- with additional compensation. When the financial aid staff position vacated at CTEC in summer 2021, the duties were shared with the remaining staff at CTEC and one other at the FAO National Campus. When the IT Director position was vacated in September 2022, the second in command based in Kosrae was appointed acting while the position was advertised. These are the normal options to ensuring functional responsibilities are carried out when a fulltime position is vacant and being advertised.

Systematic evaluation of employees remains a challenge. As part of her Work Plan, the new president has prioritized the revision of the current performance management system and will be working with college constituents to create a new performance evaluation system ([CI4.13](#)).

Evidence: Provide the list of evidentiary documents pertaining to Core Inquiry 4 which will assist the team to better understand current college processes and outcomes.

(documents should be separate pdf files on submitted flash drive)

1. [Thirty-Five Administrators updated](#)
2. [February 23, 2023 Staffing Data](#)
3. [May 5, 2022 Memo-Faculty Positions](#)
4. [Sample Form-Request for A New Position](#)
5. [Sample Form-Request for a Personal Services Contract](#)
6. [Professional Development Data](#)
7. [College-Wide Performance Evaluation Figures](#)
8. [Full Time Faculty Vs. Part Time Faculty 2021-2023](#)
9. [Improvement Plans per Employee Evaluations 2020-2022](#)
10. [Other Opportunities Employees Improve themselves](#)
11. [December 7, 2022 MT Meeting Minutes](#)
12. [January 18, 2023 MT Meeting Minutes](#)
13. [President's Work Plan - Performance Evaluation](#)
14. [President's Work Plan - Personnel Audit](#)

Context/additional information (if applicable): Please feel free to provide any additional relevant information that provides context for the college's work. (300 words max.)

Professional development of employees in the area of performance evaluation, hiring, and policy continue annually under HRO while supervisors implement the on-the-job training based on improvement plans developed on individual evaluation (CI4.6) (CI4.9). Employees continue to develop themselves through group learning experiences, individually in their field, taking classes under the college or through degree programs outside the college (CI4.10). These many opportunities offer great options to choose from that best fit individual needs and support the college goals and philosophy of continuous improvement.

The new president has also requested a personnel audit (CI4.14) as Phase 1 of Workforce Planning and Development. The college has not had a personnel audit since 2010.

Core Inquiry 5: Communication

The team would like to know more about how the college disseminates information internally to inform processes and support institutional effectiveness.

Standards or Policies:

- I.C.3
- II.C.5
- III.D.2, III.D.5
- IV.A.6
- IV.C.7, IV.C.11, IV.C.12

Briefly describe any institutional improvements, strengthening of processes, documented outcomes, discussions or reflections which have occurred pertaining to Core Inquiry 5. (300 words max.)

Information at the college is shared to the college community in several manners depending on the nature and purpose of the communication.

The college website is the primary location of information for both internal and external members of the college. The website contains documents, publications, the catalog, college information, individual offices and programs' information, and 'immediate for release' information that is piped through the newsfeed. This information is then passed to the Info Panels that exist at every campus. There is one info panel per campus placed in a common area with the highest pedestrian traffic of students and college personnel. The Info Panel is an electronic monitor populated by the IT department. The National Campus is the only exception where two panels exist. The newsfeeds that appear on the college website are also sent to the college's social media accounts, specifically Facebook (CI5.1) and Twitter simultaneously.

All college employees have email addresses and are encouraged to regularly check their email accounts for college related matters. There are several email aliases that exist for the purpose of reaching specific groups within the college citizenry. The alias college@comfsm.fm is addressed to all employees at the college, both faculty and staff (inclusive of administration)

([CI5.2](#)). The aliases are further aggregated by campuses. Any communications via the aliases are considered “official” and follow the college’s *Publications Guide*. Email aliases also exist for special interest groups such as standing committees, ad hoc committees, and temporary groups that serve an administrative or operational purpose.

All Campus meetings are held once a month at each campus to share information across the college ([CI5.3](#)). After board meetings, the Board of Regents holds a community meeting to share updates about the college. During the pandemic all meetings were held via Zoom where the public at large were invited to participate.

Evidence: Provide the list of evidentiary documents pertaining to Core Inquiry 5 which will assist the team to better understand current college processes and outcomes.
(documents should be separate pdf files on submitted flash drive)

1. [COM-FSM FB](#)
2. [Email Delegation of Authority](#)
3. [Email Campus Wide Meeting Recording](#)
4. [President’s Messages to the Community](#)

Context/additional information (if applicable): Please feel free to provide any additional relevant information that provides context for the college’s work. (300 words max.)

Core Inquiry 6: Distance Education

The team would like to know more about how the college plans for, supports and sustains distance education, maintaining continuous improvement through cyclic, systemic evaluation processes.

Standards or Policies:

II.A.5, II.A.6, II.A.7
II.C.1, II.C.3
III.C.1, III.C.3

Briefly describe any institutional improvements, strengthening of processes, documented outcomes, discussions or reflections which have occurred pertaining to Core Inquiry 6.
(300 words max.)

The transition from Schoology to Canvas as the official Learning Management System (LMS) for distance education has significantly improved online instruction. The adoption of Canvas has provided numerous benefits, including a user-friendly interface, advanced features for collaboration and communication, and robust assessment tools.

To support the implementation of Canvas, the institution has offered professional development workshops for faculty members to familiarize themselves with the platform and best practices

for teaching online courses. These workshops have been well-attended and have received positive feedback from faculty.

The Distance Education Planning Group met twice to discuss and plan for the future of distance learning, ensuring that the institution remains at the forefront of providing high-quality online education. In addition to the faculty workshops, the institution has also developed plans for online course reviews using the SUNY online course quality review (OSCQR). This review process will ensure that online courses are of high quality and meet the institution's standards for online education. The review process will involve a thorough evaluation of the course content, instructional design, and the use of technology to support student learning.

Finally, to continue supporting faculty in using Canvas, the institution plans to offer additional workshops. These workshops will provide opportunities for faculty to deepen their understanding of the platform and explore new features and tools that can enhance the online learning experience for students. Training sessions and an online orientation course for students to study successfully online will also be implemented.

Overall, the transition to Canvas, the professional development workshops, and the plans for online course reviews demonstrate a commitment to improving the quality of distance education at the institution. By continuously strengthening processes and documenting outcomes, the institution is positioning itself as a leader in online learning and ensuring that students receive a high-quality education regardless of where they are.

Evidence: Provide the list of evidentiary documents pertaining to Core Inquiry 6 which will assist the team to better understand current college processes and outcomes.

(documents should be separate pdf files on submitted flash drive)

1. [Official Adoption of Canvas](#)
2. [Canvas Course Design \(and Evaluation\) Checklist](#)
3. [Faculty Workshop Evaluation January 2023](#)
4. [Faculty Workshop Evaluation Canvas August 2022](#)
5. [Zoom meetings for Distance Education Program Planning Group \(DEPP\)](#)
6. [Institution set up \(Mission statement, goals and outcome\)](#)
7. [Long Term Plans](#)
8. [Minutes of meeting for DEPP](#)

Context/additional information (if applicable): Please feel free to provide any additional relevant information that provides context for the college's work. (300 words max.)

The College of Micronesia-FSM (COM-FSM) serves the Federated States of Micronesia, and because we are a nation spread over 600 islands across the Pacific Ocean, distance education is critical to the college's mission of providing quality education to all students in Micronesia.

In recent years, the college has made significant investments in technology and infrastructure to support distance education. This includes the creation of the COM-FSM Virtual Campus on Canvas. This online learning platform allows students to access course materials, participate in virtual discussions, and submit assignments from anywhere in the world. The college has also implemented virtual communication tools like video conferencing and messaging platforms to facilitate collaboration between students and instructors.

One of the critical challenges that the college has faced in delivering distance education is the need for more reliable internet connectivity in many parts of Micronesia. The college partners with local internet service providers to address this challenge to improve internet access in remote areas.

To ensure high-quality distance education, the college provides instructors with extensive training and professional development opportunities, and offers a comprehensive support system for students including academic advising, tutoring, and technical assistance. In conclusion, distance education is a critical component of the College of Micronesia-FSM's mission to provide access to higher education for all Micronesian citizens. The college has made significant investments in technology and infrastructure to support distance education but has also recognized the unique challenges of delivering education in a remote and geographically dispersed region. Through its commitment to training, support, and innovation, the College of Micronesia-FSM has become a leader in distance education in the Pacific region.

Core Inquiry 7: Budgeting Process

The team would like to know more about how the college plans for and budgets revenues

Standards or Policies:

III.D.1, III.D.4, III.D.11

Briefly describe any institutional improvements, strengthening of processes, documented outcomes, discussions or reflections which have occurred pertaining to Core Inquiry 7.
(300 words max.)

Revenue projection is part of the college budget development process done annually in order to address the entire needs of the college. Considering that there are only two major sources of college revenue, past data and trends are gathered in order to properly project the income of the college in the coming years. The Vice President for Administrative Services (VPAS) leads the discussions together with the other vice presidents.

The first revenue source of the college is the income from tuition and fees paid by the students. It comprises 70% - 80% of the college revenue allocated to fund the operations of the college. Past data and enrollment trends are used in computing the projected enrollment data which forms the basis of tuition and fees. The second revenue source is government support. This revenue is intended to address the salaries for faculty and other instructional needs of the college.

During the budget development process, the vice presidents discuss relevant data affecting the revenue like high school graduation rates, migration issues, prior years' projections and budgets, the Integrated Educational Master Plan (IEMP), assessment results, etc. After the discussions, the cabinet (now renamed the Senior Leadership Team or SLT) decides on different scenarios (optimistic, moderate, and pessimistic) and asks the comptroller to project the revenue based on the given scenarios. The SLT decides which projected scenario the college will use after considering all of the assumptions and projected revenues.

The college has been successful in monitoring and controlling its expenses. Actual revenue and expenses are monitored monthly in order not to spend beyond what is approved by the Board. For the past years, the college has not used its cash reserves and continues to increase its endowment fund balance.

Evidence: Provide the list of evidentiary documents pertaining to Core Inquiry 7 which will assist the team to better understand current college processes and outcomes.

(documents should be separate pdf files on submitted flash drive)

1. [Budget Procedures Handbook 2020](#)
2. [FY2017 Operations Budget](#)
3. [FY2018 Operations Budget](#)
4. [FY2019 Operations Budget](#)
5. [FY2020 Operations Budget](#)
6. [FY2021 Operations Budget](#)
7. [FY2022 Operations Budget](#)
8. [FY2023 Operations Budget](#)

Context/additional information (if applicable): Please feel free to provide any additional relevant information that provides context for the college's work. (300 words max.)