

*Self Study Report 2010*

INSTITUTIONAL SELF EVALUATION

*STANDARD IVB*

**BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION**

*College of Micronesia – FSM*

**STANDARD IVB1**

The institution has a governing board that is responsible for establishing policies to assure the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the student learning programs and services and the financial stability of the institution. The governing board adheres to a clearly defined policy for selecting and evaluating the chief administrator for the college or the district/system.

**STANDARD IVB1: DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY**

Section 705 of Title 40 of the FSM Code requires that “[t]he College, in accordance with recognized professional standards, shall have a representative governance structure to insure institutional autonomy, academic freedom, principles of equity, and insulation from political interference in order to best serve the public interest.” Section 706 defines a five member Board of Regents to be the governing body for the general management and control of the college. One member, the representative from the National Government, is to be appointed by the FSM President with the advice and consent of the FSM Congress. Four members, one representative from each state, are to be appointed by the FSM President with the advice and consent of the FSM Congress. Included among the board’s powers and responsibilities in Section 719 are: approve such policies and standards as deemed necessary for the effective operation of the college; be responsible for the financial soundness of the college; ensure that the educational program and the physical facility plans are of high quality and consistent with the purposes of the college; ensure adequate financial resources for the college; and appoint and assess the performance of the college president. A similar listing of board powers and responsibilities is found in Section III-B of the board policy manual.

Minutes of board meetings reflect that the board undertakes the responsibility for establishing policies to assure the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the programs and services of the college and to maintain the financial stability of the institution. After every board meeting, the list of actions and directives that resulted from the deliberations of the board is attached to the President’s Update.

**STANDARD IVB1: SELF EVALUATION**

At the March 2009 board meeting, four members of the board were interviewed relative to the roles, responsibilities, and functions of the board. Although one member felt that the board’s role in articulating the college’s goals and values is well understood, newer members indicated that there is room for improvement. One member felt that more could have been done to orient new members to the goals and values of the college.

Item 12 on the Standard IV survey asked respondents if they agree or disagree with the statement, “The members of the COM-FSM Board of Regents are charged with all major decisions about the college, administrative and academic ones alike.” Sixty-one percent (61%) of the faculty agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. However, 38.1% indicated “Don’t Know.” On the same item, 66.4% of the staff agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, while 32.2% disagreed or strongly disagreed. Only 1.6% of the staff indicated “Don’t Know.” There appears to be a need to improve communication between the board and the faculty and staff of the college relative to the decisions made by the board.

**STANDARD IVB: PLANNING AGENDA**

- See Standard IVA: Planning Agenda

**STANDARD IVB1A**

The governing board is an independent policy-making body that reflects the public interest in board activities and decisions. Once the board reaches a decision, it acts as a whole. It advocates for and defends the institution and protects it from undue influence or pressure

**STANDARD IVB1A: DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY**

Current regents bring diverse backgrounds to the board's decision-making processes. The representative from Yap is recently retired from serving as a trial counselor with the Yap Public Defender's Office. She has served as a local handicraft promoter (business and industry), Director of Health Services, student counselor (college level), teacher (high school), and nurse. She is a member of the Yap Women Association and has served on the Environmental Protection Agency Board, the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Board, and the Xavier High School Board.

The regent representing the State of Chuuk brings many years of educational administrative experience both at the college and high school levels. He has also supervised US federal programs, taught at the college and high school levels, and served as a counselor. He is currently Chairman of the Berea Christian School Board and has served as chair and member of the Chuuk State School Board for which he received a recognition of service award.

The regent most recently representing the state of Pohnpei is the founder of Calvary Christian Academy, a private school serving students grades K-12. He currently serves as an Executive Board Member and Representative of the World Wide New Testament Baptist Mission of Kings Mountain, North Carolina. He served as Postmaster for Pohnpei State from 1970-1986 and was a grant writer for the Community Action Agency prior to that. His term recently expired and the current Lieutenant Governor of Pohnpei State was confirmed by the FSM Congress for the position during the December 2009 special session. He has yet to be seated by the board.

The regent representing the National Government is currently serving as the Chief of Staff to the FSM President. Prior to assuming this position, he served as the FSM Ambassador to Japan and the FSM Consul General in Hawaii. He served as Personnel Officer for the first FSM President.

The regent representing the state of Kosrae served from 1985 to 1998 as a state judge, serving as Chief Justice from 1992 to 1998. He most recently retired from a position as counselor with the Micronesian Legal Services Corporation and is currently serving as a Temporary Justice for the FSM Appellate Division on an as-needed basis. Prior to 1985 he served as the vocational rehabilitation coordinator, trial counselor, and classroom teacher.

Minutes of board meetings reflect that once the board makes a decision, it acts as a whole.

**STANDARD IVB1A: SELF EVALUATION**

The college was visited in April, 2006 as a follow-up to a progress report. In the report of that visit, concern was expressed regarding the perceived lack of diversity on the board. This perception resulted in an additional recommendation which reads: "Membership of the College's Board of Regents must have the diversity of viewpoint that is required by its own policy, national law, and accreditation standards." [Standard IVB(1)a, IVB(1)e]

The college responded to the concern regarding board diversity in its midterm report by citing the provisions for diversity in the enabling legislation and accompanying policies. This paragraph was also included in the midterm report:

President Barbara Beno of the ACCJC visited the National and Pohnpei campuses in October 2006. She paid courtesy visits to the FSM President and some of his cabinet members, Chairman of the HESA Committee of the FSM Congress and its legal counsel, Governor of Pohnpei State, Vice Speaker of the Pohnpei State Legislature, and Chairman of the College of Micronesia-FSM Board of Regents and stressed the importance of having diversity on the board of regents. President James has written a series of letters to the FSM President also stressing the importance of diversity on the Board. A meeting has been scheduled with the FSM President to discuss with him some suggestions on how members can be selected to comply with diversity on the COM-FSM Board of Regents.

In a January 11, 2007, letter to the FSM President regarding the need to fill a vacancy on the Board, the COM-FSM President stated:

If possible, we would also like to maintain diversity on the Board. The current members of the Board are from the following sectors of the communities in the FSM: government and religious group (sic). The other sectors of the communities like private sector, NGO, women, and youth are currently not represented on the Board.

A September 25, 2007, letter to the FSM President from the COM-FSM president regarding two vacancies on the board included the following paragraph:

In making your appointments, we would like to draw your attention to Section 6(2) of the law which states, "Members...shall represent diverse elements of the populations of the States and the Nation, including, but not limited to, business and industry, education, and community service organizations." Diversity of interests on the Board is also an accreditation mandate; following a recent visit from the Accrediting Commission, the visiting team pointed out that the College is not in compliance with that section of the law. Currently, the religious sector is represented and should your nomination from Yap be confirmed, women's interest would be covered. If Regents Yatilman and Enlet are reappointed, government and education groups would be included. Perhaps the Kosrae Regent could represent either private sector, NGO, youth interest, or a group not yet represented.

Subsequently, the FSM President's Chief of Staff was appointed by the FSM President to serve as the national regent on the board. FSM Congress Standing Committee Report No. 15-165 on this nomination contained the following:

The only concern he (the nominee) would like to address was to assure the committee that if confirmed, he will not use his position as Chief of Staff to unduly influence policies of the COM-FSM, in any ways that could risk the school's accreditation. He believes that the Board should operate as one and that board members are prohibited from engaging in any actions that may advance his or her agenda. The nominee

further stated that there has been no evidence of meddling in the affairs of the college by the administration in the past nor does he anticipate any in the future.

Three current regents completed a survey at the May 2009 meeting on which they were asked, “Does the current membership of the COM-FSM Board of Regents adequately reflect the diversity and public interest of the FSM?” All of the regents who completed the item responded by saying yes. However, one regent added that “it could be better.”

Regents were unanimous in their self assessments in 2005, 2006 and 2008 that “[t]he board composition adequately represents the public interest and reflects the diverse elements of the populations which it serves.”

Regents were unanimous in their May 2005, May 2006, and December, 2009 self assessments that “[t]he board acts as a whole and no member or committee acts in the place of the board.” This perception was corroborated during the March interviews when all of the regents who participated responded that the board acts as a whole. One regent explained, “In our discussions and deliberations, one member may ‘step out’ and disagree but in the final decision, we act as a whole.”

Also during the May 2009 interview, regents were asked, “Does the Board adequately advocate for and defend the COM-FSM and protect the institution from undue influence?” All three regents who responded said that they do.

Item 14 on the Standard IV survey asked respondents to rate this item: “The COM-FSM Board of Regents advocates for and defends the college and protects it from undue influence.” Of the staff who responded, 62.9% indicated that they agree or strongly agree with this statement. Of the respondents, 21% either left the item blank or checked “I don’t know.” On this same item, 42.3% of the faculty indicated that they agree with this statement. However, 50% of the faculty checked “I don’t know” or left the item blank. There appears to be a need to more fully involve and/or inform faculty and staff regarding the performance of the board.

#### **STANDARD IVB1A: PLANNING AGENDA**

- See Standard IVA: Planning Agenda

#### **STANDARD IVB1B**

The governing board establishes policies consistent with the mission statement to ensure quality, integrity, and improvement of student learning programs and services and the resources necessary to support them.

#### **STANDARD IVB1B: DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY**

The mission statement is read at the beginning of each board meeting to ensure policies that are adopted are in line with the college’s mission statement.

Minutes of board meetings reflect the board’s concern for the quality, integrity, and improvement of student learning programs and services. Actions taken by the board include approval of new programs, modifications for improvement of existing programs, adoption of

policies that affect student learning, concern for adequate student financial assistance, and requests for program evaluation in the areas of student services and educational programs, among others.

### **STANDARD IVB1B: SELF EVALUATION**

Board members were asked this question on the interview: “What mechanism does the board have in place to ensure that the policies it establishes are consistent with the mission, ensure quality, integrity, and improvement of student learning and services?”

One member responded by saying that the college administration ensures that the policies are consistent with the mission. Another stated that consistency is established through dialog with the college management. A third member indicated he did not know because he was new to the board. However, a fourth member gave a more specific answer citing policies the board has established to require instructors to have a minimum of a master’s degree, to require instructional programs to conduct program evaluation and assessment, to make sure that textbook procurement is on schedule, and to ensure quality and equity of facilities across campuses.

### **STANDARD IVB1B: PLANNING AGENDA**

- None

### **STANDARD IVB1C**

The governing board has ultimate responsibility for educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity.

### **STANDARD IVB1C: DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY**

Section 719 (4) of Title 40 of the FSM Code stipulates that the board will “[b]e responsible for the financial soundness of the College and ensure that the educational program and the physical facility plans are of high quality and consistent with the purposes of the College.” Section 719 (5) requires that the board “[e]nsures adequate financial resources...” while Section 719 (6) requires the board to “[e]nsure strong financial management.”

### **STANDARD IVB1C: SELF EVALUATION**

An item on the board interview asks, “Does the board have ultimate responsibility for educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity?” A follow up question asks, “How does the board deal with external influences or pressures?” All four of the board members interviewed responded affirmatively to the first question. Regarding the follow-up question, one member said, “I feel the board should be the shield from outside pressure and protect the autonomy of the college.” He went on to say that “[t]he government needs to give the college the necessary leeway.”

Regarding the Standard IV survey item “The members of the COM-FSM Board of Regents are charged with all major decisions about the college, administrative and academic ones alike,” 61.5% of the faculty and 66.1% of the staff agreed with the statement. However, 30.8% of the faculty and 21% of the staff checked, “I don’t know,” indicating a need to strengthen communication between the board and the college community.

**STANDARD IVB1C: PLANNING AGENDA**

- See Planning Agenda IVA.

**STANDARD IVB1D**

The institution or the governing board publishes the board bylaws and policies specifying the board's size, duties, responsibilities, structure, and operating procedures.

**STANDARD IVB1D: DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY**

The Board of Regents Policy Manual sets forth the authority and strategic framework by which the board acts, as well as the organizational backdrop and operational procedures by which the board officially functions. The manual serves as an orientation tool for new board members and a working tool and central resource throughout the term of a regent's tenure.

Board bylaws are included as Appendix 7 of the manual. The bylaws are comprised of the following articles: (I) Board of Regents Meetings; (II) Officers of the Board and the President; (III) Records and Reports; (IV) Committees of the Board; (V) Statement of Ethical Conduct; and (VI) Amendment to Bylaws. Chapter 7 of Title 40 of the FSM Code, which pertains to the college, is included in the policy manual as Appendix 1. This legislation spells out the board's size, duties, and responsibilities in detail.

**STANDARD IVB1D: SELF EVALUATION**

Members of the Board of Regents unanimously agreed with Item 1.1 (The role of individual board members is clearly defined.) and Item 1.2 (The role of the board's officers is clearly defined.) on the board self evaluation questionnaire in 2005, 2006, and 2008.

**STANDARD IVB1D: PLANNING AGENDA**

- None

**STANDARD IVB1**

The governing board acts in a manner consistent with its policies and bylaws. The board regularly evaluates its policies and practices and revises them as necessary

**STANDARD IVB1E: DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY**

A review of board meeting agendas and minutes shows that the board acts in a manner consistent with its policies and bylaws. Although the board conducts an annual self evaluation, it is not clear from the minutes whether it regularly evaluates its policies and practices.

**STANDARD IVB1E: SELF EVALUATION**

Board members unanimously agreed with Item 1.4, “The board follows its ethical conduct policy and members are committed to carrying out their duties and responsibilities according to the standards set by the policy” on the board self evaluation questionnaire in 2005, 2006, and 2008.

In response to an interview question posed to board members in spring 2009, two of the four regents interviewed indicated that the board regularly reviews and evaluates the board’s bylaws and policies. However, the newest regent was hesitant to answer the question based on his brief tenure on the board and the fourth regent interviewed indicated that the board does not regularly review its bylaws and policies and should make it a point to undertake such a review.

**STANDARD IVB1E: PLANNING AGENDA**

- Beginning with the first meeting of 2010, the Board of Regents will undertake an annual review of its established policies with a report of the results published within one month of the review. The administration will place polices to be revised on subsequent board agenda for review and action.

**STANDARD IVB1F**

The governing board has a program for board development and new member orientation. It has a mechanism for providing for continuity of board membership and staggered terms of office.

**STANDARD IVB1F: DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY**

A policy on board orientation was adopted at the May 2007 meeting. The president uses the policy manual to conduct training for new regents, most recently with the new regents from Yap and Chuuk. COM-FSM regents participated in workshops for members of governing boards of Pacific institutions which were held in Guam in 2005, in Hawaii in 2007 and in Saipan in 2008. These workshops were sponsored by the Pacific Postsecondary Education Council (PPEC) which was chaired by the COM-FSM president at the time.

Section 707 of Title 40 of the FSM Code sets the parameters for staggered terms of office for regents. Section 708(3) of Title 40 provides for continuity of board membership in the event that a board member’s successor has not yet been appointed.

**STANDARD IVB1F: SELF EVALUATION**

The board feels it is knowledgeable about the college’s history, mission, values, strengths, and weaknesses as reflected in its unanimous agreement with statement 4.2 in that regard on the board self evaluation questionnaires of 2005, 2006, and 2008.

Three of the four regents interviewed for the self study indicated that they found the board development activities to be helpful. The newest member, however, said that although the orientation program was helpful, it needs to include more information than simply the board’s

role. He suggested that such orientation include information on the various college department functions and roles.

#### **STANDARD IVB1F: PLANNING AGENDA**

- None

#### **STANDARD IVB1G**

The governing board's self-evaluation processes for assessing board performance are clearly defined, implemented, and published in its policies or bylaws

#### **STANDARD IVB1G: DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY**

Section 718 (21) of Title 40 of the FSM Code requires the board to assess its own performance. To carry out this responsibility, Section IV.H of the Board of Regents Policy Manual on evaluation contains the following:

Among the responsibilities of the Board of Regents is assessment of its own contribution and performance. This is done annually through a self-evaluation questionnaire in which the board responds to statements regarding board organization, the decision-making process, board/president relations, board/college relations, board/community relations, board agenda, board education and development, board priorities, and board goals and objectives.

The self evaluation questionnaire is included in appendix 9 of the manual.

#### **STANDARD IVB1G: SELF EVALUATION**

A review of board minutes for the past six years shows that the board conducted self evaluations as required by statute. However, it should be noted that only the self evaluations for the years 2005 and 2006 are on file and only one regent's response to the self evaluation is available from 2008.

On the evaluation forms, three members circled "N" for Item 9.2 "The board annually evaluates itself on how well it has achieved the goals and objectives" commenting on the need for improvement of the process. One cited the need for an annual retreat to evaluate their performance while another circled the word "goals" indicating the reason he disagreed with the item. Other board members on the 2005, 2006, and 2008 self evaluations indicated agreement with the item.

#### **STANDARD IVB1G: PLANNING AGENDA**

- None

**STANDARD IVB1H**

The governing board has a code of ethics that include a clearly defined policy for dealing with behavior that violates its code.

**STANDARD IVB1H: DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY**

Section 7 of Title 40 of the FSM Code stipulates that:

The Board shall act as a whole; no member or committee created by the Board may act in place of the Board. The bylaws of the Board created pursuant to sections 717 and 718 of this chapter shall include a statement of ethical conduct for its members. Such statement shall include, but is not limited to, a provision prohibiting Board members from participating in any action involving a possible conflict of interest or from realizing a financial gain, other than compensation provided pursuant to this chapter, from their position as a Board member.

The board's code of ethics is found in Article V of the board bylaws. This policy contains subsections on standard of conduct, disclosure, abstention from voting, and employment with the college. Minutes of the August 2008 meeting show that the chairman recused himself from voting on the confirmation of the selection for the position of Vice President for Administrative Services due to a close personal relationship with the appointee.

Section 718 of Title 40 stipulates that "[b]oard members may be removed before the expiration of their terms by a three member majority vote of all other voting members of the board for incompetence, neglect of duty, unethical conduct, or malfeasance in office." Minutes of the March 2004 meeting show that members invoked Section IV.G of board bylaws in removing a member from the board for missing three consecutive meetings.

**STANDARD IVB1H: SELF EVALUATION**

All regents who completed the 2005, 2006, and 2008 board self evaluation questionnaires agreed with Item 1.3 that "[t]he board follows its ethical conduct policy and members are committed to carrying out their duties and responsibilities according to the standards set by the policy." However, on Item 1.3, "Board members do not participate and vote on matters where they have a possible conflict of interest," one member on the 2005 evaluation circled "N." It is not clear what action was taken by the board to follow up on this concern.

Three of the four regents interviewed as part of the self study process indicated that they found the board's code of ethics policy helpful in the decision-making process. The newest member indicated that he was unsure as he was unfamiliar with the policy.

**STANDARD IVB1H: PLANNING AGENDA**

- None

**STANDARD IVB1**

The governing board is informed about and involved in the accreditation process

**STANDARD IVB1: DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY**

Section 704 of Title 40 of the FSM Code requires the college to “[m]aintain accreditation by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges...”

A review of board meeting minutes over the past six years shows that the board is informed about and involved in the accreditation process on a continual basis. Accreditation updates and issues are presented either by the ALO in person and/or in written form in the board meeting binders.

Section IVJ. of the board policy manual contains the following provisions:

The board is to periodically cause an independent survey to be conducted among students and faculty of the college evaluating the quality of administration, quality of course instruction, the effectiveness of faculty, and such other matters as the board may deem appropriate. Such an independent survey is to be done every three years, or as required by the accreditation standards set by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. The board is to transmit a copy of the results of the survey to the FSM President and the Congress of the Federated States of Micronesia and to the governors of the states of the Federated States of Micronesia within 60 calendar days of the completion of the survey.

The periodic reports from the evaluation teams that are sent by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges can be used as substitute for the required independent survey, a practice accepted by the national leadership.

**STANDARD IVB1: SELF EVALUATION**

On the interviews conducted for the self study, three of the four board members indicated that they were informed about accreditation through reports presented at board meetings and by being assigned to the standard committees. However, the newest member expressed concern that some information regarding accreditation is obtained second hand. He cited the commission’s rejection of the initial submission of the college’s midterm report as an example.

On the 2005, 2006, and 2008 self evaluations all board members agreed with Item 7.4 “The board is informed about and involved in the institutional accreditation process.”

**STANDARD IVB1: PLANNING AGENDA**

- None

**STANDARD IVB1J**

The governing board has the responsibility for selecting and evaluating the district/system chief administrator (most often known as the chancellor) in a multi-college district/system or the college chief administrator (most often known as the president) in the case of a single college. The governing board delegates full responsibility and authority to him/her to implement and administer board policies without board interference and hold him/her accountable for the operation of the district/system or college, respectively.

**STANDARD IVB1J: DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY**

Section 721 of Title 40 of the FSM Code provides that “[t]he President of the College shall be appointed by the Board. The President of the College shall have full charge and control of the administration and business affairs of the College.”

Section 4 of Article II of the board bylaws includes the following provision:

The President of the College shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the College and the official advisor to and executive agent of the Board of Regents and its committees. The President shall, as educational and administrative head of the College, exercise a general superintendence over all affairs of the institution and bring such matters to the attention of the Board as are appropriate to keep the Board fully informed in meeting its policy-making responsibilities. Furthermore, the President shall have the power, on behalf of the Regents, to perform all acts and execute all documents to make effective the actions of the Board or its committees.

Although the procedures for selecting the president are not articulated in the policy manual, the regents do have an established process for recruiting and screening applicants and selecting the president of the college. This process was developed based on a workshop conducted for the board by a former ACCJC Executive Director in 2000. The procedure is not unlike that followed in hiring other employees of the college. The process used to hire the current president is described in minutes of the board meetings of September, October (teleconference), November, and December 2004.

Minutes of board meetings for the past six years show that the board has evaluated the performance of the president as required by statute.

**STANDARD IVB1J: SELF EVALUATION**

According to the Standard IV board interview, the perceptions of all board members relating to the question on whether the board includes clear policy guidelines for search and selecting a new president are affirmative. All except one believed that there is a process for selecting a new president in place. Although not all members of the current board have been involved in the selection of a new college president, two believed there is a process in place.

The process for selecting the president is almost the same as that used for other employees except the Board of Regents is responsible for carrying out the process instead of an ad hoc committee. The last president selected through the process is the current president in 2004.

All but one of the board members agreed with Item 3.1, “The board selects and/or retains a president as the chief executive officer for the College after appropriate consultation,” on the

board self evaluation questionnaire in 2005, 2006, and 2008. On the 2005 questionnaire one member circled “N” indicating disagreement with the statement, while another circled “Y” indicating agreement but then added a statement that “the process is too long.”

According to the Standard IV board interview, the majority of board members do not believe in micromanaging of the college system. The perception is that they need to work as a team and give the president free reign in a complementary role, not looking over his shoulder very minute. All board members agreed with Item 3.2 on the board self evaluation questionnaire indicating that they do delegate authority to the president.

#### **STANDARD IVB1J: PLANNING AGENDA**

- None

#### **STANDARD IVB2**

The president has primary responsibility for the quality of the institution he/she leads. He/she provides effective leadership in planning, organizing, budgeting, selecting and developing personnel, and assessing institutional effectiveness.

#### **STANDARD IVB2A**

The president plans, oversees, and evaluates an administrative structure organized and staffed to reflect the institution’s purposes, size, and complexity. He/she delegates authority to administrators and others consistent with their responsibilities as appropriate.

#### **STANDARD IVB2A: DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY**

The responsibilities of the president are described in Title 40 of the FSM Code which states that “[t]he President of the College shall have full charge and control of the administration and business affairs of the College.” Section 21.2 a-g delineates the powers of the office subject to limitations of the board. Planning, organizing, coordinating, and controlling the services of college employees are mentioned specifically under the powers granted by the board.

As mentioned above, the board bylaws state the college president’s role as “educational and administrative head of the College” exercising “general superintendence over all affairs of the institution ...on behalf of the Regents, to perform all acts and execute all documents to make effective the actions of the Board or its committees.”

The college’s organizational chart reveals both the management structure and complexity of the president’s authority and responsibility. Adopted in August 2007, the chart shows four vice presidents to whom the major areas of responsibility and authority are delegated. The vice presidents oversee the areas of administrative services, student services, instructional affairs, and cooperative research and extension. The president oversees and approves the selection of personnel to all major college standing committees which support the four organizational areas.

He has reconstituted the COM-FSM Assessment Committee and charged the committee with producing a new assessment handbook. This handbook describes the use of assessment as the core element in planning, organizing, and in particular budget allocation and budget management.

**STANDARD IVB2A: SELF EVALUATION**

The current president was a prime mover in the creation and adoption of the shared governance policy that underpins the fulfillment of his duties and responsibilities.

While the president serves at the pleasure of the COM-FSM Board of Regents, four of the five regents were only recently appointed. The president has served as an indoctrinator of the shared governance approach to management-- a concept relatively new to Micronesian management styles.

The president's fulfillment of the leadership responsibilities is judged in several ways. The board uses a 43-statement instrument entitled Leadership & Managerial Attributes to rate the president in the areas of relationship with Board of Regents; academic administration and planning; staff and personnel; business and finance; and personal qualities. In March 2009 the Board of Regents completed a favorable evaluation and a new two-year contract was offered which the president accepted.

Questions on the Standard IV survey as to overall effectiveness the president garnered somewhat favorable ratings from both faculty and staff. To Item 15, "The COM-FSM President plans for and oversees the college in an effective manner," 50 % of faculty agreed or strongly agreed, and nearly 71% of staff felt likewise. For the student survey, Item 15 stated, "Overall, I feel the president is doing a good job." To this statement 58.6% either agreed or strongly agreed. To the same question, 42.3% of government personnel responded favorably with 17.3 % in disagreement or strong disagreement; 36.5% marked the "I don't know" category. Parents showed a favorable rating of 45.9% as opposed to a 27% unfavorable with the business community responding in roughly the same proportion. The president received the most favorable opinions from the community survey with 19 out of 26 surveyed or 73% marking agreement with two (2) respondents, 7.6%, in disagreement and five (5) respondents, 19.2%, in the "I don't know" category.

Evaluating the president as he plans, oversees, and evaluates the COM-FSM administrative structure and sees to it that the administration is organized and staffed to reflect the institution's purposes, size, and complexity is the primary responsibility of the Board of Regents. In this sense the president must be evaluated on the successful outcomes of the various administrative components and the system as a whole. As with any chief executive officer the final evaluation on the president's success is ultimately the successful operation and outcomes of the overall operation. At colleges and universities the president is ultimately judged by the results of the accreditation process.

Likewise, the president delegates authority to administrators and others consistent with their responsibilities, as appropriate. In this sense the president is ultimately accountable for the judgment and actions of the subordinate administrators and college committees to whom authority has been delegated. This too is judged in the overall by the accreditation process.

**STANDARD IVB2A: PLANNING AGENDA**

- None

**STANDARD IVB2B**

The president guides institutional improvement of the teaching and learning environment by the following: establishing a collegial process that sets values, goals, and priorities; ensuring that evaluation and planning rely on high quality research and analysis on external and internal conditions; ensuring that educational planning is integrated with resource planning and distribution to achieve student learning outcomes; and establishing procedures to evaluate overall institutional planning and implementation efforts.

**STANDARD IVB2B: DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY**

The president as the institutional leader has been instrumental in communicating the institutions values, goals, and direction of the college. The most recent follow-up report to ACCJC states:

Under the leadership of President Spensin James, during the past years the college community has revised the mission statement, added vision and values statements and tied the goals to the strategic plan. The college's mission is evaluated by the college community annually and it continues to be directly tied to the nation's challenge of uniting disparate cultures and languages. This is a living document that has a remarkable presence for all members of the college community. It is frequently cited in the institutional plans and is read before meetings of the Board of Regents (BOR).

The president has repeatedly stressed that college decisions be based upon outcome- based data. As noted earlier, he has commissioned the assessment handbook and through the vice president for administrative services has directed that the college's institutional research and planning office focus all efforts on gathering data for decision making purposes.

As the former vice president for instructional affairs, the current president is keenly attuned to student learning and the qualitative and quantitative documentation necessary to provide a suitable culture of evidence that both proves and encourages learning. His leadership in creating a student learning outcome-based college has now turned to using outcomes for institutional review and decision making. Also as noted he has directed the Assessment Committee to produce proper guidelines to bring to life the integrated planning and resource allocation system recently designed.

The Institutional Research and Planning Office (IRPO) reports directly to the vice president for administrative services. However on occasion the president commissions and receives requested data directly from the IRPO as may be necessary for the president's own perusal. The president requires all data gathered and reports within the purview of the IRPO to be posted on the college's website.

To date the college has developed the integrated planning, evaluation and resource allocation system, and the president has directed the Assessment Committee to produce proper guideline that links research to planning and then to resource allocation. In early November 2008, an assessment cycle document was being circulated for faculty and staff review.

A major mechanism used by the college president for guidance is the president's annual retreat held in spring since 2007. It is the president that sets the retreat agenda. These retreats bring the college community together and have relied upon various data provided by the Institutional Research and Planning Office. In 2007 the president presented an agenda for an internal system evaluation that focused on the following concerns:

- There is insufficient dialogue and information exchange between external stakeholders and the college in regard to economic and social development needs, program development, service delivery, and funding for students and the college.
- There is inadequate development, understanding, and application of quality standards for an effective student centered learning environment.
- Governance processes including development, implementation, and evaluation do not include all the internal and external stakeholders.
- The academic level of the majority of incoming students is inadequate to meet college level standards.
- The success and retention rate of students at the college is less than 40%.

The concerns were analyzed and the results used to establish institutional priorities as guidance for the FY 2009 budget. As a further result of the retreat a program planning conference was called in September at which nine (9) recommendations regarding college planning were adopted. All recommendations from the president's retreat, which can be found on the IRPO website, were adopted at the planning conference.

The 2008 president's retreat was to reflect upon past year's accomplishments, place the college against the ACCJC rubrics (standards) and address the question, "Are we meeting our mission?" The president's agenda was stated as a need to accomplish the following:

- Review/revise the college's mission, goals, and objectives
- Review/revise institutional priorities for 2009 to guide improvement efforts
- Develop institutional priorities for 2010 to guide budget development and resource allocation.

As a result of this retreat, the institutional priorities were revised and are reflected in the 2010 college budget.

The May 2009 president's retreat was called to address the possibility of restructuring the college system. Underlying the call for restructuring was the difficulties financing the present system which will rely on a fixed or even a reduced amount from Compact funds and the FSM Congress. The president pointed out that the finite congressional allocation places continued burden upon the tuition/fees portion of the college budget income and plans for restructuring may include downsizing state campuses, eliminating low enrollment programs throughout the system, eliminating programs that while sufficiently enrolled produce few if any graduates or completers, centralizing academics at the National campus, turning states sites back to states for state needs and therefore state financing, ad infinitum. Everything was to be discussed including the very mission of the college.

The retreat focused upon three basic models: the first college model with a National campus and continuing education centers in each state to be funded by each state government; the second model based upon a decentralized college system used by certain Native American tribes in the United States; and lastly, the status quo with or without modifications. The status quo with major modifications was recommended. The major modifications recommendations were to be left to a committee to work under the purview of the vice president for administrative services.

#### **STANDARD IVB2B: SELF EVALUATION**

On the Standard IV survey, 73% of faculty and 69.4% of staff expressed agreement with the statement, “I am provided opportunities to participate in planning at COM-FSM.” About one quarter of the sampled faculty and staff surveyed expressed disagreement with the statement. It is possible to conclude that the president’s retreat has fostered a feeling of opportunity to participate.

On the survey, 76.1% of the staff and 46.1% of the faculty agreed with the statement, “The COM-FSM President serves as the major guide for institutional improvement for the teaching and learning environment.” However, 30.7% of the faculty disagreed with this statement. While the retreat process has been the college president’s mechanism for keeping the college on the “right track” and involved in the input process, measurable outcomes have been planning in nature and it remains to be judged as to how useful the annual retreats are in actuality.

#### **STANDARD IVB2B: PLANNING AGENDA**

- None

#### **STANDARD IVB2C**

The president assures the implementation of statutes, regulations, and governing board policies and assures that institutional practices are consistent with institutional mission and policies.

#### **STANDARD IVB2C: DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY**

The president’s annual evaluation is meant to assure that all statutes, regulations, and governing board policies are carried out and as such his performance is monitored and evaluated annually by the COM-FSM Board of Regents. The evaluation instrument used by the board assesses the president’s performance in all areas covering the responsibilities and duties assigned as well as the board’s expectation. The Likert scaled instrument assigns quantitative values to qualitative statements in six general areas supported by 43 expectation statements. The president’s quarterly reports and selected assignments are reviewed, and then the instrument is completed individually by board members. With this completed the board then meets in executive session for discussion. The overall evaluation requires group consensus and as such becomes a process of identifying the president’s strengths as well as perceived weaknesses. The board findings are then discussed with the president. In any matters judged to be unsatisfactory, the process requires a written plan describing desired outcomes and expectations for improvement which is then discussed with the president. To provide equity the process allows the president to respond in writing with a written description of any difference of opinion the president may have with the final evaluation.

**STANDARD IVB2C: SELF EVALUATION**

On the Standard IV survey, 57.7% of faculty and 67.7% of staff expressed agreement with the statement, “The COM-FSM President assures the implementation of the college’s rules and regulations and further assures consistency with institutional mission.” Less than 11% of faculty and less than 21% of staff expressed disagreement.

**STANDARD IVB2C: PLANNING AGENDA**

- None

**STANDARD IVB2D**

The president effectively controls budget and expenditures

**STANDARD IVB2D: DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY**

The comptroller reports to the vice president for administrative services who in turn reports to the president. The newly hired vice president for administrative services was selected by committee and approved by the president primarily because of his most recent budget preparation and resource allocation experience. While serving as the Lieutenant Governor of Yap State, budget formulation and control were his major functions.

In September 2009 the president informed the college of the need to comply with FSM performance budgeting requirements. As a result the college’s fiscal year 2011 budget focuses on outcomes, measures success in achieving results, links financial resources with results, focuses on the college’s key priorities, holds departments accountable for achieving results, and provides manager with information necessary to improve.

On the expenditure side, the president personally monitors all travel funds and requires that all travel be thoroughly documented. On the revenue side, he personally meets with students who are in arrears or are past due with their accounts and arranges for payments plans.

While a bit antiquated for college purposes, the college submits a quarterly performance based budget to the FSM Government which in turn must be reviewed and approved by the US Department of Interior before quarterly funds are dispersed for college use.

During the current president’s tenure, the college has received the “unqualified” opinions from outside auditors on its annual audit and qualified as a “low risk auditee.”

**STANDARD IVB2D: SELF EVALUATION**

While the COM-FSM budget has been a major recent concern to the college community, all outside audits since the last accreditation cycle and during the current president’s tenure COM-FSM has received the “unqualified” approval from outside auditors on its annual audit.

Surprisingly, on the Standard IV survey, only 23.1% of the faculty agreed or strongly agreed while 38.4% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, “The COM-FSM President

effectively controls budget and expenditures.” While staff approved the president’s budget controls with 58.1% in the positive, 29.1% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. The negative rating by COM-FSM faculty may reflect survey comments regarding COM-FSM’s low salary scale as no other survey statements were offered where overall dissatisfaction with salaries could be expressed.

In the president’s opening remarks to the 2009 president’s retreat, he stated the budget as the primary factor leading to restructuring or reorganizing the college. The president presented the revenue side which at present is a fixed congressional allotment and dependent upon fees and tuition supported for students by the Pell Grant. No additional financial resources were suggested leaving retreat participants voicing a need to reduce expenditures through consolidation and program reduction. Many strongly objected to the notion that more students in the system to boost the revenue side were an answer to a balanced budget. On September 15, 2009, the president informed the college community by memorandum that the annual congressional appropriation had indeed been reduced. Therefore, he announced:

In order to balance the FY2010 Budget as directed by the Board of Regents and to begin the implementation of the budget on October 1, 2009 I hereby put a freeze on all new positions until further notice. The purpose of this freeze is to reflect the reduction by \$100,000 of the Congress funds approved by the FSM Congress from 3.9 million to 3.8 million.

The Finance Committee will continue to work on balancing to FY2010 Budget and advise my office immediately.

The college budget is now reported yearly in the annual report to the FSM Congress and the National Government as a requirement for the US/FSM Compact Education Sector Grant funds and Public Law 79-7. This responds to a planning agenda item from the December 2003 Institutional Self Study. It was reported that “Financial reports were not made to congress for the past two years. Reports to congress should be made annually as per Public Law 79-7.” As reported this is now being done.

In his January 2009 cover letter to the FSM President, the COM-FSM President stated “First the college is committed to linking planning, evaluation and resource allocation.” While this has become the president’s mantra, there needs to be an increase in revenues or a reduction in expenditures that clearly must begin with the proper planning that addresses the COM-FSM budgetary challenges.

#### **STANDARD IVB2D: PLANNING AGENDA**

- None

#### **STANDARD IVB2E**

The president works and communicates effectively with the communities served by the institution.

#### **STANDARD IVB2E: DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY**

Micronesians identify themselves in many ways; therefore there is a variety of taxonomies or “publics” to which the current president must relate. He reports annually to the nation through

his reports to the FSM Government and FSM Congress. Further, the president submits a quarterly report to the FSM President, Speaker of Congress and FSM Secretary of Education.

The president has directed all state campus directors to hold monthly meetings with state leaders in their respective states.

The president, as a member of is the Pacific Postsecondary Education Council (PPEC), articulates the college's perspective in this regional organization of Pacific colleges. He served as the past president and is currently the vice president of the council.

He serves on the FSM Association of Chief State School Officers (FACSSO) which also includes the four state directors of education and the secretary of the national education department. Too, by statute, the college serves as a member of the Pohnpei State Board of Education. Both of these duties keep the president linked with an important constituency for the college's teacher training programs.

Finally, the president assigns the task of establishing protocols and pathways to individuals or groups; directs the writing of the communication improvement plan; promulgates the plan; and monitors the effectiveness of the communication protocols and the communication improvement plan. As noted in the procedures section of the plan, the president will establish a cycle for reviewing the plan and updating the communication protocols and the communication improvement plan.

#### **STANDARD IVB2E: SELF EVALUATION**

Communication within the organization and with the president continues to be voiced as a major concern of staff and faculty. In spite of the 2006 Shared Governance Policy, a significant percentage of college faculty voiced certain disconnect with the college president and the college administration centered upon communication or a perceived lack of communication. Specifically to Item 9 on the Standard IV survey, "The college clearly communicates its policies on governance procedures," 42.3% of faculty voiced agreement, while 34.6 % voiced disagreement. To Item 10 on the survey, "The college has effective communication," a full 69.2% of the faculty disagreed or strongly disagreed with the proposition. To Item 20, "The COM-FSM president communicates effectively with staff and faculty served by the college," 50% responded in the affirmative with 42.3% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing and 7.7% no opinion.

In 2009 the COM-FSM faculty subcommittee of the Faculty/Staff Senate perceived a breakdown in communicating the college's faculty salary needs as a college priority to the president. Therefore, a Faculty Salary Report was submitted directly to the Board of Regents at the May 2009 meeting. The report focused on recruitment and retention of qualified faculty. Likewise, the executive committee on behalf of the Faculty/Staff Senate as a whole submitted a letter protesting the appearance of arbitrary non-renewal of contracts for no cause to the Board of Regents at the August 2009 meeting. While the president rightly held to the legality of the issue of non-renewal, staff and faculty alike expressed outrage and asked that staff and faculty renewal of contracts be based upon performance evaluations or at least a period of fair notice be given to

staff when contracts are not to be offered for renewal. These two matters were not considered to be communication breakdowns but direct disagreement with the president's actions.

The faculty also questioned the president's communication with the COM-FSM students through survey Item 19, "The president communicates effectively with the students served by the college." While 23% of the faculty agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, 26.9% did not agree. This item had the highest percentage of no opinion on the survey at 38.5%. Students on the other hand stated a 47.6 % agreement with the proposition, while 32.1% disagreed that the president was communicating effectively with the student body.

Further, the planning agenda for the president in the December 2003 institutional self study stated, "The president should foster stronger communications between all levels of the college community. The president needs to assure faculty, staff, and administration that institutional practices are consistent with the mission and objectives of the institution. The president should work to implement closer communication on budgetary issues to insure that the entire college community understands how and why budgetary decisions have been made."

A comparison of results of the Standard IV survey regarding communication with like statements on a 2003 survey show that the rating is less positive in 2009 than in 2003. Clearly more progress on this communication matter is needed at COM-FSM.

#### **STANDARD IVB2E: PLANNING AGENDA**

- See Standard IVA: Planning Agenda Item 1