

Progress Report

Presented to the
Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

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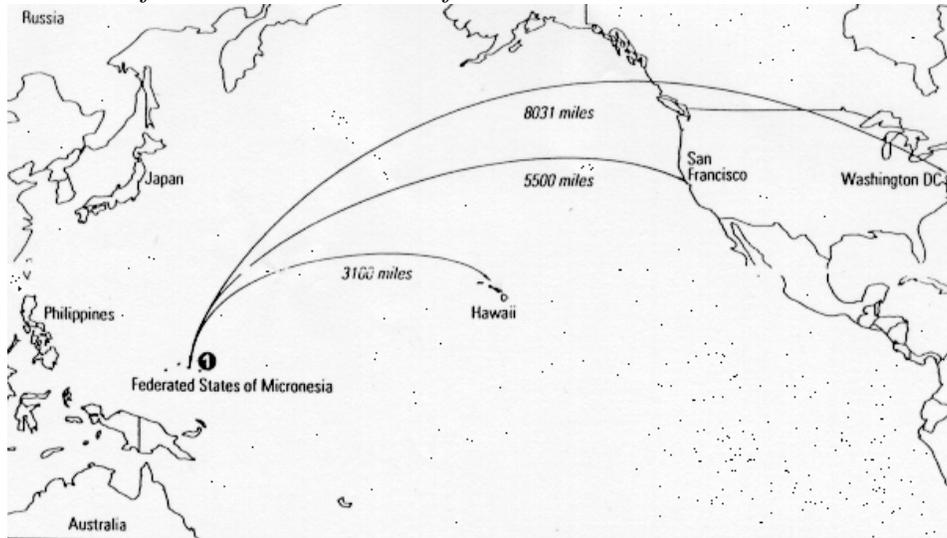
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Institution Background

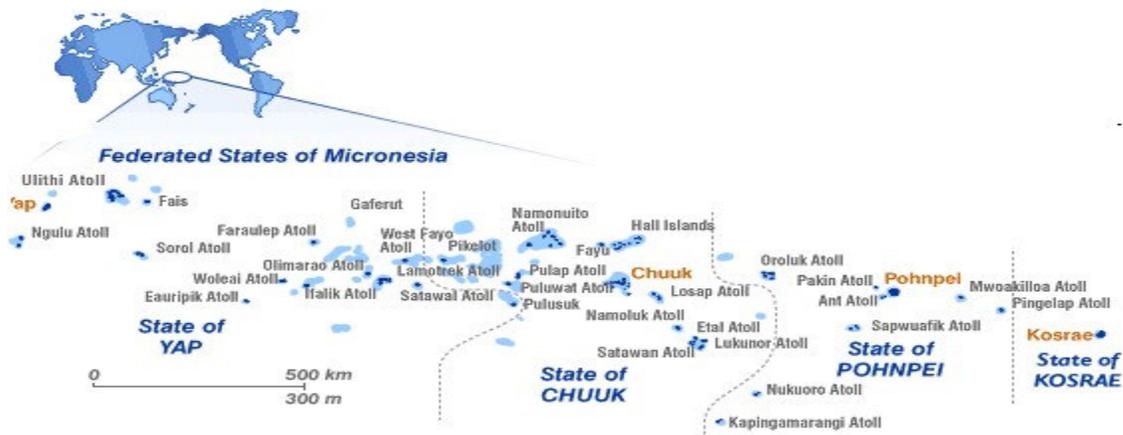
The College of Micronesia-FSM (COM-FSM) serves as the only higher education institution in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), comprising 607 islands in the Western Pacific Ocean. Although the area encompassed by the FSM is large (almost 2 million square miles), most of the area is ocean. The total land area for all islands is 271 square miles, populated by the approximately 120,000 residents. The distance between islands creates a geographic barrier, as do the fifteen different languages and cultures that comprise this developing nation.

Figure 1. Location of the Federated States of Micronesia



The Federated States of Micronesia includes four states, which are quite uneven in land area and population. The largest population is found in the state with one of the smallest land areas; based on the 2000 census, Chuuk has approximately 54,000 people making their homes on 49 square miles. The largest state, Pohnpei, has approximately 35,000 people on 132 square miles. Pohnpei is the home of the FSM national government, the source of local funding for the College of Micronesia-FSM.

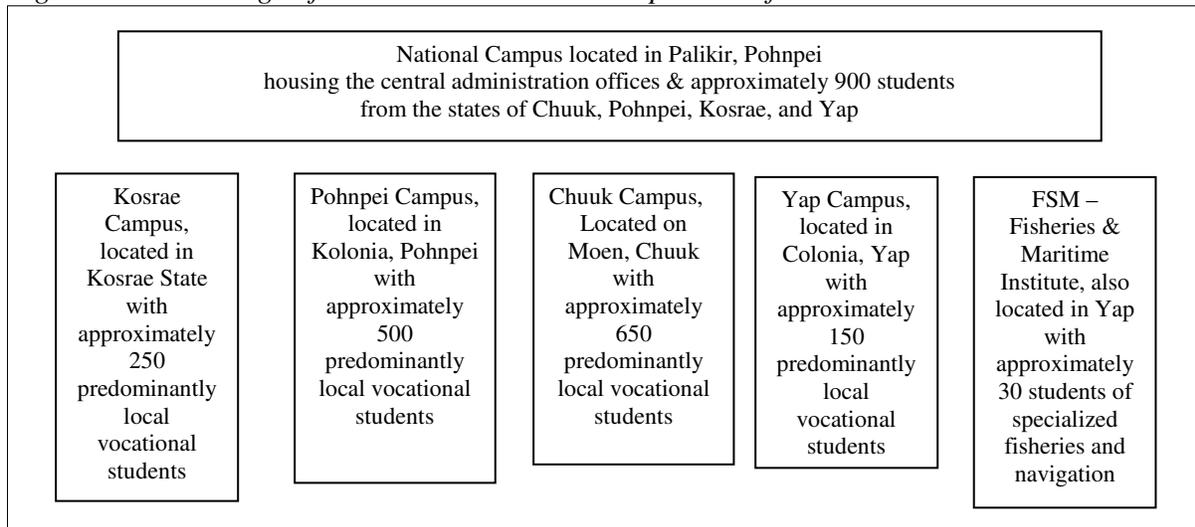
Figure 2. Details of the Federated States of Micronesia



History and configuration of the COM-FSM

The COM-FSM is one college with six campuses located in the four island states of the Federated States of Micronesia. The administrative center is located at what is called the national campus, which serves students from the four FSM states who are interested in the offerings of the national campus. The national campus is located on the island of Pohnpei, close to the FSM national government complex in Palikir. The island of Pohnpei has a campus in Kolonia, Pohnpei. The other college sites are the campuses on Kosrae, and on the main islands in the states of Yap, and Chuuk. The newest site, the FSM Fisheries and Maritime Institute, is also located on the island of Yap. Although sometimes casually referred to as a system, everyone at the college has a clear understanding that this is one college, located in six places in the FSM.

Figure 3. The College of Micronesia-FSM six campuses on four islands



Higher education was first established for this developing nation in 1963 when the United Nations Strategic Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTPI) and the University of Hawaii created the Micronesian Teacher Education Center (MTEC) to provide in-service teacher training opportunities. When the focus of MTEC changed from in-service to pre-service teacher education, the center was renamed Community College of Micronesia (CCM). With being called a community college, CCM expanded into other areas, such as business management, liberal arts, and continuing education. The Western Association of Schools and Colleges first accredited CCM in 1978.

Continuing Education (CE) Centers were established in each district of the TTPI by assuming the operation of the district-run teacher education centers to provide in-service teacher education closer to home. When CCM was united with other postsecondary institutions in the TTPI under the College of Micronesia (COM) system, administration of the CE Centers was placed under the COM main office. After the TTPI split into three independent nations—the Republic of Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia—the three institutions in the COM system also separated. In April 1993, the College of Micronesia-FSM (COM-FSM) separated from the larger system and became an autonomous college with the mission of exclusively serving students in the Federated States

of Micronesia. This move included placing the CE Centers located in the FSM under COM-FSM.

Once autonomous from the larger College of Micronesia, the COM-FSM Board of Regents created an ambitious vision for higher education as a strategy to develop the employment capacity of Micronesian citizens. In the 1994 - 1998 strategic plan it was envisioned that the four continuing education centers on Pohnpei, Chuuk, Yap, and Kosrae would each become comprehensive community colleges and the former Community College of Micronesia located in Pohnpei would become a baccalaureate-degree granting institution for the FSM. The Board renamed the CE Centers to COM-FSM Campus/(state) to reflect this new mission. As a result, each state campus practically operated independently.

Due to fiscal limitations, this ambitious plan has been adjusted to the current status of one college – the College of Micronesia-FSM – with six campuses located on four islands: a comprehensive community college campus (referred to as the National campus) in Pohnpei, four state campuses focusing on vocational training, and the specialized FSM Fisheries and Maritime Institute (not yet offering accredited courses). In addition to physical fragmentation, large distances between the islands, and an increase in student population, the newer mandate has created administrative challenges for the college. The college is addressing these challenges with the help of the recommendations from WASC and by choosing an experienced new President whose willingness to improve and understanding of the college will make the community stronger.

COM-FSM Mission

The college's mission is directly tied to the nation's challenge of uniting disparate cultures and languages. The college's mission statement begins by acknowledging that fact and mentions national unity, a vital concept for a young nation. After a long and inclusive public consensus-building process, the Board of Regents adopted the current mission statement in 1999. During extended negotiations between the FSM government and the United States, it was clear that the future of the college would depend to some degree on the agreement that is now reflected in the Amended Compact of Free Association. Therefore, a review of the mission statement was delayed until the compact was ratified. The compact has now been ratified by both countries and a review of the mission statement and strategic plan is scheduled to begin in the summer of 2005. The current statement is a remarkably strong guiding principle for the college. It is frequently cited in conversations and is read before meetings of the Board of Regents. There is some opposition to changing any of the wording of the mission statement, but it is beginning to be realized that educational opportunities for all people may no longer be a financial possibility.

Historically diverse, uniquely Micronesian, and globally connected, the College of Micronesia-FSM is the national institution of higher education of the Federated States of Micronesia. Originally established to develop teacher education, its current mission is to provide educational opportunity -- academic, vocational and technical -- for all people. Aimed at nourishing individual growth and national unity, scholarship and service, COM-FSM is dedicated to developing integrity, critical thinking skills, a breadth of vision, and the habit of reflection in an educational environment enriched by cultural traditions.

Statement on Report Preparation

On March 5, 2004, the accreditation visiting team held an exit meeting at the College of Micronesia-FSM. The accreditation team mentioned four primary areas the college needed to address. These included:

- improving communication
- integrating planning
- creating continuity
- identifying and assessing student learning outcomes

Immediately following the visiting team meeting, the senior members of the administration began to formulate plans to improve communication, continuity and planning, and create a unified campus across the Federated States of Micronesia. The faculty reaffirmed the commitment to completing student learning outcomes for all courses and including program learning outcomes in the new catalog. The biweekly Presidential Updates were returned to their original function of reflecting the monthly activities of the college. The campus directors were included in regular cabinet meetings by telephone links; members of the administration made regular visits to campuses; and, some faculty members rotated to a different campus to teach during summer session. Planning was addressed in numerous forums including a week-long campus directors meeting in May.

When the official letter from WASC was received in June, several groups were already addressing a number of the recommendations mentioned in the letter that delivered the warning. Interim President Spensin James immediately informed the college and the general community of the accreditation status. Within days he had formed an accreditation working group of faculty and senior administrators to guide the activities necessary to address the concerns. The accreditation working group has grown and changed membership slightly, but the group has continued to coordinate the responses to all the recommendations. The group has participated in the preparation and circulation of drafts of both progress reports.

The report was first created in outline form, and was widely circulated to all campuses. A detailed work plan was created and advice and information was received from the entire college community. Many hours have gone into the preparation of the report, but many more have been spent actually creating, strengthening, and renewing the communication pathways; planning the future activities and direction of the college; reviewing performance and identifying student learning outcomes in all aspects of operations. This report is a result of that effort and the authors hope we have accurately reflected the work that has been performed and supported by the entire community. The college has appreciated the opportunity to address the concerns raised by the accreditation commission and has enthusiastically addressed the issues and the changes that have been made.

Creating a continuous cycle of renewal

It is an underlying premise of this progress report that work completed to date is only the beginning of the planned responses to the accreditation recommendations. The accreditation working group has taken the lead on organizing this report. During this process, members have assured the college community that the commission does not expect the scope of work called for in this recommendation to be completed in the time passed since the accreditation

team visited the college. In general, the college has responded to the recommendations by following these steps: a) reviewing and assessing the need for improvement; b) examining the existing issues and determining the ability to affect learning outcomes; c) using consensus to develop plans for improvement; d) putting in place procedures that will assure continuation of the improvements; e) outlining the measures that will be used to evaluate progress; and; f) planning to use the evaluation to improve the process. This report will describe the steps completed to date and plans to continue improvement. Evidence will be available. The report will discuss the involvement of numerous individuals, committees and study groups to ensure that although the plans detailed here may be modified, the process will continue to be a part of the culture, so initiatives will not be sidelined. By embedding the planning process into the college culture, improvement will be a shared responsibility.

The recommendations of the commission have caused the college to examine the relationships between the campuses. The administration has strengthened the support given to the campuses and worked at creating a clear and consistent administrative organism, spread across four island states. Although the distances are great, members of the community have traveled between the islands to strengthen the relationships and the procedures. The office of the college President and the central administration have made regular electronic, telephone and face to face contact a priority. Campus staff and faculty have increased their appearances at the national campus and administrative personnel have visited campuses and provided assistance during registrations, with financial aid applications, and with general meetings to share information. The central administration has provided training for state and national campus representatives in management issues, and increased the flow of information to and from the campuses. All documentation of the improvements cited in this report will be available to the team members during their visit. A timeline of activities planned for the remainder of 2005 are included in the final section.

Members of the team

The members of the accreditation working group are: Spensin James, President; Linda Maradol, Director, Human Resources; Jean Thoulag, Acting Vice President for Instructional Affairs; Ringleen Ringleen, Vice President, Support and Student Affairs; Jessica Stam, Director, Institutional Research and Planning; Norma Edwin, Executive Assistant to the President; Felicia Hunt, Institutional Effectiveness Coordinator; Dana Lee Ling, Chair, Math/Science Division and Co-Accreditation Liaison Officer; and Joe Saimon, Co-Accreditation Liaison Officer; Jonathan Gourley, Chair, Languages/Literature Division; Jon Berger, Director, Academic Affairs; Danny Dumantay, Comptroller and Tracy Longanecker, Administrative Specialist.

This report is a collaborative work in every sense and as such addresses the recommendations that encourages the college to increase communication. All members of the college community have assisted in making the progress shown here possible. People have worked together to think about the issues, make suggestions, listen to each other, and consider new ideas to improve the organization. The staff, faculty and students also wish to recognize the members of the Board of Regents, whose leadership has enabled the college to perform the tasks necessary to address the recommendations.

Recommendation 1: Improve Communication

The college must implement a collaborative process that:

- *(I) Includes faculty, staff, students, and administrators at the college's six sites.*
 - *(II) Identifies the roles and scope of authority of the faculty, staff, students, and administrators in the decision-making processes.*
 - *(III) Identifies the roles and scope of authority of college committees in the decision-making processes.*
 - *(IV) Includes dialogue as a means to develop, document, implement, and evaluate assessment plans for student learning outcomes in both instruction and student services.*
 - *(V) Includes formal pathways for effective communication and recommendations are distributed across the college's six sites.*
-

The following evidence and documentation in support of this section of the report will be found in the team room during the accreditation visit:

- Examples of the Presidential Updates; the new college-wide newsletter; results of a communication survey and focus groups with staff, faculty and students;
- Staff and faculty senate by-laws;
- Committee responsibility memos, minutes and terms of reference for committees; information on proxy representation for remote campus committee members;
- Materials in support of the student services assessment plan development; documentation of dialogue regarding assessment; assessment study group notes;
- Chronological log of activities in support of communication.

To address the expectation of collaboration and improved communication, the College of Micronesia-FSM has renewed and begun a number of initiatives to strengthen the connections between faculty, staff, students and the community. As this report will make clear, the college community is undergoing significant change. There has been a change of leadership in the President's office, a new organizational chart, and a refocused assessment initiative. Additional activities are planned, including a retreat on communication pathways in May. That day long activity will be the culmination of an intense needs assessment underway now at the college [Bullet I, Recommendation #3, Standards IB.1, IVA.1, IVA.3, IVB.2bi].

The challenge of responding to the WASC recommendations with two progress reports within six months has energized the leadership of the college. The faculty, staff, and students are benefiting from the many renewed efforts to have frequent and inclusive communication that clarifies issues and sets direction. [Standard IB.1] Examples of open dialogue are obvious in every aspect of the college and the community is rightly proud of the exchange and the wide ranging discussions that are generated. Many feel that it reflects local culture and much of the discussion strengthens the community. These discussions are the forum where good ideas do battle with not so good ideas but the community hears and considers it all. One of the discussions is how to get the good ideas into action, and how to make sure everyone can hear the facts amid the opinions [Bullet I, Standards IVA.1, IVA.2a]. Some of the discussions have been on how to assure that there are methods to make ideas into reality and that everyone needs to have access to the procedures to that pathway. Serious efforts are underway to allow college community members a way to harness the energy of the college, to focus attention on issues and bring data

into the discussion [Bullet I & II, Standards IB.5, IIA.2f]. Progress is being made in meeting this goal and faculty, staff, and students are all participants in the progress that is reflected in this report.

Change in leadership in the Office of the President

For just over a year, Mr. Spensin James has led the College of Micronesia-FSM. With over 27 years of experience in various administrative and instructional positions at the college, he has reinstated many policies and procedures, fostered a climate where new ideas have been developed into action and been accessible to the community. Focused all-campus meetings on issues affected the college have been held for the first time [Bullet II & V, Standards IB.1, IVA.1]. The first three of these have been on planning issues, organization, and budgeting respectively. Minutes of these meetings and other documentation will be available in the team room during the accreditation team visit. Faculty and administrators have traveled to campuses to deliver training, assist with procedures, talk to leaders, monitor progress and listen to the college community, especially the students [Bullets I & II, Standard IVA.1].

The again regularly published “Presidential Update” has returned to the original format of containing information from all the campuses. [Standard IVB.2e] A newsletter with a more informal style has been initiated to supplement the Presidential Updates. Monthly reports from all areas are again required, and delays have become rare. Regular meeting schedules are announced, and committee minutes are being documented and circulated [Standard IVA.3]. Policies and procedures are enforced and reminders have been distributed to all concerned [Bullet V, Standard IVA.2]. During this period, the college community has performed a very large number of tasks. These could not have been accomplished without adequate communication and the definition of roles [Bullets II & III, Standard IVA.2a].

Working together

Interaction between the members of our far flung campuses has increased dramatically. All members of the college community have been kept informed and are invited to comment on the responses to the recommendations [Bullets I & V, Standard IVA.3]. Many members of the college community have offered their comments and assistance during the dialogue and that is reflected in this progress report. As in any organization, many have participated, but some have watched and waited to see how much real change would happen. Some have expressed noisy opposition; but most opposition is manifested in the usual way, as slow cooperation. However, momentum is building, deadlines have been put in place, and those who welcome the changes are moving in the right direction and will carry the college community. The benefits of these activities are beginning to show [Bullet V].

The enormous amount of revitalization and change that has been undertaken has caused some discomfort. Questions arise that need considered answers, and information can sometimes flow imperfectly. The uneven distribution of resources cannot be solved overnight [Standards IIA.1, IIA.2, IIB.1, IIB.3a, IIIA, IIIB.1], the redefinition of roles can cause discomfort, almost everyone has had too much to do, and change is not really ever comfortable. The plans call for time to solve these issues, and evaluate the changes at regular intervals so that adjustments can be made. Eventually the culture will shift as the benefits of the changes become more apparent. The warning status from WASC has been an opportunity for the college to review and examine the

roles and scope of authority of the various aspects of the campus community. This process will not be completed by the time the WASC team visits, because the college is attempting to make this an ongoing process of evaluation and readjustment [Recommendation #5, Standard IB.1].

Strengthening the connections

One change that is apparent to all is the amount of increased contact with the campuses that has been initiated. The needs and opinions of all members of the college community have been counted and will continue to be sought [Bullet I, Standard IB.1]. The three all campus meetings that have been held, and the next that is planned in May have been of great assistance in the progress that has been made in addressing issues of organization, accountability, and administrative functions [Bullets II & V]. Our campuses are located great distances from each other and much communication is done by email and the telephone. Face to face meetings make these written communications more personal, and relationships between counterparts in other states has done much to reduce misunderstandings and increase real interest in resolving issues [Bullet I].

Improved pathways of communication

The total population of the FSM is approximately 120,000 spread over miles of Pacific Ocean. Extended Micronesian families and the inclusiveness of local traditions make long distance relationships easier to maintain than the same relationships would be in a dense, urban environment. Representatives of the management of all the campuses have become more familiar faces at the national campus, attending training and exchanging ideas. Members of central administration have made more frequent appearances at the campuses, and have listened to the issues that concern the staff, faculty and students at each site [Bullets I, II & V, Standard IVA.1]. A log of these trainings and working visits will be available to the visit team and a sample is attached as an appendix. Although disagreements and misunderstandings can arise, the regular communication has helped with problem solving. Issues surrounding communication are on many agendas. Staff and faculty are working with their counterparts at other campuses, and the frequent exchange of information has become more commonplace. An inventory of communication needs and focus groups on every campus are being conducted at this time [Standard IVA.5]. A retreat on improving communication is scheduled for late spring. The group has discussed approaching Dr. Jamie Mason as facilitator. Dr. Mason's assistance was greatly appreciated when the college deliberated on the reorganization.

Committee structure helps communication across campuses

One way in which all the faculty, staff, students and administrators of the College of Micronesia-FSM are involved with each other and with governance is through the committees of the college [Standard IVA.2b, IVA.3]. These large and busy committees have seats for representatives of every campus. Meetings are held regularly and many committees publish their meeting schedule in advance. The members of the committees represent constituents and minutes and concerns are shared regularly with these constituents. This is designed to foster open communication and clear access for all members of the college community [Bullets III & V, Standard IVA.2b, IVA.3]. This procedure has been reinforced with memos from the office of the President regarding the functioning of the committees, the roles of the members and by soliciting membership from the faculty and organizing the membership of the committees to reflect all areas of the college.

Chairs of the committees have assisted by participating in the regular distribution of agendas and minutes [Bullet V, Standard IVA.1].

Committees develop policy at the College of Micronesia-FSM, and this is done by listening to suggestions of the members, and by responding to directives from the Board or from the Cabinet. Data and information is sought, draft policies are formulated and then the process of circulating the policy for comment from the community follows. Many policies undergo several drafts during this period of comment. Eventually the policy is approved by the committee and forwarded to the cabinet. The cabinet has the option of approval or returning the policy to the committee for further development. Policies that have not been circulated, or are inadequately detailed, confusing or inconsistent are returned for further work. The President monitors this activity through the minutes and confers with the committee chair if necessary [Bullets III & V, Standards IVA.1, IVB2e].

Proxy representation

Increasing effective communication to and from the meetings by the members located at the campuses is in the best interest of the committee and the college. Numerous ideas have been suggested, conference calls and a satellite connection are sometimes used, but these are too expensive to be used on a regular basis. This year an experiment in proxy representation has been tried for several committees whose members report an increase in awareness at the campus of the issues addressed by the committee and an increase in the perspective of the campus by the committee members. At the very least, there is increased participation by the remote members in the processes of the committees [Bullet I & II]. A formal evaluation of proxy representation is planned for the end of spring term. Included in that plan will be a review, suggestions for improvement and the potential further implementation of proxy representation to additional committees [Bullet III & Recommendation #4, Standards IVA.1, IVA.3, IVA.5].

Increased interest in the well being of all campuses

A significant change in the college over the past year is the perception that assistance in staying on schedule is now seen as a college, not a campus problem. Solutions to problems are addressed by all relevant employees, not just the campus directors. There is a movement at the national campus to address and assist with campus problems. Assistance with compliance has been given by visits to the campuses and by trainings at the national campus. Departments have created documentation of the necessary procedures and distributed this information. Revisions of manuals are underway, budget hearings are attended by representatives of the whole college and the budget directives reflected the need to improve the libraries and staff development at the campuses. These changes in the distribution of resources, and data to support decision making will improve the perceptions of all members of the college community, although it will take time to change. The campuses have also been actively involved in the budget hearing held by the financial committee and in a joint meeting of the curriculum committee and the student services committee on the managed enrollment instituted this year at the college [Bullets II, III & V, Standards IIA.2c, IIB.1, IIID.1a].

Assessment study group

The assessment study group is an excellent example of the development of roles and scope of authority of the committees. The college community is willing to undertake assessment

activities, and a committee structure would allow input and dialogue regarding assessment. But the work of the accreditation self study showed that there were some concerns about how the committee should be structured and how the groups should be represented. This year an assessment study group was formed to review the needs, and the potential structure of an assessment committee. The group hopes to develop the terms of reference and strike a committee by the end of the spring term.

The assessment study group has been considering the issues and educating themselves on the experience of other schools, and will recommend a clear path for monitoring the progress of assessment. This group is open to anyone with an interest and meets as a group but also works as small subgroups interested in ways of assisting the assessment efforts. Members of the assessment study group were instrumental in suggesting that assessment be the keynote of the staff development day this year and also participated in bringing Dr. Mary Allen to work with the college during staff development week [Bullet IV, Standards IB3, IB6, IB7].

Staff and Faculty Senate assists in communication

The College of Micronesia-FSM was involved in a Presidential search for many months following the accreditation team visit. Like other colleges, this activity involved representatives from all parts of the college including the faculty and staff senate. Unlike most colleges, at COM-FSM the staff and faculty have a combined senate, which represents every employee of the college except the President. The Board of Regents agreed that the staff and faculty senate would lead a forum where the final candidates would respond to questions generated by the college community and refereed by the senate [Bullets I & II, Standard IVA.1].

The college faculty and staff senate had been involved in assisting with issues of maintaining communication and connections between the campuses before the accreditation recommendations. These issues have been important to the college and the senate addressed this issue when it changed the by-laws in 2002 to include representatives of the campuses.

Issues of improved communication discussed under other recommendations

Improved communication has been facilitated by the visits of the vice presidents and the administrative staff to the campuses, the implementation of email distribution list and some wireless communication installed at Chuuk campus. All of these are discussed under the implementation of the new organizational chart under recommendation #2.

The communication needs assessment currently being conducted and the focus groups at each campus are thoroughly discussed under recommendation #3.

Communication is improved by the distribution of the manual of administrative policies and procedures, which includes the Board of Regents manual is listed as Governance, and is discussed under the appropriate bullet in recommendation #6.

Recommendation 2: Improve Communication

The college must develop, document, and implement an organization of administrative responsibilities across the six sites that ensures continuity in student support and instruction and gives a clear, consistent line of administrative authority such as,

- *For all instructional programs cross all sites to the Vice President for Instructional Affairs*
 - *For all student service programs across the sites to the Vice President for Support and Student Affairs*
 - *For all learning resources programs across the sites to the Director of Learning Resources Center.*
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The following evidence and documentation in support of this section of the report will be found in the team room during the accreditation visit:

- May 2004 Board of Regents minutes on the role of the campuses;
- October 15 progress report to WASC;
- Implementation training materials used in December 2004 training; and participant evaluation report; and documentation of follow-up discussions;
- Log of visits between campuses for training and monitoring; enrollment monitoring factors & criteria; documentation of communication on instructional issues; field notes and trip reports of face to face visits;
- Documentation of all college librarians meeting, revised policy and procedure manual for college learning resources centers;
- Campus implementation plans for Chuuk, FSM-FMI, Kosrae, Pohnpei, Yap and national campus.

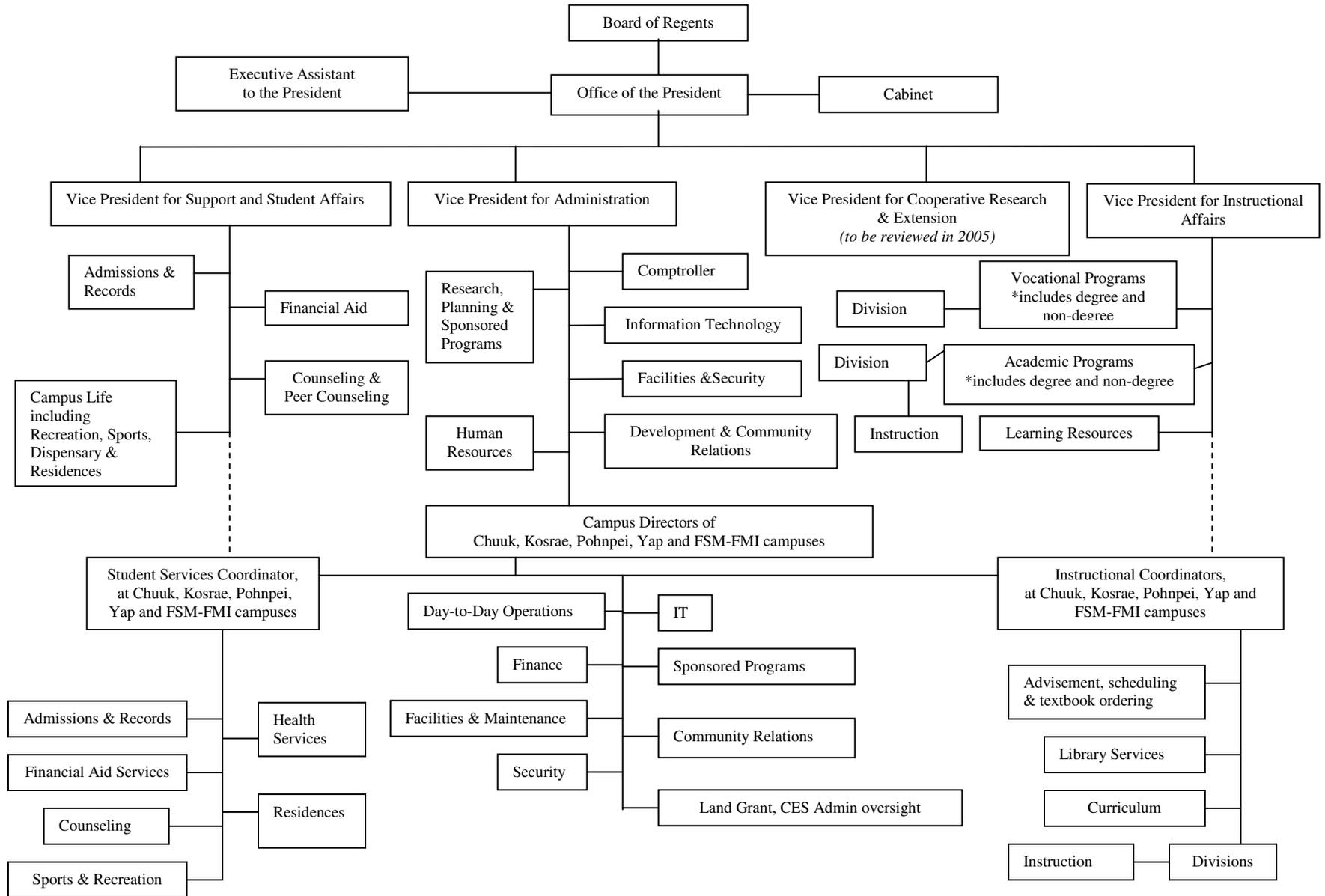
Introduction

In the progress report submitted to WASC on October 15, 2004, the College of Micronesia-FSM reported on a collaborative process of organizational review that culminated in a revised organizational chart. That chart, with minor clarifications inserted, is produced on the following page. This report is a description of the progress in following the plans made last fall. The implementation of the organizational chart was done in three phases. The first phase, October to December, culminated in a day of training and discussion attended by key personnel from all campuses. This training was rated a success overall by the participants.

The nearly completed second phase began in January 2005 and ends in April. During this phase the faculty and staff have been meeting the identified objectives. For example, many training and monitoring visits have occurred; each campus has created an implementation plan; research and planning has begun the evaluation of the strategic plan and the performance based budget; student services has begun instituting student learning outcomes; the college community has been offered assessment training and each department has deliberated on assessment; and the college has welcomed the President, Spensin James. While the college officially begins the third phase of this process in May, much of the assessment work assigned to this phase has already begun. The members of the college have been very successful in responding to this recommendation by engaging the college community in a collaborative process of evaluation, reorganization and planning.

COM-FSM Organization Chart follows

College of Micronesia – FSM Organizational Chart



Role of the campuses

The role of the state campuses had been an important issue for the Board of Regents for several years. In March 2004, the Board of Regents strongly encouraged the administration to resolve issues and conclude with a recommendation. Issues of decentralization, efficiency, and economies of scale were complicated by local needs and the political issues confronting a young federated nation. Administrative deliberations included an all campus and director meeting which culminated in a September 2004 Board of Regents motion approving the role of the campuses and included as an appendix.

With this issue successfully resolved, the WASC recommendation to clarify the lines of authority resulted in a reorganization of the reporting relationships. The changes also create a stronger link between the responsibilities at the campuses and the administration at national campus. Coincidentally the business office made several changes including an increase in the amount of imprest funds available to campuses, improvements in the book ordering process and the level of responsibility that the business officers and directors at the campuses can assume for day to day financial transactions. These financial adjustments were most welcomed by the campuses and have been implemented at all campuses.

Phase one - October to December 2004

The progress report submitted to WASC on October 15, 2004 was distributed to the college community and shared with national and state leaders. Discussions of the changes were included in nearly every major meeting, discussed in the Presidential Updates and in the new college newsletter. The accreditation working group continued to meet regularly and began planning for a discussion and training to address implementation. Additionally, an outline of the response to all the recommendations was begun and circulated to the college community for additions and comments [Standards IVA.1, IVA.3]. The president's cabinet was kept up to date on the discussions surrounding the reorganization, discussed the issues regularly, and took an active role in decision making [Recommendation #1, #2, & #3].

A training and discussion of the organizational changes took place at national campus on December 13, 2004. The goals of the training and discussion were to: a) understand the new organizational chart and the line of authority within divisions and departments and review the changes at COM-FSM; b) cover topics that included changes in job descriptions, finance procedures, committee representation and communication; c) review and update the outline on progress in meeting the WASC recommendations; d) review and discuss the plans for assessment activities; e) hold an administrative organizational unit meeting; and f) evaluate the needs of the members of the college community. At least three representatives of each campus and administrative managers and directors attended. [Standard IVA.1].

To facilitate the sharing of information, the training materials were contained in a binder which also contained a CD with the WASC recommendations, the progress report of October 2004, and all materials pertinent to the changes. These materials will be available to the visit team. The morning session was attended by all participants. The afternoon breakout sessions addressed the details by area. Details of the first two of the phases were reviewed, but it was agreed that the evaluation phase would be planned during the spring.

Phase two – January to April

The focus of this phase of the transition was to: a) continue trainings and increase communication regarding integrating the changes into the existing COM-FSM structure and culture; b) monitor the progress of consistent delivery of instruction and student services during the transition and; c) develop implementation plans for each area. The increase in widespread information has increased confidence in the new organization plan. Under the integration plan it was agreed that an existing position might be converted to one of the two new coordinator roles. Most of the campuses were able to name both an instructional and a student services coordinator from amongst their experienced employees. This experience facilitated communication and allowed the issues to be addressed quickly. Also during this time, the vice presidents increased the number and amount of contact with the campuses. This contact has improved overall understanding of college policies and procedures. It has also improved communication between leaders at the college.

Review of integration by instructional and student services personnel

The Vice President for Support and Student Affairs has placed a high priority on the consistency of services across the campuses and these issues are also discussed under Recommendation #6. During the past six months, and covering both fall and spring terms, administrators have assisted with the regularization of the numerous processes by traveling state campuses to deliver training and monitor the delivery of student services [Standard IVA.5]. Performing the trainings were Mrs. Arlene Dumantay, Admissions and Records Coordinator and Mr. Joey Oducado, Registrar at National Campus, Mr. Faustino Yarofaisuk, Work Study Coordinator and Ms. Arinda Swingly, Financial Aid Counselor [Standard IB3].

Admission, registration and student records

During trainings with campus staff members, issues involving admission, registration and student records policies and procedures were reviewed, including: schedules and deadlines; procedures for applying for graduation, admissions and re-admissions, and concerns on how to expedite transmitting and receiving of reports, i.e., campus to campus transmissions [Standard IIB.3f]. Also included were registration process add/drop period, creation of official enrollment lists, registration cards, individual development plans, graduation requirements, transcript requests, change of major documentation, missing grades, class scheduling, course selection, strict compliance of the Third Year Teacher Education-Elementary admission policy, and activities to ensure consistency and standardization of the registration process and procedures.

Financial aid

Issues involving financial aid included financial aid staff preparation for registration and review of student progress; entering and correcting financial aid data online, financial aid policies and financial aid preparation for the upcoming school year; understanding how to measure student progress, and why students are being placed on either financial aid probation or suspension. This training will assist campus personnel provide immediate help to students which will speed up the Pell Grant awarding process. Training was also given on helping students fill out FAFSA or Renewal FAFSA correctly and gave campus personnel more understanding of the SAP process so that they could be more confident in giving financial aid advice [Standard IIB.3a].

Training and support

Personnel traveling to campuses have also participated in the following activities at several campuses: workshops for staff & faculty on student learning outcomes; orientation programming; direct counseling with students; and other issues addressing individual needs and concerns of students. During these trips to the states, several of the national campus personnel were able to meet with state education leaders and address issues of importance to the college and the states. For instance, in Kosrae meetings were held with both the chair of education division and the designated instructional coordinator on matters pertaining to the individual development plans for students in the Third Year Certificate of Achievement and A.S. in Teacher Education-Elementary programs.

Consistency and Quality of Instructional Programs

The acting vice president for instructional affairs and the director of academic services have traveled to campuses to assist with the integration of the reorganization and to assure consistency of instruction across the six campuses of the College of Micronesia-FSM. The campus visits, combined with the increased electronic communication, have improved information sharing, training, monitoring instructional quality, and planning. Course schedules, requests for course outlines, and timely distribution of curriculum committee agendas and minutes have increased attention to detail and compliance with instructional affairs procedures and policies.

Since the accreditation team visit, these activities have improved communication:

- a) campuses and the instructional affairs office have coordinated all course offerings, schedules, book orders, and part time teacher certification across the campuses;
- b) a course approval process is being developed that includes an assurance that the campus has a qualified instructor, adequate facilities and resources to conduct a course, and the required and approved course text or materials.
- c) a new system is being implemented in which course syllabi from each instructor are collected;
- d) training in response to faculty questions on policies and procedures, such as faculty work load assignments, faculty work hours, course overload, academic advisement on prerequisites, academic suspension, mid term deficiency course selection, and reporting information on the faculty feedback form.

The bulk of this review process can be conducted through electronic communication. However, site visits provide first hand opportunities to observe the quality and consistency of instruction. Site visits will include classroom observations in the future.

The new position of instructional coordinator will be assisting in the above activities at each campus, and will also be responsible for observing and evaluating faculty. The instructional coordinators will assist in planning and implementing, monitoring, and assessing instructional activities. Combined with the site visits by instructional affairs office staff, a collaborative effort is underway to address consistency. Face to face visits will continue frequently to discuss concerns and limitation in implementation.

Enrollment Management

After several years of rapid growth, the college is now controlling enrollment to avoid over extending the campuses ability to provide quality student learning outcomes. Initially, the upper limits were based on three factors, seating capacity, student/teacher ratio, and instructor overloads. A new process for determining enrollment limits will be based on the previous factors and characteristics of the student body served at the respective campuses, factors related to student services, instructional, information and learning resources, recreational facilities, and available transportation for off campus students. At the present this work is ongoing and expected to be completed and presented to the cabinet by mid April [Recommendation #6, Bullet 3, Standard IIIB1a].

Information and Learning Resources

Libraries and computer centers have also been visited by the VPIA. For the libraries, one focus was to follow up on collection development efforts conducted by the campus libraries over the past year to add print and electronic resources for students and faculty. Discussion on the need for campus wide student learning outcomes and assessment for information literacy also occurred.

In September, the acting VPIA and Acting Director of the Learning resources center organized a meeting with key campus library staff. This two day meeting covered the new organizational structure, identifying issues in addressing continuity in information resources across. During the meeting the librarians examined and identified the issues and needs for providing continuity and consistency in resources and services at each campus, made plans, to address the needs to improve the quality and consistency of information resources and libraries at their respective campuses. Additionally the campus libraries, with assistance form the national campus, developed budget recommendations for FY 06 to present to the administration in order to address the needs for improvement. As a result of this effort, the FY 06 budget has provided increased funding to allow the campus libraries to improve the quality of services and resources [Standard IIC1].

Area implementation plans

Another major outcome was to create a detailed implementation plan for each of the campuses and each of the three areas of the national campus. A template was created to assist with consistency and is attached as an appendix. Implementation plans have been completed by each campus director after consultation with their management teams, the president and the director of human resources. The plans have now been shared with the vice presidents and the comptroller. The President, with the assistance of members of the accreditation working group, will lead the coordination of the implementation and recommend an implementation date for each campus.

Pohnpei campus will be the first to implement the new structure completely. The organization of Pohnpei campus most closely matched the new positions, and the management team was already functioning as a group. Personnel are currently performing in their new roles and the campus is pleased with the effects. Chuuk campus will likely be the second to convert to the new titles, and like Pohnpei campus, they are functioning in their new roles. At Chuuk, the English division chair, a long time instructor, has assumed the instructional coordinator role and the results have been significant. The vice president for instructional affairs reports increased communication

with the campus. Kosrae and Yap have reassigned personnel to cover the key positions of instructional and student services coordinators and both have vacant positions to fill. Both of these smaller campuses also have new positions in the FY06 budget to strengthen their student services and instructional delivery. FSM-FMI has reassigned duties and has adequate staff to perform the necessary tasks for their small student population.

Staff development training

Campus faculty and staff have also visited the national campus for several specialized staff development training sessions [Standard IIIA.5]. Dr. Mary Allen was the keynote speaker and workshop facilitator of the staff development activities that take place every February. She led discussions of student learning outcomes and assessment with the several departments of the college. Campus faculty and staff have had the opportunities to develop and review policies and procedures with their counterparts from other campuses. Procedure manuals are under revision to standardize numerous areas throughout the college. An important review of communication is underway, with a survey and focus groups completed with the participation of each campus. Benchmarks for evaluation are being identified by each area, and these are planned to be incorporated in an assessment cycle.

Phase three - Evaluation

The assessment plans at COM-FSM will be detailed in the response to recommendation #3. Briefly, plans for the upcoming evaluation phase include: a) reviews of the remaining positions affected by the reorganization will be completed by the human resources office; b) the new positions of vice president administration and community relations/fundraising director will be finalized and advertised; c) the evaluation of the 2001 - 2006 strategic plan, including alignment of the performance based budget with the strategic plan; d) preparing the 2004 annual report for the FSM Congress with data to support the conclusions and e) the Board of Regents will complete WASC training this spring. A review of the land grant structure and activities is also planned for 2005.

Recommendation 3: Improve Communication

Once the collaborative processes (Recommendation 1) and the organization of administrative responsibilities (Recommendation 2) are developed, documented, and implemented, they must be periodically and systematically evaluated to facilitate a cycle of continued improvement.

The following evidence and documentation in support of this section of the report will be found in the team room during the accreditation visit:

- Grant from the US Dept of Interior, Office of Insular Affairs to fund institutional effectiveness activities for the calendar year 2005
- Detailed results of web based communication survey administered Feb & March 05
- Reports on focus groups and face to face meetings at all campuses completed March 05
- FIPSE grant application

Introduction

The college is working to improve communication. One part of this is to identify a process of evaluation of both processes and outcomes. The implementation of the work in the previous recommendations is now well underway and a communication survey currently underway will assist the college in establishing benchmarks. Additional evaluation methods are being identified and further implementation of assessments is scheduled during the next six months. A detailed communication study currently underway includes a survey and focus groups with staff, faculty and students on all campuses. The report on the results will be available to the visit team members during their visit in April [Standards IB7, IIA2, IIB4, IIC2, IVA5, IVB2].

Work is progressing on the identification of measurable student learning outcomes relating to the reorganization. Plans to gather and analyze data and other information in support of student learning outcomes for student services are in compliance with predicted timelines. An inventory of information on administrative functions is being prepared. Much of this work is being organized and performed by the office of research and planning with the support and guidance of the accreditation working group. A one year grant from the US has allowed the college to hire a temporary institutional effectiveness coordinator, Dr. Felicia Hunt. A summary of that proposal is attached as an appendix and the full proposal will be available in the team room during the visit.

Overall, Dr. Hunt's efforts are directed to three areas: (1) develop consensus and continuity in assessment of outcomes for all programs and all campuses [Standard IIA.1]; (2) integrate all aspects of institution and program evaluation and resource allocation [Standards IIID.1a, IIID.1b]; and (3) help the institution facilitate effective communication and documentation [Standards IB.1, IB.5, IVA.3]. Her work to date will be particularly evident in this section and under Recommendation #5, reviewing the increased efforts in the areas of evaluation and assessment.

The development of collaborative processes and the organization of responsibilities at the College of Micronesia-FSM have been discussed in the previous sections. Recommendation #1, improve collaboration and #2, organize administrative responsibilities are helping the staff and

faculty and students see new ways of working together. These responses outlined the communications and organizational structures that were improved during the last year. Assessment of these changes can and will be part of the process. This section of the progress report will highlight (a) the college's efforts to assess communication, and (b) the college's plan for assess its new organizational structure.

Communication Assessment

The college has completed a large part of the work on reviewing the college's methods and modes of communication [Standards IB.1, IVA.3]. The goal for this assessment is to use the information collected to improve communication on, and across, all six campuses. To help the institution facilitate effective communication and documentation, the college has conducted a communication needs assessment. This assessment was conducted in three ways.

The first aspect of the communication needs assessment was conducted quantitatively. Members of the college community, including all employees and students, had the chance to participate in an online survey. More than 500 members participated. Preliminary survey results showed that most respondents appear to be sophisticated users of information and prefer electronic communication [Standard IIC.1]. It was also significant that more than half of all respondents want more information on every area of the college.

During the second part of the communication needs assessment, the college's the institutional effectiveness coordinator traveled to all six campuses and conducted focus groups. These focus groups were held with faculty, staff and students. Discussion from these focus groups provided the data necessary to not only improve communication, but also to improve operations. Themes that emerged from the data included the information that more information is being asked for, the effects of the reorganization have not yet been felt by the students, and in general, most participants feel informed but want better services. Recommendations from the needs assessment will be used to develop policies, organize information and improve communication [Standards IB.1, IB.7].

Finally, the college has plans to hold an all day evaluation of all existing communication pathways. As part of the assessment the college will identify all critical constituencies - the community, national and local leaders, reporting agencies, alumni, parents, and the media - and will consider ways to strengthen and clarify communication with each. Specifically, the findings of the communication needs assessment will be delivered to the college's Planning Council and to the leaders of the accreditation working group. These groups will review and analyze the needs assessment and the existing communication pathways and make recommendations for improvement [Standard IB.1, IVA.3].

As a result of the communication needs assessment, the college will be collaborating with constituents regarding issues that affect the success of the College of Micronesia on a regular basis [Standard IB.5]. The outcome of this needs assessment will be improved, strategic and effective links between all members of the community. One important link is between the college community and the FSM government. To that end, college leaders will be connecting with local and national government officials; Executive Director of WASC, Barbara Beno; and other visiting WASC representatives this spring. Facilitating dialogue between the college and

the community and should increase understanding, improve working relationships as well as offer important feedback and input for the college. The next steps for assessing communication at the College of Micronesia-FSM are included in the table of tasks at the end of the report.

From March to November meetings will be organized with the college and the nation's leaders, including the state leaders, the FSM Executive and Congress. The purpose of these meetings will be to develop institutional structures that bring together the college's constituents in order to exchange information and strategies regarding the work and the future of the institution. Specifically, in August there will be an all campus meeting to address assessment and communication issues. All campus directors, instructional coordinators, student service coordinators, division chairs and administrators will attend. In September, the institutional effectiveness coordinator will assess and re-evaluate communication pathways including changes, and new communication strategies and report to this information to the Planning Council. In November we will report on the progress and effectiveness of improving communication to stakeholders, leaders and the college community. From October to December, the documentation will be organized into a procedure manual for ongoing communication improvements throughout the college.

Organization of Administrative Responsibilities

Over the last year the College of Micronesia-FSM has coordinated a new organizational structure. This structure identifies a clear and consistent line of authority and facilitates improved communication between faculty, staff and students on all six campuses of the College of Micronesia [Standards IVA.1, IVA.2a]. The new structure was developed in the fall of 2004 and plans for the implementation have been created for each campus. Some aspects of the reorganization are already in place and when approved, each campus will fully implement their individualized plan.

Once all of the campuses have implemented the new organizational structure and have integrated the newly created positions into its staff, the college will begin an evaluation of this structure [Standard IVA.5]. The assessment will survey key informants to identify how information and authority is shared among leaders, committees, and staff on all campuses. Results from these interviews will help the college improve learning, services, operations, decision making, planning and governance [Standard IB.3]. Health indicators and surveys will also be used. The criteria for this evaluation will be developed with consultation with faculty, staff and students and will focus on evaluation of student learning outcomes.

This assessment will be informed by the two critical activities currently taking place at the College of Micronesia - FSM. The first activity is the evaluation of the strategic plan [Standards IB.2, IB.3]. The findings of this report will inform future institutional planning and evaluation. A number of activities will be included in the overall assessment of the organizational structure. As a first step, senior level administrators have visited all campuses and met with colleagues at all levels. These visits have been largely training, information, communication and implementation visits. The outcomes of these visits are that lines of authority and communication are improved and that services have been streamlined.

Other activities to address this recommendation include aligning the college's goals in the performance based budget with those in the COM-FSM mission and strategic plan; conducting interviews with the community to document the college's achievements against the goals of the strategic plan; reporting this information to institutional leaders; making recommendations for next steps and traveling to regional colleges to learn more about assessment as a tool for institutional improvement [Standards IA., IA.3, IB.3, IB.5, IIA.2f].

Other activities include strengthening institutional effectiveness; analyzing informational interviews with campus leaders in order to document the college's progress addressing the strategic plan; reviewing indicators cited in the performance based budget; identifying realistic and integrated goals for the strategic plan and performance based budget, and making recommendations on short and long-term planning [Standards IB.3, IB.6, IIID.1].

Recommendation 4: Integrate Planning

The college must develop and implement college-wide planning that

- *(I) Includes all sites*
 - *(II) Integrates all aspects of planning, evaluation, and resource allocation*
 - *(III) Includes a technology plan and evaluates, supports, and plans for the future of instructional student services and administrative functions across the college's six sites.*
 - *(IV) Is driven by the college mission and goals*
 - *(V) Relies on involvement of faculty and staff across the college's sites*
 - *(VI) Incorporates research and data in a strategic plan that contains measurable outcomes*
 - *(VII) Guides decision-making for both short-term and long-term planning*
 - *(VIII) Is well-documented and widely disseminated*
 - *(IX) Is periodically reviewed to assess the validity of the process.*
-

The following evidence and documentation in support of this section of the report will be found in the team room during the accreditation visit:

- Planning Council terms of reference; minutes and informational materials; plan and examples of proxy representation for campus members;
- FY03 and FY04 Annual Report to the FSM Congress;
- Documentation of link between budget planning cycle and strategic planning;
- Technology plan and timeline;
- Revision of performance based budget and strategic plan goals; FTE and expenditures worksheet for the FY 06 budget preparation;
- Timeline and details of mission statement review; alignment of performance based budget and strategic plan;
- Data book, data collection definitions and publication calendar.

Introduction

This section will focus on the progress that has been made in developing and implementing integrated college-wide planning. Planning Council and the research and planning staff have taken a major role in the response to this recommendation. Important gains have been made: two annual reports, supported by data, have been produced and a third is in production; short term planning is taking place at the every level of the college; the long term planning process is underway; evaluation is being integrated with resource allocation and both of these will be aligned with planning during the summer of 2005 when the FY07 budget is prepared; and a technology plan is being developed that will assist with strengthening communication [Bullets I – IX, Standard IB3, IB4, IB5, III6]. All aspects of this recommendation have been addressed in some way, and plans are laid for progress to continue. As in previous sections, the bullet points above and the accreditation standards are cited in the text.

Planning Council has been re-activated

The membership of chairs of the standing committees at Planning Council facilitates communication with a wide range of faculty and staff at COM-FSM. Members are encouraged to participate in the council in consultation and collaboration with members of the college community and are encouraged to bring information and concerns to the committee [Bullet V,

Standard IB1, IB6]. This process increases the flow of communication to and from the campuses and encourages planning behavior throughout the college. The members of the planning council, and their constituencies, have been instrumental in the response to this recommendation, and will continue to play an active role in long and short term strategic planning [Standard IVB2b].

The director of research and planning and the President are co-chairs of Planning Council. The restructured membership consists of the fourteen chairs of the standing committees, the five campus directors, two representatives of the Staff and Faculty Senate, and two representatives of the Student Body Association. The change in leadership in the office of the President and the hiring of a new research director were nearly coincident in the weeks surrounding the accreditation team visit in March 2004. The reconfiguration of Planning Council was accomplished by summer 2004.

Achieving representation

Mechanisms have been created to achieve representation of all faculty and staff across the college, to assure community involvement and to overcome the problems caused by the distances separating the campuses. An arrangement has been established for Planning Council whereby committee members who are remotely located and cannot attend regular meetings can be represented by a proxy. This proxy attends the meetings, participates in discussions, keeps the member informed and ensures their point of view is represented at meetings. So far, proxies have a high attendance rate and are in frequent contact with their member. This has helped in the revitalization of the Planning Council. Critical issues are required to have at least two readings, which allows for discussions with constituents, campus members and those who may be out of town. The Council is also developing a culture of planning as a basic responsibility of all leaders and managers. The Council's goal of encouraging the incorporation of planning-oriented behavior at all levels of the organization is reinforced by the well-distributed minutes and materials. The activities of planning council are disseminated to all committees, senate and the campuses. By informing the college community about planning issues, and modeling communication behavior, the committee encourages planning by all members of the college community [Standard IB1, IB4, IB5].

Advisory boards have been implemented at some campuses and for some vocationally oriented programs. For instance, the Pohnpei campus has an advisory board [Standard IVA2b]. It has members from the local government and from the campus administration, but the majority of the members are local business representatives. These members are encouraged to see the educational opportunities at the campus as a partnership. The Pohnpei campus also has a management team made up of the senior managers of the campus. This group meets regularly to review and discuss issues and plans for the campus. Other campuses are in the process of creating similar management teams [Bullet I, V & VIII, Standard IB3, IB5].

Research and planning activities during the past year

During the past year, significant efforts to establish a formal research program have been undertaken. These efforts have included:

- a) The research office has been relocated, reorganized and employees have been added to create continuity and standardize procedures. The permanent positions of sponsored programs

coordinator and data manager have been added and a grant funded institutional effectiveness coordinator has joined the office staff for 2005 [Bullet VI, Standard IB4].

- b) The FY03 and FY04 annual reports which include enrollment and performance data as well as narrative were prepared by the research and planning office. A data book of published information on college performance is in production and will be widely available. In addition, members of the staff were major contributors to the activities documented in the two progress reports to WASC [Bullet VII, Standard IIA6e].
- c) As mentioned above, Planning Council has been re-organized and revitalized and is moving toward a well-defined role in integrating planning, budgeting and assessment. Finance Committee and Planning Council are working collaboratively to reorganize the budget process by the end of spring term 2005 [Bullets I & VIII, Standard IB4].
- d) Planning activities have been initiated and include the process of aligning the strategic plan and performance based budget goals, objectives, activities and outcomes. This work will form the basis of the next annual report to the FSM Congress. A request from the government for a twenty year plan is also being addressed and a timeline for that project has been created. A draft technology plan has been created, and funding for the new information technology initiative is under review [Bullets III, IV, VII & VIII, Standard IB5, IIIc].
- e) A college-wide assessment plan, including instruction, student services and administrative activities is also under development. The assessment committee is expected to be reactivated by fall of 2005 [Bullet IX, Standard IB3, IIA2f, IIB1, IIB4]. Assessment is more thoroughly discussed under Recommendation #5.
- f) In addition, an assessment of the research and planning office activities will be among the early assessment activities of the newly created administrative group [Bullet IX, Standard IB3, IIA2f, IIB1, IIB4].

Creating a flow of information

Data and information flow will be included in the communications policy initiatives reviewed this spring. Collaborations with the FSM national statistics office are being implemented and new electronic surveys have been instituted. The research and planning office is developing a schedule of reports that include information collected by all areas of the college. This information will be made available to the entire college community. The managers and directors will have information available for decision making, and the Planning Council members will have the information available as they chart the course for the College of Micronesia-FSM. The items identified for incorporation into the data book include retention rates, program completion rates, graduation rates, all tables of Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System [IPEDS], and additional information included in the annual report [Bullets VI & VII, Standard IB5].

A procedure manual for research and planning is in the development stages as well. Data field definitions, supporting documentation, and use of appropriate health indicators are being introduced to campus personnel and training in data management techniques has been conducted. An accreditation link has also been added to the website, although surveys show that the community has been relatively well informed about accreditation issues and responses through the *Presidential Updates* [Bullet VIII, Standard IVB2e].

Communication with managers on planning and evaluation

COM-FSM is working towards a culture of integrated planning. Meetings are being held with managers and directors of each area which include a review of progress against the goals of the performance based budget and the strategic plan. In some instances, the goals have been re-framed to fall within the rubric of the priorities, goals and mission of the institution. Two patterns emerged during this process: the strategic plan was in some areas too vague to translate into clear goals; and in several instances, the actual performance measures stated in the performance based budget were unclear, or unreachable, or not really under the control of the department.

In the early stages, these inconsistencies were highlighted and the managers and directors were encouraged to work with their departments to clarify the actual goals of each department. Additional work is being done to restate goals that incorporate the strategic plan and use relevant, quantifiable and measurable outcomes. The overall purposes of this review were twofold: a review of the previous work in order to clarify the outcomes, and the introduction of the concept of internal assessment on a continuous cycle [Standard IB4, IIA2b].

Linking budget development to planning

The office of the President has directed that the linking of departmental and institutional level assessments be accomplished through the planning and budgeting processes [Standard IIID1a, IIID1d]. A major goal of the institutional research and planning office and the institutional effectiveness coordinator is to develop an institutional assessment model that uses outcome measures to inform budgeting, long-term planning, and decision-making. Linking these processes will ensure that the institution is working toward the achievement of its goals [Bullet VIII & IX, Standards IB3, IIA2f].

The office of research and planning is addressing the alignment of the college's goals in the performance based budget with those in the COM-FSM mission and strategic plan. [Standard IB4, IIID1] Small group meetings between the institutional effectiveness coordinator and managers and directors have taken place to assist in meeting this goal. These meetings have included dialogues on assessment activities, as well as adjustments in the goals and objectives stated in the performance based budget and the strategic plan. Each department has had the opportunity to revise their goals, and the two documents are now aligned and shown as an appendix [Standard IB4, IVA2a].

The next step in this process will be to review the performance objectives, and begin addressing long term planning. Assessment activities are also being addressed, and the performance based budget format is moving to a Nichols five column assessment model [Bullet IV, Standard IB3, IIIB6, IIID1d].

Informing the process

The new organization chart and the implementation activities discussed in the previous sections have included discussions of resource allocation. The need for a more informed process in budget and planning has been strongly voiced through surveys and interviews [Standard IVB2b]. Like most public institutions, the College of Micronesia-FSM is dependent on government

appropriations. In practical terms, this means developing an annual budget and presenting that budget to the government agency charged with funding post-secondary education. The Board of Regents of the college directs the administration by approving budget guidelines.

Previous to implementing the accreditation recommendations, the budget at COM-FSM was created in individual divisions, offices and campuses by following the Board of Regents guidelines, which predominantly addressed fiscal expectations. This process culminated in budget hearings, in which the Finance Committee, chaired by the Comptroller, worked to bring the budget in line with the recommendations. Departments, divisions and campus directors were given the opportunity to defend the budget submission of each unit and the Finance Committee members attempted to make consistent and fair decisions about the expenditures. This was not linked to planning, and changes have been proposed [Standard IID1a]. The research and planning office and the office of the comptroller are working together with the Planning Council and the Finance Committee to prepare a new plan for the preparation of the FY 07 budget. This issue will be included on the retreat agenda in May [Bullet II, Standard IB7].

Proposed steps include:

- a) Increasing the amount and quality of performance data contained in the annual report to the FSM Congress. This report should now reflect the goals and objectives previously stated in the performance based budget and aligned with the strategic plan and with clear, measurable outcomes projected for the upcoming year. This should also incorporate assessment data on student learning outcomes as it becomes available [Bullets I, II, V & VI, Standard IIA6e].
- b) Using the information above, and historical financial information, the Planning Council and Finance Committee will make recommendations on directives for budget development for the Board of Regents [Bullets I, II & VI, Standard IVB1c].
- c) The budget will then be developed with the involvement of the vice presidents for instructional affairs, support and student services and administration. Performance and expenditures should be aligned and financial support can be directed to areas identified under the strategic plan [Bullets I, II, IV, V, VI, & VII, Standard IID1a].
- d) The cycle will be completed when the annual report is compiled and utilized by Planning Council for developing the budget for the following year. This should encourage improvement in all areas of the college and ensure a link between the assessment of student learning outcomes and the budget process [Bullets I, VIII & IX, Standards IB1, IB4, IVA1, IVA3, IVA5].

Changes in reporting requirements

The 2001- 2006 strategic plan was created in an environment of optimistic growth and included a laudable, community based, interactive process that involved the faculty, many individual members of the community, community groups and the administration of the college. This was a serious attempt by the college to first hear and then respond to the needs of the community, and to reflect Micronesian values and national goals.

The performance-based budget was a requirement imposed on the college, and was an attempt to demonstrate a link between the expenditures of funds and the performance of the organization. The performance-based budget exercise had a short timeline, complicated tables and jargon similar to, but not exactly like student learning outcome language. The tables had been edited, in some instances severely, and some managers felt disconnected with the resulting product.

These experiences required the organization to view its operations in a new way, which has helped the organization now in responding to the incorporation of planning in all activities. In response to the accreditation recommendations, the managers are reconciling these two documents and adjusted the strategic plan goals to reflect what they really are trying to accomplish in their work areas and there have been many comments about how much easier planning seems in light of the work already accomplished.

New opportunities created by change

The format of the performance-based budget has now been deemed cumbersome, and the FSM government no longer requires the use of the format. The FSM government does continue to require that the college, and all other government agencies, report on performance as well as the expenditure of funds. The college has the opportunity to utilize the performance based budget goals and objectives, thoroughly assess the progress achieved toward the current strategic plan goals and create a new, twenty-year plan as requested by the FSM government. This is a solid base on which to build the long-term strategy [Standard IB3].

All of the changes in reporting requirements emphasize the need for a clear and informed new strategic plan. Specific data will contribute to the baseline of shared information. The research and planning office will assist in the process of establishing what will be collected and how and when it will be reported and compared to the baseline. This will be developed and implemented as part of the ongoing assessment cycle, which will be more fully addressed in the discussion of recommendation five.

Technology Plan

The technology advisory committee has recommended a new College of Micronesia-FSM Proposed Strategic Technology Plan. This plan is moving through the approval process which includes review and comment by the college community and several committees. A summary of this plan is included as an appendix [Bullet III, Standard IIC1a, IIC1c, IIC1d].

The location of the college makes electronic communication imperative. As in other postsecondary institutions, the need for electronic transmission of information feels like a necessity at the College of Micronesia-FSM. This is more tenuous in a small island nation. Without power, computers cannot carry the information between campuses and the college can be left dependent on the phone lines and planes carrying documents that allow the college to continue to function as one coherent organism. For this reason, our infrastructure development plan includes generators at each site to maintain electrical power when the primary source is interrupted [Standard IIC1c].

The difficulties of communication in a remote and low population market are easily shown in this recent example. The satellite that allows electronic information to flow between the islands

and to the rest of the world suffered a major electrical malfunction. This malfunction has rendered the satellite completely unusable and instantly ended almost all global communication with the Federated States of Micronesia and several other island nations. This persisted for a period of several days, until satellite dishes could be aligned with alternative routes. This event and the resulting increased difficulty with electronic transmissions brought home a clear reminder how dependent we are on technology. This situation was corrected well enough that information could begin to flow within a few days; however, a long term solution is still under development by the local and regional telecom organizations.

Increasing dialogue with leadership

The College of Micronesia-FSM has been actively engaged in dialogue with FSM state and national leaders and US government representatives. This has increased the quality and quantity of the communication between the leadership of COM-FSM and FSM government leaders. There is now a greater understanding of the issues facing the college. It has also been good for the college leadership to understand the information needs, and the expectations of the national and state leadership. A new position at the college has been created in the FY2007 budget request. When filled, the incumbent in this position will take a leadership role in fundraising and also in community and government relations [Standard IB5, IIID1b, IIID1d].

The FSM and US governments have, since the accreditation visit, ratified an agreement known as Compact II. This wide ranging agreement with the US government includes funding specifically for education. The FSM federal government plans to link the college budget with the compact funding. This is good news, in that the compact funds are planned to continue for twenty years. However, the compact calls for increasing amounts of funds to be placed in a trust account every year, which will effectively reduce the amount available to the college. The reductions will begin in 2007. This issue will be part of the dialogue with the state and national leadership [Standard IB5].

A request for a twenty year plan

In May 2004, the FSM President asked the College of Micronesia-FSM to prepare a plan for the next twenty years. The leadership of the college hopes to work closely with the government in answering the questions about education facing the college and the nation [Standard IA1, IB3]. This dialogue would include issues specific to the college's mission, enrollment, and the increased costs of educating and supporting students. The FSM President has scheduled a meeting of the state governors, the executive and legislative branches of the FSM national government, and the college in March. The Executive Summary of the document prepared by the college is included as an appendix.

Conclusion

In order to promote institutional change and improvement at COM-FSM, the review of department outcomes must be incorporated into the regular and consistent cycle of planning, budgeting and reporting. To achieve this goal, plans must be developed collaboratively and widely shared with the staff, faculty, student and the general public. Achieving this goal will help COM-FSM integrate all aspects of institution, program evaluation and resource allocation.

The major activities to support this goal at COM-FSM include aligning the college's goals in the performance based budget with those in the mission and strategic plan; conducting interviews with the community to document the college's achievements against the goals of the strategic plan; reporting this information to institutional leaders; making recommendations for planning; facilitating benchmarks for future evaluation and guiding decision making. The activities and timeline for this goal are outlined in the appendix.

Recommendation 5: Identify and Assess Student Learning Outcomes

The college must develop and implement student learning outcomes across the six sites in order to determine the effectiveness of college programs and services on student learning including:

- *(I) Instructional programs at course, program, degree and certificate levels*
 - *(II) Student services throughout the students' matriculation at the College of Micronesia-FSM Links between student learning outcomes and the planning process*
 - *(III) Mechanisms for measuring student learning outcomes*
 - *(IV) Mechanisms for using those measurements to improve courses, programs, and services*
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Introduction

The College of Micronesia – FSM is actively developing and implementing a program of student learning outcomes. To date the college has completed outcomes for nearly all academic and vocational courses and programs. The instructional faculty and staff are involved in developing a structure for assessing student and program learning outcomes. The student services staff are developing an integrated assessment program throughout the college, with implementation scheduled for summer 2005. Administrative area personnel have received training, and the initial stages of assessment are underway. Results from these assessments will improve learning; inform decision making and support planning at the College of Micronesia-FSM.

Recently one area that has made considerable progress developing student learning outcomes is student services. Major activities include developing an assessment policy, aligning departmental goals and mission, and coordinating trainings. Continued efforts in this area will have learning outcomes and assessment tools in place by the end of this calendar year. Assessment for the administrative areas are continuing to use health indicators, but the hiring of a new vice president for administration will accelerate the activity of tying information to student learning outcomes.

The last step in an assessment cycle, and the task that we are attempting to integrate in the discussions of assessment measures, is the use of assessment information for improvement of student learning outcomes. We have confidence that we are collaboratively developing an assessment cycle that can build an institutional program of assessment and evaluation – a cycle that encourages reflection, information sharing and change.

This report discusses the development and assessment of student learning outcomes in the division of instructional affairs; the development and assessment of student learning outcomes in the department of support and student affairs; and a plan for integrating student learning, program assessment and institutional assessment in order to establish a system of ongoing evaluation.

Instructional Programs

The college has made considerable progress addressing student learning outcomes and has nearly completed the step of developing student learning outcomes for all instructional affairs department levels. The office of instructional affairs conducted an inventory on the status of learning outcomes development for all course, program, degree and certificate levels. Using the

current list, instructional staff are preparing student learning outcomes for the few remaining programs and courses to be ready by May 2005. The college has initiated assessment activities at the course and program level and is refining strategies and plans for assessing outcomes [Standard IB3, IIA1c, IIA2a, IIB4].

Following the completion of the inventory of student learning outcomes development, all learning outcomes for program and course outlines are being duplicated and distributed. Program outcomes and course outlines for the Associates in Applied Science degree programs have been published and distributed. Electronic versions are being processed [Bullet I]. All degree and non-degree program outcomes will be published in the 2005-2007 college catalog [Standard IIA6]. The learning resources center and information technology staff has developed learning outcomes for these programs and are presently aligning outcomes with activities [Standard IIC]. Finally, the first year certificate programs offered at the college are under revision and will be finalized by fall 2005

Program learning outcomes

Program learning outcomes for degree and non-degree programs offered at COM-FSM are also in development. Program learning outcomes for all Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, and Associate of Applied Science degree programs will be published in the 2006 catalogue and will be reviewed annually. In addition, program learning outcomes for all are almost complete.

Recently, the college completed an inventory of certificate courses that are already in student learning outcome format. Certificate programs still requiring approval include Bookkeeping, Trial Counselors, General Studies, Agriculture & Food Technology, and Secretarial Science. While not all program outcomes are complete, the College of Micronesia-FSM outcomes for all programs will be complete and approved for fall 2005.

The college will include these outcomes in the publication in the institution's student handbook which is available to all students in advance of registration at the college. The goal is to have all remaining courses updated by December 2005 [Standard IIA1c].

Measuring Student Learning Outcomes

Assessing student learning outcomes is a focus of the instructional department at COM-FSM. Assessment creates a shared academic culture dedicated to improving the quality of higher education. The purpose of assessment at the College of Micronesia – FSM is to show whether students are learning what the college committed to teach. This college is using the Nichols model of institutional assessment as a tool to collecting such evidence and is patterning the implementation of that model on the experience of Guam Community College.

Assessment requires faculty to jointly examine outcomes from multiple, coordinated activities. To that end, the instructional affairs division has coordinated a number of student learning assessment activities. These activities include assessment trainings, conducting review and alignment of program and course outcomes, conducting assessment activities, researching tools, documenting assessment plans and attending professional development conferences. These activities have helped our instructors, department leaders, and division chairs establish benchmarks and begin evaluating student learning outcomes [Standard IIA1c].

The Board of Regents of the College of Micronesia-FSM approved an instructional program assessment policy in 2003. This policy identifies the purpose, application and procedure for conducting assessment. It states that evaluation is to be part of the overall planning of the college. It also states that goals and objectives must be reviewed in terms of how they relate to the college mission.

Instructional divisions are conducting assessment activities at the course and program level. The education division has established a portfolio assessment strategy for their teacher training programs. Faculty in this division have aligned program and course learning outcomes with classroom instruction and assessment activities. Program and course outcomes as well as assessment activities are clearly indicated in all course outlines and course syllabi. Selected student assessment pieces are being compiled into a portfolio. Another division has completed an alignment of program and course outcomes, and currently collects samples of student assessments such as tests and projects every semester. These samples are reviewed and used to make recommendations and improvements in the courses and in their assessment tool. These assessment samples are compiled in a binder that is shared by the division and the information is available to all interested instructors [Standard IIA1c].

Another initiative of instructional affairs is the evaluation of the general education curriculum core at the College of Micronesia-FSM. The general education curriculum includes courses within the divisions of language and literature; math and science; agriculture; business; and social studies. The purpose of the general education program is to prepare students who will (a) transfer to a four year institution, (b) continue in an occupational/technical program (c) earn a certificate. All the associate of arts, the associate of science, and the associate of applied science curriculum include the general education core [Standard IIA1c].

As part of the college's assessment plan, a different area of the general education curriculum will be assessed each semester. As part of this assessment initiative, instructors and members of the assessment study group continue to discuss the size and scope of each piece of general education assessment. For example, the curriculum committee first adopted the general education core outcomes in spring 2004 and later agreed each semester to focus assessment on one segment of the general education outcomes [Standard IIA1c].

Assessment training

Also, members of the community attended training in Glendale, California where they explored direct and embedded assessment strategies. Facilitators at the training identified effective strategies for assessing student learning for a range of institutional experiences. There was also significant team time allowed to work on the COM-FSM institutional application of the strategies presented at the workshop. Leaders at the college returned to COM-FSM- to discuss training materials and next steps with instructors, members of the curriculum committee, division chairs, institutional coordinators and faculty [Bullet III].

It was established after this training that the first step in evaluating the general education will be the assessment of the outcomes for the math department. To this end, a chair of the math and natural sciences piloted an assessment tool for math and general education outcomes. This tool

was reviewed by members of the campus community and by Dr. Mary Allen. After much discussion, it was determined that the math assessment tool was inadequate and the math and science general education outcomes will be revised. Based on this change the general education assessment plans are currently being revised. The evaluation of the general education is one step toward implementing a full assessment program.

Another step in this process is currently underway. This step is being facilitated by academic leaders. As part of this, academic leaders are collecting student work and developing rubrics to evaluate this work for example writing assessments. Additionally instructors are currently using a matrix process to align program and course outcomes with the next step to identify direct and embedded assessment strategies. Academic leaders are currently working with faculty to develop or refine plans for conducting assessment on a five year cycle. The data collected during these assessments will be used to improve programs at the College of Micronesia – FSM. Members of the instructional affairs office staff, instructional coordinators, division chairs, and faculty are committed to implementing an assessment program. As part of this they will develop and administer assessment instruments, analyze the data collected, and make recommendations for improvement.

Using measurements to improve

The last step in the assessment cycle is to use the assessing of student and program learning outcomes to improve programs at the College of Micronesia-FSM. To ensure a closer alignment with instruction and expected student learning outcomes, instructional faculty are currently reviewing and aligning: course outcome; course outlines; classroom instruction; and assessment to match and align with program learning outcomes. Faculty in the education and social science divisions have completed a review and alignment process for their respective programs and courses. Based on what they have learned they have used the information to improve the courses, thereby closing the loop.

The faculty at the college, with the support of the assessment study group, will continue to use the information collected to advance student learning [Standard IIA2f]. To do this they will review findings and use the data to inform teaching, course design and curriculum. Such feedback is critical to instructional success. The coordinated effort that describes this process will be discussed at greater length in the final section.

Student Learning Outcomes – Support and Student Affairs

The services of the division of support and student affairs have a major impact on the learning experiences of students at The College of Micronesia-FSM. Members of the student services staff are in the process of articulating how that learning takes place and creating student learning outcomes for the delivery of student services. The student services program evaluation process applies to financial aid, admissions and records, counseling and peer counseling, and campus life including residencies, recreation, sports, and dispensary services where applicable. Most of these services are available on all of the campuses of the College of Micronesia-FSM.

COM-FSM has begun building a program of student learning outcomes for student services. After identifying the student learning, these outcomes will determine if the department of support

and student affairs facilitates student success. The purpose of assessing this department is to determine in what ways these programs assist student learning. These assessments also help the department improve its level of service to students. Finally departmental evaluation helps each department identify whether their goals and objectives are being realized or whether they need enhancement. This final step will allow the student services departments to utilize information to improve the student learning outcomes of the services offered to students.

Planning for Assessment

The department of support and student affairs has a three phase plan aimed at developing assesses student learning. The department has just completed the first phase of this process and has begun working on the second phase of the plan. These phases include: (a) the initial phase, (b) the implementation phase and (c) the feedback phase [Standard IIB4].

(a) Initial Phase: Understanding Assessment for Student Services

During the Initial Phase of planning for assessment, the department of support and student affairs will focus on understanding Assessment for Student Services. Activities to support this phase included drafting an assessment policy, establishing an assessment working subgroup, adopting a mission statement for the department, coordinating department plans, goals and objectives, learning about student learning outcomes, and working with administrators and staff to understand how to use these for management.

The first step to understanding assessment for this department was to draft an evaluation policy. The policy is being reviewed and will be approved this spring. This policy was modeled after the assessment policy for instructional affairs, but using health indicators and evaluation methods for student services activities. This draft document states that the purpose of the student services program evaluation is to review the student services programs and their effectiveness. This process will be used to determine if the policies are assisting student learning by effectively delivering student services. The evaluation process will also determine how the programs are meeting their goals and objectives and will assist in the identification of areas needing enhancement. It is agreed that the last step will be to use the information for improvement of the services.

The student services program evaluation process will be applied to financial aid, admissions and records, counseling and peer counseling, and campus life including residencies, recreation, sports, and dispensary services where applicable. This policy will apply to all campuses of the College of Micronesia-FSM. The normal approval process requires that the policy be adopted by the student services committee, and then forwarded to the COM-FSM Cabinet for approval, and finally the policy can be recommended to the Board of Regents. Under the current timeline, the policy will be presented at the June Board meeting.

This process has reconfirmed the importance of assessment for all services within the department of Support and Student Affairs. The policy will be the basis of the plan and identifies tools to assist in the implementation. The assessment plan will organize a system for developing student learning outcomes, coordinating benching marks to assess these outcomes and creating a feedback to loop to help administrators improve their programs.

Training for outcomes based management

The student services department has also selected a small group to steer the process. This will facilitate assessment activities for the department and will work jointly with the student services committee, department staff and the institution's assessment study group. In addition, the division of student services participated in an exercise that coordinated the objectives of the college's performance based budget with those in the strategic plan. During individual workshops, each service area linked its office goals and objectives with college initiatives—including those outlined in the institution's mission. Training was provided for administrators and staff on student learning outcomes and outcomes based management. As part of this training, administrators and student services professionals traveled both to Glendale, California and to Guam to visit to Guam Community College. These trainings focused specifically on creating a culture of evidence at the College of Micronesia [Standard IIIA5].

Consultant assistance

Furthermore, the department of support and student affairs received support from consultant Mary Allen. Dr Allen traveled to the Federated States of Micronesia and presented workshops for all of the staff and faculty during staff development week. She presented workshops for members of the faculty and the student services committee. She also spoke to the general assembly where she provided tools for effective evaluation.

Training was also conducted at a student services committee. At this presentation the reviewed the purpose of outcomes based management, facilitated a discussion on the assessment policy helped the team develop a timeline for its adoption and implementation. In addition, the college's institutional effectiveness coordinator led the group in an exercise to create a departmental mission that reflects the impact, or outcome, of each area of the department.

In summary during February, 2005, the department of Support and Student Affairs drafted an assessment policy and a departmental mission that is aligned with the institutional mission [Standards IA1, IA4]. These were circulated these for comment and feedback. The institutional effectiveness coordinator facilitated meetings with each service area and reviewed goals, and discussed student learning outcomes. During March, the comments on the mission were reviewed, and the final draft of the mission was adopted. Now, the department will identify, with the help of the performance based budget and the strategic plan, what each service plans to accomplish and these will be aligned the division's mission.

b) Implementation phase: identifying the goals and how to measure success

Currently the department is nearing completion of the first phase of this process and is beginning on the implementation phase of the plan. This implementation phase includes conducting an inventory of assessments and evaluations across all campuses, establishing outcomes for each area, establishing benchmarks and coordinating evaluation tools for outcomes, assessing these outcomes and, finally, using this information to improve service.

During the Implementation Phase the department of support and student affairs will identify goals and will establish ways to measure success. Currently, the department is conducting an inventory of assessments and evaluations across all campuses, working collaboratively to establish outcomes for each area, developing consensus to establish benchmarks for outcomes,

determining the appropriate assessment methods, and implementing a plan to assess these outcomes.

The department of support and student affairs has created an inventory of assessments and evaluations that have been done across all campuses. This inventory will help the assessment subgroup identify areas where data was being collected and where assessment could begin. Also during this phase, the support and student affairs divisions will continue the work of establishing and organizing assessments of student learning outcomes for all student service areas [Standard IIA1c].

As part of this effort, the institutional effectiveness coordinator (IEC) at COM-FSM traveled to campuses to document and implement student learning outcomes, and reaffirm the division mission. During her visits, she met individually with administrators to discuss learning outcomes that are appropriate for their area, that are meaningful and measurable and that are consistent with the department's goals and objectives. This travel confirmed that all staff received consistent training and that assessment work was being supported college-wide.

Once these student learning outcomes are finalized, the department will coordinate its assessment efforts. Members the assessment subgroup will be assigned roles and responsibility for assessment within the department. The subgroup members will also establish benchmarks, propose tools and guide the evaluation of these outcomes [Standard IVB4].

Assessing these outcomes

The department of Support and Student Affairs has experience assessing student learning outcomes and there are some examples of these assessment efforts. First, the department conducted an assessment on the environment for residents at the College of Micronesia-FSM. As part of this assessment, the department of Support and Student Affairs completed a survey on the living learning environment at the college. This qualitative analysis identified learning opportunities for students in the residential facilities. It also identified areas where additional participation, particularly from instructors at the college, would contribute to student success. Other assessment in this area include surveys about registration, residential life, late night services and communication.

c) Feedback Phase: Gathering the Evidence and Improving Service

In the final phase the College of Micronesia-FSM will complete the following activities: finalize benchmarks for outcomes and coordinate evaluation methods, finish coordinating evaluation methods, use assessment information to improve service, establish methods to communicate the results of our assessments to the community and integrate the learning and assessment process into a cycle of on-going institutional assessment. The college will use assessment information to improve services [Standard IIA1c].

During the feedback phase the department will finalize benchmarks for outcomes and coordinate evaluation methods. The department will use this information to improve service, establish methods to communicate the results of our assessments to the community and integrate the learning and assessment process into a cycle of on-going institutional assessment.

Also during this phase, the college will also communicate the results of our assessments to the community. As part of this the department will show evidence that identifies how student services impact student learning and graduation. Communicating these results will involve publishing outcomes in the student handbook, posting them on the web, discussing them in college communications, reporting them to the federal and state government and discussing them with all members of the college community.

Integrate the learning and assessment into an ongoing cycle of institutional assessment

This section will discuss the institutional assessment model currently being used at the College of Micronesia – FSM, the implementation of the Assessment Program at COM-FSM, action taken by the assessment study group, completed assessments and next steps [Standards IB1, IB3, IIIA2f].

The College of Micronesia is developing a system of continuous assessment that involves the entire campus, influences the direction of the college and support institutional improvement. To that end, COM-FSM is evaluating student and program learning outcomes and assessing these outcomes. Assessing outcomes in this way will inform program review, support institutional level assessment and help COM-FSM identify the total impact it has on students.

The college has developed an assessment model for all three areas of the campus: administration, support and student affairs, and instructional affairs. The college's system of assessment utilizes a three leveled structure. This three leveled structure helps the college evaluate student learning outcomes, program outcomes and institutional outcomes.

The findings from the first level of assessment directly impacts students. At this level, staff members and instructors assess student learning outcomes. Assessment results provide data that is then fed back to the college community. These data helps identify areas for improvement in instruction, services, and support and improve the impact the institution has on student learning.

The findings from data collected at the second level of assessment directly impacts divisions and departments. At this level, program leaders, administrators and division chairs use the data – and the patterns of data – from the first level of assessment to conduct program reviews and inform program outcomes. The meta-analysis of this data helps decision-makers shape planning, budgeting, and establish program needs and priorities.

The findings from data collected at the third level of assessment help improve the institution. The third level of assessment is where overall institutional assessment is coordinated. Assessments on student learning, program and college outcomes are all used to help make strategic decisions. They also help influence priorities, focus and long term planning and finalize policy.

This three-leveled program is:

Level III: The strategic direction of the institution and institutional decision making are based data that is collected and feedback to leaders from all levels of the college. Assessment in level III are informed by levels I and II and from institutional level assessment, like assessment of the strategic plan.

Level II: Data on outcomes and data on improvement provides information for administrative decision making and budgeting. It also supports changes at the program level and strategic decisions at the institutional level. Data collected in levels I and II help inform assessment in level III.

Level I: Data collected on student learning outcomes improves instruction, curriculum, service, and support. Data collected here informs assessment in level II.

Implementation of the Assessment Program at COM-FSM

One way the college is guiding assessment activities is through an assessment student group. According to Nichols (1995) an assessment study group of this kind - where faculty and staff are able to discuss both the findings of this work and the interpretations of their results – is essential. The strategy behind developing an assessment study group is to instruct and mentor the college during the first full phase of a college assessment cycle. Once a full assessment cycle is complete, this study group will evolve into a college standing committee. The standing committee will be staffed by faculty and staff and will be led by the Institutional Research and Planning Office [Standards IB1, IB3, IIIA2f].

The COM-FSM assessment study group assists in the collection of data. This data will help instructors, department leaders, student service professionals and administrators identify areas of institutional strength as well as areas in need of improvement. This data will also help identify benchmarks for future evaluation and planning.

Major assessment study group activities that support institutional assessment include coordinating and assisting with the development of tools to assess student learning outcomes; researching and determining tools to facilitate this assessment; collecting information from courses at all campuses; documenting assessment results and offering feedback on what the findings suggest; reviewing the data collection process and making recommendations for revisions; reporting findings and offering ideas for modifications and leading workshops on the feedback from the assessment cycle.

Actions Taken by the Assessment Study Group

One of the first initiatives of the assessment study group was to identify and utilize a tool to support institutional assessment. One tool the assessment study group is framing goals and outcomes with Nichols' tool for institutional assessment. This tool was created by Nichols and Nichols and helps the college structure its assessment activities. The first step toward implementing this five column model is aligning the college's institutional mission and goals with department objectives and with its performance based budget. These activities were completed in the fall of 2004.

In addition to adopting an assessment tool, the assessment study group also initiated a college assessment calendar. This calendar documents the cycles of assessment for each area. This calendar schedules rotating assessments, clarifies reporting timelines and help department and divisions reflect on in an organized schedule. Having areas of the college cycle through an

assessment calendar allows the assessment committee to focus its support amore effectively. The calendar has been proposed is being circulated through the community for comment. The calendar will likely be adopted at a spring meeting of the assessment study group.

The calendar of institutional assessment activities includes establishing benchmarks, evaluating outcomes, and using these data effectively. An additional part of this assessment model is communicating the assessment results to the community. This system of reporting creates a feedback loop for the college. This feedback provides evidence of the impact of the college, helps it be accountable to its community and provides information to help the college improve.

Completed Assessments at COM-FSM

The college has completed some institutional assessments. The first was a human resources study. The study reviewed the possible causes for hiring challenges faced by the College of Micronesia-FSM. The study concluded that the timeline, while long for some positions, was not as problematic as previously thought. A follow-up to this study will include more detailed information on the status of the positions and follow-up by the hiring committees. In addition, the Office of Research and Planning will be assisting this office in conducting a survey of current and former faculty members to determine what attracted them to the college in the first place and what has kept them here or their reasons for leaving.

Other assessment activities include a communication survey and focus groups at each campus. The human resources study and the communication survey were quantitative in nature. The third assessment was qualitative in nature and provided the college feedback on information sharing, organization change and assessment needs. These data serves as tools for instructors and administrators and guide their attempts to adjust programs and policies and make change.

Next steps

The College of Micronesia – FSM values improvement. One way to facilitate this improvement is to develop and implement a model of learning, program and institutional assessments. This system of continuous assessment will support decision-making and planning, influence the direction and ultimately strengthen the college. Improving the college in this way will help COM-FSM promote learning and help the college be more accountable to the community as a whole. While the college has started a number of assessment initiatives. There is still work left to accomplish. This work comes in the form of finalizing student learning outcomes, establishing protocol for program reviews and conducting a complete assessment of the strategic plan. Institutional assessment will include documenting, analyzing and offering feedback to members of the community on assessment results. This will involve review the data and making recommendations for ongoing reporting on student learning and program outcomes and review the full assessment cycle and determine steps for the next assessment cycle. Finally, next fall the college will lead trainings on assessment and facilitate feedback from the assessment cycle. The college will also organize documentation and create a procedure manual for ongoing assessment throughout the college.

Recommendation 6: Create Continuity

The college needs to standardize instruction, student services, learning environment, and quality instruction across the college's six sites. Specific areas that require greater continuity at this time are:

- *(I) A written policy manual for the Board of Regents*
- *(II) Full-time and part-time faculty and staff hiring procedures, assignments appropriate to qualifications, and performance evaluations*
- *(III) The delivery of comprehensive and consistent student services at each of the college's sites*
- *(IV) The provision of adequate facilities for instruction at all sites; at this time, the college must immediately provide an adequate facility for student learning at the Chuuk site.*

The following evidence and documentation in support of this section of the report will be found in the team room during the accreditation visit:

- Distributed manual of administrative policies and procedures and schedules for revisions and distribution including revised versions of instructional division handbooks for the curriculum committee, faculty, and academic advisement;
- Documentation of ethics policy adoption; faculty performance evaluation adoption; part-time faculty policy development; and evidence of procedures relating to assignments appropriate to qualifications
- Documentation of communication to ensure comprehensive student services and alignment with procedures across all campuses
- Documentation of efforts to secure permanent site for Chuuk campus, and efforts to improve current Chuuk campus facilities

Introduction

The College of Micronesia-FSM has directed attention to all six of the accreditation recommendations. However, even more people have been involved in the wide ranging subjects covered by the four bullet points under this sixth recommendation. This response has received attention from all members of the college community, the state and national government leaders and many members of the population of the Federated States of Micronesia. The dialogue fueled by this recommendation has helped the college by bringing the issues to the attention of and increasing dialogue with the leaders of the nation. As in the previous recommendations, this process has helped the college to improve.

Bullet I of this recommendation pointed the administration in the right direction to complete the manual on policies and procedures. By investigating the manuals used by other colleges, the format has been reinforced. The Board of Regents manual, called governance manual, is under development and should be completed by the accreditation visit team arrival. The college is also updating and distributing all of the previously created sections of the Manuals of Policies and Procedures. Procedures for all areas of the college are being documented. Since turning attention to this task, many managers and directors have expressed appreciation for the effort. The

existence of consistent and well distributed policies and procedures will assist the college in manifesting the mission statement and in carrying out the mandate of the Board of Regents.

Bullet II addresses personnel issues, an area that had received attention in previous recommendations. Previous accreditation visit recommendations have helped the college develop a personnel policy and procedure manual that is well written and well distributed. Although the personnel manual has served as a model for other areas, some policies needed updating. Faculty evaluation policies had been under development, and well discussed for several years and finally adopted by the Board in May 2004. Faculty and staff hiring procedures are described here and procedures for ensuring that assignments are appropriate to qualifications are also described. The creation of the position of instructional coordinators at each campus and the filling of the position of Director of Academic Affairs at national campus are further insurance that the procedures are carried out properly.

Student services have been expanding at all the campuses, but these services had not been systematically coordinated. Bullet III directed the college to perform an assessment of the number and types of student services offered at each campus. In addition, an analysis of the number and type of employees managing the central support for student records and managing US Pell grant requirements helped the administration consider efficiencies of scale. The amount of support that campus student services coordinators could receive from the central administration was found to be higher than previously realized.

Finally, the need for a permanent site for Chuuk campus has been evident to all of the FSM, not just the college community, for many years. Numerous efforts had been made over the years. The administrators and the Board of Regents believed that once a permanent site was secured, the college could build the large, modern facilities the population of Chuuk required. However, the land that had been purchased turned out to be too expensive to build on; many buildings and sites were considered; and, existing buildings were identified as possibilities. The search will continue, as at the present time, the college still does not have a permanent site.

The efforts of the administration to bring closure to this issue brought the college into extended dialogue with state and national leaders. Although the discussions have not at this time produced the desired result, they have helped many of the participants to better understand this complex issue. State and national government officials have joined together in attempting to solve problems and it may be that a permanent site will be secured within a short time. Efforts have not ceased, and the decision to improve the current site does not preclude the addition of a permanent site in Chuuk.

The leased property has been greatly improved with more improvements underway and many more planned. Enrollment has been managed, and services have been added. There are many young people in Chuuk, and it has been widely believed that if there were appropriate facilities, the enrollment could exceed that of the national campus. However, for the time being, the Chuuk campus is only enrolling the number of students that can be fully supported in an adequate learning environment.

Significant progress has been made on all of the recommendations and the college has worked hard to address each of these points. Most significantly, however, there are now plans and timelines and a dialogue within the larger college community to match each of the tangible activities that will be described under these bullet points.

Bullet (I) The college needs to standardize instruction, student services, learning environment, and quality instruction across the college's six sites. Specific areas that require greater continuity at this time are a written policy manual for the Board of Regents

In response to this recommendation, the College of Micronesia-FSM is:

- completing the College of Micronesia Manual of Administrative Policies and Procedures [MAPP]
- informing the college community of the inventory of policy manuals
- distributing the existing manuals and will distribute other manuals as they are completed to all work units across the institution
- posing all policy and procedure manuals on the college website
- reviewing and updating policy and procedure manuals in existence
- direct all departments to document validate or update all procedures.
- a consultant has been hired to staff this project until completion.

As the first step, the administration clarified what a Board of Regents policy manual entails and its relationship to the College of Micronesia-FSM Manuals of Administrative Policies and Procedures. In their research, the Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education Policy and Procedures Manual reinforced the direction the college is taking. The board policy manual will officially be called the College of Micronesia-FSM Manuals of Administrative Policies and Procedures and will include the following volumes:

- Governance Manual
- Administrative Manual
- Finance/Business Manual
- Personnel Manual
- Instructional Affairs Manual
- Student Services Manual
- Sponsored Programs Manual
- Facilities/Maintenance/Transportation Manual
- Community Relations Manual

The personnel policy and procedure manual is current and up to date. The manual was distributed to all faculty and staff in 1999. Each new employee is given a copy of the manual. The director of human resources periodically updates the manual and changes are distributed to all employees. The manual has also been added onto the college website in an easy to update format.

The business/finance manual was completed in 2001. The student services manual and the instructional affairs manual were completed in 2002. However, the manuals were not distributed college wide. Although the accreditation working group agreed it would be ideal to update the manuals before distribution, it was decided that awareness of the policies was of higher

importance. At this time, the existing manuals are being printed (50 copies each) and will be distributed to every work unit within the college. This task should be completed no later than March 31, 2005. These manuals are also in the process of being posted on the college website. Since some of the information may be out of date, the website and printed material will include the expected date of the next revision and the name of the person who can be contacted to answer questions.

As mentioned earlier, a consultant has been hired to complete the other manuals. Work has already started on the administrative manual. The executive assistant to the President is developing the Board of Regents manual which has been renamed governance manual. The expected completion date is March 31, 2005.

Since the instructional affairs, student services and business/finance manuals were distributed as is, these manuals will be reviewed by the administrators responsible for each section to identify:

- a) policies needing revision
- b) outdated policies to be deleted
- c) policies that need to be written

Deleting outdated policies and updating policies to reflect changes since 2002 and disseminating the changes to the manual will be completed by September 2005. Revised and new policies will be developed through appropriate channels allowing for wide input from the college community. Changes will then be distributed to all manual custodians and posted on the college website.

The governance, administrative, sponsored programs, facilities/maintenance/transportation, and community relations manuals are under construction. Outlines have been made and placed in the appropriate manual. The consultant is reviewing Board directives and committee information and inserting the policies developed into the appropriate manuals [Standard IVA2]. These manuals will be then be reviewed by the responsible administrator to identify:

- a) policies needing revisions
- b) outdated policies to be deleted
- c) policies that need to be written

Old policies will be deleted and necessary updates made prior to the manuals being printed, distributed and placed on the college website. Policies to be revised or written will be included in the Policy Development Plan and channeled through the appropriate channels.

A plan to maintain the manuals for regular updates of policies and procedures will be completed by June 2005. The consultant has indicated a willingness to assist with updates and make recommendations concerning procedures and responsibilities for this task. Workshops to familiarize the faculty and staff with the contents and availability of the manuals are planned once all the manuals are printed.

In all discussions of this recommendation, the accreditation working group has agreed to institute a continuous cycle of review and adjustment [Standard IVB.1e]. As was previously suggested, the administrators in the appropriate areas will review the policy manual for accuracy,

consistency, and completeness, and then adjust through appropriate policy channels as needed. It has been further recommended a thorough review of primary policy documents be done to ensure consistency and completeness and to ensure that they accurately reflect the college. Workshops to familiarize the faculty and staff with the contents and availability of the manuals are planned.

Bullet II - The college needs to standardize instruction, student services, learning environments, and quality of instruction across the college's six sites. Specific areas that require greater continuity at this time are full-time and part-time faculty and staff hiring procedures, assignments appropriate to qualifications, and performance evaluations.

The accreditation visit team members have been helpful to the director of human resources both during and after their visit. The policies mentioned above will be described separately, with appropriate references to the personnel manual and committee minutes.

Staff Performance Evaluation

Annual performance reviews for non-teaching staff occur on an annual basis after the one year probationary period has ended [Standard IIIA.1b]. During probation there is a six month review as well as the 12 month review. The personnel office notifies the supervisors on a quarterly basis when evaluations are due or past due. All evaluations are reviewed by the human resources office to ensure completeness and then forwarded to the President for his signature.

The current evaluation tool used for the classified and professional staff was developed and approved by the Board in the fall of 1999. This tool is designed to encourage communication between the employee and supervisor and requires that objectives be set and evaluated [Standard IIIA.1b]. The ratings include a number of points under the categories of job understanding, productivity, self-management, communications and supervisory abilities where appropriate. The tool has been used successfully for a number of years and appears to be adequate and satisfactory for supervisors. No substantive complaints have been received regarding the content. The management staff is currently being evaluated on an old tool and a new tool is planned to be developed by 2007.

Faculty Evaluation

In spring of 2001 an ad hoc committee was formed to develop an Instructional Faculty Evaluation form. They began by reviewing the form used by CNMI. Since the form seemed appropriate for COM-FSM, permission was sought to use the CNMI form as the foundation for the development COM-FSM's faculty evaluation form. Permission was granted and the ad hoc committee continued their efforts. The evaluation form appeared promising however, during the process of working out implementation details the supervisors decided the document was not going to be implementable. The evaluation form also did not include references in relation to student learning outcomes or upholding a professional code of ethics.

During the fall of 2002 an entirely new evaluation form was developed with input from the division chairs. The new document was based on an existing form used by the vice president for instructional affairs. The new instrument also required effectiveness in producing student

learning outcomes as a component of the faculty evaluation [Standard IIIA.1c] and required upholding a written code of professional ethics [Standard IIIA.1b].

In the fall of 2003 the draft was forwarded to the personnel committee. The personnel committee noted the need for a section on supervisory responsibilities. This section was added. Once the section was approved by curriculum committee it was circulated college-wide for comments during early spring of 2004. Also developed at this time were the requirements for its use regarding annual step increases. During late spring the form and its corresponding policies were presented to the President, approved by cabinet and forwarded to the Board of Regents. The Board adopted the form and its corresponding policies at the May 2004 Board meeting. The evaluation form is now used consistently according to the policy on faculty reviews.

Assignments appropriate to qualifications

For faculty and staff, assignments appropriate to qualifications are ensured in a number of ways. This process is intertwined with the hiring process, which is also described here. The process begins when a job is announced. The supervisor defines the duties required; knowledge and skills needed and defines the appropriate level of responsibility [Standards IIIA.1.a, IIIA.2]. The job description is then reviewed by the human resources office to ensure appropriate placement on the appropriate classification and compensation scale. In the case of a new position, a qualitative system is used whereby the position is ranked in comparison to similar jobs and then placed on the appropriate level. This review is conducted on a consistent basis [Standard IIIA.3].

Positions are advertised for a period of from two weeks to two months and can be extended or re-advertised at the request of the supervisor. When the position closes, the human resources office reviews the applications for completeness and circulates the applications to a hiring committee. Members of the hiring committee are appointed by the human resources office in consultation with the supervisor. Once applications have been reviewed, the committee meets and with the assistance of the human resources office to review the applications. During the review, the committee members narrow the field by criteria defined in the job description. All candidates must meet the minimum job requirements. In this manner the committee determines who will be interviewed. Interviews are often conducted via conference call due to the distances between many applicants and the college.

For faculty assignments to be appropriate to qualifications several steps are followed and a number of people are involved. The applicant's schooling and experience appropriate to the position are reviewed [Standards IIIA.1.a, IIIA.2]. The ad hoc review committee then makes recommendations to the human resources director. The recommendation is then forwarded to the director of academic affairs or vocational education for their review. They send it on to the VPIA for comments and recommendation. It is then sent back to the director of human resources and on to the president for final approval. Once hired, course assignments are made by division chairs and instruction coordinators. When requested to teach a course outside of their primary discipline, there is a review of that assignment by the curriculum committee. The faculty workload policy, which is located in the personnel policy and procedure manual, clearly defines faculty assignments. All faculty are expected to follow their job description and the course outline.

Development of new policies regarding part time instructors

Minimum qualifications for full-time instructors are clearly written in the personnel policy and procedure manual and every employee has an up to date copy of this document. The part-time faculty handbook is currently under revision, partially in response to this recommendation, and is expected to be completed by May 2005. This policy is undergoing a review process similar to the review completed for the faculty workload policy [Standard IIIA.3]. That process required review by two committees with multiple opportunities for comment by the faculty and was completed in approximately 18 months.

The minimum qualifications policy for part time instructors has involved the entire college community. In January 2004 the director of human resources identified the need for the development of minimum qualifications for vocational education part-time instructors and asked the curriculum committee to begin to review the issue. It was then realized that not only did the college need to develop the minimum qualifications for vocational education part-time instructors, it also needed to develop the same for exercise sports science instructors and revisions were needed for the minimum qualifications of academic part-time instructors. During summer 2004, the curriculum committee identified this as a priority and started a review of part-time instructor minimum qualifications to bring them in line with full-time minimum qualifications.

While this process has not yet been completed, the personnel and curriculum committees are working in collaboration to finalize these minimum qualifications. Policies in place have been reviewed, policies of other WASC accredited institutions have been considered and the faculty has been consulted. When the qualifications have been agreed upon, the college will be addressing the requirements in relation to the personnel already in place. Three scenarios have been developed. The first scenario is to implement the change without any time for the campuses to make adjustments. This in effect would halt education at the campus level. The second is to grandfather instructors in allowing those currently approved to teach to continue to be eligible for recertification. The third is to give all campuses a time limit in which they would either need to hire full-time instructors or identify part-time instructors who meet the minimum qualifications.

As stated, we foresee the development of the minimum qualifications standards for faculty to be handled in the same manner as the policy developed for faculty workload with the personnel and curriculum committees working together in a collaborative effort. This also allows for comments from all levels – faculty and administration at both the national and state campuses. Our targeted date for completion is May 2005.

Code of Ethics

Though not listed under the recommendation directly, a written code of ethics was discussed in the findings and evidence section of the evaluation of human resources. At this time, we have completed the committee work and the Board of Regents has approved the code of ethics.

COM-FSM had already addressed the lack of a code of ethics in the spring of 2003. The director of vocational education had the initiative to begin the development process for the policy. During fall of that same year, the personnel committee reviewed and revised the draft. In the spring the

revised draft was distributed college wide. Recommendations for improvements were received. The personnel committee accepted a revised version created by an employee from a state campus. Then, after a web search, another version was submitted to the committee. The policy identified was nearly identical to the American Association of University Professors Statement on Professional Ethics. The policy was distributed throughout the college through email and campus representatives. Comments were collected and reviewed by the committee. The final draft was sent from committee to the President for cabinet approval. The Board of Regents approved the policy in December 2004.

Bullet III. The college needs to standardize instruction, student services, learning environments, and quality of instruction across the college’s six sites. Specific areas that require greater continuity at this time are the delivery of comprehensive and consistent student services at each of the college’s sites.

The college is attempting to standardize all of the items listed above. However, particular attention has been paid to the delivery of student services. In this section, we will attempt to explain the current delivery of consistent student services across our college [Standard IIB.1, IIB.3a]. We will also describe the plans to assure that these services are regularly assessed and improvements are made. Under the new organizational chart, all personnel working in student services programs report to the vice president for support and student affairs. The vice president reports directly to the president and is part of the central administration at the national campus. Clearly delegated responsibility in this area will assist the college in the provision of consistency in support services across all campuses. The responsibilities of the vice president for support and student affairs include admissions and records, financial aid programs, counseling programs, and campus life including sports and recreation throughout COM-FSM.

Where the student services personnel work

The table below illustrates the number and type of full time equivalent personnel currently performing student services functions at each campus and in the national administrative offices. Personnel perform multiple tasks in nearly every office, and campuses with lower enrollment do not as yet have full time personnel devoted to each activity. As resources allow, additional personnel will be added to student services.

Number of Personnel FTE in each area of Student Services by campus

	Avg. 04 enrollment	Admissions and Records	Financial aid programs	Counseling programs	Campus life & Rec
FMI*	25	.33	.33	1.33	1
Yap	143	.25	.25	.25	.25
Kosrae	237	.5	.5	.5	.5
Pohnpei	486	1	.5	1	1.5
Chuuk	728	2	2	2	2
National **	904	2.2	3.7	2	11
Central admin	overall 2,523	3.8	3.3	1	2

*FMI is a specialized vocational program with low enrollment and an active physical component

** National campus has 2 dormitories, serving 200 students and staffed by campus life personnel

College wide student services support provided by the national campus administration

Several administrative functions are centralized at the national campus. This is done both for efficiency and is necessary to assist with internal quality control to meet external regulations. Financial aid, work study and scholarships are coordinated by the national financial aid office [FAO] and supplemented by the completion of FAFSA online by the students with the assistance of campus financial aid counselors. Local registration for campuses is entered and electronically sent to the national campus central office of admissions and records [OAR]. Registration changes and grade recording is handled in the same way. Local campuses keep paper copies of student information and instructor grade reports. Duplicate electronic records are also kept of the database [Standard IIB3f]. Transcript requests and grades are only issued by the central records office.

The department of support and student services is assisted directly by the work of several committees: admissions board, financial aid committee, facilities/security/safety committee, and the large student services committee. The student services committee has proxy representation from the campuses. Members from campuses are represented at meetings by a counterpart from the national campus. These members partner and share information to assure that campus members' points of view are brought forward at meetings. Electronic distribution of meeting materials and minutes also assists campus members in actively participating with improved representation for campuses.

The student services committee develops student services policy. Policies are developed in response to need identified either by the administration or from suggestions by committee members and their constituents. Draft policies are widely circulated for review and to allow comments by staff, faculty and students. Numerous drafts of policies are circulated before committee approval. The committee also takes the lead on planning for future activities. A schedule of events and activities is developed by members of the committee and again, these are circulated widely for review and comment before approval.

Recently the student services committee has undertaken the lead in the development of student learning outcomes for each of the student services areas [Standard IIB4]. Staff from the campuses joined the national administration in training sessions and discussions. The college invited Dr. Mary Allen to work with the student services personnel during staff development week. She assisted the staff in the identification of learning objectives and reviewed assessment methods. Prior to this opportunity, the student services offices had conducted a review and discussions of the mission, objectives and goals as part of the alignment of the performance based budget and strategic plan goals and objectives. These activities were accomplished with the assistance of the student services committee members and the managers and directors of each area and will be discussed at length under recommendation #5 on assessment activities.

Admissions & Records

The coordinator of admissions and records oversees the development and oversight of policies and procedures regarding admissions and student records management of all campuses. Of the six staff members at national campus, approximately 3.8 FTE is devoted to activities that support the entire college, and approximately 2.2 FTE is spent directly assisting the students attending the national campus. The college wide responsibilities include implementation of admissions and

records management policies and procedures and assistance in assuring student learning outcomes. The student records database is centrally located at the national campus and data is electronically transmitted overnight from the campuses.

Plans for this area include a reclassification of the coordinator's position to managerial level as the coordinator has responsibility for admissions and records across the campuses. Adding another data processing specialist is planned. Plans are to continue monitoring and assisting the campuses by sending staff to assist at campuses and receiving campus staff for training at the central office. This will provide for continuous improvement and consistent delivery of OAR services college wide. The office is also participating in the development and implementation of an office assessment plan. Early work on this project included the development of a mission statement and review of office goals.

Admissions policies are developed and carried out by the COM-FSM Admissions Board. This group of faculty and staff meet regularly and review applications and test scores. Students seeking eventual transfer to a four-year institution are encouraged to apply for admission to the national campus and the students with the highest potential to perform well in college transfer courses are offered admission.

Financial Aid

The coordinator of financial aid oversees the development and oversight of policies and procedures regarding financial aid policies and procedures for all campuses. Of the seven staff members at the national campus, approximately 3.3 FTE are devoted to activities that support the entire college, while 3.7 FTE are spent directly assisting the national campus students. The national campus financial aid office also assists with scholarships and, as national campus students have a higher rate of transfer to four year institutions, a significant portion of time at the national campus office is spent on transfer activity. The college wide responsibilities include the implementation of financial aid policy and procedures and the assessment of student learning outcomes.

All financial aid programs, both US federal and FSM government, are administered by the central financial aid office at the national campus. Information is gathered at all campus sites, and transmitted electronically and by fax to the national financial aid office. An electronic tracking system has been implemented to assist the campuses and students throughout the college in knowing the status of the received documents. Student financial aid fund distribution continues to be in accordance with US federal regulations.

Plans for this area include the reclassification of the coordinator's position to managerial level as he has responsibility for financial aid activities across the campuses. The office plans to convert the special contract financial aid technician to a permanent position. In the next two years another financial aid technician position is planned. Monitoring and assisting the financial aid activities at campuses has been and will continue to be a high priority. Training for the US Pell grant requirements and coordinating the activities of each campus has always been an integral part of the activities of this office. Training in the assessment of student learning outcomes will be an additional focus for this area.

Counseling

During the process of reviewing the reporting relationships and the organization of work units, the decision was made to have the counseling offices college wide coordinated by a lead counselor. The lead counselor is centrally located at the national campus in Palikir. This counselor will develop guidelines, coordinate programs, provide information and materials on pertinent subject areas to the counselors at other campuses and develop a policy and procedure manual for counseling college wide. The campuses with more than one counselor will designate a lead counselor, who will be the primary contact for the campus on counseling issues. These individuals will work together to take policy suggestions to the student services committee for approval. This will allow a mechanism for the development and oversight of counseling policies and procedures for all campuses. Upcoming activities for this area include designating a lead counselor at Chuuk and Pohnpei campuses [Standard IIB.3a].

Residential life, including sports and recreation and health promotion

The new director of residential/campus life, Dr. James Yaingeluo, brings together a number of student services providers at COM-FSM. This includes the coordination of sports and recreation and health services college wide. The campus life director located at the national campus will now oversee the development of policies and procedures regarding all these areas. Working with the director on college wide issues are the national campus recreation specialist Castro Joab and the national campus dispensary nurse, Benina Ilon. The residential/campus life director also oversees the staff of the two dormitories at the national campus and serves as an advisor to the staff of the one other dormitory of the college at the FMI campus. The national campus dormitory staff includes one manager and two permanent advisors and four contract resident advisors plus four student resident assistants.

The implementation of policies and procedures and student learning outcomes for sports and recreation, health promotion, and residence hall activities are the responsibilities of all managers at national campus and the student services coordinators at the campuses. Upcoming plans for campus life include training on new policies and reviewing procedures. The director of campus life and the vice president will visit other campuses and continue to bring campus staff to the national campus for training and events [Standard IIIA.5].

Student services available at each campus

National campus: The vice president for support and student services performs the dual role of national campus student services coordinator, as well as the head of administration of student services. As described earlier, he is ably assisted by the presence of the central offices of Admission and Records, Financial Aid, the lead counselor and Campus Life Director. The vice president will continue to offer training and monitor visits to other campus sites in these areas. The emphasis on the development of procedure manuals for each area is currently a high priority. In addition, the vice president has placed a high priority on the development and implementation of the assessment plan for all student services areas. These activities are more fully described under Recommendation #5.

Pohnpei Campus: The Student Services Coordinator/Assistant Director is responsible for the implementation of admissions and records, financial aid, counseling, sports and recreation, and

health promotion activities. Pohnpei campus has a number of staff members who report to the student services coordinator and assist in the implementation of the policies and procedures in each of these areas. These include one admission & records staff person, one financial aid counselor, one sport and recreation staff person, one counselor, and a nurse. The student services coordinator will assist with the implementation of policies and procedures and the assessment of student learning outcomes. The Pohnpei campus is located near the national campus, and the staff works closely to implement policies and develop procedures for the continuous improvement and consistent delivery of all student services areas. Student services staff from Pohnpei campus are able to attend student services committee meetings at national campus and the all student services staff at national campus are easily available to the Pohnpei campus staff members. This has lead to a comfortable collaborative relationship in this department.

Chuuk Campus: The Student Services Coordinator/Assistant Director is responsible for implementation of admissions and records, financial aid, counseling, sports and recreation, and health promotion activities policies and procedures and the assessment of student learning outcomes. The largest campus, the student services coordinator has a relatively large staff to assist with the delivery of student services. Chuuk Campus has two admission and records staff, one financial aid counselor (and one open position) and two counselors. At the present time, no one individual is performing sports and recreation activities exclusively. Several members of the campus community are sharing responsibilities for these activities. A position dedicated to sports and recreation is planned. Chuuk Campus does not have a dispensary, but is utilizing the services at the state hospital. All staff members are aware of the need to assist in the implementation of policies and procedures and the assessment of student learning outcomes.

As Chuuk campus continues in reorganization, several roles will be clarified. A lead counselor will be designated. Positions for a sports and recreation advisor and nurse are planned. Training at the national site, and training and monitoring at the Chuuk campus will continue with at least one visit planned for each term [Standard IIB.4]. This is intended to ensure continual improvement and consistent delivery of student services programs.

Kosrae Campus: For the smaller COM-FSM campuses, the person holding the student services coordinator position will, for a time, continue be responsible for more than one student service activity. Although one new position will be filled in FY05, one in FY06, and two more in FY 07, Kosrae student services are the primary responsibility of the student services coordinator. The student services coordinator has primary responsibility for the oversight of financial aid, and admissions and records. He shares counseling, sports and recreation and health promotion activities with other members of the staff including the director, faculty members and the peer counseling advisor. This campus is utilizing the services of the state hospital for the medical and health needs of its students and staff. Kosrae campus staff will continue to receive training on new and existing policies and the assessment of student learning outcomes. The vice president for support and student affairs will continue to oversee monitoring visits to the campus for continuous improvement and consistent delivery of student services programs.

Yap Campus: Yap is also a small campus, and the student services coordinator position is new in their organizational structure. The employee moving into this position is the business officer. She has already been involved in helping students and is pleased to be increasing these

responsibilities. The Yap campus re-organization will be implemented in stages over the current year. New positions are currently being advertised. The major transition is expected to be completed by the end of spring term. The student services coordinator will continue to have dual responsibilities and be responsible for more than one student service activity. At Yap campus, this initially means the student services coordinator will oversee financial aid, admissions and student records and do some counseling and health promotion activities. Yap Campus is utilizing the services of the state hospital for the medical and health promotion needs of its students and staff. The Yap campus staff will continue to receive training on new and existing policies and the assessment of student learning outcomes. The vice president will continue to schedule monitoring visits to assure the continuous improvement and consistent delivery of student services programs.

FSM-Fisheries & Maritime Institute (FSM-FMI): FSM-FMI is the smallest and only specialized campus. It usually has an enrollment of approximately 30 students. The students receive specialized training and are not at this time eligible for US Pell assistance for tuition. The campus is entirely supported by the FSM Congress and administered by COM-FSM. At the Institute there is a student services coordinator who also has other duties and is assisted in each of these activities by faculty and the campus director. He assists students with financial aid, admissions, counseling and recreational activities. The coordinator is responsible for the implementation of policy in all of the above areas. FSM-FMI, like Yap campus, is utilizing the services of Yap state hospital for its medical and health promotion activities. The student services coordinator will continue to receive training in student services policies and in the assessment and evaluation of student services programs [Standard IIB4]. Monitoring visits take place regularly and will continue.

Bullet IV. The college needs to standardize instruction, student services, learning environment, and quality instruction across the college's six sites. Specific areas that require greater continuity at this time are the provision of adequate facilities for instruction at all sites; at this time, the college must immediately provide an adequate facility for student learning at the Chuuk site.

Although a permanent site has not been acquired, the college has made considerable progress in improving the facilities for student learning in the currently leased buildings and properties of that constitute the Chuuk campus. Negotiations have been undertaken with the owner of the primary campus site to allow for a fifteen year lease extension. These friendly negotiations have reached an agreement in principle, with only a few remaining details to be completed. The decision to continue using this property over this time period supports the decision to upgrade the property. The College of Micronesia-FSM has been actively improving the current site and at the present time, and a contract has been implemented for the construction of new buildings [Standards IIB1, IIB1a, IIB1b].

New buildings on the current campus

The bids for the construction of new buildings to house a generator, a toilet facility, two computer labs/classrooms, and the learning resource center have been awarded to construction companies in Chuuk. Construction has begun and completion is expected during spring term 2005 and should be near when the visiting team visits in April, 2005. The college has also issued

a call for proposals from local land owners for additional space to accommodate vocational classrooms and shops. The relocation of vocational education classrooms should be accomplished by summer 2005. In progress to date, a number of buildings have been identified and a review of the most appropriate buildings will be determined by approximately mid-March.

One of the most striking improvements to the Chuuk campus is the addition of a student center [Standard IIIB1a]. Built to accommodate local cultural and student events, the center is a high-roofed, open-sided, concrete floored area in the center of the campus. Two corners of the center are partially supported by two large cargo containers. These containers will house a book store and a small facility where students can purchase food and drinks during the day. The student center became a focus of campus life even before the floor was completed and is frequently the venue for co curricular activities. Another important improvement is a cultural center. Formerly an unused building it now houses a small museum that features Chuukese handicrafts and serves as the venue for cultural events.

Improvements to existing structures

Completed improvements include the replacement of some leaky roofing, replacement of some areas of flooring and the installation of additional lighting in multiple areas. This has increased classroom and office space and improved the maintenance shop. These improvements have increased the efficiency of the maintenance staff and have allowed the maintenance workers to focus on other improvements. A sidewalk has been constructed, which increases the safety and comfort of students moving between classes. One of the major overall improvements is the purchase of a generator. Due to infrastructure issues, electrical power in Chuuk has been intermittent for the past several months. When this issue arose, the college began the process to purchase a generator for Chuuk campus to provide a source of electricity when the local source was not operational. The generator will allow the uninterrupted flow of power to classrooms, offices, computer labs, and the learning resource center and is to be housed in a new, single use building already under construction. The maintenance staff have been trained to troubleshoot this vital piece of infrastructure.

To improve communication, three antennas have also been installed to allow for a wireless internet system to connect the separate buildings of the Chuuk campus. This project was started during the latter part of 2004 with only two more buildings remaining to be hooked up to the network, the project is expected to be completed by the end of March 2005 [Standard IIIC1a]. These improvements have greatly improved the situation at Chuuk campus, and planned improvements should continue this trend.

As Chuuk is the only one of the four states without a permanent college facility, Chuuk states growing population of high school graduates had intensified the problem of inadequate facilities. Controlling enrollment was seen as a necessary part of improving the learning facility. As recently as four years ago, the college was able to write a mission statement that included the phrase, “and education for all”. However, times have rapidly changed and the college is now in a situation that requires enrollment management for all sites. At sites other than Chuuk this has meant limiting the number of seats available to new students.

Administrative procedures strengthened

Chuuk campus has, with the support of the National campus, improved the registration process. This has made it easier to be compliant with the enrollment limits and has lowered the number of students overall. Although the political and government leaders of Chuuk would like to see a larger Chuuk campus that offers increased enrollment and additional programs, the college has set a limit on enrollment to the number of students that can be adequately served. This enrollment cap is under review, and the vice presidents for instructional affairs and for support and student services are working together to provide clear guidelines to each campus to manage the number and type of facilities required to support the student population [Standards IIA.2c, IIIB.1a]. Local leaders have a strong incentive to improve the Chuuk campus facilities.

These issues surrounding the college are compounded because the College of Micronesia-FSM is located in a young country with some of the “most autonomous states that have ever been held in a federation”. Each state has a strongly defined culture that is reflected in the personalities and characteristics of its citizens and of its institutions. Chuuk state has the highest population of the four states, and the smallest amount of land. Most public institutions, including the state government buildings, are located on leased land in Chuuk. There is unlikely to be a more difficult challenge in the state of Chuuk, which has many challenges, than that of land use, land ownership and land availability.

For many years, the Board of Regents and the administration of the college had believed that the solution to the problems at the Chuuk campus would be lessened by the acquisition of a permanent site. If the college owned the property, it could be properly improved. The experience of the national campus, where the campus had moved from old and inadequate facilities into new buildings on owned land, was the example everyone hoped would happen in Chuuk.

History of the search for a permanent campus

The history of the permanent site for the campus goes back to 1993, the year the college became independent. In that year the College of Micronesia-FSM used funds from the FSM national government to purchase a piece of land in Nandaku, Chuuk for the permanent site of Chuuk Campus. Problems arose over the construction of roads and sewer lines that would require an easement agreement with private land owners. The prohibitive price of the easement forced the college to court but land cases linger in the courts in the FSM, as land ownership is held by families and issues become very complicated quickly. Although the case was eventually settled by the government, and the easement was granted, Chuuk constitutional provisions and third party negotiations caused the solution to be less than adequate for permitting access to the land.

Chuuk Star Hotel identified

In 2003, the Board of Regents and former President Michael Tatum decided not to re-locate the current Chuuk Campus to the Nandaku site. The College of Micronesia-FSM solicited proposals from Chuuk land owners for property that might be sold to the college. Three proposals were considered worth exploring. After serious investigations into the issues involved, the Board of Regents approved a proposal to acquire Chuuk Star Hotel in October 2003. The Board of Regents also established a task force to work with the owner of the hotel as well as the FSM Development Bank. A series of meeting took place between the three parties, the College, FSM Development Bank, and the owner, Mr. Oshiro Billimon.

The College was given permission from the owners of the hotel to assess and appraise the hotel and adjacent land. The College hired consultants to survey the adjacent land to the hotel and did an assessment and determined that the hotel, land, and the restaurant will meet the future needs for Chuuk Campus. The College had many meetings with the FSM National Government and Chuuk leaders on securing the funding. Some highlights of these efforts are worth noting.

In FY 2004 the FSM Congress appropriated \$350,000 and Chuuk Legislature appropriated \$500,000 for Chuuk Campus facilities under infrastructure development plan of Compact II funds. The College learned from JEMCO in December 2004 that Compact II funds cannot be used to purchase land. This meant that appropriated Compact II funds in the amount of \$850,000 could not be used. The college community has been kept updated on the Chuuk campus situation as frequent notices on the progress have been posted in the Presidential Updates. The wide ranging activities and intense local interest are reflected in the many details and numerous participants in the discussions. For instance, the Ad Hoc Committee on Chuuk Star Hotel had meetings with Mr. Peter Christian, Speaker of the FSM Congress and Mrs. Anna Mendiola, President and General Manager of the FSM Development Bank. There were many meetings with FSM Senators, members of the Chuuk House and Senate, the Chuuk Governor and Chuuk campus students, faculty and staff.

Current situation

In January 2005, the Board of Regents authorized negotiations for a long term lease for the current site and an increase in improvements. The task force recommended to the Board at its March 2005 meeting that the Chuuk Star Hotel project no longer be the focus for the permanent site of Chuuk campus. Two alternative permanent sites for Chuuk campus have been identified. The Board of Regents has agreed to drop the focus on Chuuk Star Hotel and delegated to the Chuuk Regent, at his request, and the Chuuk campus director to work with the Chuuk state government to identify a permanent site for the administration to proceed in the acquisition processes. The Board will then propose new options. As in all other postsecondary institutions, COM-FSM is facing fiscal challenges in securing adequate funding for improving its facilities., The infrastructure improvement plans and budget requests in place for the period FY2006 to FY2009 total approximately \$10M which, if appropriated, should allow the college to continue to improve facilities at all sites. Facilities standards have been developed and have been disseminated for review and comments to all campus directors and facilities staff.

Timeline of Additional Plans the Community College Has Developed:

The college has been very actively involved in the response to the recommendations and many initiatives are in process. The following list of activities summarizes the upcoming plans organized by the departmental responsibilities.

During March 2005:

Instructional Affairs:

- Instructional affairs department will complete student learning outcomes for all remaining courses requiring SLO format. [Recommendation #5]

Student services:

- The department of Support and Student Affairs will identify student learning outcome objectives for counseling, residential and student life including recreation, sports and dispensary, admissions and records and financial aid offices. [Recommendation #5]

Administration:

- The Institutional Effectiveness Coordinator will make recommendations for the institutional assessment cycle. [Recommendations #5]
- Planning council and Finance committee will consider changes to the budget development process. [Recommendation #4]

Executive:

- Managers and directors will report to the president progress against the goals identified in the college's strategic plan and performance based budget. [Recommendation #4]
- President will attend EPIC meeting with state and national government leaders to discuss the future of the college. [Recommendation #2]
- The administration will continue improvements at Chuuk campus. [Recommendation #6]
- Completion of distribution of the Manual of Administrative Policies and Procedures [Recommendation #6]

During April 2005

Instructional Affairs:

- The division of Instructional Affairs and the Personnel Committee will propose part time faculty qualifications for Cabinet and Board of Regents approval. [Recommendation #6]
- The instructional affairs department will propose evaluation measures for assessment of the responses to WASC recommendations. [Recommendation #5]

Student Services:

- The student affairs departments will identify evaluation methods for student learning outcomes for admissions and records, financial aid, counseling, and residential and student life including recreation, sports and dispensary. [Recommendation #5]
- The student affairs assessment group will work with service departments to establish benchmarks for evaluation.

Administration:

- The Research and Planning Office will conduct informational interviews with faculty and staff in order to measure & document progress meeting the goals of the strategic plan and the performance based budget. [Recommendation #4]
- The Research and Planning Office will report spring IPEDS data and gather FY04 annual report data. [Recommendation #4]

- The Institutional Effectiveness Coordinator will compile data for a communications needs assessment and will present findings, along with some recommendations, to the cabinet [Recommendation #3].
- The Research and Planning Office will work with the Vice President of Cooperative Research and Extension to conduct a needs assessment to inform the reorganization of all land grant programs.

Executive:

- The cabinet will adopt a new technology plan once the college community has had the chance to review the plan and provide feedback. [Recommendation #4]
- The Accreditation Working Group will approve reorganization implementation plans. [Recommendation #2]
- The administration of the college will continue to improve Chuuk campus. [Recommendation #6]
- The cabinet will approve procedures for enrollment management for all campuses. [Recommendation #2]

During May 2005

Instructional Affairs

- Instructional Affairs will establish benchmarks for assessment of course outcomes. [Recommendation #5]
- Instructional affairs will complete program learning outcomes for all degree and non-degree programs. [Recommendation #5]
- Instructional Affairs will identify tools to assess the courses specific to the general education requirement in math, science, language and literature and social sciences. [Recommendation #5]

Student Services

- Student services will design an assessment for at least two areas, to be completed over the summer months.

Administration

- The Research and Planning Office will publish the FY 2004 Annual Report including performance data and goals for FY 05 & FY 06. [Recommendation #4]
- The Research and Planning Office will publish an inventory of evaluations and assessments conducted in FY04 and create a schedule of upcoming data gathered throughout the college. [Recommendations #1, #2, #3 & #4]
- Implementation of the revised budget process. [Recommendation #4]

Executive

- Cabinet will evaluate communication data and will develop a campus communication policy and plan during a college retreat aimed at improving communication. [Recommendations #1, #2, & #3]
- Construction of new buildings at current Chuuk campus will be completed. [Recommendation #6]

During June to August 2005

Instructional Affairs

- Instructional Affairs will publish and distribute all program learning outcomes. [Recommendation #5]
- The Instructional affairs will make recommendations for ongoing reporting on student learning and program outcomes. [Recommendation #5]

Student Services

- The department of Support and Student Affairs' will conduct a summer assessment project.
- The student services departments will make recommendations for ongoing reporting on student learning outcomes. [Recommendation #5]

Administration

- The Research and Planning Office will report feedback from the evaluation of the strategic plan to Planning Council. Planning Council and the Research and Planning Office will develop guidelines for a twenty year strategic plan. [Recommendation #4]
- The Institutional Effectiveness Coordinator will begin developing assessment manual with assessment study group. [Recommendation #5]

Executive

- The college will implement a communication plan that will formalize pathways for effective communication. [Recommendation #1]
- Completion of the revised portions of the manual of administrative policies and procedures. [Recommendation #6]

During September to October 2005

Instructional Affairs

- Instructional Affairs and Support and Student Affairs will communicate the results of assessments and will use data to inform improvements to programs and services. [Recommendation #5]

Student Services

- The Student Affairs Assessment Sub-Group will evaluate data collected from the summer assessment project and report on the results to the assessment study group. [Recommendation #5]
- Implementation of the assessment plan [Recommendation #5]

Administration

- Hire the Vice President for Administration [Recommendation #2]
- The Institutional Effectiveness Coordinator will help the assessment study group transition to a college committee. [Recommendation #5]
- The Research and Planning Office will re-survey the community regarding communication and integrate information gathered by communications initiatives and will make recommendations for planning [Recommendations #1, #3, #5].
- The Assessment Committee will lead a workshop on the college assessment cycle for faculty and staff. [Recommendation #5]
- Information Technology will begin implementing the new technology plan. [Recommendation #4]

Executive

- Planning Council will facilitate activities that guide decision making for short and long term planning and will establish benchmarks for evaluating these activities. [Recommendation #4, #5]
- The cabinet will review and approve the College of Micronesia - FSM Assessment Manual. [Recommendation #5]
- Workshops on policies and procedures campus wide. [Recommendation #6]
- Hire the community relations/fundraising coordinator. [Recommendation #2]

During November to December 2005

Instructional Affairs

- Instructional affairs will perform site visits to all campuses. [Recommendation 32]

Student Services

- Student affairs assessment subgroup will determine the assessment results.
- Decisions and recommendations regarding program planning will be incorporated into planning.

Administration

- The Research and Planning Office will evaluate the college communication policy and plan
- The Research and Planning Office will hold focus groups and community meetings to hear feedback on development of the new strategic plan. [Recommendation #4]
- The Research and Planning Office will begin drafting a twenty year strategic plan. [Recommendation #4]
- Planning Council will organize documentation and adopt a manual for ongoing planning at the college. [Recommendation #4]
- The institutional effectiveness coordinator will organize documentation and create a procedure manual for ongoing assessment throughout the college.

Other changes or issues currently confronting the institution

In addition to addressing the changes, improvements and restructuring, other events have influenced the work at the College of Micronesia.

Changes in Key Personnel:

- Spensin James has been named President as of January 2005.
- Jean Thoulag continues as Acting Vice President of Instructional Affairs.

Concluding statement

This report addresses the progress made in responding to the recommendations delivered by the Western Association of School and Colleges to the College of Micronesia – FSM in June, 2004. It has been almost a year since the college was visited by WASC. During this year, the staff, faculty, administration and the Board of Regents of the College of Micronesia - FSM has completed a major amount of work. They have developed, documented and implemented formal lines of communication; clear lines of administrative authority; a new organizational model; long term plans for the college and new systems and procedures for institutional assessment. The college has also developed and revitalized a number of practices and procedures.

The college has begun evaluating student and program learning outcomes; initiating and then assessing new protocols for communication, conducting trainings, acquiring an appropriate site for Chuuk campus; and implementing new ways to monitor programs and services. The college is not only addressing all of these issues, it is also documenting and publishing information on college systems so that faculty, staff and students have access to information on “how things work”. This increased dialogue has assisted the collective decision-making, strengthened the institution and will serve the college well in the long term.

The College of Micronesia – FSM understands that our work is not done. We have spent a year refocusing: a new strategic plan is underway; planning and budgeting are becoming linked; communication continues to improve; continuity is apparent and assessment is taking hold. There are still issues that require attention; however, we look forward to the work ahead.

This report demonstrates the commitment of the College of Micronesia – FSM to improving. The process of responding to the recommendations has strengthened the institution in many ways. The six campus college community is working together, communication has improved, and staff, faculty and students are reflecting on our work. We look forward to sharing our accomplishments with the visit team in April.

Appendix One

Example of COM-FSM Face to Face Visit Log:

(complete log of campus visits will be available in team room during accreditation visit)

March 17- 21,2004 Pohnpei	Joakim Peter, Chuuk Alex Rhowuniong, Chuuk Deliver Salle, Chuuk UB	Meet with President James and other administrative and instructional college personnel in regards to sponsored program management & other management & communication matters [Recommendation #1]
March 22-25, 2004 Kosrae	Penny Weilbacher, Pohnpei Norma Edwin, Executive Assistant to the President Danilo Dumantay, Comptroller Spensin James, Interim President Brian Isaac, Regent Podis Pedrus, Regent Tiser Lipwe, Regent Joakim Peter, Director Chuuk Campus Joseph Habuchmai, Regent Lourdes Roboman, Director Yap Campus Matthias Ewarmai, Director FMI	Meeting of the Board of Regents Agenda included planning, budget, Chuuk campus facility, Presidential search, articulation agreements, enrollment management, infrastructure development and regular business [Recommendation #1, #2, #4]
March 22-27, 2004 Pohnpei	Rioichy Johnny, Coordinator for Career Ladder Project Chuuk Campus	Local Language Implementation Conference and meet and discussions with college personnel on performance reporting [Recommendation #1]
March 27-April 4, 2004 Pohnpei	Mathias Ewarmai, FMI Yap Kalwin Kephass, Kosrae Patrick Peckalibe, Yap	Travel to Pohnpei to attend the Third Economic Summit and meet with members of the administration [Recommendation #1]
March 29-April 05, 04 Chuuk	Bruce Robert, Librarian National	To provide technical assistance to Chuuk Campus LRC re Follett Software and Cataloging [Recommendation #2]
March 29-April 2,2004 Chuuk	Mark DeOrio, Information Specialist National Campus	To set up the new computers in the library and computer lab and conduct training [Recommendation #6]
April 24- May 1, 2004 Pohnpei	Yap, Chuuk and Kosrae Upward Bound Students and Staff	Campus visitation for high school seniors, & meetings with administrative, instructional and student services personnel [Recommendation #1]
April 20- 24, 2004 Yap	Gordon Segal, Director of Information Technology National Campus	Assistance with technology following typhoon damage [Recommendation #1]
April 27 – 30, 2004 Chuuk	Spensin James, President	To work with Chuuk campus staff and Chuuk leadership regarding permanent site for the campus and to meet with Chuuk campus staff/faculty regarding enrollment management [Recommendation #6]

Appendix Two

Brief Review of the COM-FSM October 15, 2004 Progress Report to WASC

The accreditation working group evaluated the reporting relationships and the line of authority identified in the previous organizational chart. The consensus was that a major reorganization was needed to clarify the lines of authority. Based on these findings, the President initiated discussion of reorganization. To begin, the group circulated information on organizational structuring and management theory. They also facilitated discussions on the needs of the college.

Three hypothetical organizational charts were created. These charts were used to demonstrate solutions to the needs the college identified and to stimulate discussion. During these discussions, the college community was challenged to create alternatives and develop additional charts [Standards IVA.1, IVA.3].

This intensive process engaged many groups and individuals and nearly a dozen organizational charts were circulated to everyone. All members of the college community had the opportunity to comment and numerous groups reviewed and discussed the alternatives. This process culminated in a week long meeting at national campus during which a new organizational chart was created. This meeting was attended by several representatives of each campus. The new chart was then submitted to the Board of Regents, who made minor modifications and then approved the organizational plan at the September 2004 meeting [Standard IVB.1c].

Plans for the integration of the new organizational chart were created, then reviewed by the college community, approved by the Board of Regents and submitted in the October 15 report to WASC. The report described three upcoming phases:

Phase One: Implementation

From October until December 2004, training materials were developed to orient the college community to the meanings behind the organizational chart. These materials were gathered in a binder and will be available to the accreditation visit team.

Phase Two: Integration

From January to April 2005, the members of the college community reviewed and developed procedures and processes that relate directly to the new organization structure. Staff and faculty assigned to newly created positions traveled from the Kosrae, Chuuk and Yap campuses traveled to the national campus for all campus meetings. Faculty and staff from the national campus administration traveled to all the states to discuss issues, assist with problem solving, listen to students, faculty and staff, and train and evaluate performance. This work is described in this progress report and supported by evidence that will be available to the accreditation visit team.

Phase Three: Evaluation

From May until October 2005, the accreditation working group will continue to explore ways to evaluate the changes initiated at the college. Communication research is underway and student learning outcome measures for administrative performance is under investigation by the group. The research office is compiling an inventory of data to assist the group with baseline information. Some of the changes cannot be implemented until October 2005, which is the beginning of FY06.

Executive Summary of Response to FSM government in request for 20 year plan

Planning Process

Beginning immediately, the College is gathering data, seeking community input, exploring all available funding options and seeking advice from our leadership in order to prepare a long-term strategic plan. The College has been instructed to seek State as well as National funding for facilities and to attempt to reduce costs by maximizing efficiencies. The College has an ongoing goal of meeting the requirements of the Accrediting Commission, which recently reminded the College that it must provide equal, quality instruction and services at all sites.

Difficult Questions

The College seeks the advice of our leaders in answering the many difficult and interesting questions surrounding the funding of post secondary education. Some of the most interesting are:

Accessibility

- If educational opportunity for all is too expensive and cannot be provided, how should admission to the College of Micronesia-FSM be determined?
- Should the College decide what courses students are allowed to take, or should students be free to choose?

Workforce needs

- What courses of study will be most helpful to the nation?
- Can the College of Micronesia-FSM offer programs that are expensive to run but serve manpower needs?

Ultimate Questions

- Will it be possible to find enough funding to maintain services and therefore maintain an accredited college?
- What will happen to post secondary education opportunities if the FSM does not have an accredited college?

Projections

Projecting five percent increases in operating costs, we provide three scenarios, continued high enrollment at seven percent, enrollment growth limited to three percent, and limiting enrollment to current levels. Here are the five-year projections of enrollment and costs:

Projections in 5 years	# COM students	Projected expense budget	Projection FY 2005 government contribution	Projected operating funds from tuition, w/increases (without increases)	Projected shortfall, w/increase (without increase)
Current	2,579	\$10,196,144	\$3,856,067		
High (+7%) enrollment	3,412	\$14,324,848	\$3,856,067	\$9,724,200 (\$8,700,600)	\$744,581 (\$1,768,181)
Med (+3%) enrollment	2,903	\$12,844,205	\$3,856,067	\$8,273,550 (\$7,402,650)	\$714,588 (\$1,585,488)
Capped enrollment	2,579	\$11,803,311	\$3,856,067	\$7,350,150 (\$6,340,077)	\$597,094 (\$1,607,167)

Appendix Four

**College of Micronesia-FSM Institutional Effectiveness Coordinator Proposal
Funded by the Department of the Interior, Office of Insular Affairs**

Abstract

The College of Micronesia-FSM is on accreditation warning status. COM-FSM leadership is responding in part by initiating a college wide systematic assessment of program objectives. Educational literature strongly supports the link between the on-going assessment of program objectives and strengthened overall management. In order to achieve this goal, the college seeks funding to hire a consultant for one year who will initiate a program linking institutional activities and programs directly to the mission, goals and priorities. The consultant will assist the College of Micronesia-FSM in creating a system of on-going evaluation that uses the findings of institutional assessments to improve planning and resource allocation. This process will assist the institution with all the changes necessary to cause the commission to lift the warning.

Goals/Activities and Timeline

There are three goals: (1) develop consensus and continuity in assessment of outcomes for all programs and all campuses; (2) integrate all aspects of institution and program evaluation and resource allocation; and (3) help the institution facilitate effective communication and documentation.

Requested and contributed budget:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>OIA funding</u>	<u>Contribut ed</u>
Salary	Consultant fee for Dr Felicia Hunt to assist COM-FSM, January to December 2005	\$ 20,566	
Salary	Contribution of 5% time from Spensin James, President COM-FSM		\$ 2,250
	Contribution of 20% from Jessica Stam, Director, Research and Planning		\$ 4,800
	Contribution of 30% from Dayle Dannis, Administrative Assistant, IRPO		\$ 5,100
Supply requested	Office supplies, printing, and materials, etc	\$ 1,000	
Supply contributed	Use of Computer/Software/Printer and books and materials		\$ 3,000
Travel requested	One two day visit to each campus (Yap, Chuuk and Kosrae)	\$ 3,500	
	Travel for Dr. Hunt to San Diego, April 13 - 15, 2005 for WASC Annual Meeting	\$ 2,500	
Travel contributed	Two day all campus meeting with campus directors, instructional and student services coordinators, division chairs and administrators		\$ 7,000
Total OIA Request		\$ 27,566	\$ 22,150

Summary of the College of Micronesia-FSM Proposed Strategic Technology Plan

SUMMARY

This Strategic Technology Plan for COM-FSM outlines the vision, identifies resources, defines the priorities, and organizes the plan to support the continual upgrading of the technical infrastructure and capabilities of our communications systems.

MISSION

All members of the College of Micronesia-FSM community will have access to a secure and reliable information technology infrastructure consisting of the technical tools, services and support that will enable them to effectively integrate information so that students, faculty and staff will be able to further the mission and goals of the College of Micronesia-FSM.

GOAL

To continuously and consistently provide affordable, secure, relevant, up to date, high quality technical services that are responsive to the needs of students, faculty and staff, and assists the institution in meeting its responsibilities.

In order to reach the goal, there are strategic objectives to be met. In each area, specific actions are presented to achieve the objective.

OBJECTIVES

To use appropriate tools and the resources of COM-FSM IT department to develop improved support systems, such as:

1) Increased Funding for Improved Information Technology Institutional Support

Given the fact that all members of the college community recognize the need to pay for telephone and fax services, and network services are currently being provided free of charge to the user, the TAC committee proposes a 1% surcharge for services on the overall COM-FSM budget for two fiscal years to cover the costs of developing #2 & #3. Funds will be used to hire additional technical support personnel and an administrative assistant who will provide faster, more efficient service to the college by temporarily replacing or supporting current personnel to develop and perfect the activities described under #2 & #3.

2) An integrated intranet accessible Student Information Management System [SIMS] to include:

- Access to Student IDP by Faculty Advisors
- Course Selection
- Enrollment
- Add/Drop changes
- Course updates (e.g., Open/Closed Courses During Enrollment Period)
- Application for Course Substitutions
- Midterm deficiency list to Advisors and individual students

Appendix Five

- Access to Financial Aid information
- Access to Student Services information
- Grade reporting
- Transcript review by individual students and advisors
- Financial obligation/Status report

3) The development of a web-based intranet system utilizing “portals” to allow students and faculty to utilize information systems in support of classrooms activities. Such web portals have been developed at other institutions for, “faculty and instructors, [to have] a central place for instructors to manage their courses and [gain] access the latest Web-based teaching tools. A portal also makes it easier for instructors to keep track of their classes, create email lists to contact students, post web pages for a class without knowing web design, computer programming or database management.”

- Intranet access to course materials
- Individualized student pages with course information available and email access to instructors
- Student services information and tracking for students, advisors and counselors
- Upgrades to Learning Resources availability

4) A web-enabled, integrated Administrative Information Management System [AIMS] system to include:

- Password protected, with multiple levels of access so that students, staff, faculty and administrators can see up to date financial information, and other pertinent administrative documentation.
- Announcements regarding campus activities, including the regular calendar and exceptions to that calendar, community or outreach activities scheduled on campus, unusual uses of facilities, important visitors, lectures open to the college community, any unusual closings or additional times that things are open, institutional deadlines, upcoming events, etc.