



PPEC

Pacific Postsecondary Education Council

Report to ACCJC
Accrediting Commission of
Community & Junior Colleges



JANUARY-JUNE 2023

American Samoa Community College

Introduction

As the spring 2023 semester commenced in January, academic life at ASCC was slowly returning to normal following the disruptions caused by the Pandemic in 2022. Regular classes have resumed and work continues on projects which received only limited attention during the Pandemic restrictions. Visitors are once again welcome on the ASCC campus to offer special presentations and workshops. Likewise, ASCC students once again frequently go out into the public for experiences relevant to their studies and to provide support to worthy causes.

Accreditation Updates

ASCC continues to work collaboratively on its Annual Audit virtually with its Auditors. Documents and verification communications are ongoing with the Finance Office continuing to complete and submit requested data. As of March 27, all requested entries have been updated according to the Auditor's requests.

The College submitted its required Annual Report to ACCJC in April. The ALO continues to work on the Fiscal Report. The data collection process for the report began in February and was completed by the end of March. After approval by the President and the Board of Higher Education, the data was entered onto the ACCJC portal for annual reports by the deadline given by ACCJC.

On February 6th, ALO Mr. Leomiti was able to attend an ACCJC Peer Evaluation meeting for the review of the Palau Community College ISER in preparation for their site visit which was held in March. Mr. Leomiti was also nominated by ACCJC as an ACCJC Nominating Committee member in which he has gladly accepted.

Capital Improvements

Work continues at ASCC on a number of capital improvement projects, three of which will result in a new appearance to the campus. As of April 2023, the new ASCC Cafeteria moved closer to completion, with the facility anticipated to open in the coming fall 2023 semester. This two-story building will be the site of a food-vending facility on the first floor and additional office space on the second.

Extensive excavation has also proceeded on a site behind the cafeteria to prepare the building site for the Career Tech High School, a collaborative project between ASCC and the Department of Education. A third project, the renovation of the East Wing building into an expanded, two story facility to be re-named as the Smart Art and Community Higher Education Building, is in preparation.

First ASCC Professor Emeritus

ASCC reached a historical milestone in its history when, in January, the President's Office announced that the College would confer the status of Professor Emeritus on a retired faculty member who, while active at ASCC, displayed exemplary service as an instructor, researcher and/or administrator. The first individual chosen for this distinction is Mr. Larry Hirata, who for many years served the Agriculture, Community and Natural Resources (ACNR) division as an instructor, researcher and departmental leader. The Professor Emeritus status will enable Mr. Hirata to continue conducting research projects based on his official affiliation with ASCC.

CMC Grant to Enable Upgrades in Computer Services

ASCC has been awarded \$2,994,869 from the Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program (CMC). The program is run by the Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), and is part of the Biden-Harris Administration's Internet for All initiative. The award is for the "A'oa'oga Aso Nei" project which aims to make remote learning a way of life in American Samoa, to transform the local economy, and to preserve the Samoan culture. The award will enable an upgrading the campus Internet connection to a Gigabit-speed connection; creating an equipment lending program; developing a modern curriculum that will deliver both a plan for the coming decade, as well as a working pilot adding Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and/or computer science classes for both postsecondary and adult learners. Also included is training to existing ASCC Information Technology Staff to better support and improve educational service delivery in the context of a significantly altered technical environment.

SSI Collaborates on Teaching Certification for Samoan Language

The ASCC Samoan Studies Institute (SSI) has collaborated with the Department of Education on the development of a program to certify teachers of the Samoan language. The official launch of the certificate took place on March 20th. The SSI now offers three courses specifically for those seeking this certification, with 16 teachers enrolled in the program during the spring 2023 semester.

The College of the Marshall Islands (CMI)

Enrolment Trends

The College provided educational services to 1207 students during the Spring Semester 2023 which represents a 1% decrease from Spring 2022. Liberal Arts students increased to 32% of enrollments. Increases were noted in enrollment in the CMI AA Liberal Arts, which increased by 5% points (to 32%), and enrollments in the BA Education remains the same at 10%. Enrollments

in the AS Nursing (-5% points) and the AS Education (-6% points) decreased further from previous Spring semester.

The average age of students registered in Spring was 23 years. Of those, there were 48% full-time and 52% part-time students and 98% were Marshallese citizens. First time students were 111 or 9%, 80% were Continuing, and 9% returning students. Out of all students, the proportion of female students continues to be higher than males at 54% this Spring. There is a slight increase in students placing at Credit Level English and Math with the increase more pronounced in Math with 6% points. More students from the RMI private high schools are placed in Credit English while more students from the RMI public high schools are placed in Credit Math. The 12th grade Math Transition course gave RMI public high school students an advantage in their CMI Math placement.

General Accreditation Updates

At the January Commission meeting, CMI's accreditation was reaffirmed for the remainder of the cycle. The next required report is the midterm report, due March 15, 2025. The Accreditation Steering Committee continues to meet on a monthly basis to review progress on the team recommendations, self-identified improvement plans, and quality focus essay projects. The ASC, along with participatory governance committees, has also been reviewing the new draft standards.

In February, the college's ACCJC staff liaison visited the college, including the new Kwajalein Campus location.

Substantive Change

A substantive change application for two new maritime certificates, one for a Rating Forming Part of a Navigational Watch and one for a Rating Forming Part of an Engine Room Watch, has been submitted. These are the certificates that were initially developed by a consultant funded by the RMI World Bank *Education and Skills Project*. Both programs include a new course on Traditional Navigation and Seafaring and a focus on the recruitment of women in maritime careers.

Governance

General Highlights

The Board of Regents conducted three (3) meetings from January to April that resulted in 8 new policies and 4 amended policies to strengthen areas of Academics, Finance, Faculty development, Research, and Human Resources at the College. The Board of Regents continues to be responsive to policy areas that reflect the priorities of the college.

From January 2023, the College undertook an analysis of the progress of the 333 Strategic Activities listed in the 2019 - 2023 Strategic Plan. Of these, 123 are achieved (37%) which is an increase of 17% since the last reporting cycle, 157 are on track (47%), and 53 deferred (16%).

The College is currently in the process of prioritizing 24 strategic activities towards which \$150,000 will be allocated by the Budget Committee based on priority ranking.

The college has been implementing recommendations from research, sponsored by APIA Scholars, conducted into the gender gap in first year student retention. Among the interventions implemented are a regular *bwebwenato* session in which women students and staff have the opportunity to discuss topics of concern; they do this together with the college's master weaver, as the weaving space was traditionally a space for women to talk. Instructional departments have also added syllabus language encouraging students to discuss with them if they need to be absent due to reasons of personal health. A CMI team also presented the results from this study at the 2023 NASPA Conference.

CMI is currently implementing several grants including 2 larger grants from NTIA (\$1,794,628) to provide better access to broadband for the CMI community in remote locations, as well as a USAID Pacific American Fund (\$1,050,000) to develop 24 local books for the Public-School System (PSS).

CMI Cooperative Research & Extension Land Grant Program

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES 2023	
Initiatives	Updates / Comments
Explore a poultry demo startup project that will focus on the production of eggs to address food security.	Ongoing consultations with regional livestock expert Poultry training to be conducted May 12-14, 2023 Recruitment of interested participants underway
Develop a partnership with other key stakeholders to establish and advocate a national dietary guideline.	Ongoing consultations with respective stakeholders
Continue strengthening the Research and Extension INDIRECT activities initiative.	FB page completed (CMI Cooperative Research & Extension) Upcoming radio show launching
Develop a partnership with other key stakeholders to plan, develop and implement an advocacy platform for World Soil Day.	Ongoing consultations with respective stakeholders
Continue developing and implementing extension activities to the rest of the neighboring islands	Mejit Island completed Utrök Atoll coming up Apr 29th - May 5th

and atolls that have not received the services.	
Develop a partnership with other key stakeholders to plan, develop and seek funding for a “Non-Formal Education” project in Food and Agriculture.	Partnership between CMI’s Agriculture, Agroforestry and Cooperative Research & Extension completed. A proposal for NIFA’s FANE grant of \$750K was successfully submitted and acknowledged on April 5th, 2023. Awaiting response from NIFA grant reviewers
Continue improving the 3 research programs across the board.	Food Technologist on the grounds and working Aquaculture researcher on the grounds and working Agriculture researcher due to arrive April 28th
Identify and provide capacity building to all the extension agents and support staff in their respective programs and activities	Food Safety training in Guam completed Upcoming trainings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poultry, Swine, Climate-smart agriculture - NERAOC 2023

College of Micronesia-FSM

Introduction

The College of Micronesia-FSM Mission Statement reads, “*The College of Micronesia-FSM is a learner-centered institution of higher education that is committed to the success of the Federated States of Micronesia by providing academic and career and technical educational programs characterized by continuous improvement and best practices.*”

The College of Micronesia-FSM (COM-FSM) is a multi-campus institution with the National Campus located in Palikir, Pohnpei, and a state campus in each state. COM-FSM also includes the FSM Fisheries and Maritime Institute located in Yap and a Career Technical Education campus (CTEC) in Kolonia, Pohnpei. The area most directly served by the college is the Federated States of Micronesia, which includes approximately two-million square miles of the western Pacific Ocean and a population of over 110,000. The college offers 2 baccalaureate degrees, 14 associate degrees, and 17 certificate programs. The college offers fisheries and maritime instruction for fishing, navigation and engineering that meet the Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) regulations and traditional navigation.

Accreditation Updates



COM-FSM National campus held an Accreditation Carnival on March 3, 2023 with the faculty, staff, and students with the purpose of familiarizing them with the accreditation process and the ACCJC Standards. COM-FSM welcomed the Accreditation Team the week of March 13-17, 2023 for their focused site visit. The team was led by Dr. Rosevonne Pato as Chair, Dr. Ardis Eschenberg as Vice Chair, and members Dr. Peter Hepburn, Dr. Jill Bonds, Dr. Brian Sanders, Mr. Stevenson Kotton; and ACCJC staff liaison, Dr. Catherine Webb. Interviews on the seven (7) Core Inquiries were conducted with the college community members in addition to an open forum, and the team concluded their visit with an exit report. The college will be informed of its accreditation status at the June commission meeting.

General Updates

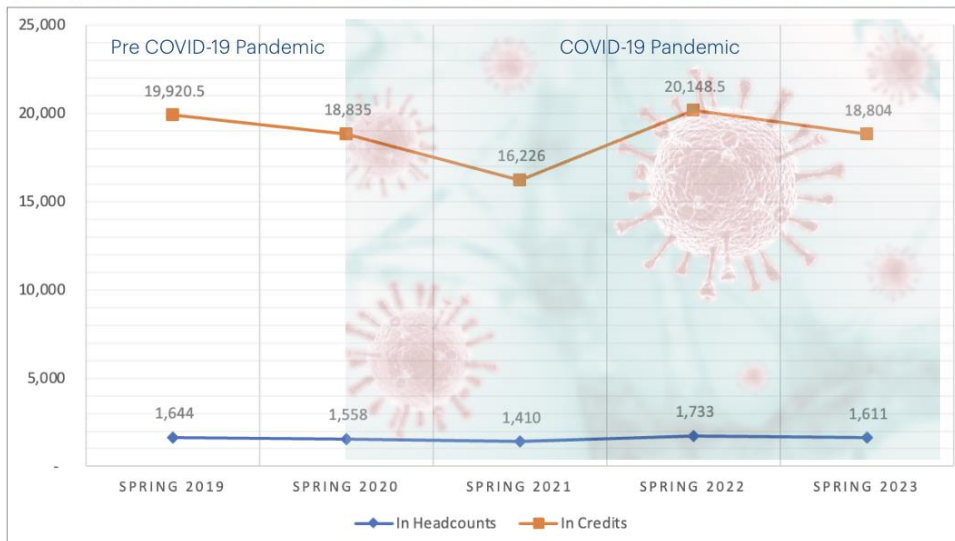
- Dr. Theresa Koroivulaono began her tenure as the President/CEO of the College of Micronesia-FSM on February 13, 2023. Dr. Koroivulaono holds a bachelor's degree, master's degree and PhD in English from the University of Auckland in New Zealand and is the former President/CEO of the College of the Marshall Islands from 2015 to 2020. In her work plan to the Board of Regents, priorities in strategic planning, performance evaluation and human resources were highlighted.
- Delihna Ehmes began her tenure as the Vice President for Instructional Affairs (VPIA) on February 15, 2023. Ms. Ehmes holds a bachelor's degree in Psychology from Missouri Southern State University and a master's degree in General Psychology from Capella University. She was a former professor in the college's Micronesian Studies program for over 20 years.
- The college celebrated its 30th anniversary with a fundraising dinner that raised over \$800,000 for the college's endowment fund.
- The college issued A Request for Proposal (RFP) for a Personnel Audit to solicit proposals from qualified firms or individuals to perform a Position Classification, Job Evaluation, Compensation, Benefits Study, and Audit the areas of recruitment and onboarding, policies and procedures, performance management and records retention for the COM-FSM.
- Two hydroponic greenhouses at the Chuuk and Kosrae campuses were formally opened in April, led by the Center for Entrepreneurship (CFE). Students involved with CFE's Leadership Through Immersion (LTI) internship program underwent several capacity-building workshops. The workshops provided helpful guidance and information about

business correspondence and data collection etiquette. Topics discussed in the workshop included sending formal electronic messages, writing business letters, and proper data collection etiquette. Interns also learned about the proper protocols in administering surveys to minors.

Enrollment Updates

- For spring 2023 semester, a total of 1,611 (headcount) students enrolled with 18,804 registered credits (or 1,567 full-time equivalents). Chart below shows the college’s spring 2019 to spring 2023 enrollment in headcounts and registered credits distributed by campus.

EMSS Chart 1. Spring 2019 to spring 2023: College-wide enrollment in headcounts and registered credits



- Summer 2023 Course Schedule

Figure 1 Summer 2023 offerings by full-time faculty-system wide. Note: Tables not including incoming Freshmen.

Campus	Instructor	Sections	Credits
Yap	8	13	42
Chuuk	10	26	68
National	22	47	117
CTEC	23	37	115
Kosrae	11	23	74
Total	74	146	416

Note: A total of 74 full-time instructors will be teaching 146 sections or classes for Summer 2023. All 146 sections are a combination of both residential and on-line offerings.

Guam Community College

Introduction

Since its inception through the Community College Act of 1977 (as amended by Public Law 31-99 in 2011), Guam Community College continues to fulfill its mission to be a leader in career and technical workforce development, providing the highest quality, student-centered education and job training for Micronesia. GCC serves as Guam's State Agency for Career and Technical Education under the United States Vocational Education Act of 1946 (and subsequent amendments). As a multi-faceted, public, career and technical education institution, the College currently offers one (1) bachelor degree, 26 associate degrees and 18 certificates. GCC delivers postsecondary education on campus in fall and spring semesters and during summer. Off-site, the College primarily delivers secondary career and technical education at six Guam public high schools, as well as short-term, specialized training at local businesses. Additionally, GCC offers adult education programs and services, namely English as a Second Language, Adult Basic Education, High School Equivalency preparation and testing, and Adult High School Diploma.

General Updates

Enrollment for the spring 2023 semester decreased by approximately six percent (6%) to 1,561 when compared to the enrollment in the prior year spring 2022 semester. When compared to the enrollment ten years ago in spring 2013, the spring 2022 semester enrollment dropped by approximately thirty-six percent (36%).

The Spring 2023 College Assembly was held on campus with faculty, administrators, and staff in attendance. The focus of the general session was accreditation and the Institutional Strategic Master Plan (ISMP). Additionally, Faculty Union provided training on the proposed changes to the faculty evaluation rubrics.

Since June 2021, the College offered twenty-five (25) bootcamps in various areas including construction, ship repair, truck driving, information technology, medical home health aide, engineering technician, HVAC, certified nursing assistant, medical code and billing, diesel mechanic, bus driving, and childcare. The total number of boot camp completers since June 2021 is 277. The number of boot camp completers employed with an employer sponsor is 138. Bus Driving II & III and Truck Driving IV bootcamps are ongoing.

The College recently held a transformation leadership academy for new employees. The academy was hosted by Dr. Samuel Betances and Dr. Laura Sauder. GCC remains committed to the transformation vision of 100% student-centered success through its continued investment in professional development initiatives for employees.

The College continues to be vigilant and steadfast in its efforts to ensure students' needs are met and every avenue exhausted to provide the education and support necessary to achieve our

educational mission. The laptop loaner program continues and is managed by the College's bookstore.

The Center for Student Involvement (CSI) offered several student activities in the spring. The Spring 2023 New Student Orientation was held on January 9, 2023. Students were provided information about the different student services offered by the College. The Spring Festival and Tour of the Pacific was held on March 23, 2023. Participants included students, student clubs and organizations, employees and members of the community. The Edge Student Conference was held on March 3, 2023. The conference provided students with tips on workplace success. The 2023 GCC Student Leaders Election was held on April 17, 2023 to April 19, 2023.

Accreditation Updates

ACCJC Vice President, Gohar Momjian, visited the campus on March 2023 to conduct Advanced ISER Training. An overview of the 2024 Accreditation Standards was provided during the training. Participants included faculty, staff and administrators. GCC's ISER is due to ACCJC in August 2024.

Palau Community College

Accreditation Updates

Palau Community College became an accredited institution in 1977 by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (ACCJC-WASC). It has been an ACCJC-WASC member institution for 46 years.

Palau Community College submitted its Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER) on July 22, 2022, to ACCJC, WASC, as a result of the meeting in October 2022 in San Francisco by the Accreditation Focus Site Visit Team Chairperson Dr. Erika Lacro, who the College of Marshall Islands President Dr. Irene Taafaki replaced. The Team recommended that the College address the five Core Inquiries submitted in February 2023, followed by a visit from March 13 to 17th with only three visiting team members able to visit the College. Dr. Irene Taafaki, who chaired the Visiting Team, could not participate in March 2023 due to travel arrangements. As a result, the Visiting Team comprised Dr. Gohar Momjian, Mr. Sonny Leomiti, and Dr. Susan Kazama, who was the Team Chair. Upon arrival, the Palau Community College welcomed the Accreditation Commission for Community and Junior College (ACCJC) Visiting Team. As part of the accreditation process, the Team Visit took place the following day, with an invitation extended to the college community to attend the Open Forum and meet the visiting team members. PCC faculty and staff participated in the exit meeting to hear visiting team members deliver their final commendations. The College is expected to receive the Accrediting Commission's action at its June 2023 meeting.

College Program Highlights

- A Ribbon Cutting Ceremony to officially open the Taiwan Digital Opportunity Center took place on Monday, January 30, 2023. Present to grace the occasion were PCC President Dr. Patrick U. Tellei, ROC-Taiwan Ambassador Jessica Lee, Minister of Finance Kaleb Udui, Jr., and Minister of MPII Charles Obichang including community members and government employees attending courses provided by the Center. Ambassador Lee reiterated ROC-Taiwan's commitment to establish the center to support learning information and communications technology (ICT) courses which are offered online. In addition, the computer hardware, projector, and printer donated will ensure continuous learning from beginning to advance level. Under the management and co-operating by MPII, MOF and PCC, the Center will open to both government and private sectors for those who are interested in developing digital literacy and advanced ICT skills.
- Palau Community College Board of Trustees held its annual organizational meeting on Monday, January 09, 2023. The Republic of Palau Public Law 4-2, cited as the Higher Education Act of 1993, mandates that members of the PCC Board of Trustees meet each year in order to elect its officers and establish its calendar of regular meetings. During their annual meeting, the trustees voted unanimously to re-elect Reverend Billy G. Kuartei as the Chairman of the College Board of Trustees, Ms. Romana Wong was also re-elected as Vice Chairperson and Trustee Kione Isechal was voted Secretary/Treasurer. Other members include Trustee Alvina Timarong, Trustee Dr. Emais Roberts, and Student Trustee O'Keef Kokichi. Trustee Dr. Emais Roberts represents the Board on the three-member College of Micronesia Land Grant Board of Regents. In addition, the PCC Board of Trustees organized its standing committee. Academic Programs Committee-Chairman, Trustee Timarong; Finance/Personnel Committee-Chairman, Vice Chair Wong; Facilities-Chairman, Secretary/Treasurer Isechal; and Student Affairs Committee Chairperson Student Trustee Kokichi. All committee include key college officials as Ad-Hoc Members. The annual organizational meeting of the PCC Board of Trustees is held on the second Monday of January of each year.
- The University of Hawaii, Manoa initiated the University of Hawaii Pacific Leadership (PACMED) Master Degree Program with an introductory Zoom meeting on Thursday, Feb. 16, 2023. Leading this work from the PCC side is Dean of Continuing Education, Hedrick Kual who is working closely with the University of Hawaii (U.H.), Manoa team to recruit students for the new graduate program. The program is a 5-semester master's degree that targets local teachers and other educators. PACMED focuses on curriculum development with a STEM specialization. The Nationally accredited U.S. program is tailor-made for the Pacific Islands with its "culturally-responsive cohort support" that has an impressive retention rate of 100%. The program already exists in 5 other Pacific Countries and is set to begin its Palau cohort in August of this year. PACMED will train Palau teachers and educators with a solid curriculum development specialized in STEM program.

- In March 2023, fourteen (14) PCC students were inducted into the Phi Theta Kappa International Society. PCC President was present to induct the honor students while Dean of Students inducted the new officers. In order to be a member of PTK, a student must have a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 and above and pursue an associate degree in their chosen academic program.
- Palau Community College researcher and instructor, Richard Page with the college Cooperative Research and Extension was appointed as Island Innovation Council Ambassador by the Island Innovation Council and the United Nations Small Island Developing States (UN-SIDS) working group. The Island Innovation Ambassador will represent a collection of organizations that work to promote the mission of Island Innovation at the global level. The group includes stakeholders from various small island developing states who work together to advocate for fair and equitable development that is sensitive to cultural and environmental concerns and to ensure permanent representation at the United Nation.
- PCC President received a letter from U.S. Department of Education-Office of Postsecondary Education informing him of the new grant award for Upward Bound Math-Science (UBMS) program. With the letter, a grant award notification (GAN) specifying the amount of funds for 2022 to 2027. The program will serve minimum of 60 students in all five high schools in Palau for the next five years by providing fundamental support to students in preparation for college entrance. The program also provides opportunities for participants to succeed in precollege programs following enrollment in colleges or universities. It will serve high school students from low-income families and whose families neither hold bachelor's degree from a four-year college or university. The goal of UBMS is to increase the rates at which participants enroll in and graduate from institutions of post-secondary education in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) related fields.