To provide institutional direction in light of an impending Guam military build up, the revamped Institutional Strategic Master Plan (ISMP) that the institution has begun to implement in January 2009 is also included in the report. A brief conclusion leads toward the remaining challenges the College needs to hurdle, along with a forecast of where the College needs to be by the time the next comprehensive evaluation occurs in Spring 2012.

Major Recommendations

1. **"The College has adopted new math and English course requirements for all certificate and degree programs. These requirements are unitary for all programs. The College should assess the effect of these new requirements on student access and success. Based on an assessment of the student learning outcomes for each program, the College should engage in a dialogue about the appropriate levels of English and math to require for various programs. (Standard II.A.3)**

   A standardized general education pattern has likewise been established. To further opportunities for students to meet general education requirements at transfer institutions and to provide an opportunity for a greater breadth of understanding of the major areas of knowledge including humanities and fine arts, a dialogue should occur to consider adding classes to the general education curriculum." (Standard II.A.3.a)

   Response: This recommendation was initially addressed by the Office of Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness (AIE) through a comprehensive research report called the *General Education Impact Study*. This study examined student enrollment, grade distribution, and completion rates over a 5-year period (AY 2003-2004 to AY 2007-2008) and repeater patterns over a 4-year period (AY 2003-04 to AY 2006-2007) in developmental English and math courses at the College. Primarily intended to gauge the effect of the General Education requirements on student access and success, study results indicated that the challenge of successfully completing developmental courses prevents students from progressing to College-level courses. Ultimately, this potentially impacts program completions in general and program completions in a reasonable time. Additionally, it delays students in meeting general education requirements that would potentially be transferred to other institutions. It negatively affects the number of students who complete both certificate and degree programs. The complex factors that contributed to this situation were discussed in the report, along with recommendations that the College provide greater support in tutorial services, mentorship, and strengthened academic services that would mitigate the problem. The regular assessment of the Developmental Education curriculum in general was also emphasized. See **Appendix A** for the *General Education Impact Study*.

   As a result of the College's continuing dialogue on this issue, the Council of Chairs recently met to discuss the AVP's memo regarding the subject (See **Appendix B**). The Council has come up with three recommendations to address the visiting team's concerns, namely:

1. The Council recommends that the general education requirements for all Certificate programs should be determined by each program, with input from the respective advisory committees.

2. The Council recommends the deletion of the general education policy limiting students to a certain amount of credits unless English and Math courses are completed.

3. The Council encourages the Gen Ed Committee to include courses in the general education requirements that promote "soft skills" in their student learning outcomes, and to provide more choices for students. For example, under Social Sciences, PY120, SO130, PY100 or PY125 (instead of PY120 and SO130). In addition, the Council encourages the inclusion of a Humanities course in the general education requirements.

In consonance with participatory governance processes, the Academic Vice President has issued a memo requesting for continuing campus dialogue on the matter, involving Faculty Senate committees, as well as the Deans and other administrators in discussions. See **Appendix C** for the Academic Vice President's memo to this effect. Clearly, a robust campus dialogue on this issue is continuing.

2. **"The College is considering a more formal organization for faculty participation in *shared governance* such as the initiation of a faculty senate. The College should finish its work on developing a formal system for faculty, staff, and student participation in the governance processes of the College. Such systems should provide clear lines of communication and contribute to timely decision making oriented toward the positive development of the institution."** (Standard IV.A.1, IV.A.2, IV.A.2.a, IV.A.3)

Response: This recommendation has been met with the full implementation of the Faculty Senate structure since Fall 2006. This occurred just a few months after the team's campus visit. As a new entity in the College's organizational hierarchy, the Faculty Senate has undergone assessment twice as spearheaded by the Office of Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness. See **Appendix D**, *Second Effectiveness Survey Report of the GCC Faculty Senate* for the latest Senate evaluation report by the Assessment office.

The phrase "shared governance" has been italicized in Recommendation #2 above because it became a contentious subject for the College since the appearance of the team report. An advisory letter from Dr. Barbara Beno on this issue (dated 02 May 2008; see **Appendix E**) further fueled a very robust campus dialogue on the true meaning of the term. Consequently, the chief negotiators in the Board-Union agreement proposed to reconfigure the faculty governance structure in a memo to the Board (see **Appendix F**). As a result of all this dialogue, faculty and management negotiating teams (comprised of six members each) were finally formed to discuss Article XII (The Faculty Senate) of the Board-Union Contract in September 2008. The intensive negotiation occurred off-campus in the course of approximately four days. The result of these negotiations is a completely revamped article in the Board-Union contract, now renamed *Participatory Governance* (the former title was *Faculty Senate*). It was fully ratified by the general faculty in October during Professional

Development Day. Data and evidence from the two assessment reports, as well as voices of Faculty Senate leaders and administrators, were all considered in the conceptualization of the revised Faculty Senate structure. See **Appendix G**, *Participatory Governance*, the revamped Article XII of the Board-Union Contract.

3. **"Working on the strength of its assessment infrastructure, the College should now fully undertake the process of developing student learning outcomes for courses, programs and the institution. As these student learning outcomes are developed, they should be communicated to students, the College community and the public."** (Standards II.A, II.A.1.c, II.A.2.b, II.A.2.e, II.A.2.f)

Response: This recommendation has been met with the development of the College's Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) implementation plan. This is a four-year plan that was jointly developed by the Office of Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness and the faculty's Adjunct Associate Dean with the expressed intent to align it with the institution's two-year assessment reporting cycle. This was, in fact, merely the formalization of a process that has been in place since the 2006 release of the team report. The plan provides timelines, tasks, justification, and types of assistance that can be provided to faculty members and departments regarding this initiative. As an all-inclusive plan, the SLO implementation process covers the remaining time period prior to the College's next comprehensive visit in Spring 2012. See **Appendix H**, Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) Implementation Plan.

The newly-published **2008-2010 Catalog** lists programs and courses with SLOs that have already been developed since the team's visit. All fourteen (14) Certificate programs listed in this catalog have student learning outcomes, along with sixteen (16) Associate's programs. Three program examples of SLO maps are included at the back to serve as guideposts for good curriculum practice amongst program faculty in the various departments. Most importantly, the catalog contains a section called "A Statement on Student Learning Outcomes" which highlights the value and importance that the College places on SLOs. See **Appendix I**, excerpts from the 2008-2010 Catalog.

The *SLO Booklet* is the most concrete product that serves as the evidence for the College's response to this team recommendation. In particular, SLOs at the course level are continuously being compiled each semester with the goal of eventual alignment between all course syllabi and course guide SLOs on file at the AVP office. See **Appendix J**, SLO Booklet, Summer & Fall 2008.

4."The Board of Trustees is now fully empanelled and evidences a commitment to further 4.the development of the College. Provisions should be made to provide training for the 4.Board to assist them in fulfilling this commitment. After the Board adopts its recently 4.revised manual, it should engage in a review of Board policies." (Standard IV.B.1.e, 4.IV.B.1.1.f, IV.B.1.g)

Response: As of November 2008, the GCC Board of Trustees is truly empanelled with nine (9) members – seven voting and two non-voting – thanks to the recent appointments made by

Governor Felix Camacho. Since 1977, the board has consistently experienced intermittent fluctuations in its membership through the years. This membership issue notwithstanding, the Board has consistently demonstrated its full support of institutional goals and activities through its active involvement in College affairs and functions.

The Board approved and adopted its revised manual at its meeting on September 2006. Regarding the issue of Board education, the College allocated $25,000 each year for Board training activities in its effort to address the team's recommendation. Moreover, the two newly-confirmed Board members (by the Guam Legislature) have been scheduled for Board orientation, including a campus walking tour, at the time of this writing. Some selected members of the Board have also participated in training opportunities through their attendance at the Association of Community College Trustees' (ACCT) annual conferences. See **Appendix K** for the list of training opportunities that Board members have availed of since 2006.

Spurred by the team's recommendation, the Board adopted "dedicated time" to the review of existing policies since the release of the team report in early 2006. A policy review tool was developed by the Office of Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness (see **Appendix L**) and utilized by faculty/staff/administrator reviewers who assisted the Board in this task. **Appendix M** lists the policies that have undergone careful Board review through regularly-scheduled meetings and retreats within the last two years.

Addressing Accreditors' Specific Concerns through the AIAR

Since 2001, the College has produced Annual Institutional Assessment Reports (AIAR) to document assessment activities across campus. These reports are typically released during the Fall convocation prior to its online posting on the College's website. By the time the team visited GCC in February 2006, five (5) such reports have been written. The latest report (Eighth AIAR) produced by the Assessment Office (as posted online at the GCC public website) is in **Appendix N**.

The relevant discussion below is excerpted from an analysis of the evaluation team's report as reflected in the Sixth AIAR (August 2006, p. 45, 57-63), which was written soon after the team's visit to the College:

On its evaluation report released to the College on July 2006, the ACCJC accreditation team that visited the College detailed their notes and observations of the GCC assessment process as they viewed it first hand during their four-day site visit on the GCC campus. After a careful review of all the relevant findings from the accreditors' report, it proves useful to group them together into six (6) topical issues for purposes of focused discussion. Put in another way, these issues are areas that should inform dialogue and discussion at the College in the next year and beyond, surely between now and the next site accreditation visit in the near future. These issues include the following:
  - *communication and information dissemination;*

- *assessment as an inclusive process;*
- *curriculum as a dynamic product and process;*
- *diversity as a key factor in improvement;*
- *holistic approach to assessing student services; and*
- *assessment leadership and support.*

Communication and information dissemination

There were several places in the report where the College was taken to task because of the unevenness of communicating key elements of assessment to the wider campus community and beyond. The most basic example is the mission statement, which the team found, "is not being used universally in all publications and materials." They also found cases of inconsistency where the old and the new mission statements were appearing in various materials (e.g., student catalogue and website). It must be recalled that two years ago the Office of Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness took the lead in publicizing the new mission statement through printed posters that were strategically placed all across the campus. Evidently, from the accreditors' perspective, this was not enough, and the College "should make a concerted effort" to embark on an information and education campaign that would reach all College constituents and members of the community as well. In this light, the Communications and Promotions office is well positioned to shoulder this responsibility for greater consistency and thoroughness in accomplishing this task.

There is a corollary recommendation that comes with this objective though. Under Standard 1 (Institutional Mission and Effectiveness), the team also suggested a thorough review of the goals that come along with the mission statement. In this regard, team members wrote that the College "needs to make renewed efforts to assure that goals and objectives are in line with those of the new mission statement," and that diversity must also be considered in this conversation. In other words, the currently existing six (6) goals that accompany the mission statement should also be revisited, insofar as their alignment with the new mission statement is concerned. This emphasis in the report essentially validates a similar discussion in the previous section of this report.

There may be voluminous assessment documents being produced by the Office of Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness (AIE), but are they being read and understood by GCC constituents? Put in another way, are assessment results, culled and distilled for the annually-written institutional reports, reaching their intended audience? The answer may be "no," for the accrediting team observed that "while the organization for assessment has been quite thorough, especially at the institutional level, at times the existence of reports or analyses of data has not been consistently communicated to the campus." It is apparent from the team's personal interviews with selected faculty and staff that "various people on the campus seem to not be aware of the existence of these reports, or are not aware that TracDat has become a powerful vehicle for accessing data and reports at the program or institutional level." It would seem then that AIE's online posting of annual assessment reports and other assessment documents has not accomplished its intended goal. More vigorous information dissemination of assessment results needs to be re-emphasized therefore in more formal, face-to-face means, like the fall convocation and the upcoming Professional Development

Day, among important College events. The Assistant Director of the Communications and Promotions office can assist in this task through the finalization of a long-planned College newsletter, in the tradition of the now-defunct Chachalani in the early 2000s. Internal communication, it must be emphasized, should be given equal importance as external communication. When this effort is consistent and pervasive, there would be greater internal knowledge of assessment results generated within the GCC campus itself.

Update: The mission statement of 2005 undergoes review this year. The Standard I Self-Study Committee will lead the campus-wide effort to further the dialogue on this issue. As the College's electronic newsletter, the **Chachalani** has now been regularized through its monthly publication by the Communications and Promotions office since December 2007. This has served as a convenient channel through which highlights of assessment reports are disseminated campus wide. Likewise, the Office of Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness has developed Assessment Report Highlights in newsletter format to disseminate key findings of assessment studies to the campus community. A series of these Highlights included findings and were placed in faculty packets during the Fall 2008 convocation. The newly-revamped public website and MyGCC have also become important sources of campus news for many college constituents. Also see the section, "Newest Plan the Institution Has Developed" in this report (p. 15) to learn how the College has embarked on a campus wide dialogue on mission, vision, and goals that will guide the College in addressing the impending military buildup on island.

Assessment as an inclusive process
Based on the report's findings, the team would have wanted to see greater inclusiveness in the College's assessment and governance processes. Because no students were made part of the Self-Study committees, the lack of a substantive role given to students in the accreditation process for instance was brought up repeatedly in the report. The accreditors in fact concluded that "student involvement in many of the major plans and decision making efforts is very limited and in some cases nonexistent." Another severe shortcoming that was observed by the team was the lack of studies that focused on "researching concerns related to identifying and meeting the educational needs of students and the possible disproportionate impact of policies and practices on specific students." This observation was made in relation to the efficiency and effectiveness of student support services on campus.

Faculty input in assessing competency levels appropriate for various programs, as well as in facility planning, was also found by the team to be lacking. Furthermore, the team also wanted clarity as to the role of adjunct faculty in the whole assessment process. These issues need further thought and consideration by all College sectors involved so that proper remedial measures may be instituted as soon as it is feasible.

Update: See response to Major Recommendations #1 above. In the current participatory governance structure, students have been given a voice, with student representatives participating in the Committee on College Assessment (CCA) and the College Governing

Council (CGC). The plan is for students to actively participate in the Accreditation Steering Committee in 2011, the year when the Comprehensive Self-Study Report is due. This will also be the year prior to the comprehensive site visit.

Regarding adjunct faculty participation in the assessment process, a faculty member is currently working on a small grant project (i.e., AVP SAGA) to integrate the meaningful participation of adjunct faculty in the development and revision of course guides in Adult Basic Education. This is being accomplished through a day-long retreat (this has already been completed) and follow up activities that are spread out throughout the year.

Curriculum as dynamic process and product

Under Standard 2, the finding that the College falls behind what is expected in course learning outcomes is highlighted in various places on the report. Examples of the team's evidence include randomly-reviewed course outlines that were undated or outdated, syllabi that do not match the course descriptions in the catalogue, competency skills that were being substituted for student learning outcomes, among others. The issue of currency, as well as Advisory Committee input into curriculum revision, was raised alongside these concerns. The team wrote that "the College should adopt a systematic process of updating and revising curriculum to maintain currency..." Although courses and programs are continuously being reviewed throughout the year (as reflected in Table 15, Summary of Course/Program Changes for AY 2005-2006), the key term here is "systematic," as the accreditors view it; for this process to work, it must be led, coordinated and monitored by the respective Deans of the two existing schools at the College. Moreover, this must be tied concretely to the Individual Faculty Plan (IFP) through a provision that must be negotiated in the Faculty Union contract. Whatever form or substance this provision may eventually take, it must be well balanced between individual faculty rights and higher institutional interests that would promote sound assessment processes.

At the same time that the team observed the relatively slow progress in curriculum revision at the course level, it likewise noted "the limited number of courses that fulfill general education requirements in the humanities and fine arts," and suggested that the general education program be made more comprehensive in this respect. A campus wide dialogue to consider adding classes to the general education curriculum is the team's recommendation to this effect.

Update: See Response to Major Recommendation #1 and #3 above.

Diversity as a key factor in improvement

Issues of diversity were raised constantly in the team's report, particularly on how students are impacted by these issues. After a review of voluminous documents, the team found that "the diversity of students is not clearly delineated in GCC's research documents or Self-Study." This conclusion stemmed from the team's observation that "the College has work to do to meet the varied educational needs of its students based on the diversity and demographics of its student body." In other words, the team was concerned about the differential means by which students have gone through "the institutional experience in