

MESEISET

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Congratulations to the Newly Elected SBA Officers

Meseiset extends its congratulations to the newly elected SBA officers of the school year 2013-2014: President Shawn Mori, Vice-President Nenson Cholymay, Secretary Coleen Dungawin, and Treasurer Arene Setik.

The SBA elections were held September 16-17, and the election results were confirmed by Dean Kind Kanto. The four officers were presented to everyone at the All-Campus Meeting on October 2.



Shawn Nenson Coleen Arene

[Photo Credit: MITC (Media Center) staff]

COM-FSM POLICY: Participatory Governance

Our COM-FSM Board of Regents approved in early May 2013 a revised policy on participatory governance, as follows:

It is the policy of COM-FSM to promote participatory governance environment that involves the commitment and participation of all campus constituencies and is guided by the college's mission, goals, values, and institutional [student] learning outcomes (ISLOs) in the development of policies and procedures.

Participatory governance is the process for shared development of policies, procedures, and recommendations. Participatory governance provides the means through which all membership of the college community — students, faculty, and staff — can participate effectively in the systematic growth and development of COM-FSM. Participatory governance will be reflected in the functioning of the college community-at-large.

More on participatory governance, in terms of **student responsibility**, is found on page 3.

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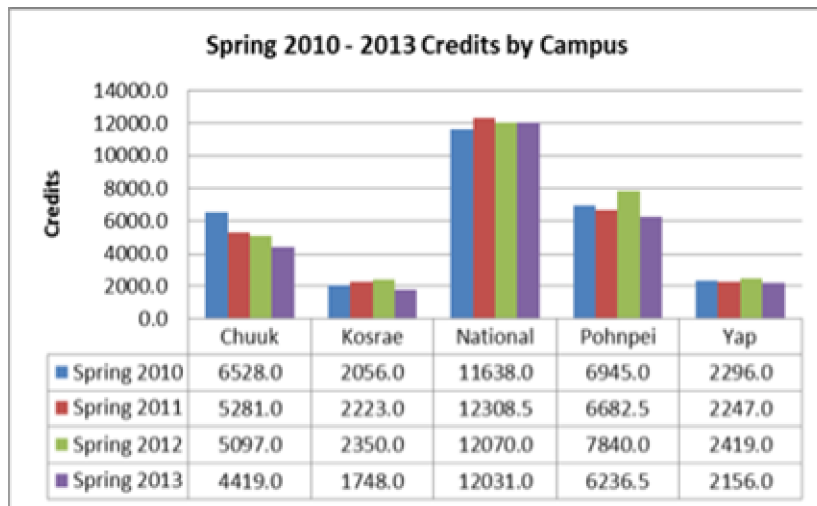
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Student Enrollment is Falling at Chuuk Campus

Only 318 students, according to official sources, registered to take courses at Chuuk Campus for the Fall 2013 semester. This figure represents only 65% of the projected 490. In other words, our administration had originally hoped to have 490 registered students, but less than two-thirds of the target was achieved. *“This is a deep disappointment,”* explained an administrative official. *“Our student enrollment is falling.”*

The rate of ðfallingö is measured not only in body count but also in ðnumber of creditsö. The graph and chart below come from our COM-FSM Palikir administration, as found in our COM-FSM website. The graph/chart, entitled ðSpring 2010-2013 Credits by Campusö, presents four years (measured by the spring semester) of credits taken by COM-FSM students at five campuses (including our own).

Look at Chuuk’s ðfallingö from 2010 to 2013 ð from 6528 credits to 4419 credits. The numbers in four years may reflect a 32% decline in student enrollment. In comparison, Kosrae experienced a 15% decline, Pohnpei 10%, and Yap 6%. Only the National Campus had a potential increase of 3% in student enrollment. Taken together, the five campuses declined 10%.



What factors might have led to the over-all decline of 10%? A Chuuk Campus instructor claimed, *“The National Campus is stealing students from the state campuses.”* That may, in part, be true, but such claim cannot explain fully how the National Campus’ 3% increase equals the over-all 10% decline.

Other factors have existed. Chuuk Campus administrators, faculty, staff, and students have offered their interpretations. Students (with possibly their parents) want to attend other colleges in Micronesia (not COM-FSM). Still others want to attend colleges outside of Micronesia. And, of course, some high school graduates fail the COMET and cannot attend COM-FSM.

A Chuuk High teacher said, *“They’re not stupid and lazy, but too many high school students don’t even take the COMET because they are afraid of failing the test. Also, too many of us don’t teach well.”* He added, *“The COMET has an essay test, but some students don’t even know how to write a paragraph or a sentence.”*

The father of a high school student explained, *“COM-FSM isn’t the only college in the world. There are other opportunities — better opportunities — for Chuuk High graduates.”*

Under normal conditions, the fall semester enrollment is greater than the spring semester enrollment. If only 318 registered this fall, we may expect an enrollment of fewer than 318 in the Spring Semester 2014. Get ready, people! The future does not look bright for our Chuuk Campus.

OUR SNACK BAR IS OPEN — FINALLY!

The Chuuk Campus Snack Bar has been re-opened, as of Monday, September 16, more than a month after the first day of instruction had begun. The delay was allegedly due to lack of full administrative support and action, particularly on the part of both Administration and Student Services.

All persons on campus are advised by Acting Student Services Coordinator Memo Yesiki to visit the snack bar daily and to purchase items that quench thirst and quell hunger.

PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE, Part 2

Participatory governance, in theory, is good. In fact, it is excellent. However, in practice and at COM-FSM, including Chuuk Campus, it is difficult to find. This is a problem in our college system, and it reveals itself in a number of ways.

For one thing, the written policy, as shown on page 1, states that “*all membership of the college community — students, faculty, and staff*” should get involved in the work of “*shared development of policies, procedures, and recommendations*”. To achieve this work, or process, all of us (not just administrators, faculty, and other staff, but also students) should participate in **purposeful dialog** — what Dean Kind Kanto calls **“genuine communication”**.

A case in point exists at Chuuk Campus: the recent SBA elections. At our All-Campus Meeting on Wednesday, September 4, Student Services (SS) officials announced that nomination papers were available for interested students to run for SBA positions. The Student Activities Coordinator added two points. First, any nomination requires signatures of at least 75% of the total student enrollment. In effect, given 318 students enrolled this semester, the nomination paper must contain more than 239 student signatures. Second, such nomination must follow the National Campus SBA by-laws, not the Chuuk Campus SBA by-laws.

An audience challenge was raised by a faculty member — that such points were not correct. No student in the audience joined the challenge. The Student Activities Coordinator then amended her own earlier statement: that a nomination could be approved and accepted with 50% of the student enrollment. No further amendment was made by anyone, including the Acting Dean.

The next week on Wednesday, September 11, SS officials convened a student meeting to introduce two candidates for SBA presidency and to announce that the SBA elections would be held on Thursday and Friday, September 12-13.

When asked by the audience if both candidates had at least 239 student signatures, the two explained that the total number of signatories on their nomination papers amounted to 60-70 only. At that point, a faculty challenge arose — to disqualify both candidates and/or postpone the elections. The challenge to postpone was accepted,

pending the return of Dean Kanto who was at a meeting on Pohnpei. The planned September 12-13 elections were postponed. No student voiced a viewpoint on the challenge.

On Monday, September 16, with the return of the Dean to Chuuk Campus, the SBA elections were held Monday and Tuesday, September 16-17. The Dean had accepted the fact that 60-70 signatures on a nomination paper were sufficient and that the number 239 was not correct.

What does this case reveal about participatory governance? Two points are shown.

É First, participatory governance does not allow for administrative dictatorship over student issues. The two-week delay in SBA elections was due to faculty challenge, not student participation in “shared development of policies, procedures, and recommendations”.

É Second, without student participation, student responsibility is sorely lacking on Chuuk Campus. To be sure, student responsibility does exist — in short supply; so, if students fail to challenge faulty administrative decisions, then Chuuk Campus becomes a venue for effective dictatorship.

If students choose to remain silent, then let them live under the feet of dictatorial decision-makers.

WHERE’S THE MONEY?

In April 2013 Chuuk Campus celebrated Cultural Day and Founding Day. In particular, there was a fund-raiser (like *téechapw*) to select a King and a Queen.

Student Activities Coordinator Lucille Sain was assigned to collect the funds and to submit an accurate written report on funds collected. To date, our Chuuk Campus Management Council has not yet received the report, and so we are not sure where the money is.

To be sure, the report was supposed to be prepared by Lucille and then to be submitted formally to the Management Council. Without the report, we cannot verify total receipts collected. Half of the funds was expected to be transmitted to the COM-FSM Endowment Fund.

A basic question must therefore be asked: Where is the money now?



**WHO
ARE
THESE
PEOPLE?**



INCENTIVE AWARDS 2012-2013 ANNOUNCED

A number of faculty, staff, and students received awards and certificates at our recent Chuuk Campus "Incentive Awards" ceremony for the school year 2012-2013, held on Friday, August 30 at the Student Activities Center. They included:

- É **Students' Choice:** Kersweet Eria
- É **Teacher of the Year:** Miuty Nokar
- É **Award of Recognition:** Alton Higashi
- É **Innovative Idea:** Alton Higashi
- É **Staff of the Year:** Kersweet Eria
- É **Professional Recognition:** Miuty Nokar and Jayleen Kokis.

Special recognition was also given to the following, according to our Staff Development Committee Chairperson Marylene Bisalen who served as mistress of ceremonies:

- É **Campus beautification:** Sosiro Adolif, Fumiko Chaniel, Virginia Mamangon, Marcelly Maria-

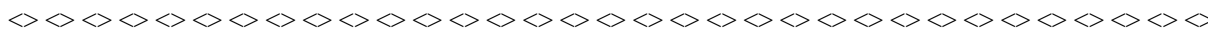
no, Cecile Oliveros, Lolita Ragus, Deva Senarathgoda, and Lynn Sipenuk;

- É **Maintenance Work:** Reagan Repen;
- É **Custodial/Maintenance:** Nariano Narios and Reagan Repen; and
- É **Student Leadership** (representing SBA officers): Acting President Nenson Cholymay and Treasurer Atson Atnis.

Certificates for Years of Service were given:

- É 25 years: Berikita Siver
- É 15 years: Roger Arnold, Rick Chiwi, and Alton Higashi
- É 10 years: Deva Senarathgoda
- É 5 years: Jayleen Kokis and Mariano Marcus.

Campus Dean Kind Kanto congratulated not only the award-certificate recipients above but also all employees for their hard work and team effort, particularly in the accreditation process.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Miuty and Jayleen

Miuty Nokar and Jayleen Kokis were recognized, at the "Incentive Awards" ceremony on August 30, for professional skills development, according to Staff Development Committee Chairperson Marylene Bisalen.

Miuty received his master's degree in the field of Education for Curriculum Studies on May 11, 2013, from the University of Hawaii at Manoa (UHM). He had participated in the MACIMISE (Mathematics and Culture in Micronesia - Integrating Societal Experience) program, funded by the U.S. National Science Foundation and sponsored by PREL and UHM. The MACIMISE program is known for its professional staff development efforts in the field of ethnomathematics.



Jayleen received her master's degree in the field of Library Information and Science from the University of North Texas. Her training had begun in Fall 2011, and she completed her training in July the

past summer. The program was funded by LEAP (U.S. Library Education in the Affiliated Pacific).

Miuty works as an instructor in the Math/Science division. Jayleen serves as a library assistant and is an employee through the Chuuk Campus Learning Resource Center (LRC). She is involved in our Pacific Digital Libraries (PDL) program, and her primary focus in her academic studies was youth librarianship.

Congratulations to both Miuty and Jayleen.



National Campus Elects Faculty/Staff Senate Officers

Faculty/Staff Senate officers for the new school year 2013-2014 were elected September 13 at the National Campus on Pohnpei, according to our COM-FSM webpage. They are President Ross Perkins, Vice-President Ringlen Ringlen, Secretary Maria Christina Madison, and Treasurer Universe Yamase.

Perkins said, *“As President of the Faculty and Staff Senate, I pledge to work with all constituents within the college to bring about positive change.”* By definition, all constituents within the college include internal stakeholders — administrators, faculty, staff, and students — at Chuuk Campus. Perkins is expected to visit Chuuk Campus sometime in October.

Chuuk Campus has two representatives on the National Faculty/Staff Senate. Last year they were Maika Tuala (staff) and Alton Higashi (faculty). For this present school year 2013-2014, the Chuuk Faculty/Staff Senate elected in May 2013 Mariano Marcus and Alton to represent Chuuk Campus.

What is surprising — and, at the same time, disappointing — is that our Chuuk Campus faculty and staff were not at all given any opportunity to vote in the September 13 election. No effort was made, at the national level, to include voting at the state level. In effect, President Perkins’ statement regarding all constituents within the college does not ring with much truth. Nonetheless, we at Chuuk Campus can hope that Perkins’ statement will hold true — that he plans to work with all constituents (or stakeholders) during his tenure. After all, Chuuk Campus’ faculty and staff are, by right, COM-FSM constituents as well.

To share faculty and staff concerns not only at Chuuk Campus but also throughout the COM-FSM system, please contact Mariano or Alton.



Perkins Ringlen



Madison Yamase

ACCREDITATION STANDARDS, MISSION STATEMENT, VISION, AND STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS OF COM-FSM

We the internal stakeholders of Chuuk Campus — administrators, faculty, staff, students — have at least four guiding lights with which we must foster student learning. They are:

- (1) Four Accreditation Standards, established by WASC/ACCJC;
- (2) Mission Statement, as written by COM-FSM;
- (3) Vision, also written by COM-FSM; and
- (4) Six Strategic Directions, as set by COM-FSM.

Here is a general description of the four guiding lights:

É Accreditation Standards:

- Standard I: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness;*
- Standard II: Student Learning Programs/Services;*
- Standard III: Resources (human, physical, technological, and financial); and*
- Standard IV: Leadership and Governance.*

É **Mission Statement:** *Historically diverse, uniquely Micronesian and globally connected, COM-FSM is a continuously improving and student-centered institute of higher education. The college is committed to assisting in the development of the FSM by providing academic, career and technical educational opportunities for student learning.*

É **Vision:** *COM-FSM will provide educational opportunities of the highest quality and will embrace the life-long pursuit of knowledge and the enrichment of the diverse Micronesian communities we serve.*

É Strategic Directions:

- Focus on student success;*
- Emphasize academic offerings in service to national needs;*
- Be financially sound, fiscally responsible, and build resources in anticipation of future needs;*
- Invest in and build a strong capacity in human capital;*
- Become a learning organization through development of a learning culture guided by learning leaders; and*
- Evoke an image of quality.*

Each one of us is fully responsible for implementing and achieving everything listed above. To implement and achieve, we must first know what the four guiding principles say. How are we expected to know? Certain key groups at Chuuk Campus will provide the teaching/learning: Management Council, Faculty/Staff Senate, SBA, and all standing committees. Let’s get started!

EDITORIAL RUMINATION #1: SBA ELECTION PROBLEMS

by Alton Higashi

An important reaction to our recent SBA elections is a critical revelation about our Chuuk Campus administration — that the Student Activities Coordinator Lucille Sain demonstrated incompetent decision-making. Here are revealing facts:

(1) *On September 4, at our All-Campus Meeting, Lucille announced that any student interested in running as a candidate in the SBA elections must submit nomination papers with at least 75% of the student enrollment. That would have required any candidate to submit his/her nomination papers with at least 239 signatures. That was not true at all.*

(2) *All the same, Lucille approved two candidates for the presidency — each with only 60-70 signatures on his nomination papers. She may have discouraged others from running for office, having declared the 75% “requirement” earlier.*

(3) *Later, she posted notices on campus announcing a further qualification — that a candi-*

date must be in a degree program. One of the two candidates for the presidency was in a certificate program, and Lucille did not declare him ineligible to run. We should ask ourselves why she failed to declare him ineligible.

A few students expressed their personal disillusionment — that Lucille had misled students. An administrator admitted that we trusted her too much. Last week, at the All-Campus Meeting on October 2, Dean Kind Kanto apologized to all that errors were made in administering the SBA elections, that we should learn from our mistakes, and that such errors must never be made again.

Indeed, as stakeholders, we must participate actively in observing how decisions are made on campus, in expressing any disaffection toward how decisions are made, and in sharing and recommending ideas on how we may all participate in governing what happens on Chuuk Campus. This is the essence of participatory governance.

EDITORIAL RUMINATION #2: SBA ELECTION PROBLEMS

by Alton Higashi

I wonder what stakeholders would think about Chuuk Campus when they learn about our recent SBA elections. Here are my thoughts:

(1) *A total of 195 students voted on September 16-17. This figure represents 62% of all 318 students enrolled this semester. I am glad that 62% of our students chose to participate in the elections; however, at the same time, I am disappointed that 38% of our students did not vote. The figure 62% represents student involvement and responsibility toward SBA governance (good), but 38% represents lack of student commitment to participatory governance (sad).*

(2) *For the 4 SBA positions (President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer) only two students ran against each other for the presidency. No student — I repeat, NO student — signed up to run for the three other positions.*

It is easy to conclude that, in general, our students choose not to get involved. When stakeholders learn about this, they may reach the same conclusion as mine — that our students may not care enough in demonstrating leadership and helping our campus get better. Should we there-

fore NOT care in helping our students get better? In other words, if students do not care, why should anyone else care about students?

(3) *The three remaining positions were won on the basis of write-in votes. So be it.*

For vice-president, there were 7 write-in candidates. The winning candidate received 16 write-in votes, or 8% of the 195 ballots.

For secretary, there were 3 write-in candidates. The winning candidate received 67 write-in votes, or 34% of the 195 ballots.

For treasurer, there were 5 write-in candidates. The winning candidate received 12 write-in votes, or 6% of the 195 ballots.

The winning percentages — 8%, 34%, and 6% — may be low. All the same, the three winning persons are now, by the rules of write-in voting, the duly elected vice-president, secretary, and treasurer.

I am saddened by these facts. All the same, we should (a) help these newly elected SBA officers succeed in helping Chuuk Campus and (b) work against incompetence in the administration of student affairs.

EDITORIAL RUMINATION #3: A FACULTY PROBLEM

by Alton Higashi

Is there a problem with some faculty members? A case in point is presented herewith.

On Friday, October 4, Chuuk Campus sponsored its monthly faculty workshop. By definition, a faculty workshop is an effort to improve professional skills among our instructors. Attendance included 13 full-time instructors — except Herner Braiel and Ben Bambo, both of whom are from the Business/Computer office. This kind of non-attendance should remind all of us — including students — that COM-FSM hopes to maintain a high-quality staff.

What, then, is a potential faculty problem? COM-FSM presently has six strategic directions for where we want to go as a learning organization. The fourth direction is, as follows: *“Invest in and build a strong capacity in human capital: The COM-FSM will support and strengthen faculty, staff, and administrators through establishment of aspirational goals for credentialing and funding professional development and building upon organizational and leadership capacity.”* It would therefore seem that non-attendance at faculty workshops runs counter to this fourth strate-

gic direction. That is not good.

On the other hand, attendance at the October 4 faculty workshop demonstrates something good:

É First, Wilson Bisalen and Virginia Mamangon (Counseling Office) attended and offered faculty an idea and plan to improve student learning on campus. They are not at all instructors, but they obviously care enough for students.

É Second, Edson Asito (Media Center) is not an instructor, but he attended the workshop to provide technical support.

É Third, Lolita Ragus (CRE) teaches only one course (AG 101) — she is not a full-time instructor — but she attended as well.

É Fourth, Lorleen Reitaun (IC Office) does not teach, but she attended to keep notes and prepare the minutes of the workshop.

It may be easy to forget what some persons do good for campus improvement. At the same time, it may be hard to remember what others fail to do what they were hired to do. Just remember: **WE ARE ALL STAKEHOLDERS, AND WE MUST DO WHAT IS GOOD AND RIGHT FOR THE CHUUK CAMPUS COMMUNITY.**

ACADEMIC TALENT SHOWDOWN

Okay, students! We are going to open up a new kind of talent show on campus — academic competition. Students may participate in demonstrating their academic skills in various subject areas (including English, math, natural science, social sciences, and business/computer). In mid-November Chuuk Campus will sponsor the competition — the Academic Talent Showdown.

This is how it will work: Students will form teams. Each team will include a number of volunteer students, and they will answer questions prepared by instructors. Points will be given for questions answered correctly. The team with the most points wins! Prizes for winning teams — and their individual students — will be awarded.

By October 31 instructors will provide lists of academic questions. How many questions will there be? Close to 250 questions in all. Then, with assistance of tutors, the teams will practice by trying their best to answer these questions. Then, on the day of the showdown, the real competition will begin. Only some of the practice questions will be chosen randomly, and the student teams must answer those questions.

The showdown is an opportunity to have fun, because it will be formatted like a quiz show or a college-style “jeopardy” show. So, come on, students! Start thinking about forming a volunteer team with friends. The practice sessions will be a great way to review lessons and to strengthen student learning, and the final showdown in mid-November will end with prizes!