

# **EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT**

**American Samoa Community College  
P.O. Box 2609  
Pago Pago,  
American Samoa 96799**

**This report represents the findings of the External Evaluation Team that visited  
American Samoa Community College on September 30-October 3, 2014.**

**Gari Browning, Ph.D.  
Team Chair**

## LIST OF TEAM MEMBERS

### **Chair**

Dr. Gari Browning (Chair)  
Superintendent/President  
Ohlone College

### **Faculty**

Dr. Mary Therese Perez Hattori  
Associate Professor Information  
Technology/Online Education  
Kapiolani Community College

### **Faculty**

Dr. Steven Reynolds  
English Instructor  
College of the Siskiyous

Dr. Merryl Kravitz  
Dean of Language Arts and Learning  
Resources  
Evergreen Valley College

### **Faculty/BA Subject Matter Specialist**

Dr. Keith Walters  
Associate Professor, School of Education  
California Baptist University

Dr. Kimberlee Messina  
Vice President for Instruction and  
Institutional Research  
Foothill College

Ms. Abbie Patterson  
Vice President, Student Services  
Los Angeles Harbor College

Mr. Brandon Shimokawa  
Vice Chancellor for Administrative Services  
Kauai Community College

Dr. Joseph Daisy  
President  
College of Micronesia-FSM

Dr. Carol Kozeracki  
Dean, Academic Planning  
East Los Angeles College

### **Team Assistant**

Mr. Jeff O'Connell  
Associate Professor  
Ohlone College

## SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INSTITUTION: American Samoa Community College

DATE OF VISIT: September 30—October 3, 2014

TEAM CHAIR: Gari Browning, Ph.D.  
President/Superintendent, Ohlone Community College District

The visit of the External Evaluation team was conducted from September 30 through October 3, 2014. Despite plans to conduct an in-person pre-visit to the College, weather forced cancellation of those plans. Instead the team chair and the team assistant conducted a conference call with the College president and the ALO to discuss logistics. The team chair and assistant also went to the College a few days ahead of the visit to address any issues that required in-person attention. In order to take into account the limited flight schedule to American Samoa, the visit was conducted from Tuesday through Friday rather than the typical Monday through Thursday schedule. Because ASCC has no off-campus sites, there was no need to make special arrangements to visit such facilities.

Although just half of the team members had ACCJC team experience, nearly all had accreditation experience in some form. All members were knowledgeable and conscientious, prepared well prior to the visit, coalesced quickly into an effective team, and were thorough in their assessment of the College.

This was the first time any team or college used the 2014 Accreditation Standards and Eligibility Requirements. Despite prior notification of this requirement, ASCC was confused and initially sent a report based on the 2002 Standards to the team. ACCJC notified the College, and the report was reconfigured to match the numbering system in the new Standards. The team was impressed with the amount of effort and teamwork involved in rewriting an entire self evaluation in a matter of days and recognized that it involved many sleepless nights on the part of the College staff.

The original self-evaluation report did not fully describe processes active at the college. In many cases the evaluation sub-sections were simply assertions that the College met the Standard. The Actionable Improvement Plans, referred to in the report as Planning Agendas, did not always follow logically from the previous sections of the Standard. Additionally, the evidence was not numbered in line with the 2002 Standards. Instead the college had devised its own numbering system.

The second report was aligned with the new Standards, and it was clear that the College had made a concerted effort to cover the portions of the Standards that were new in 2014. Although the new version addressed nearly the issues found in the earlier report, the electronic version, which was received somewhat ahead of the visit date, stalled the readers' computers, making it difficult to read. The hard copy of the new report arrived just before the visit, and some members did not receive it before leaving. The College made additional copies available to the team in the team room, and team members worked diligently to read it.

Determination of how the College was operating within the Standards was based on review of both reports, examination of evidence available through links in both reports and presented/requested during the visit, interviews with members of the College community, observations of meetings, and the teams' notes and assignments from the original version of the self evaluation report.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 2014 VISITING TEAM**

### **Recommendations to meet the Standards**

#### **Recommendation 1:**

**In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College, in cooperation with the governance process, fully develop program review processes, systematic course review, and authentic assessment of SLOs and analyze and use the results of assessments to improve continuously. (Standards I.A.2, I.B.1, I.B.2, II.A.2, II.B.3, I.B.6, I.B.7, I.B.8, I.B.9, II.C.2, II.C.3, IV.A.1, IV.A.2, IV.A.3)**

#### **Recommendation 2:**

**In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College, in cooperation with the governance process, expand access to program evaluation and assessment data and promote collegial dialogue surrounding student learning and student success. (Standards I.B.1, I.B.4, I.B.5, I.B.6, I.B.7, I.B.8, I.B.9, IV.A.1, IV.A.2, IV.A.3)**

#### **Recommendation 3:**

**In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College set institutional standards for student achievement and use them as the basis for evaluation in the program review and institutional planning processes. (Standards I.B.3, I.B.6, I.B.7, I.B.8, I.B.9, IV.B.3, IV.C.8; ER11)**

#### **Recommendation 4:**

**In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College address the previous recommendation to improve services to support the College's mission to transfer students to institutions of higher learning. (2008 Recommendation 5; Standard II.C.2)**

#### **Recommendation 5:**

**In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College revise its employment policies to ensure equity, diversity, and fairness. (Standard III.A.12)**

#### **Recommendation 6:**

**In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College revise and conduct performance evaluations that include consideration of how employees use the results of assessment of learning outcomes to improve teaching and learning. (Standard III.A.6; ER14)**

**Recommendation 7:**

**In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College manage its fiscal resources to effectively achieve the mission, manage its cash position, and maintain a minimum 5% reserve to ensure financial stability. (Standards III.D.9, III.D.11; ER18)**

**Recommendation 8:**

**In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College evaluate the organizational structure and governance processes to increase opportunities for broad-based participation, purposeful dialogue, and involvement in decision-making processes. (Standards IV.A.1, IV.A.2, IV.A.3, IV.B.2)**

**Recommendation 9:**

**In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College use and publish the results of Board of Higher Education self-evaluations to improve Board performance. (Standard IV.C.10)**

**Recommendation 10:**

**In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College establish and implement a Board code of ethics and conflict of interest policy that clearly defines conflict of interest and the process for dealing with behavior that violates its code. (Standard IV.C.11; ER7)**

**Recommendations to improve institutional effectiveness**

**Recommendation 11:**

**In order to improve institutional effectiveness, the team recommends that the College analyze available data to assess technology resources and improve college wide and public access to data and information. (Standards I.B.6, I.B.7, I.B.8, I.B.9, I.C.3, III.C.1)**

**Recommendation 12:**

**In order to improve institutional effectiveness, the team recommends that the College proactively plan for the maintenance of physical resources and project prioritization. (Standard III.B.2)**

**Recommendation 13:**

**In order to improve institutional effectiveness, the team recommends that the College publish and implement a systematic review cycle of board policies and archive outdated policies. (Standards IV.A.7, IV.C.7)**

**Recommendation 14:**

**In order to improve institutional effectiveness, the team recommends that the College develop and implement a continuous training program for board development regarding the roles and responsibilities of board members and implement the process intended to ensure continuity of board membership and staggered terms. (Standard IV.C.9)**

## **TEAM COMMENDATIONS**

The team commends the College for its innovative College Accelerated Preparatory Program (CAPP). Using data from its programs in developmental reading, writing, and math, and based on effective practices in basic skills education, the College created and implemented this very effective program to address the needs of its students.

The team commends the College for its clear and complete documentation of key processes. Of particular note are the Financial Aid Handbook and the Standard Operating Procedures Manuals.

The team commends the Associated Student Government for its active involvement in the life of the College and for its many programs designed to engage students. The team was particularly impressed by the tireless student support of the team throughout the Accreditation visit.

The team commends the College for its extensive Samoan and Pacific Studies collection, which serves as a resource to the College and the community. This collection provides a critical means for preserving the Samoan language and culture.

## INTRODUCTION

American Samoa, the only U.S. Territory south of the equator, lies 2,500 miles southwest of Hawaii and 1,800 miles northeast of New Zealand. The closest neighbor is the Independent State of Samoa (Western Samoa), 73 miles to the east. American Samoa consists of seven islands, with a total land mass of 76 square miles. American Samoa has been a territory of the United States since 1900.

American Samoa Community College (ASCC) is the sole regionally accredited institution of higher education of American Samoa. ASCC is located on the main island of Tutuila, which accounts for three-fourths of the total land area and is home to 90% of the population of 65,000. It was established in 1970 and first accredited by ACCJC in 1976. It offers two-year associate degrees, occupational certificates, and a Bachelor of Education. It enrolls approximately 1,500 students.

The College has been engaged in addressing accreditation issues since the last comprehensive visit as follows:

- October 2008, the last comprehensive visit to ASCC was conducted.
- February 2009, the Commission placed ASCC on Probation status requiring two Progress Reports, one in October 2009 followed by a visit and the second in October 2010.
- October 2009, the Commission postponed the report and visit to March 2010 because of damage sustained by the island.
- February 2010, the College submitted the Follow up Report.
- April 2010, the team submitted the Follow up Team Report.
- June 2010, the Commission changed the College status from Probation to Warning.
- September 2010, the College submitted the second Follow Report to address additional recommendations.
- November 2010, the team submitted the second Follow up Team Report.
- January 2011, the Commission removed the College from Warning.
- October 2011, the College submitted its Midterm Report.
- February 2012, the Commission required the College to resubmit the Midterm Report.
- March 2012, the College resubmitted the Midterm Report.
- July 2012, the Commission accepted the Midterm Report.
- September 2013, the College submitted the Substantive Change Proposal to offer B.Ed.
- November 2013, the Commission approved the Substantive Change to offer B.Ed.

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 2014 VISITING TEAM

### Recommendations to meet the Standards

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#### Recommendation 2:

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The team commends the College for its Samoan Collection, which serves as a resource to the College and the community. This collection provides a critical means for preserving the Samoan language and culture.

## EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES TO PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Recommendation 1:**

**The visiting team recommends that the College designate a group of College constituents to oversee planning activities and to design a process to promote broader participation, provide more coordination, ensure greater integration of functional plans, and establish a clearer link to resource allocations. (2003 Recommendations 1.1, 3.1) (Standard I.B)**

The Institutional Planning Executive Core Committee (IPECC), known as the Core Planning Committee, is chaired by the director of Institutional Effectiveness and has responsibility for overseeing planning activities. Under the oversight of the Core Planning Committee, information from Program Review surveys is collected from all divisions and programs compiled by the Institutional Effectiveness Office. These results are used to identify four strategic focus areas--academic excellence, staffing, technology, and physical facilities/maintenance. Four sub-committees, one for each area of focus, review the Program Review data and draft goals, objectives, performance indicators, activities, and needed resources for the strategic plan. All divisions and units are then asked to create their own goals and objectives to align with these central areas. Progress on these goals and objectives are reported to the Board of Higher Education. Most recently, budget allocations, many of which were tied to the \$14 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds, were made in conjunction with the goals and objectives set by the subcommittees and divisions to align with the strategic plan.

The College has met this recommendation.

### **Recommendation 2:**

**The visiting team recommends that the College develop a document that fully describes the relationship between the assessment of SLOs, program review, and planning. It is further recommended that this document be shared throughout the campus community and its content be presented to the various constituency groups. (Standards II.A.2.a, II.A.2.e, II.A.2.f)**

The College's 2015-2020 institutional strategic plan includes an outline of the "Institutional Assessment Cycle of all Outcomes" that specifies the scope, responsible persons, assessment instruments and cycle for General Education Outcomes, Program Learning Outcomes, Course Learning Outcomes, Divisional Learning Outcomes, and Institutional Learning Outcomes/Core Values. This document presents a concise overview of the process but needs to be expanded to ensure that all stakeholders fully understand the components and processes.

The midterm report references an "ASCC Alignment and Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) Training Manual" and a document entitled "Continuing the Data Driven Dialogue: Assessment, Program Review and Planning at ASCC," which document the relationship among these activities. The strategic plan and these process documents are used on an ongoing basis for training on learning outcomes assessment.

The College has met this recommendation.

**Recommendation 3:**

**The visiting team recommends that the College establish a comprehensive tutoring and learning assistance program to support students enrolled in both basic skills and upper level transfer courses. (Standards II.A.2, II.B.3, II.C.1.2)**

In response to the 2008 accreditation recommendation, the College established the Student Learning Assistance (SLA) Center. Tutoring is offered to students in English, math, (basic skills and collegiate levels) and other subjects in two computer labs. The SLA Center is overseen by a full-time tutor coordinator and tutoring services are provided by a combination of full-time and student tutors. Tutoring is offered by appointment and on a walk-in basis. A tutorial directory is published each semester that provides the location and contact information for tutoring taking place across campus. In addition to the comprehensive tutoring offered in the SLA Center, students can receive tutoring in nine departments across campus. Assessments have been done to measure the impact of tutoring on student success in the College Accelerated Preparatory Program (CAPP) English and math classes.

The College has met this recommendation.

**Recommendation 4:**

**The visiting team recommends that the College improve collection and dissemination of student success data to ensure effective data driven planning and to support College dialogue. (Standards II.A.1.a, II.A.1.c, II.B.4, IV.A.1)**

The College has invested in the Office of Institutional Effectiveness by hiring an additional data clerk and purchasing data management software. This office coordinates the collection of program review and divisional assessment data, which includes an array of data but no extensive information on student success. The office also tracks success rates for general education courses, degrees awarded by program, and nursing NCLEX pass rates. Some of this information is stored on a password-protected site that is restricted to deans and directors, limiting its usefulness for planning and broad-based dialog.

Although the institution does appear to be collecting student success data on a regular basis, the dissemination appears to be very limited and not broadly shared. Rates have limited usefulness for improving student success.

The College has partially met this recommendation. See 2014 Recommendations 1 and 2.

**Recommendation 5:**

**The visiting team recommends that the College improve transfer advisement and coordination and establish a comprehensive support program to meet the College's transfer mission. (Standards II.A.6, II.B.3.c)**

The College has renewed and updated its articulation agreements, has included transfer information in the catalog, and has added a transfer counselor in the Student Learning Assistance (SLA) Center. However, due to the isolation of the institution and the varied schools to which

students transfer, the team encourages the College to establish articulation agreements with additional four-year institutions.

The College has not met this recommendation. See 2014 Recommendation 4.

**Recommendation 6:**

**The visiting team recommends that the College develop a staffing plan and budget development process that are integrated with institutional planning, including educational master plan and facilities master plan. (2003 Recommendations 1.1, 3.1, 3.2) (Standards I, III.A.11, III.D, III.D.3)**

The 2014 budget process integrated budget planning with institutional strategic planning. Staffing, facilities, technology and budget development are part of the Institutional Program Review. The Academic Excellence Plan integrates all of the other institutional plans. The incorporation of the “Total Cost of Ownership” concept as a new focus area for College’s the 2015–2020 strategic plan commits to the strategic objective of addressing “total cost of ownership for staffing and personnel development in the provision of services and programs for academic achievement.”

The College has met this recommendation.

**Recommendation 7:**

**The visiting team recommends that the College respond to the finding cited in the 2007 audit, specifically, checks issued to financial aid recipients that were not cashed, and resolve the issue. (2003 Recommendation 9.2) (Standards III.D.1.c, III.D.2.a, III.D.2.d)**

The 2013 independent auditor report did not contain a finding related to un-cashed financial aid checks.

The College has been met this recommendation.

**Recommendation 8:**

**The visiting team recommends that the College develop a plan to fund the total cost of ownership for recent capital investments in computing technology, facilities expansion, and air conditioning, based on support area program review, and integrated planning. (2003 Recommendation 3.1) (Standards I, III.B.3)**

The College has developed and begun to implement a Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) plan for recent capital investments. To date, the College has been able to set aside \$105,000, unaudited, for future maintenance costs related to the Multi-Purpose Center, which is scheduled to be completed in January 2015. However, due the College’s financial circumstances, it has not been able to set aside monies for its recently constructed Wellness Center, or its air conditioning resources. The College should consider its decision to set aside funds for a future project given that it has been unable to fully fund the TCO plan for the existing Wellness Center.

The College has partially met this recommendation. See 2014 Recommendation 7.

**Recommendation 9:**

**The visiting team recommends that the College identify and document the charge, scope of authority, and the responsibilities of each College committee (IV.A.2.c); identify and document the roles, scope of authority, and responsibilities of students, faculty, staff, and administrators in the decision-making processes (IV.A.2.b); and identify and document the specific procedures for moving items or issues through decision-making processes at the College, including mechanisms for providing feedback. (Standard IV.A.3)**

The College has documented its governance and decision-making processes in policy. The governance policies dictate who participates in which aspects of decision-making and dictate how decisions are communicated to the campus. However, the strict adherence to chain of command relies on a representative path for dialog and decisions rather than encouraging broad-based involvement. In order to cultivate a more collegial atmosphere, ASCC should revise some of its committees to be more representative of the constituent groups.

The College has partially met this recommendation. See 2014 Recommendation 8.

**Recommendation 10:**

**The visiting team recommends that the Board, in consultation with the President, define and delineate the roles and responsibilities of the Board in College operations and policy making and develop an evaluation process to determine the effectiveness of the delineation. (Standards IV.B.1.g, IV.B.1.j)**

The Board has a policy that delegates primary responsibility for overall operations of the College to the president. The Board determines the effectiveness of the president in fulfilling this responsibility through an annual performance evaluation. Policy states that monitoring executive performance is synonymous with monitoring the college's performance against board policies, mission and vision, and executive limitations. The policy further states that the Board will monitor performance in a manner as to have systematic assurance of policy compliance, including accomplishments of college goals. Both the Board and the president evaluations are conducted annually.

The College has met this recommendation.

**Commission Recommendation:**

**The Commission recommends the College work immediately with the government of American Samoa to ensure that the government end restrictions on the College's use of resources, and that the College is able to use the financial resources available to it in a timely manner.**

As per the April 2010 Follow-Up Visit Report, "This concern expressed in this recommendation may have been misplaced. The 2014 team found no evidence that the College is restricted in any way by the American Samoan government in spending its revenue allocation.

The College has responded effectively to the Commission recommendation.

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

*The Eligibility Requirements were addressed separately in the ASCC Comprehensive Self Evaluation Report and are therefore treated in this section rather than integrated with the Standards.*

### **1. Authority**

The institution was established in 1970 as part of the American Samoa Department of Education, and granted semi-autonomous status within the American Samoa Government in 1992, with the authority to operate as a degree-granting institution under Public Law 22-30. American Samoa Community College is a public institution.

The College meets this requirement.

### **2. Operational Status**

The College is fully operational, with students actively attending classes, studying, and participating in all the expected activities in pursuit of their degrees. Interviews with students verified that they are pursuing both associate degrees and/or the Bachelor of Education degree.

The College meets this requirement.

### **3. Degrees**

ASCC offers associate's degrees, certificates and one bachelor's degree. A review of the College Catalog verified that courses and support programs and services are designed to lead students to degree attainment. The majority of the institution's students are enrolled in courses leading to a degree.

The College meets this requirement.

### **4. Chief Executive Officer**

ASCC has a president who serves as the institution's chief executive officer appointed by the governing board, with full-time responsibility to the institution. The president possesses the requisite authority to administer board policies. He does not serve as chair of the Board of Higher Education. The institution informs the Commission immediately when there is a change in the institutional chief executive officer.

The College meets this requirement.

### **5. Financial Accountability**

ASCC annually undergoes and makes available an external financial audit by a certified public accountant and has demonstrated compliance with federal requirements for Title IV eligibility.

The College meets this requirement.

## **6. Mission**

ASCC's mission is clearly defined and published in the College Catalog and other institutional documents such as the strategic plan. It expresses a clear commitment to student learning and achievement. The mission is reviewed at the annual planning session of the Board of Higher Education.

The College meets this requirement.

## **7. Governing Board**

The institution has a functioning governing board responsible for the academic quality, institutional integrity, and financial stability of the institution and for ensuring that the institution's mission is achieved. The board members are appointed by the governor and approved by the legislature, with the exception of the Student Trustee and the Director of Education, who is an ex officio member. The board is an independent policy-making body capable of reflecting constituent and public interest in board activities and decisions. Board members have no employment, family, ownership, or other personal financial interest in the institution. This board is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the financial resources of the institution are used to provide a sound educational program. Its membership is sufficient in size and composition to fulfill all board responsibilities.

The board does not have a detailed conflict of interest policy that includes the requirement for a board member to disclose any possible conflicts of interest; nor is there a policy for dealing with behavior that represents such a conflict. There is a current issue that has not yet been resolved regarding a perceived conflict of interest.

The College does not meet this requirement. See Recommendation 10.

## **8. Administrative Capacity**

A review of the organizational structure, tours of the College's offices, and interviews with students and personnel confirmed that the College has sufficient staff and administrators to provide the necessary services for the effective support of its mission and purposes. A review of personnel files confirmed that personnel are qualified with appropriate education, training, and/or experience to serve in the positions for which they were hired.

The College has sufficient staff, with appropriate preparation and experience to provide the administrative services necessary to support its mission and purpose.

The College meets this requirement.

## **9. Educational Programs**

A review of the College Catalog, course outlines of record, and required coursework for degrees confirmed that degree programs are consistent with the College's mission to prepare students for transfer, career entry, and research into human and natural resources, and to raise their awareness of Samoa and the Pacific. ASCC's degrees and certificates are in alignment with the College's mission, and are of sufficient content, length, quality and rigor and lead to identified learning outcomes. Program learning outcomes for all academic departments are printed in the catalog.



The College meets this requirement.

### **10. Academic Credit**

The College awards credit based on generally accepted practices. One unit of credit requires one hour of classroom lecture per week or three hours of lab per week. A typical three-unit course at ASCC requires three hours of classroom lecture per week or nine hours of lab per week. The institution provides appropriate information about the awarding of academic credit in the College Catalog and in the student handbook.

The College meets this requirement.

### **11. Student Learning and Student Achievement**

The College has identified expected student learning outcomes and program-specific outcomes for each instructional program. However, the College has yet to define standards for student achievement of these outcomes. Although the College collects assessment data for these program outcomes, not having institution-set standards the College cannot fully demonstrate that students who complete these programs have met expected standards of achievement.

The College does not meet this requirement. See Recommendation 3.

### **12. General Education**

The College has established general education requirements for all degree programs. The College defines general education in two forms: General Education Outcomes (communication, critical thinking, information technology literacy, global awareness and cultural competence, and development and responsibility) and Core Foundational Areas (arts and humanities, social sciences, mathematics, sciences, Samoan studies, and physical education). General Education Outcomes and Core Requirements are woven into the fabric of each degree program. General education courses and courses that satisfy Core Foundational Areas have been selected for each degree program to ensure that students achieve comprehensive learning outcomes. Degree credit is consistent with the College's policy for award of credit, and general education courses and learning outcomes are consistent with levels of quality and rigor appropriate to higher education.

The College meets this requirement.

### **13. Academic Freedom**

The College has and upholds a written policy protecting academic freedom of faculty and students. This policy is published in the Governance Manual and the College Catalog. The College Catalog also provides a richer definition and explanation of academic freedom. In both the policy and the catalog explanation, the College maintains an atmosphere in which intellectual freedom and independence exist.

The College meets this requirement.

#### **14. Faculty**

A review of the faculty list and adjunct faculty list, of the College Catalog and Schedule of Classes, of job descriptions and personnel files, of enrollment management data, and interviews with College administrators, faculty, and students confirmed that the College has a sufficient number of qualified faculty to achieve its mission and purpose and to support all its educational programs. A review of faculty job descriptions confirmed that faculty are responsible for development and review of curriculum and for assessment of student learning.

The College has a sufficient number of qualified faculty, which includes mostly full time faculty with some adjunct faculty, to achieve the institutional mission and purposes. The number is sufficient in size and experience to support all of the College's educational programs. The faculty position descriptions include the development and review of curriculum, but do not consistently include the assessment of learning.

The College does not meet this requirement. See Recommendation 6.

#### **15. Student Support Services**

The institution provides an array of student support services to meet student needs. It provides the Student Learning Assistance Center as well as a variety of labs for students to access materials. It provides academic, personal, career and transfer counseling. The Student Government Association (SGA) provides opportunities to participate in College government directly or through club participation. The clubs are diverse and promote student interests and diversity needs.

The College meets this requirement.

#### **16. Admissions**

ASCC is an open admissions institution. It has established admission criteria that are congruent with its open admissions policy. The B.Ed. program has additional admission criteria consistent with expectations of that program; Applicants must have successfully completed the General Education coursework with a 2.7 or better grade point average and take the Praxis, a U.S. teacher certification exam.

The College meets this requirement.

#### **17. Information and Learning Support Services**

The institution has a fully-staffed library that is open during the regular working hours of the College. It has 40,000 volumes including 90 journals and access to additional volumes through interlibrary loan on the island, online databases, and materials appropriate for students in the baccalaureate education program. In addition to circulating items, the library has a reference area and a Special Collections area with a Samoa Pacific Collection. The library director confirmed that the Internet connections and Wi-Fi for the library computers are adequate.

Tutoring services are provided at multiple locations across the campus. The Student Learning Assistance (SLA) Center provides tutoring in English, math, and a broad range of disciplines.

The College meets this requirement.

### **18. Financial Resources**

Although the College has an average fiscal year 2014 month-end cash balance, including reserves, of approximately \$700,000, unaudited, and has grown its cash balances to approximately \$1 million as of September 30, 2014, unaudited, the College does not have a sufficient unrestricted cash reserve of its general fund operating expenditures of approximately \$7 million in fiscal year 2014 unaudited. The College may not have a sufficient level of financial resources to support and sustain the College's current offering of student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness.

Furthermore, although the College has implemented contingency plans to mitigate its recent budgetary shortfalls, the team finds that the College does not currently have sufficient cash flow or cash reserves to maintain financial stability.

The College does not meet this requirement. See Recommendation 7.

### **19. Institutional Planning and Evaluation**

The College provides evidence of planning for improvement of institutional structures and processes, student achievement of educational goals, and student learning. The institution assesses progress toward achieving its stated goals and makes decisions regarding improvement through an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and re-evaluation.

The College meets this requirement.

### **20. Integrity in Communication with the Public**

The College Catalog includes all of the policies, procedures, and information regarding the admissions and registration process, cost of tuition and other fees, graduation and major requirements, course descriptions, support services, qualifications of faculty and other required information.

The College meets this requirement.

### **21. Integrity in Relations with the Accrediting Commission**

The College and the Board of Higher Education has affirmed by signatures of the official representatives that ASCC has consistently adhered to the Eligibility Requirements, Standards, and policies of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges. The College describes itself in identical terms to all of its accrediting agencies, communicates any changes in its accredited status, and has agreed to disclose information required by the Commission to carry out accrediting responsibilities. The College has responded to Commission requests and all disclosures by the College are complete, accurate, and honest.

The College meets this requirement.

## **Standard I: Mission, Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness, and Integrity**

### **A. Mission**

#### **General Observations**

The current mission statement of American Samoa Community College was approved in June 2014 and reads:

The mission of the American Samoa Community College is to foster successful student learning by providing high quality educational programs and services that will enable students to achieve their educational goals and to contribute to the social, cultural, political economic, technological, and environmental well-being of American Samoa.

To fulfill this mission, the College, as an open-admissions United States accredited, Land Grant institution, provides access to bachelor and associate degrees and certificate programs of study. These programs prepare all students including those who are educationally underserved, challenged, or non-traditional for:

- Transfer to institutions of higher learning
- Successful entry into the workforce
- Research and extension in human and natural resources
- Awareness of Samoa and the Pacific

In addition to the mission, ASCC defines its core values/Institutional Learning Outcomes as follows:

- Student Centeredness
- Respect for Diversity
- Collaboration and Teamwork
- Respect for Tradition and Culture
- Lifelong Learning

The College's Curriculum Committee reviews the mission statement every two years, as does the administration and other stakeholders, before it is ultimately approved by the Board of Higher Education. The Mission and the Core Values are in the printed and online version of the catalog and posted prominently throughout the campus, although they are not easily found on the College's website. A Samoan language version of the mission statement is also published.

ASCC offers basic skills courses, vocational courses and programs, transfer courses and programs, associate degrees and certificates, as well as a bachelor's degree in education. The College provides a wide array of support services including counseling, transfer advising, tutorial services, services for students with disabilities, and the College Accelerated Preparatory Program

(CAPP) designed to prepare students for college-level work. These educational programs and services are in clear alignment with the stated mission of the College.

The College has mapped its courses to the General Education Program, and has assessed these courses and programs each semester and included them in the annual divisional assessments and in biannual program reviews. These assessments and reviews are linked to the Institutional Strategic Plan (ISP), which is in alignment with the College mission.

The Bachelors of Education program (B.Ed.) is a good example of the ASCC's efforts to use the institutional mission to create degrees and other certificate programs. Coordination of the institutional mission with the B.Ed. is apparent in the MOU with the America Samoa Department of Education (ASDO) to improve the quality of the Samoa K-6 public school system, the required Samoa course students complete during the A.A. portion of the program, and the clinical experiences required in years three and four where students work in America Samoa public schools.

Over a seven year period of time, ASCC personnel worked with the ASDO to design the program and craft a substantive change report. The shortage of elementary teachers throughout American Samoa, combined with the benefit of a stable A.A. education program producing graduates ready for B.Ed. coursework, was foundational to making the proposed program an institutional priority. ACCJC approved the program in November 2013. ASCC validated the importance of the program by providing a budgetary increase from \$47,000 in Fiscal Year 2007 to \$348,500 in Fiscal Year 2014. Design elements included alignment of course objectives, students learning outcomes, and program learning outcomes. The complexity of the system is apparent in the B.Ed. curriculum map that coordinates the nine program outcomes with the General Education outcomes and finally with course objectives. Data from course rubrics are used as part of the institution data systems such as the catalog review and strategic planning process.

## **Findings and Evidence**

The team determined that the mission statement, approved by the Board of Governors in June 2014, accurately describes the general purpose of American Samoa Community College and the programs it offers to the students and the community the College serves. (I.A.1, 1.A.2) The team examined College documents, including the College Catalog, the Institutional Strategic Plan (2009-2014 and 2015-2020), Divisional Assessments, quarterly reports, Program Reviews, and interviewed College personnel. The team found evidence that the College's programs and services are in alignment with the College mission, and that student learning is being assessed and included in the College's program reviews. The assessments are currently limited to courses mapped to the General Education Outcomes, and do not include analysis of the data. (I.A.3)

In response to the 2008 Accreditation site visit and recommendations, ASCC formed the Institutional Planning Committee (IPC) to define and implement a comprehensive planning process that incorporated student learning and was linked to resource allocation. The committee's work resulted in the development and implementation of the 2009-2014 Institutional Strategic Plan that encompassed four institutional priorities: Academic Excellence,

Technology, Physical Facilities/Maintenance and Staffing. Each division and program was tasked with completing a program review that addressed these key areas. The same process was used to update the Strategic Plan for 2015-2020, and a fifth area, Total Cost of Ownership, was added to the Plan. Each program and division has an identified mission and outcomes that are aligned with the College mission and the Strategic Plan, and are articulated in the program reviews. Institutional priorities in the Strategic Plan are in support of the College's mission. The institution relies upon student and faculty surveys as an indirect assessment of the College mission. (I.A.4)

## **Conclusions**

The College demonstrated that the mission is central to its decision-making processes, and that its programs and services are aligned with the mission and the core values. Although there is direct assessment of student learning at the course and program level, there is no evidence of how these data are analyzed or how the results are used. There is not sufficient evidence of how the institution evaluates the effectiveness of the mission.

The College does not meet Standard I.A.2. See Recommendation 1.

## **B. Assuring Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness**

### **General Observations**

American Samoa Community College uses its committee structure and operational processes to further dialog regarding student outcomes, student equity, institutional effectiveness, and continuous improvement of student learning and achievement. College personnel also make presentations to the Board of Higher Education and other stakeholders, as well as external entities upon request.

The College has identified student learning outcomes for all instructional and student and learning support services, including those for the B.Ed. program, and assesses them every semester. The assessment results are included as part of the program review documents, and the outcomes are in alignment with the College mission. Student assessment data is included in the program review process. Student achievement data is disaggregated at the institutional level but not the program level, and is not disaggregated in the student learning outcomes data. These data informed the decision to convert the English Language Institute (ELI) to the Center for College Accelerated Preparatory Program (CAPP) in order to improve success rates of students performing below college level.

The institution regularly evaluates its programs and services through a comprehensive program review process that is integrated with its Institutional Strategic Plan (ISP) to assure their effectiveness in accomplishing its mission.

ASCC identified one institution set standard, 70% course completion rate, in its 2014 update to the Commission. However, there is no evidence of any institutional dialog surrounding

standards, and interviews with College personnel and review of documents did not provide evidence that the College has established any other institution-set standards for student achievement.

The institution engages in systematic evaluation of its programs and services and has an annual program review process that is integrated with the ISP. The program review process includes short- and long-range planning and addresses human, physical, technology and financial resources. The results of the assessments and program reviews are shared within the College on a limited basis, and with external groups upon request. There does not appear to be wide distribution or broad-based discussion of the assessment and evaluation activities.

## **Findings and Evidence**

The Institutional Planning Executive Core Committee (IPECC) was charged to monitor the program reviews annually to ensure alignment with the Strategic Plan and to recommend resource allocation priorities to the President's Advisory Council (PAC). The team reviewed the Institutional Strategic Plans and completed program reviews that include student assessment data and a program mission that are aligned with the College mission. The team also interviewed members of College committees including IPEC and PAC and verified that the process is functioning and is well understood by those who are active members of these committees. There is a core of dedicated employees who have been working on the strategic planning processes since 2009. The team did note that this group does not include any faculty. (I.B.1, I.B.2)

Collegial dialog occurs in various committees, such as the Curriculum Committee, the Data Committee, and the IPECC, regarding student achievement, student learning, and the evaluation of programs. Dialog also occurs administratively and with the Board of Higher Education. Although some of this data is publicly available, much of it remains password protected and not visible to the College community or the public. From discussions with the Institutional Effectiveness Staff and members of the Faculty Senate, it appears that much time has been dedicated to working with faculty to develop course learning outcomes and to map them to program, general education, and institutional learning outcomes. Data have been collected over this two-year period of time but results have not been analyzed or discussed in many departments or on an institutional basis. In some departments, such as Samoan Studies and English, constructive faculty discussions related to outcomes assessment have taken place.

The team verified through a review of documents and interviews with committee members, faculty, and staff that all instructional programs and student services have identified learning outcomes and that they are regularly assessed. These assessments form part of the program review. According to the annual update sent to ACCJC in spring 2014, only forty-eight percent of the courses and sixty percent of the institutional learning outcomes have ongoing assessment. Comments from the team member who investigated the learning outcomes for student services indicate a lack of understanding of the role of learning outcomes for student services. (I.B.1, I.B.2, I.B.4)

The only evidence of institution-set standards is a 70% successful course completion rate listed in the 2014 annual update to ACCJC. None meeting the criteria specified by the USDE or ACCJC are included in the self-evaluation. (I.B.3)

The team found evidence that the College disaggregates some student achievement data at the institutional level, but not at the program level. The student assessment data was primarily survey based, and was analyzed quantitatively, with no evidence of qualitative data. Faculty and administrators confirmed that data has been collected for two years and that analysis is the next step in their process. (I.B.6)

The self-evaluation and on site interviews affirm that ASCC identified learning gaps in first-time college students and made programmatic adjustments to better address their needs. This resulted in the change from the English Language Institute to CAPP. The team did not find other examples of how student learning or achievement data is used in the College's decision-making, or how it is used to validate the mission.

The College has identified a planning agenda to review policies and procedures to evaluate their effectiveness, and has begun this process with its new Strategic Plan for 2015–2020 that implemented the following changes: adding a timeline for the completion of goals and objectives, assigning goals and objectives to divisions, and including budget information. (I.B.5, I.B.6, I.B.7)

The College's program review process is integrated with the Strategic Plan and incorporates student learning data, as well as goals and objectives and resource requests. The team found evidence of broad-based participation in completing the program reviews. The institution appears to limit the dialog and participation about the evaluation activities, and does not publicly share the program reviews or program evaluations. (I.B. 8, I.B.9)

The B.Ed. program illustrates the institution's efforts to develop a comprehensive assessment program. (I.B.2) The College Catalog and website both include program outcomes. Program documents such as the 2013 Teacher Education Department Assessment of Program Learning Outcomes as well as interviews highlighted the manner in which the program provides matrices that match GE, Core and Program outcomes. Matrices highlight when outcomes will be checked and reviewed. Rubrics distinguish the manner in which data is being gathered and differentiates achievement levels (knowledge, developing, and performing).

The 2013 B.Ed. self-identified program improvement efforts are focusing on eliminating duplication efforts, establishing inter-rater reliability, and keeping accurate records within the SLO and PLO assessment processes. Faculty and administrator interviews along with a syllabi review indicate an intentional effort to design signature assignment rubrics for PLOs. Current standards are based on the collaborative experiences of the faculty. An increase in rubric rigor could be achieved through a careful examination of industry standards set by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC). (I.B.3)



Faculty advisors assist students in understanding program requirements. Faculty work with students to complete an advising form. Information on the advising form mirrors the information in the catalog. However, an interview with students in B.Ed. did note a few instances of student frustration caused by inconsistent advice provided by faculty advisors and the registrar's office. (I.B.1)

Coordinating student learning outcome achievement with course completion is still in an introductory phase. Specifically, student advancement is still based on an overall course grade. While the student teaching semester provides a capstone experience, minimal training of the cooperating teachers and an overreliance on qualitative data creates reliability issues. (I.B.3)

B.Ed. engages in the institutional program review process. The 2013 Teacher Education Department Assessment of Program Learning Outcomes provides evidence. SLO and PLO data are provided based on the aggregate number of knowledge, developing, and performing scores awarded on a variety of assessments. Data was reviewed for SLO coordination. Analyzing data with the intention of identifying program strengths and areas for improvement was not found. The unified nature of the B.Ed. program allows for a greater level of disaggregation related to student diversity. An interview with students in the B.Ed. revealed diversity in terms of gender, current employment in a school, cohort model, and age. Analysis of SLO or PLO data based on these factors was not found. (I.B.5, I.B.6)

The B.Ed. 2013 program review did not include specific information related to student experiences with student support services, resource management, and governance processes. (I.B.7) This is expected as the B.Ed. program shares institutional resources with the ASCC's A.A. programs. The lack of data does call into question the extent to which the B.Ed. faculty and administration monitor the student's experiences with institutional services. Interviews with students did note some frustration with the reality that late afternoon class sessions make it difficult to access institutional support services. Expanding the program review to include relevant information related to all B.Ed. student experiences would allow the program to produce a comprehensive report that would advocate for program needs during the institution's short- and long-term planning. (I.B.9)

## **Conclusions**

Although the College has identified student learning outcomes for all programs and services, regularly assesses them, and includes the assessment data in the program review, there does not appear to be broad-based dialog based on these reviews, and it is unclear how the student data is used in College decision-making. The College has not identified or applied institution-set standards.

The College does not meet Standards I.B.1, I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.5, I.B.6, I.B.7, I.B.8, and I.B.9. See Recommendations 1, 2, 3 and 11.

## **C. Institutional Integrity**

### **General Observations**

The College gives clear and accurate information to the public through its catalog, course schedule, website, and in course syllabi and other documents. ASCC has an Accreditation link on its webpage that provides access to the public to some accreditation reports and information, but neither the self-evaluation nor the last few team reports were available online at the time of the visit. ASCC limits access to the program review data, assessment results, and complete accreditation information to a password-protected site.

The B.Ed. program is an example of a successful effort to provide students with clear and accurate information. Program learning outcomes are posted on ASCC's website and the ASCC Catalog. The student teaching capstone semester includes a student- and a cooperating teacher-handbook, both of which state the program's purpose, course requirements, and expected learning outcomes. The handbooks also include copies of the final evaluation rubrics with brief descriptions differentiating the various score levels. The use of documented assessment of student learning and evaluation of student achievement is not included in the training of cooperating teachers prior to the start of the student teaching semester.

ASCC accurately describes its certificates and degrees including the expected learning outcomes, in the College Catalog and other college publications. The catalog has a separate section for the B.Ed. including detailed information on program of study requirements, course descriptions, admission information, and tuition/fees explanation. A helpful admission checklist is provided to current and prospective students. The catalog is available in the book store and on line.

The College also publishes information regarding the total cost of education as well as its policies on academic freedom and responsibility and the requirement that faculty distinguish between personal conviction and professional accepted views in the catalog and on the website. The College's policies and procedures apply to all constituencies. ASCC does not have a code of conduct that seeks to instill specific points of view for its employees or students.

The institution has identified a Planning Agenda to formally review its policies and publications on a regular cycle.

ASCC does not operate in foreign locations.

ASCC agrees to comply with all Accreditation requirements and demonstrates integrity in its relationships with external agencies. The Board does not have a detailed conflict of interest policy that includes the requirement for a Board member to disclose any possible conflicts of interest; nor is there a policy for dealing with behavior that represents such a conflict.

### **Findings and Evidence**

The team verified through College publications, interviews with College personnel, and a review of the website that ASCC provides accurate and clear information to students, personnel, and the

public regarding its programs and services. (I.C.1) The institution has policies and procedures in place, and readily accessible on the website and in the catalog, regarding academic freedom and responsibility and academic integrity. (I.C.7) The College Catalog is available in print and on line, and includes course, degree, and certificate requirements and expected student learning outcomes. (I.C.2, I.C.4)

Although the College regularly assesses student learning, the results are not broadly distributed, are password protected, and the public has limited access to them. (I.C.3)

The College has a planning agenda to regularly review its policies and procedures, and has begun this work with its revision of the Institutional Strategic Plan (ISP). (I.C.5)

The College publishes information regarding the total cost of education on its website and in the catalog. In addition, many of the reviewed course syllabi included up-to-date information regarding the price of the required textbooks. (I.C.6) The catalog includes policies on academic freedom and responsibility and the requirement that faculty distinguish between personal conviction and professional accepted views. (I.C.7)

ASCC has clear policies regarding academic freedom and academic integrity and publishes these in the catalog and online. (I.C.8) Faculty distinguish between personal conviction and professionally accepted view of their disciplines. (I.C.9) The College does not adhere to any specific world views nor does it operate in foreign locations. (I.C.10, I.C.11) In addition, the College is responsive to requests from the Accrediting Commission and demonstrates integrity in its relationship with external agencies. ASCC is a public institution, and as such does not have private investors. (I.C.12, I.C.13, I.C.14)

## **Conclusions**

Previous visiting teams recommended that the College increase the collection of student achievement data and to broadly disseminate and discuss the results. Although the College has improved regarding data collection and planning, the communication, dialog and demonstrated use of student learning assessment in institutional planning remain a concern.

The College meets Standard I.C with areas for improvement noted.

## **Recommendations to meet the Standards**

### **Recommendation 1:**

**In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College, in cooperation with the governance process, fully develop program review processes, systematic course review, and authentic assessment of SLOs and analyze and use the results of assessments to improve continuously. (Standards I.A.2, I.B.1, I.B.2, I.B.6, I.B.7, I.B.8, I.B.9, II.A.2, II.B.3, II.C.2, II.C.3, IV.A.1, IV.A.2, IV.A.3)**

**Recommendation 2:**

**In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College, in cooperation with the governance process, expand access to program evaluation and assessment data and promote collegial dialogue surrounding student learning and student success. (Standards I.B.1, I.B.4, I.B.5, I.B.6, I.B.7, I.B.8, I.B.9, IV.A.1, IV.A.2, IV.A.3)**

**Recommendation 3:**

**In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College set institutional standards for student achievement and use them as the basis for evaluation in the program review and institutional planning processes. (Standards I.B.3, I.B.6, I.B.7, I.B.8, I.B.9, IV.B.3, IV.C.8; ER11)**

**Recommendation to improve institutional effectiveness**

**Recommendation 11:**

**In order to improve institutional effectiveness, the team recommends that the College analyze available data to assess technology resources and improve college wide and public access to data and information. (Standards I.B.6, I.B.7, I.B.8, I.B.9, I.C.3, III.C.1)**

## **Standard II: Student Learning Programs and Support Services**

### **A. Instructional Programs**

#### **General Observations**

American Samoa Community College offers instructional programs, including one Bachelor of Education, eight Associate of Arts degrees, eighteen Associate of Science degrees, twenty-two Certificates of Proficiency, and six certificates of completion. The College offers courses in workforce, basic skills and transfer, as well as life long learning. All courses are offered on campus; ASCC does not offer off-campus centers or online courses.

The quality of the curriculum is monitored by a review process that relies on faculty expertise. The College Curriculum Committee approves new courses, as well as any requested course revisions on a two-year cycle based on its catalog review process. The College has identified student learning outcomes (SLOs) and program learning outcomes (PLOs) for 100 percent of its courses and programs, and faculty have assessed all courses in the General Education Program each semester for the last two academic years. All instructional programs are included in the annual Academic Affairs Divisional Assessment process, as well as the divisional program review every two years. The student learning outcomes assessment data is included in these reviews.

The College offers many programs and courses to support the diverse needs of students, including the opportunity for a GED diploma, an Adult Basic Education (ABE), and Apprenticeship/Workforce training, as well as continuing education and direct services for persons with disabilities. Information on degrees, certificates, and transfer is available in the printed catalog and on the College's website, as are College policies related to academic freedom, academic honesty and integrity.

#### **Findings and Evidence**

The team interviewed faculty and administrators and reviewed the College Catalog, schedule, Divisional Assessments, program reviews, and General Education course assessment data and found evidence that American Samoa Community College offers a variety of high quality instructional programs, career technical education, basic skills and transfer curriculum at its main campus. The College addresses the needs of its diverse students by providing short and intensive courses, and incorporates technology in its face-to-face courses. ASCC does not offer online courses. The institution awards A.A. and A.S. degrees, Certificates of completion, Certificates of proficiency, and a Bachelor's of Education degree. (II.A.1)

Each program participates in an annual divisional assessment process, as well as the program review process every two years. These reviews include student learning outcomes assessment data from courses and programs identified as part of the General Education program. The team found one example of program reviews and assessment data used for instructional improvement in the College's transition from the fifteen week English Language Institute to the intensive six week College Accelerated Preparatory Program (CAPP) for developmental math and English. At

the time of the visit, the team was unable to find formal evidence of additional examples of instructional improvements related to assessment results, although faculty from several departments described improvements made at the department level as a result of their course level assessments. (II.A.2)

Interviews with members of the College's curriculum committee and the dean of academic affairs, as well as committee minutes, provided evidence that the institution's curriculum committee reviews all new course proposals, regardless of instructional modality, for quality and rigor. The curriculum committee does not currently approve 300 level courses from the teacher education program, although departmental faculty serve on the committee and indicated that course revisions in the current catalog review cycle will be taken to curriculum for approval. The College is in the process of developing the process for the committee to review these courses.

The committee reviews proposed course revisions on a two-year cycle to coincide with the biennial publication of the College Catalog. The process ensures that the catalog contains only the most up-to-date information on all courses and programs. However, only those courses with proposed revisions are actually reviewed. The evaluating team learned that it is possible for a course never to be updated or revised if the responsible faculty determine there is no need for updating. The College should articulate explicitly that courses are expected to be reviewed every two years. (II.A.2, II.A.3)

The College has identified student learning outcomes (SLOs) for all courses. Course SLOs are included in the Course Outlines of Record (CORs) and course syllabi. Additionally, the College has identified SLOs for 100 percent of programs, publishes program SLOs in the catalog, and includes them in planning documents. General Education Outcomes are in place and are published in the catalog. Based on a review of the schedule of classes and the catalog, the team confirmed that classes are scheduled to allow students to complete their degrees or certificates within a two-year timeframe. (II.A.3, II.A. 6)

Faculty are responsible for development and review of the Course Outline of Record (COR) for each course and for development and review of degree and certificate program requirements. The CORs include course content, prerequisites, co-requisites, and student learning outcomes. The College Curriculum Committee reviews all program proposals in addition to course proposals. All of the College course hours are based on the Carnegie unit, and are aligned with higher education norms for award of credit. Transfer level courses are aligned with the primary transfer partners through MOUs that are updated on an as-needed basis. The College's course outlines, course descriptions, and course numbering system clearly distinguish between pre-collegiate and college-level course work. (II.A.4, II.A.5, II.A.10)

Interviews with members of the College Curriculum Committee as well as a review of College documents confirmed that dialogue about student learning outcomes is occurring in the Curriculum Committee and at the institutional level through college-wide presentations. The institution had previously identified a full-time faculty member to serve as the Assessment Coordinator. When the faculty member transitioned to the director of institutional effectiveness, this function was temporarily added to the duties of that office. While the assessment coordination is the responsibility of the dean of academic affairs, faculty continue to participate

actively in assessment. There is evidence of discussion among faculty on the effectiveness of the various instructional delivery modes and the relationship between student performance and pedagogy, primarily at the Curriculum Committee meetings. The institution makes use of its Curriculum Committee to establish procedures for creating, designing, and approving new courses and student learning outcomes, which are included in all new and revised course outlines of record. (II.A.7)

The College established an annual program review process that includes quarterly and annual reports. This review process includes SLO development; assessment; and analysis at the course, program, and institutional levels. The College evaluates its courses and programs through the curriculum approval process. All programs, including General Education and transfer courses and programs are assessed annually through the program review process, and the courses and programs are on a two-year review cycle with the College Curriculum Committee. Advisory committees and licensure exam requirements and passage rates are analyzed in vocational programs to ensure that the student learning outcomes are appropriate. (II.A. 14, II.A.16)

Faculty use various teaching strategies such as lecture, lab, field work, and group work and are increasingly incorporating technology with the use of online media and Moodle in response to the diverse needs and learning styles of their students. The College does not currently offer online classes or classes at any other sites or off campus locations. ASCC offers comprehensive tutoring for most disciplines in addition to the CAPP program. There are also services to support students with disabilities. (II.A.7)

The institution does not have departmental or program examinations. (II.A.8)

The Curriculum Committee ensures that all courses meet the applicable guidelines and regulations. Reviews of the catalog and CORs and interviews with faculty and deans confirmed that the College awards degrees and certificates based on successful course completion and course SLOs are mapped to program learning outcomes. The College has collected two years of student learning outcomes assessment data from the General Education courses and is preparing to analyze the results. The evaluating team examined the October 2012 SLO Report to ACCJC and the 2014 Annual Report to ACCJC and reviewed outcomes assessment data for General Education courses. There is evidence that the College awards credit based on the outcomes and objectives stated in the course outline of record, as well as the program level assessments.

Graduation from the B.Ed. program is based on students passing all courses with an appropriate grade. The basis for grades is professor evaluation of work and completion of the student teaching capstone semester. The primary assessment for the capstone semester is based on supervisor evaluations and observations. There is no systematic manner used to synthesize content knowledge and capstone performance data. The two assessment methods (coursework and capstone) meet externally set requirements. The passing standards are based on professional interpretation rather than exemplars, creating the potential for score variance. The lack of calibration makes it difficult to determine if the final evaluation is based on individual, department, or governmental standards. The institution relies primarily upon student achievement data such as course completion rates, graduation and transfer rates, and successful external examination rates to assess the programs. (II.A.9)

The College's academic and vocational degree programs have a General Education component plus institutional and program learning outcomes consistent with the College's General Education philosophy. The College defines General Education in two forms: General Education Outcomes (communication, critical thinking, information technology literacy, global awareness and cultural competence, and development and responsibility) and Core Foundational Areas (arts and humanities, social sciences, mathematics, sciences, Samoan studies, and physical education). General Education Outcomes and Core Requirements are woven into the fabric of each degree program. Courses are mapped to these General Education and core areas and are assessed using student surveys as indirect assessments. The team observed that, rather than relying on surveys, a combination of direct and indirect assessment would be most effective. (II.A.11, II.A.12)

The College Catalog lists all degree and certificate programs. The academic degrees are focused in an area of study or an established interdisciplinary core, and the vocational programs meet outside agency requirements where indicated. In addition, the catalog is published every two years to ensure that course and program requirements are accurate and up-to-date. (II.A.13)

Students receive clear and accurate information regarding courses, programs, and transfer policies in the College Catalog and on the College website. In addition, all instructors are required to include SLOs on course syllabi. The team reviewed multiple syllabi and found evidence that SLOs are included. The syllabi may be somewhat confusing to students as they do not follow a set template and often include several sets of outcomes identified by a variety of labels, including course outcomes, learning outcomes, student learning outcomes, and learning objectives. The College Catalog is updated every two years to ensure accuracy; although interviews documented that some academic programs remain active in the catalog although they are currently not being offered. (II.A.13)

Although the College has not officially discontinued any programs, it has placed programs on hiatus, according to interviews with academic administrators. The College does have an approved Program Discontinuance Policy to ensure that appropriate plans would be put in place to accommodate affected students if a program were discontinued. Although the College has not needed to invoke this policy, it would be helpful to identify more clearly when and how the College would determine the need to discontinue programs. (II.A.15)

The B.Ed. program begins with a 70 semester credit unit A.A. General Education degree (completed during years one and two). The General Education portion of the program has an interdisciplinary structure and provides candidates the basic content knowledge needed to teach in a K-6 school. (IIA12 and 13) The College used information from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), now Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), and interaction with personnel from other institutions such as the University of Hawaii-Manoa to design the upper division year three and four coursework (45 semester credit units). Adding in clinical experiences the B.Ed. program amounts to 127 semester units. (IIA5) Assignments such as the Evaluating Research Papers in ED 280 provide students the foundation needed to transfer to a relevant master's level program. (II.B.1)



Various interviews presented information related to the B.Ed. faculty and dean's openness to routinely discuss the relationship between professional standards and current program expectations. (II.A.8) The program's emphasis has been on concepts with only peripheral attention paid to skill levels. As a result, the College has focused program improvement efforts on SLO and PLO alignment as is evident in the 2012 ASCC Teacher Education Conceptual Framework. (II.A.2)

A developmental progression across program courses is based on course sequence with prerequisites establishing the fundamental skills for subsequent course work. The structure allows for the use of cohort scheduling. The dean noted, and interviews with students confirmed, that the cohort model encourages student relationships that enhance peer collaboration and support. Assisting students whose life situations prevent the cohort-designed pace is achieved through the scheduling of courses during the summer months. (II.A.6)

Interviews with students and faculty along with a syllabi review highlight a variety of delivery models such as lecture, student presentations, reflections, and clinical experiences. Use of the computer program Moodle along with a synchronous class offer students exposure to contemporary instructional pedagogy. Evaluation of the diverse instructional practices is informal, making it difficult to ascertain the impact on the B.Ed. program's ability to achieve equity in student success. (II.B.7)

Based on the goals set out in the 2013 Teacher Education Department Assessment of Program Learning Outcomes, B.Ed. faculty have completed a review of course assessment effectiveness. Interviews noted that the conversations focused on face validity and scoring reliability. Evidence related to identifying and addressing areas of test bias could not be found. (II.C.7)

In addition to passing courses, B.Ed. students are required to complete a student teaching capstone semester. B.Ed. degrees are only awarded to students who successfully complete the requirement. The primary assessment for the semester is based on supervisor evaluations of observations. Reflections and post-observation conferences provide input related to cognitive understanding with the result that a degree of confidence is obtained related to the student's attainment of PLOs. Formally linking performance with knowledge in a manner that allows the gathering of data would strengthen the program. (I.B.9) However, the student teaching evaluation methods are typical of those found throughout the education discipline and meet the employment standards set by the American Samoa Department of Education. (I.C.14)

## **Conclusions**

ASCC faculty, staff, and administration have worked collaboratively to build a culture of assessment and planning to support student learning. Since 2009 the College has dedicated resources to strengthening its planning processes and institutionalizing data driven decision-making. In response to recommendations from the previous team visit, the College has fully identified SLOs and faculty have assessed the course and program outcomes each semester for the past two years and are preparing to analyze the collected data. Although the College has made excellent progress in collecting student success rates on a regular basis, disaggregated data would allow the College to measure specific impacts on student achievement. Furthermore,

there does not appear to be a process for broadly sharing and discussing the data, and much of the data is password protected and only available by request. The dialog regarding student success and instructional improvements is occurring in small groups and in department and committee meetings and within the B.Ed. program, but it is not being used directly as a means of improving instructional programs and student success.

The B.Ed. program demonstrates that it meets the Standards. However, the team urges the program to move toward engaging in an analysis of data that provides more insight into content currency, improvement in teaching/learning strategies, and promoting student success.

The College does not meet Standards II.A.2 and II.A.3. See Recommendation 1.

## **B. Library and Learning Support Services**

### **General Observations**

The library, which was built in 2003, has 9,960 square feet of space with seating for approximately 200. The collection includes 40,000 volumes and subscriptions to 90 periodicals and eight online databases, including EBSCO Host. Among the library collection are over 7,200 volumes of teacher education resources. Acquisition of additional materials follows the ASCC institutional protocols.

The library is a designated federal depository library and houses a Special Collections Room with research materials on Samoa and the Pacific Island Nations. Ten computers are available on the main floor with an additional eight computers available in the Education Resource Center, which was designed to serve primarily the students in the B.Ed. program. Access to the collection is provided through a card catalog and the Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC). The College is part of the American Samoa Library Consortium, which includes seven libraries and archives and gives students and faculty access to materials through the Follett Automation System.

Tutoring services are provided at multiple locations across the campus. The College publishes a Tutorial Directory, which lists the contact person for discipline-specific tutoring in 10 different disciplines and areas. Most of the tutoring is provided in the Student Learning Assistance (SLA) Center, which offers tutoring in English, math, and a broad range of disciplines. The SLA Center is overseen by a full-time tutor coordinator and tutoring services are provided by a combination of seven full-time staff (all with college degrees) and twenty peer tutors. The two SLA Center tutoring labs offer a total of 20 computers and are open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. For the math and science department, embedded tutoring is available in selected classes.

The Special Collections Room is used by students in the Samoan Studies, Social Sciences, and Natural Resources programs, as well as members of the public, including legislators, demonstrating its importance to this land grant institution. In addition, the College serves as a

materials repository for K-12 education, which is utilized by B.Ed. students as part of their curriculum. Access to the collection is adequately provided.

The library is staffed by a full-time professional librarian, five library associates, a library clerk, and a library technician. A second professional librarian, with expertise in cataloguing, will be joining the staff in October 2014. The library associates have primary responsibility for providing one-on-one assistance to the students, faculty, and staff at the reference desk. Reference services are offered in person and also remotely, via e-mail or telephone. The College provides enough support for the staff to participate in professional development webinars and for one person to attend an off-island conference each year. The staff have requested additional funds to allow more people, including the staff without library science degrees who work directly with students at the reference and circulation desks, to participate in the annual American Library Association conference.

The library director communicates with the faculty at the new faculty orientations and by e-mail twice a semester to encourage them to bring their students to the library for a tour and to make requests for class-related materials to purchase for the library collection (form available for requests). Tours of the library are conducted at the request of faculty to familiarize students with the available databases and to assist them with research reports.

### **Findings and Evidence**

The team interviewed faculty, library staff, tutor coordinators, and tutors, and reviewed the College Catalog, divisional assessments, program reviews, survey results, and achievement data reports. They found evidence that American Samoa Community College offers library resources and other learning support services that support the academic programs and contribute to the educational experience of the students at the College.

The spring 2014 Divisional Assessment submitted by the Library-Learning Resource Center faculty and staff indicated a need for expanded facilities to accommodate students and the collection, updated equipment, and evening hours. The Divisional Assessment completed by Academic Affairs also indicated a need to open the library in the evening. (II.B.2) A discussion with the library staff disclosed that they had tested keeping the Education Resource Center open from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. for a period of time to accommodate the B.Ed. students but found the usage to be minimal. Data suggested that the additional hours had little impact on student usage and resulted in the decision to return to the traditional operating hours. The staff reported that they communicate with faculty to let them know that they are able to stay open late to accommodate specific projects or class needs. (II.B.3)

Feedback from a student survey conducted in spring 2014 and conversations with the library staff indicate a need for additional computers in the library to meet student demand. (II.B.1, II.B.2) Interviews with B.Ed. students suggested that the online resources are sufficient.

Student attendance in the library is tracked daily at the exit gate. Furthermore, students at the Reference Desk, the Pacific Collections Desk, and the Education Resources Center Desk are asked to sign in, show an appropriate ID card, and identify their main purpose for accessing the

resources. These data are compiled by the librarian and presented in the bi-weekly, quarterly, and year-end summary reports. (II.B.3)

Student learning outcomes for the library services, including the orientations, have not been articulated. The self-evaluation asserts that “Library User skills are documented and assessed through user surveys and student performance on class based library assignments.” Evidence of these results was not available. However, in spring 2014, the library conducted an online survey of students and faculty/staff. There were 78 student responses and 47 faculty/staff responses. Satisfaction levels from students and faculty/staff were high. Student responses indicated a need for more/updated books, including fiction, and more computers. Staff requests included an expansion of the materials in the Samoan collection. Finally, the self evaluation states that there needs to be a stronger link between library skill instruction and demonstration of ability to apply these skills in course assignment. The library director indicated that he is interested in proposing a library information course to the curriculum committee, which would have associated student learning outcomes. In addition, service outcomes need to be specified and continue to be assessed through measures in addition to surveys. (II.B.3)

An interlibrary loan program exists via memoranda of understanding with college and university libraries in Hawaii, Guam, and the Federated States of Micronesia. A \$5 fee is charged for interlibrary loans from the University of Hawaii at Manoa Library. The staff confirmed that students have not requested these materials and incurred these fees; these materials have been borrowed by staff in the Community and Natural Resources program. (II.B.4)

Personal information about students is not included in library records. Records related to late fees are purged after materials are returned or fees are paid. The physical security of the students and the collection is supported by security patrols that take place on a regular basis and also by a mounted video monitoring system, which includes nine cameras inside and outside the library. The video displays can be tracked by any of the staff from their desks and camera recordings are deleted after one week. Materials in the collection are dusted regularly and plastic covers are used to protect them. Library staff are able to maintain and repair bindings in support of material integrity. The staff helps to secure and maintain the computers and printers in the facility. Air conditioning “hot spots” are checked to maintain quality of books and technology. (II.B.4)

Tutoring services are provided at multiple locations across the campus. The College publishes a Tutorial Directory, which lists the contact person for discipline-specific tutoring in 10 different disciplines and areas. In response to Recommendation 3 from the 2008 ACCJC visit, the College convened a series of meetings with faculty and staff to refine their tutoring services. They created the Student Learning Assistance (SLA) Center, which provides tutoring in English, math, and a broad range of disciplines. The College advertises the tutoring service in its bi-weekly newsletter, “411.” (II.B.1) Students using the SLA labs are tracked when they receive services. (II.B.3) Interviews with SLA Center staff (the coordinator and staff tutors) revealed a high level of commitment and professionalism among the staff, which was reflected in the positive outcomes reported by students who use tutoring at the center. In the math and science disciplines, the College has implemented an in-class, embedded tutoring program in selected

classes to maximize the number of students able to benefit from tutoring. During 2013, an average of 424 students used one of the tutoring services at least once each quarter.

Seven outcomes are listed in the catalog for the SLA Center. The grades for students participating in tutoring are tracked and outcomes related to grades are reported, but some of the other outcomes have not yet been assessed. A presentation was created with data on students participating in tutoring between fall 2010 and spring 2013. The number of students participating increased from 273 to 1512 over those three years (with the vast majority of students being tutored in math and English). About 75% of the students attend between 1 and 5 tutoring sessions. Over those three years, 76% of the students receiving math tutoring (total n = 221) passed, with the greatest impact shown in the higher level courses, and 81% of students in English tutoring (total n = 174) passed. Across all subjects, 78% of the students (n = 458) passed the courses for which they were being tutored. Other data available from fall 2013 revealed that 63% of developmental math students, 63% of developmental reading students, and 65% of developmental writing students participating in the CAPP program passed their courses. (II.B.3)

## **Conclusions**

The Library-Learning Resource Center appears to be equipped at an appropriate level in terms of books, periodicals, and electronic resources. The library director communicates regularly with faculty on the campus to encourage them to bring classes to the library for an orientation and to communicate their needs for resources. A spring 2014 survey of faculty/staff and students revealed general satisfaction with the library services. However, feedback from the student surveys and discussions with the staff point out the need for additional computers to meet student demand in the library. In addition, the team supports the staff request for more funding to participate in ALA conferences, an important source of professional development for not only the librarian but also some of the staff who do not have degrees in library science but serve as the students' guide to the library's various collections. The team especially commends the library's Samoa Pacific Collection, which is a valuable resource to the campus and community.

Student learning outcomes for the library services, including orientations for students, have not been specifically articulated, although satisfaction surveys have been used to assess library services. No assessments have been conducted to document skills obtained during visits to the library nor has any formal feedback been obtained about the effectiveness of training sessions. Language for the service outcomes needs to be developed and should continue to be assessed. Devising a system that would gather more data related to student and faculty goals for library services would allow the administration to more fully determine the extent to which the library and other learning support services are adequate in meeting student needs.

The tutoring services on campus appear to have been thoughtfully expanded to serve students at the developmental and collegiate level. They are well publicized and the numbers of students receiving tutoring, especially in math and English, have increased dramatically. The SLA Center is well staffed with well trained personnel, with both full-time tutors with associate degrees or higher and peer tutors. Program outcomes have been developed and the impact of tutoring on student success is tracked and analyzed. However, the SLA Center should move forward on assessing the additional learning outcomes that are identified in the catalog.

The College does not meet the Standard II.B.3. See Recommendation 1.

## **C. Student Support Services**

### **General Observations**

American Samoa Community College offers a comprehensive array of student support services delivered through different departments and programs on campus. They are available to all students, including those in the new B.Ed. program. Services provided include Admissions; Records and Financial Aid (AFRAO), which reports to Administrative Services; Personal, Academic, Transfer and Career Counseling; the Student Learning Assistance (SLA) Center; Veterans Student Affairs; Student Government Association (SGA); the University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD); the College Access Challenge Grant Program; and the ASCC Wellness Center. Programs and services recognize the diversity of student needs in a primarily Samoan student body. No evening or off site services are provided.

The B.Ed. program uses the student support services provided by the College. Entry into the B.Ed. program requires a separate application, as a program prerequisite is completing the 70 credit unit A.A. General Education requirement. The specific B.Ed. application also includes 3 letters of recommendation, one from a faculty member. The letters provide the program with information related to the prospective student's match with the program and institution's mission.

Services are spread out in various locations across the College, but the campus is not very large. An All Purpose Building, which will house all or most support services and create one stop services, is scheduled to be completed in January 2015. The Student Services Division is managed by an experienced dean of student services, who reports to the vice president of instruction and student services, who also has extensive experience at the College. Divisions and offices hold regular meetings to review services, to plan, and for in-service support and professional development.

Each program has a written mission statement that aligns with the institutional mission statement and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), and all programs complete biweekly and quarterly reports as required by all divisions on campus. Divisional Assessment results are reviewed to improve services. Student Satisfaction Surveys and Customer Service Surveys are used to collect opinions regarding services, and they are part of Institutional Program Review. Assessment measures also include final grades of students who receive tutoring in that semester and information collected on a Low Grade Report Form.

The College asserts that professional staff have appropriate degrees. Opportunities for professional development are available on the mainland and through webinar workshops. Conferences attended include the WASC Academic Resources Conference, the Federal Student Aid Conferences, the Institute for Facilities Management Program, the AACRAO Strategic Enrollment Management Conference, technology conferences, and a conference on international students.

The College provides schedules of classes and a College Catalog with information that includes the official name, address, and other contact information; educational mission; requirements for admissions; fees and tuition; services provided; major policies affecting students; the No Tolerance Policy on student conduct; graduation and transfer requirements; major requirements; lists staffing and their degrees/credentials; and other required information. The catalog is available in hard copy and online. Hard copies of class schedules are available and posted in the community newspaper. The schedule is also advertised on the radio. An online copy of the schedule was not posted on the College website.

The College states that the division of student services has student learning/service outcomes that have been assessed or are in the process of being assessed and that the data they have collected and evaluated has been used to improve services. Data collected by the institution provides information related specifically to the B.Ed. population.

The Student Government Association (SGA) provides a range of student activities that includes workshops, co-curricular sports events, open microphone, talent shows, environmentally conscious activities, cultural events, speakers, and participation on college committees and self evaluation standards. Students are able to work on campus through federal and campus work study programs and as tutors.

ASCC's math and English placement instruments, which are locally-produced, are evaluated and updated through the division of academic affairs.

The Admissions and Registration Office maintains permanent academic records in a secured, locked office, using fire proof filing cabinets for current and former students. The records are also secured electronically using the Colleague system. The records are only accessed by AFRAO staff and they maintain the privacy rights of students and FERPA regulations.

## **Findings and Observations**

The visiting team compiled findings and observations from interviews and reviewing student service documents. Interviews were held with the vice president of instruction and student services, dean of student services, diversity and tutorial counselor, transfer counselor, admissions and records and financial aid office (ARFAO) director, financial aid manager, assistant registrar, an admissions officer, University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) director, CAPP director, ASG advisor and student council. Documents reviewed included SOPs, biweekly and quarterly reports, Divisional Assessment Manual, catalog, class schedule, student satisfaction survey results, data on assessment and placement, and CAPP. The College has created a documented process, committee review, and examples of continued improvement.

The College offers a variety of services, and unless otherwise designated (for example by federal guidelines to serve only selected students), these offices serve all students. As a result of only day time operational hours, it is difficult for B.Ed. students to access in-person services. The lack of representation in student government has been addressed by a third-year B.Ed. student being elected as the student representative to the Board of Education. (II.C.3, II.C.4, II.C.5)

The College provides schedules of classes and a College Catalog that are accurate and current. The College has provided two excellent examples of how they have made changes from assessment results. They are the development of the CAPP program to improve math and English skills for students placing in developmental classes and the creation of a Tutorial and Learning Assistance Center. The College has made progress in creating a campus culture and practice of continuous improvement by providing staff development and training opportunities, encouraging committee participation, and requiring quarterly reporting of activities toward improvement of services and instruction.

Student services provides students with an environment that supports personal and civic responsibility through a very active SGA and student clubs.

Satisfaction surveys are students' primary source of input into the institutional dialog. Survey results are presented to the Curriculum Committee and decisions are referred to members of the committee to take to their divisions. Once the data is disseminated to the divisions, it appears that it is treated differently. In some departments data are used directly in the decision-making process. In others, it is less clear how the data drives improvement. (II.C.2)

The College evaluates many of its services by logging usage through sign-in sheets. Student satisfaction surveys and graduate surveys are also used. The latter are compiled by the Foundation office. The tutoring program has comprehensive staff meetings in which data are discussed and changes are made. The flow of data for the other areas is less direct. Data often goes to the Curriculum Committee where decisions are made and funneled to divisions for implementation. Decisions are implemented differently, depending on the division. (II.C.1, II.C.2)

The College provides clear, accurate, and widely disseminated information in its catalog and class schedule. The catalog includes all the information required in this Standard. Information is easy to find and understand. It is reviewed and updated in a biennial review process. Planning documents and accreditation reports are available on the college website. Educational costs are provided to prospective and current students on the web in the admissions and financial aid sites, in addition to the catalog. The student handbook, which is a few years old, and current financial aid student handbook provide information on cost of attendance and other educational costs, in addition to how to apply for financial aid assistance.

The College states that all service areas have developed program reviews through provision of biweekly and quarterly reports and student learning/service outcomes. The College uses student and staff satisfaction surveys, graduate satisfaction surveys and exit surveys, anecdotal information, and sign-in sheets to track services and assessment/placement results to assess the extent to which services meet student needs on campus and online. They also use participatory meetings to plan and discuss processes. Student services staff are involved in the development of strategic plans and weekly and quarterly reports. (II.C.1, II.C.2)

Through the College evaluation processes, student support services have been able to identify what they do well and what needs to be improved. In the student support services self evaluation planning agenda, the area has identified needed improvements. These include institutionalizing



student services surveys and other measures to provide meaningful analysis and widespread distribution, reviewing and revising outcomes that support student learning and integrating them into institutional assessment plans, revising student government by-laws to include students working on the bachelor's degree, expanding online registration and payment options for off-campus users, and math and English faculty reviewing placement instruments on a five-year basis. (II.C.1, II.C.2, II.C.7)

The College has a small staff of counselors but has made advising and educational planning available to all students through the use of faculty advisors. The faculty advisors assist students in their major requirements, and the counselors focus on liberal arts majors, personal counseling, transfer requirements, financial aid, and accommodations for students with disabilities. Student educational plans are available online and major fact sheets are provided. Counselors also teach student success classes. The counseling division develops learning/service outcomes for students and uses surveys and feedback to assess.

Faculty assume primary responsibility for academic advising for the B.Ed. program. (II.C.5) Interviews with administration and students noted instances of inconsistent information and confusion in areas such as appropriate course enrollment combinations and financial aid/grant awards. Additionally, the seamlessness of the two enrollment requirements (one prior to the A.A. and the second prior to the B.Ed.) remain at the anecdotal level. Improved collection and analysis of data is needed to ensure appropriate, comprehensive and reliable services to students. (II.C.3)

ASCC is an open admissions institution. It has established admission criteria that are congruent with its open admissions policy. (II.C.6)

The Admissions and Registration Office maintains permanent academic records in a secured, locked office, using fire proof filing cabinets for current and former students. The records are also secured electronically using the Colleague system. The records are only accessed by AFRAO staff and they maintain the privacy rights of students and FERPA regulations. (II.C.8)

## **Conclusions**

The College has developed the very effective CAPP Program to assist students placing in developmental math and English. The student services divisions also provide excellent resources for students and staff including an online Financial Aid Student Handbook and Cost of Education Calculator and Standard Operations Manuals (SOP).

The College is providing all of the support services required in the Standard and striving for continued quality of improvement. The catalog and website provide required information on policies, procedures, and support services.

The team supports the College plans to institutionalize surveys and other measures to provide meaningful analysis and widespread distribution, reviewing and revising outcomes that support student learning and integrating them into institutional assessment plans, revising student government by-laws to include students working on the bachelor's degree, expanding online

registration and payment options for off campus users, and math and English faculty reviewing placement instruments on a five-year basis.

There is concern regarding measureable outcomes and evaluation and use of data for continued improvement. A more robust set of practices related to the collection and analysis of data is needed to ensure appropriate, comprehensive, and reliable services to students. Lack of off-campus access to online services, the comprehensiveness of transfer and career counseling, information and services, services for students with disabilities, and access for services of B.Ed. students are of concern.

In the previous Accreditation visit in 2008, the College received a recommendation to improve transfer advisement and coordination and establish a comprehensive support program to meet the College's transfer mission. A counselor has been designated to provide transfer information, but there is still no transfer or career center with comprehensive information on a wide variety of transfer majors, requirements, university profiles for students to explore, workshops to be held, and university representatives to meet with students. Resources for staffing, facilities, online services, transportation, and evening services are issues that need to be resolved.

The College does not meet Standards II.C.2 and II.C.3. See Recommendations 1 and 4.

### **Recommendations to meet the Standards**

#### **Recommendation 1:**

**In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College, in cooperation with the governance process, fully develop program review processes, systematic course review, and authentic assessment of SLOs and analyze and use the results of assessments to improve continuously. (Standards I.A.2, I.B.1, I.B.2, I.B.6, I.B.7, I.B.8, I.B.9, II.A.2, II.B.3, II.C.2, II.C.3, IV.A.1, IV.A.2, IV.A.3)**

#### **Recommendation 4:**

**In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College address the previous recommendation to improve services to support the College's mission to transfer students to institutions of higher learning. (2008 Recommendation 5; Standard II.C.2)**

## **Standard III: Resources**

### **A. Human Resources**

#### **General Observations**

The College's personnel policies are contained in the Governance Policy Manual, which was recently revised and released, and the Personnel Manual, which was issued in October 1997. The College has a draft of a revised Personnel Manual, aligning it with many of the Governance Policy Manual policies, but it has not yet been released. Both the Policy Governance Manual and the Personnel Manual are very thorough and cover all aspects of employment and human resource management. In cases where the two conflict, the Governance Policy Manual takes precedence over the Personnel Manual.

All College employees are categorized into one of three types: career service, contract, and emergency hire. According to the director, Human Resources Office (HRO), both the career service and contract recruitments must go through the due process, which involves advertising the position publicly and interviewing the qualified applicants. Emergency hires may be appointed based on approval from the president and appropriate vice president without going through the due process. However, according to several administrators, the president has the authority to override the due process and appoint emergency hires into contract or career service positions.

The Position Review contains the position description and minimum qualifications for each position at the College. According to the director, HRO, the Position Reviews are undergoing a process of mass updating to ensure the positions are properly classified in accordance with the U.S. Department of Labor standard of occupation, and in alignment with the needs of the institution in serving its student population. Updated Position Reviews for academic faculty include the development and review of curriculum and the assessment of learning in the position description. Additionally, the minimum qualifications for faculty who teach college-level courses are a Master's degree or higher in the content area, or a Master's of Education and Bachelor's degree in the content area, or a Master's degree plus 15 credit hours of upper division or graduate coursework in the content area. The minimum qualifications for B.Ed. are consistent with typical university standards, and current B.Ed. faculty meet these qualifications. Vocational program instructors must instead possess relevant certification and recognized significant work experience. As a note, according to the College Catalog, the College employs one full-time instructor in English and two full-time instructors in math without Master's degrees who teach developmental courses. The older Position Reviews may not contain these aforementioned new requirements.

According to several administrators, the hiring or selection committee is generally comprised of the committee chair, who is usually the dean or director under whom the recruited position belongs, two other employees, and one HR representative, usually the HR manager. The committee chair will review the appropriate Position Review form against other similar employees to ensure consistency in job duties and minimum qualifications. The HR manager ensures that each candidate is objectively evaluated against a consistent set of evaluation criteria.

Furthermore, Policy 4003.1 states that appointments and promotions to all positions shall be made solely on the merit system. Once the committee has completed its interviews, the chair can submit a recommendation to hire to his/her respective vice president and the president. The president must give his final approval on all recommendations to hire before HRO can issue the offer letter.

Policy 4006.1 Degree Requirements says that all required degrees must be from a U.S. regionally accredited institution. However, the College's self assessment of Standard III.A.4 states that credentials from U.S. accredited institutions are preferred, and "Applicants with credentials from a non-U.S. institution must provide documentation that ensures that the equivalent qualifications are recognized in the United States."

The College addresses employment equity and diversity through the following Policies: 4005.1 Employee Recruitment and Hiring, 4005.2 Preference Candidates, 4208 Equal Employment Opportunity & Affirmative Action, 4208.1 American Samoa Employment Preference, and 4210 Non Discrimination. First, Policy 4005.2 seems to contradict Policy 4208.1. Secondly, both Policies 4005.2 and 4208.1 seem to contradict Policies 4005.1, 4208, and 4210. Finally, even after consulting with the College, the team could not locate ASCA (American Samoa Code Annotated) 7.205, which is referred to in both Policies 4005.2 and 4208.1. Instead, the team could only find ASCA 7.0205(b), which states "Any person entering the career service shall be a resident of American Samoa and either an American Samoan or an American national at the time he enters the service. If no resident can be found who meets the minimum qualifications for employment established for a particular class of work, nonresidents may be employed." Additionally, the case notes further elaborate, "Section is essentially a preference for permanent residents rather than for ethnic Samoans and does not breach any constitutionally applicable standards of equal protection."

According to the director, HRO, the Two-Way Performance Evaluation for staff and Faculty Performance Evaluation forms are used to evaluate the performance of each employee annually. The College's planning agenda for Standard III.A.6 states that the evaluation instrument will be revised to emphasize SLOs and assure continuous improvement of teaching and learning. However, although the current Faculty Evaluation Form does not contain a section for the assessment of student learning, the director, HRO, asserts that since it is within the position description that each faculty member should be evaluated for their assessment of student learning.

Furthermore, the College has asserted that discussions regarding assessment of student learning occurs in many venues, including department meetings, division meetings, and committee meetings. Nevertheless, the College has begun work to include SLOs in evaluations. The dean of academic affairs has submitted to the Faculty Senate for their review a draft of an updated evaluation instrument that includes assessment of student learning as a component of a faculty member's evaluation. The Senate President confirmed that the Senate is reviewing and discussing this draft. The academic deans, in a separate interview, stated that they have set a goal of having this revised faculty evaluation instrument ready for first use for the spring 2015 faculty evaluations.

Additionally, the College's evaluation forms include sections for counseling employees to help them improve their performance. Evaluation criteria are written and listed on the performance evaluation templates for faculty and for staff and administrators. Evaluation criteria are related to behaviors and performance indicators that are expected of all employees of the College. Evaluation criteria for faculty include duties that are listed on faculty job descriptions. All personnel evaluation forms include space where goals for improvement can be documented, especially when an employee receives a less than satisfactory performance appraisal.

Of the 21 administrators listed in the College's 2014-16 Catalog, 18 have postsecondary or terminal degrees. According to the College, they currently have approximately 295 employees, which results in a 13:1 employee to administrator ratio. The College currently employs 62 full-time faculty, which equates to an average full-time equivalent student to full-time faculty ratio of 20:1. This is better than the College's goal of 25:1 student/faculty ratio. Additionally, the College employs a total of 21 adjunct faculty.

Per ASCC's discussion on Standard III.A.14, the College has supported a variety of professional development and training opportunities, with a recent focus on SLOs, assessment, and TCO (Total Cost of Ownership). Each division is responsible to gauge the need for the continued development and training of its faculty and staff based upon its ability to fulfill the mission of the College. In addition, the professional development needs of the College as a whole are evaluated at the institution level through the Institutional Program Review. Whether the request for professional development or training comes from the division level or institution level, it must be approved by the president to ensure alignment with ASCC's mission.

The director of admissions, records, and financial aid office further elaborated that starting in fiscal year 2015, and related to the College's cost reduction efforts, required training will be funded at the division level and will not require the president's approval. However, all professional development monies will be allocated back from the divisions to the president so that all non-mandatory professional development, especially off-island travel, would need to be justified and approved by the president.

The College provided evidence of adjunct faculty orientations on the topic of SLOs and assessment. For example, the team was given PowerPoint slides from orientations presented in 2011 and 2014. Interviews with the director, HRO, and then with the deans revealed that the administration is aware that the College has done a good amount of work training all faculty on SLOs and assessment, yet ongoing training, updating, and dialogue on the topic of student learning and assessment will be needed to sustain the momentum and ensure continuous improvement of teaching and learning. According to the director, HRO, the College does not provide an annual orientation to adjunct faculty to refresh their knowledge on basic expectations of being a member of the faculty or to provide updates on policy and procedure. Besides training adjunct faculty on SLOs and assessment, the College's institutional self-evaluation is silent on other aspects of integrating adjunct faculty into the life of the College.

Personnel records are located in the HR manager's office in a locked file cabinet to which only she has the key. Additionally, the HR manager's office is secured when she is not in the office, and access to the HRO is secured when the office is closed for business. Furthermore, each

employee has access to his/her personnel records, but must view them within the HR manager's office as the files are not allowed to be removed from that location.

## **Findings and Evidence**

Based on a review of the Governance Policy Manual and the Personnel Manual, the team finds that the College establishes, publishes, and adheres to written personnel policies and procedures that are available for information and review, and upholds a written code of professional ethics for all of its personnel, including consequences for violation. The B.Ed. program adheres to the institution's policies and procedures related to faculty training, professional development, and evaluation (III.A.5, III.A.6, III.A.8, III.A.14). However, the team finds that due to its employment preference policies, the College does not maintain appropriate practices to maintain a diverse workforce. Furthermore, because of the president's ability to override the due process of recruitment when appointing emergency hires to contract or career service positions, the College may not consistently administer fair and equitable personnel policies and procedures. (III.A.11, III.A.12, III.A.13)

According to interviews with various administrators and examinations of Position Reviews, the team finds that the criteria, qualifications, and procedures for the selection of personnel are clearly and publicly stated. Furthermore, the team finds that the job descriptions are directly related to the institutional mission and goals and accurately reflect position duties, responsibilities, and authority. However, based on an examination of eight sample Position Reviews, the team found that four of those Position Reviews did not contain descriptions that included development and review of curriculum and assessment of learning. (III.A.1, III.A.2, III.A.4)

The team interviewed each administrator, and in addition to their academic credentials, the team finds that each administrator possesses the requisite preparation and experience to perform the duties required to sustain institutional effectiveness and academic quality. Additionally, based on examining the 2014-16 College Catalog and discussions with various administrators, the team finds that the College's faculty possesses qualifications including knowledge of subject matter and requisite skills to support the services performed. The team also finds that the College's faculty, staff, and administrators possess degrees from institutions accredited by recognized U.S. accrediting agencies or foreign equivalent. A review of the B.Ed. faculty job description affirmed that the minimum required qualifications are consistent with typical university standards. Current B.Ed. faculty meet the minimum qualifications (III.A.1, III.A.2, III.A.3, III.A.4). A dean oversees the B.Ed. and A.A. Education programs. Mirroring the academic quality policies and procedures for the institution, the dean is assigned responsibility for leading program assessment activities within the department. The dean is also responsible for distributing reports to the various institutional committees such as the Curriculum Committee and the Assessment Planning Committee. The dean also serves as a member of both groups (II.B.1).

Finally, based on examining and analyzing the 2012 Human Resources Annual Report and interviews with administrators, faculty, and students, the team finds that the College maintains a sufficient number of qualified faculty, staff, and administrators to support the operation of the

College, including the B.Ed. program, and fulfillment of its mission and purposes. (III.A.7, III.A.9, III.A.10)

Committee rosters and minutes from meetings show faculty presence in matters related to governance of the College; therefore, the team finds that faculty responsibilities essential to the quality of educational programs and services are fulfilled. According to the director, HRO, 8 of the 21 adjunct faculty are administrators or staff, and so there are only 13 incremental adjunct faculty members at the College. The team finds that although the College did not provide conclusive evidence that the adjuncts are effectively integrated into the life of the institution, these adjuncts represent a small portion of the College's total instructional staff. (III.A.7, III.A.8)

Based on the 2011 Faculty Performance Evaluation Data report, the team found sufficient evidence that faculty reviews were being performed annually. The team also examined a selection of sample employee evaluations, where in subsequent years, improvements that were made previously and employee goals that have been accomplished were not documented or recognized. Regardless of this lack of narrative, scores on the various performance criteria are documented as rising, providing some evidence that the employee was successful in correcting or improving his or her performance. Finally, the team did not find any evidence that the College included the assessment of learning outcomes to improve teaching and instruction as a component of the evaluation process on either the Two-Way Performance Evaluation or the Faculty Performance Evaluation templates or any of the samples reviewed. (III.A.5, III.A.6)

The College provided the team with training sign-in sheets or certificates of completion for the following training: 2014 WASC training, 2014 Personnel Manual training, 2012 SmartBoard training, and 2012 Moodle training. Additionally, the team reviewed the Program Reviews, Divisional Assessments, and Quarterly and Bi-Weekly Reports and found evidence that a great deal of training and development is undertaken at the College. (III.A.14)

The team finds that the College makes provision for the security and confidentiality of personnel records by securing it behind three locked doors, and that each employee has access to his/her personnel records in accordance with law. (III.A.15)

## **Conclusions**

Although the College generally meets Standard III.A, it does not meet the critical requirements of employment equity, diversity, and the fair, equitable, and consistent application of its employment policies. Additionally, the Faculty Performance Evaluation instrument needs to be revised to include how the employee uses the assessment of SLOs to improve teaching and learning, extracurricular involvement, and other faculty participation in institutional committees.

The College does not meet Standards III.A.6 and III.A.12. See Recommendations 5 and 6.

## **B. Physical Resources**

### **General Observations**

The College is situated on a 53-acre site with more than 260,000 square feet of physical facility space. Most of the College's 23 buildings were originally constructed in the 1970's or earlier with the exception of the Land Grant building, Learning Resource Library, and Wellness Center, which were added in 2000, 2004, and 2013 respectively. However, in 2007 and 2010 the College was able to renovate the interior/exterior finishes, roofing, and electrical and data network systems, and add air conditioning to the majority of its original buildings.

Consequently, the campus now boasts 40 classrooms and six dedicated computer labs.

Moreover, a new Multi-Purpose Center is currently under construction and is scheduled to be completed in January 2015. The new building will house office and collaboration space for Student Services and Student Government, meeting space for use by the community, and a 500-person auditorium.

The College primarily relies on its security, maintenance, and janitorial personnel to maintain the safety and reliability of its facilities but will also hire outside contractors to perform jobs that exceed \$10,000, per government procurement rules, or when the maintenance staff do not possess the technical capability to perform the work, such as maintenance of its air conditioning systems. All new construction and renovation projects adhere to the 1967 Uniform Building Code (UBC), the 2012 American Disabilities Act (ADA), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration Standards (OSHA), and the 2006 International Building Code (IBC).

All repair and maintenance projects are funded by either general or grant funding from the College. For capital projects, the College submits biennial project proposals to the ASG for funding through ASG's \$10 million per year capital in process (CIP) allocation. Starting in fiscal year 2015, the College intends to use a Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) framework to drive the planning, acquisition, maintenance, upgrading, and replacement of its physical resources. Under this framework, the College will evaluate the quality and adequacy of its facilities through feedback collected through Divisional Assessments, Student Satisfaction Surveys, Program Reviews, Quarterly and Bi-Weekly Reports, work order metrics, enrollment data, and classroom availability. As a result of this TCO framework, in fiscal year 2014, the College was able to set aside a \$105,000 cash reserve for the repair and maintenance of the new Multi-Purpose Center. Nonetheless, planning for repair, maintenance and capital projects is still largely driven by necessity and availability of funding, rather than a planned and systematic process based on the expected useful life of each physical resource.

### **Findings and Evidence**

Based on the Classroom Matrix for Fall 2014, which shows the times classrooms are reserved for courses each weekday, the College has more than enough classroom space to accommodate its academic course offerings. Furthermore the College's Quarterly Reports, Bi-Weekly Reports, and Divisional Assessments do not contain recurring, significant, or a large number of requests for additional classroom, meeting, or office space. As a result, the team found that the College had sufficient physical space to support its educational programs and services. (III.B.1, III.B.3)



Although the College asserts that it adheres to all UBC, ADA, OSHA, and IBC requirements, in the spring 2014 Divisional Assessment, a significant number of employees responded that the physical facilities were not accessible to persons with disabilities. Although the team observed a number of recently installed handicap accessible ramps and walkways throughout the campus, the team also found a significant number of impediments, such as narrow passageways and the lack of elevators. This is because many of the originally constructed buildings have not been renovated up to recent ADA requirements. The College asserts that it generally resolves these access issues by relocating courses to handicap accessible classrooms or providing other accommodations such as meeting with the student on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor if the service is otherwise provided for on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of an inaccessible building. Additionally, the College has budgeted to hire a full time Compliance Safety Officer in fiscal year 2015, who will be responsible for compliance with UBC, ADA, OSHA, and IBC requirements, and be given a budget comprised of facilities maintenance monies previously allocated at the divisional level. (III.B.1, III.B.2, III.B.3)

The team generally observed that the campus facilities were in fair working order and moderate repair. The College explained that their repair and maintenance activities have been adversely affected by budgetary constraints, and that they have been under cost containment measures since 2011. As a result, the College is generally operating under a fix-as-fail policy with respect to its physical resources. The College also mentioned that it recently had to close its old CAPP building due to safety concerns stemming from ill repair. Despite these circumstances, the team notes that College's Quarterly Reports, Bi-Weekly Reports, and Divisional Assessments do not contain recurring, significant, or a large number of issues regarding the safety or quality of the College's facilities. (III.B.1, III.B.2, III.B.3)

The team found that the College's planning over the repair and maintenance of its physical resources is primarily driven by work order requests, and secondarily through needs identified through Program Reviews, Divisional Assessments, and Quarterly and Bi-Weekly Reports. This highlights the College's current reactionary, fix-as-fail method of addressing the repair and maintenance needs of the campus. The College asserted that it is working on completing a repair and maintenance and capital renewal plan based on the useful life of its physical resources but that it does not expect to complete it until sometime in fiscal year 2015. Additionally, the team found that the College does have a facility master plan that identifies future capital projects, but has only a short-range capital plan comprised of projects that the College intends to propose to the ASG for capital in progress (CIP) funding over the next 2 to 4 years. (III.B.2, III.B.3, III.B.4)

## **Conclusions**

The College has adequate space from which to carry out its mission. However, a holistic review of the campus's classroom, meeting room, and office utilization could reveal opportunities to reduce the amount of rooms and possibly even buildings that need to be operated and maintained. Additionally, the team agrees with the College's plan to hire a Safety Compliance Officer to ensure compliance with UBC, ADA, OSHA, and IBC requirements and its continued efforts to address its handicap accessibility issues. Lastly, the team recognizes the College's budgetary constraints and supports the College's plan to create and maintain repair and

maintenance and capital expenditure plans based on the expected useful lives of its physical resources, regardless of the availability of funding.

The team would also like to clarify that TCO is a helpful method of identifying the total cost of operating a resource over the long-term, which is a necessary and critical component of physical resource planning. However, it does not in of itself represent a plan to adequately sustain the resources of the College. Instead, a plan is a schedule of the College's entire listing of plant, property, and equipment, with identified future repair, maintenance, upgrade, and replacement costs over a long time horizon, i.e., 20 or more years. The College can then use this plan to understand its future funding requirements and its potential funding shortfall, and make decisions on the prioritization and rationing of its limited resources.

The College meets Standard III.B with areas for improvement noted.

## **C. Technology Resources**

### **General Observations**

The College's MIS unit is responsible for campus informational technology services both administrative and instructional; feedback is solicited from students and employees as to satisfaction with services, adequacy of service and support, and technology needs.

ASCC plans for, updates and replaces technology to ensure its technological infrastructure; quality and capacity are adequate to support its mission, operations, programs, and services. Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning. Technology is one of the institution's strategic focus areas. Technology goals support instruction, student services, and administration of the College. The plan was developed through a multi-stage integrated process. Technology planning occurs at various levels throughout the institution using a variety of data sources.

ASCC assures that technology resources at all locations where it offers courses, programs and services are implemented and maintained to assure reliable access, safety, and security. Disaster-recovery, data backup, uninterruptable power supplies/generator, firewalls and malware protection ensure reliable, safe, and secure technology environments and services. The MIS Division and the Physical Facilities and Maintenance (PFM) Division collaborate to ensure technology requirements for facilities are integrated into any renovation or building project plans.

The institution provides appropriate instruction and support for faculty, staff, students, and administrators, in the effective use of technology and technology systems related to its programs, services, and institutional operations. Instruction and support in use of campus technologies are provided to all sectors of campus using a variety of delivery modes.

## Findings and Evidence

Technology services, support, facilities, hardware and software are appropriate and adequate to support ASCC's management and operational functions, academic programs, teaching and learning, and support services. Management and operational functions are supported and delivered with appropriate technologies. Examples include servers to support collaboration and data storage; email servers; the Colleague Administrative Suite and Compliance Assist, which support functions of offices such as Institutional Effectiveness, Finance, and Human Resources; and TrackIt, a help desk system to manage technology work requests. (III.C.1)

Teaching and learning are supported and enhanced with technologies such as the Moodle course management system; a student wireless network; SmartBoards in classrooms; twenty-one instructional computer labs; six general-purpose computer labs for students; video teleconferencing units, projectors and other multimedia equipment; multimedia support; and dedicated server space. (III.C.1)

While ASCC does not offer distance education courses, teachers are using distance education technologies such as the Moodle course management system, multi media, and video conferencing systems, to enhance their face-to-face courses. The institution supports faculty professional development as well as procurement of equipment and software to enable increased adoption of educational technologies to enhance student learning. Should the College choose to extend learning and student support beyond the bounds of the campus, they can easily leverage the existing human and physical resources to distance learning course development and delivery. Providing student learning and support services online is a strategic goal: Strategic Goal #4 To effectively maintain & develop its Distance Learning and Online Services to internal & external stakeholders by providing opportunities and access for Distance Learning and Online Services. A performance Indicator for Strategic Objective #5 is to promote distance learning and integration of existing technologies. The self-evaluation notes that while technology exists to make distance learning available to residents of Manu'a Island and that the MIS Division did an assessment of this kind of instructional delivery which demonstrated viability, proper agreements (memoranda of understanding) need to be drafted. The team supports these assessments and efforts to improve and expand educational services via appropriate technologies. (III.C.1)

Student support services are enhanced with technology tools and support including financial aid software such as EDEXpress and EDConnect; online registration; library catalog search software and research database; and the campus website, which provides students with access to learning resources and instruction. (III.C.1)

Management of technology resources and provision of technology support services are the responsibility of the MIS Division; this unit also provides guidance on technology procurement and facilities management through published SOPs, technology standards and specifications, and policies. Technology equipment purchases must be reviewed and approved by the MIS division prior to purchase to ensure compatibility and compliance with MIS policies. MIS provides drafts of policies and plans for administrative review and enforces approved policies on management, maintenance, and operation of the institution's technology infrastructure. The MIS Division has

personnel devoted to various support areas covering operational, instructional, administrative, and student support needs. (III.C. 1)

To improve upon Standard III.C.1., the institution should implement a process to assess continued appropriateness and adequacy of technology resources to support ASCC's management and operational functions, academic programs, teaching and learning, and support services. Data is gathered from a variety of sources such as student and employee surveys, but analysis of the data and application of the data for decision-making and improvement is not evident.

ASCC plans for, updates, and replaces technology to ensure its technological infrastructure, quality, and capacity are adequate to support its mission, operations, programs, and services. Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning. A Technology Master Plan is incorporated into the Institutional Strategic Plan, providing a vision and goals for technology resources to support the College. Technology needs are identified through program review, divisional assessment, and work requests. Prioritization, budgeting, and other decisions made with regards to technology are aligned to divisional outcomes, and technology goals and outcomes of the Institutional Strategic Plan. (III.C.2)

Planning for technology is supported by the budgeting process. The ASCC Institutional Strategic Plan includes a budget that accounts for upgrades to the campus networks both wired and wireless; procurement of equipment; migration of telecommunications services to VOIP; and the review and updating of technology accessibility, support, purchasing, and disposal and replacement policies and plans. (III.C.2)

The student technology fee provides a stable and sufficient funding source to ensure the maintenance, procurement, and long-term sustainability of campus technologies that directly support students. This funding is applied to assets and services such as classroom technologies, computer labs, the wireless student network, student email services, and software licensing. This fee is managed by MIS to ensure consistency and compatibility with other campus technologies. (III.C.2)

Technology assets are tracked through the procurement office which is responsible for the inventory of fixed assets. Inventory audits are conducted more than once a year and are updated as new fixed assets are acquired. All technology purchase requests are reviewed by the MIS Division to ensure compliance, compatibility, and supportability. The institution has a Technology Equipment Replacement and Disposal Process (dated April 2011) for equipment disposal that includes review by MIS staff for cleaning/clearing and screening for possible redistribution or transfer to the property management and procurement office for auction, donation, or discarding. (III.C.2)

The Self Evaluation Report includes a Planning Agenda to develop a comprehensive technology maintenance plan for all ASCC technology. The MIS Division began crafting this plan in fall 2014. (III.C.2) To improve upon Standard III.C, the College is encouraged to complete and implement its comprehensive technology maintenance plan.

ASCC assures that technology resources at all locations where it offers courses, programs, and services are implemented and maintained to assure reliable access, safety, and security. Disaster-recovery, data backup, uninterruptable power supplies/generator, firewalls and malware protection ensure reliable, safe, and secure technology environments and services. The MIS team has implemented innovations to improve efficiency and reliability such as virtualization of servers, disaster recovery systems, upgrades and new equipment, a schedule of maintenance of lab computers, implementation of security measures (password reset policies, firewall, filtering software, automated regular Windows OS updates, and controlled access to physical facilities) reliable access, safety, and security of technology services as well as security of sensitive and confidential data. Given the limited bandwidth and high cost of internet services, the College necessarily sets priorities for network services, with mission critical operational and instructional needs given higher priority than non-essential requests. Exceptions to security and support policies are considered, primarily when justified by curricular or programmatic needs; thus innovative uses of technology are facilitated in ways that do not negatively impact core services. MIS (Management Information System) staff receive appropriate training to maintain currency of knowledge, skills, and abilities and participate in the American Samoa Cyber Security Working Group to promote safe information security practices. Plans are in place to improve awareness training in this area for students and employees. (III.C.3)

Organizationally, the MIS Division and the Physical Facilities and Maintenance (PFM) Division both report to the vice president of Administrative Services. This organizational structure facilitates collaboration and communication between these units who share responsibility for reliable access, safety, and security of campus facilities and equipment. MIS staff are involved in the planning of new facilities and renovations of existing facilities to ensure adequate technology infrastructure and anticipation of support needs or workload demands placed on MIS staff. (III.C.3)

The institution provides appropriate instruction and support for faculty, staff, students, and administrators in the effective use of technology and technology systems related to its programs, services, and institutional operations. ASCC recognizes the need for technology training for end-users and technical support staff. A variety of professional development activities are supported including off-island travel to conferences, webinars, and on-site training. Technology training on equipment usage and administrative systems and professional development in educational and distance learning technologies are provided to faculty and staff. Examples of professional development topics include the use of enterprise systems such as Colleague, Compliance Assist, and Moodle; and the use of educational technologies such as SmartBoards and video teleconferencing units. Commencing in FY 2014-2015, divisional budgets include an allocation for professional development directly connected to employees' performance of primary duties. Additional requests for professional development funding can be made to the College leadership but must be aligned with strategic goals of the institution. Students' technology literacy skills are integrated in General Education Outcomes for ICT 150 which is required for all ASCC students. (III.C.4)

The institution has policies and procedures that guide the appropriate use of technology in the teaching and learning processes. The MIS Division has comprehensive and thorough SOPs and is in the process of developing new SOPs to guide work on the College website. Given the

significant number of computers across campus and depth of integration in the curriculum, the Acceptable Usage Policy is critical for promoting digital citizenship and cybersecurity. The team suggests it be given more prominent placement on the campus website and in student and staff handbooks and other publications. The current website lacks a search tool and the link to the policy is present on the technology services page; it may be more appropriate to provide a link to the policy from pages that include other student policies such as the student conduct code. (III.C.5)

## **Conclusions**

The College meets the Standard.

## **D. Financial Resources**

### **General Observations**

The College has recently completed its fiscal year 2015 budget for general funds utilizing the new planning process as described in its self evaluation. The College's institutional goals, which are expressed at the division, department, and program level as outcomes, are at the core of the budgetary process. Each departmental budget is developed through input and dialogue from a broad base of the institution faculty and staff, albeit through a representative process. The process is iterative with multiple "washes" of the budget cycling up and down the organizational hierarchy until consensus is reached. The result is a balanced consolidated budget that has clear links to student learning and service outcomes at the departmental level.

The College's independent certified public accountant (CPA) assists the College's Department of Finance in the preparation of basic financial statement annually in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, as prescribed by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). The College's financial statements are examined by its CPA, who has given unqualified opinions of the financial statements for each fiscal year ended September 30, from 2009 through 2013. Moreover, although in previous years the auditor has found internal control weaknesses and instances of noncompliance material to the financial statements, as of the year ended September 30, 2013, the College has remediated all material weaknesses, and the auditor had no additional financial statement findings. The College has also been submitting its annual fiscal report and independent auditor's report to the ACCJC annually.

Additionally, the College has its CPA audit compliance with requirements that could have a direct and material effect on each major federal award program and on internal control over compliance in accordance with the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-133 Compliance Supplement. For the year ended September 30, 2013, the College received an unqualified opinion, although the auditor found two instances of noncompliance that required reporting. Furthermore, as of September 30, 2013, the College had remediated all previously identified material weaknesses and significant deficiencies in internal controls over compliance.

The College's financial stability has been an issue in the past and continues to be a challenge. Although the College was able to reach a positive net position of \$458,404 at the end of fiscal

year 2013, which is a significant \$1.7 million improvement from the end of fiscal year 2011, even with the cost containment measures that have been in place since 2011, the College still incurred a deficit of \$421,035 in fiscal year 2013. In other words, the College's total expenses of \$14,457,366 exceeded its total revenues of \$14,036,331. It is important to note that according to the College no faculty or services directly related to students and student learning were affected by the College's cost containment actions.

In fiscal year 2014, according to unaudited financial information, the College contained its spending to approximately \$7 million in general funds, which is roughly \$100,000 more than in fiscal year 2013, but approximately \$1.6 million less than its 2014 budget, unaudited. As a result, the College ended the 2014 fiscal year with the largest cash balance by far in at least five years, approximately \$1 million unaudited. This \$1 million balance includes a cash reserve of approximately \$300,000 and Multi-Purpose Center maintenance reserve of \$105,000. Moreover, this is the first time the College has been able to set aside cash into a reserve account in at least five years. Nevertheless, the solvency of the College still remains a concern as the cash balance low point over the last 12 months was \$50,568 in January 2014, excluding reserves.

The College is essentially an unleveraged operation. Meaning, it does not rely on either trade credit or long-term debt to finance its operations. As of the end of fiscal years 2012 and 2013, the College had a positive net working capital, which means that it has enough cash, cash equivalents, and other current assets to cover its short-term obligations. The College's only long-term liability is its accrued compensated absences obligation, which was \$600,623 as of September 30, 2013. Employees can accrue a maximum of 480 hours of vacation and an unlimited amount of compensatory and sick leave. The accrued vacation hours are tracked and monitored jointly by the HRO and Department of Finance.

The College has an internal legal counsel who reviews all contractual agreements with external entities. The College enters into a variety of purchase, supply, service, warranty, and other agreements in support of its procurement activities. The College also has articulation, transfer, and other agreements with other institutions of higher education. Lastly, the College has an agreement with the American Samoa College Research Foundation.

## **Findings and Evidence**

The team finds that for 2015, the College clearly defined and disseminated its guidelines and processes for financial planning and budgeting as evidenced by the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan and the Board of Higher Education Budget Presentation. Furthermore, the team finds that the budgetary process is grounded in the College's mission and goals, and the entire organization had the opportunity to participate in the financial planning processes through a representative based model. Moreover, the team finds that the new budgetary process effectively and appropriately allocated the College's limited resources, with an emphasis on fiscal responsibility, to support the development, maintenance, and enhancement of programs and services. Based on feedback gathered from the College's various divisions and examination of examples of the MIS, Academic Affairs, and Admissions, Records, and Financial Aid Offices, the team further finds that the 2015 budget represents a realistic assessment of financial resource availability and expenditure requirements, and has a high degree of credibility and accuracy. Lastly, the final

budgets as well as updated actual expenditures are widely and timely disseminated throughout the institution through the Web Advisor online financial reporting tool. The team finds that the College has adequate procedures and controls in place to ensure that resources are used with prudence and do not exceed the annual budget. (III.D.1, III.D.2, III.D.3, III.D.4, III.D.5, III.D.6)

The team finds that, through the release of Standard Operating Procedures for the Department of Finance, the College has recently evaluated its financial management practices and has used the results to improve its internal control systems. Additionally, the team finds that the College's responses to the 2012 and 2013 fiscal year audit findings have been addressed comprehensively and in a timely manner. Finally, the team finds that the College has sound internal control systems and is in compliance with major federal program requirements, and that these compliance and control systems are regularly evaluated and assessed for validity and effectiveness, the results of which are used for continuous improvement. (III.D.5, III.D.7, III.D.8, III.D.10, III.D.14, III.D.15)

The team finds that although the College has an average fiscal year 2014 month-end cash balance, including reserves, of approximately \$700,000, unaudited, and has grown its cash balances to approximately \$1 million as of September 30, 2014, unaudited, the College does not have a 5% unrestricted cash reserve of its general fund operating expenditures of approximately \$7 million in fiscal year 2014 unaudited. At most, the fiscal 2014 year-end cash reserve of approximately \$300,000, unaudited, represents a 4.3% reserve at one discrete point in time. The team calculated the month-end average reserve balance for fiscal year 2014 to be approximately \$80,000, unaudited, or a 1.1% reserve, which is more representative of the reserve balance maintained by the College over the year. Although the team recognizes that the College manages its short term liquidity with care and in consideration of long-range financial stability, the team is concerned that the College may not have a sufficient level of financial resources to support and sustain the College's current offering of student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. Furthermore, although the College has implemented contingency plans to mitigate its recent budgetary shortfalls, the team finds that the College does not currently have sufficient cash flow or cash reserves to maintain financial stability. (III.D.1, III.D.9, III.D.11)

The team finds that the College does not possess any short- or long-term debt obligations or Other Post-Employment Benefit obligations, but does have the ability to honor its accrued compensated absence obligations. (III.D.12, III.D.13, III.D.14)

The team finds that the College has contractual agreements with external entities, which are consistent with the mission and goals of the College, and that the College has adequate staff, i.e., the internal legal counsel, to ensure these agreements contain appropriate provisions to its interests. (III.D.16)

## **Conclusions**

Over the past year, the College has established an exemplary budgetary process for its general funds. If there is a weakness in the end product, then the weakness lies with the College's goals



and desired outcomes, and not with the procedures used to formulate, aggregate, analyze, review, and disseminate the budget.

From a holistic financial perspective, the College has made significant and measurable progress in three key areas over the past year: financial integrity, financial planning, and financial stability. Clearly the improvements to the College's financial integrity and planning over the past year are the key enabling factors behind the College's improved financial position. However, the College runs the risk that this improved liquidity comes at the expense of institutional quality. The team's concern is that the College has been making this trade-off since 2011 with cost containment measures, and the College has still not been able to secure its financial stability. Should the College continue to restrict its auxiliary and support functions, eventually the quality of the College's educational programs will follow. Perhaps a steadfast commitment to the College's current strategy will result in a financial turnaround within the next few years. However, if it doesn't, the College may need to make difficult decisions on the viability of its operation.

The College does not meet Standard III.D.9, III.D.11. See Recommendation 7.

### **Recommendations to meet the Standards**

#### **Recommendation 5:**

**In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College revise its employment policies to ensure equity, diversity, and fairness. (Standard III.A.12)**

#### **Recommendation 6:**

**In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College revise and conduct performance evaluations that include consideration of how employees use the results of assessment of learning outcomes to improve teaching and learning. (Standard III.A.6; ER14)**

#### **Recommendation 7:**

**In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College manage its fiscal resources to effectively achieve the mission, manage its cash position, and maintain a minimum 5% reserve to ensure financial stability. (Standards III.D.9, III.D.11; ER18)**

### **Recommendations to improve institutional effectiveness**

#### **Recommendation 12:**

**In order to improve institutional effectiveness, the team recommends that the College proactively plan for the maintenance of physical resources and project prioritization. (Standard III.B.2)**

## **Standard IV: Leadership and Governance**

### **A. Decision-Making Roles and Processes**

#### **General Observations**

The College Governance Manual contains several policies that outline the College's commitment to include all relevant perspectives in policy setting, implementation, and decision-making. Policy 1001 outlines expectations for participation of all member groups of the institution in governance processes and decisions. Policy 1002 establishes that organizational charts delineate relationships and responsibilities of departments and divisions in governance and operations. Policy 2001 describes the Board's responsibility to ensure that governance processes include diverse perspectives from constituent groups.

The Committee Structure Manual further outlines the roles and responsibilities of the various governance committees at the College, listing each committee's expected membership from constituent groups. The organizational charts and committee structures are designed to bring relevant individuals' experience and expertise to the table. (IV.A.5) The structures are designed to promote collaboration of administrators, faculty, staff, and students on matters pertaining to college governance, planning and decision-making, and institutional improvements. Standing committees of the College are identified and described in the 2010 Committee Structure Manual. Each committee's charge, composition, and meeting frequency are defined in this manual. The relationship between these committees and operational governance structures are also described in the Institutional Strategic Plan. These structures and processes are described in College policies contained in the Governance Manual, in the published organizational chart for the College, and in the Committee Structure Handbook. The College's participatory governance structures and processes are aligned with the College's mission and have been created to further that mission to provide high quality educational programs and services. Through analysis of outcomes data, institutional divisions, departments, and governance committees discuss and determine innovations that, when implemented, will lead to improvements in programs and services and in the institution. The intention is for continuous quality improvement.

#### **Findings and Evidence**

The College leadership encourages innovation in all areas. The evaluation team found evidence of this encouragement in observations of the College's facilities, examination of documented evidence, and in interviews with the CEO, deans and directors, vice presidents, and members of the governing board. For example, in support of innovative instructional methods, the College began using Moodle as a course management tool and for electronic supplemental instruction. In classrooms, the College has installed SmartBoards that are utilized not only to teach but also to train students how to use the technology for presentations. Using data from its programs in developmental reading, writing, and math, and based on effective practices in basic skills education, the College created and implemented its College Accelerated Preparatory Program (CAPP). Also, to meet the needs of the island for elementary teachers, the College has created a Bachelor of Education program. From the Board of Education to the president to the deans, the College leadership has promoted and supported innovative solutions to college and community needs. (IV.A.1)

When ideas for improvement have policy or significant institution-wide implications, the College has systematic processes in place that are intended to assure effective planning and implementation. The Committee Structure Manual contains organizational charts delineating expected lines of communication throughout the organization. Ideas for improvement are communicated along these lines. Governance Policy 3200 establishes that the lines that connect departments and positions within the organizational charts represent the expected communication protocols for the movement of ideas through the organization. It states:

The College's approved organizational and department charts shall be used and implemented as the guide for communication protocols. This will ensure proper chain of command, respectful communications and effective management of the college's administration. Communication protocols shall abide the major organizational chart as a fundamental rule for college-wide matters, or a departmental organizational chart when an issue requires the attention of a department only.

The organizational charts place all departments and divisions in relationship to other departments and divisions. In interviews with deans, program directors, managers, vice presidents, and faculty, College personnel affirmed that these channels of communication are followed. These staff members described the processes through which ideas may start at a grassroots level and work their way up through the hierarchy of the institution. (IV.A.1)

The ASCC Committee Structure Manual provides evidence that the leaders of the College support participation of members of the different constituent groups in the planning, evaluation, and decision-making processes of the College. Interviews with members of the College community verify that faculty, staff, and administrators work together on committees as appropriate to the task. For example, regarding institutional planning, the subcommittees that ensure the completion of the objectives related to each of the five institutional goals—Academic Excellence, Staffing, Technology, Facilities, and Total Cost of Ownership—comprise representatives from the different constituent groups: faculty, staff, and administrators. They assess the College's progress at achieving the strategic goals and objectives and report the results to the Institutional Planning Executive Core Committee (IPECC).

The College has outlined and expects all employees to follow the chain of command when communicating ideas. The organizational charts contained in the document Organizational Charts 2013 present the lines of direct report in every department and division of the College, and in the 1997 Employee Manual, which was provided to the evaluation team, policy describes how employees and faculty are to communicate with their direct reports and to follow the chain of command: “‘First-line supervision’ means that level of supervision directly over the rank-and-file or non-supervisory employees and forming the starting point upward for the direct line of authority and communications to top management.” Governance Policy 3022 specifies the manner in which individuals bring forward ideas and work together, asserting that following the lines of direct report established in the organizational charts will “ensure proper chain of command, respectful communications and effective management of the college's administration.” Thus, according to the organizational charts, participation in governance

through departmental structures is hierarchically arranged, with rank-and-file employees including faculty on the bottom layers, department chairs and managers above that, associate deans and directors on the next level, followed by deans, then the vice presidents, the president above the vice presidents, and the Board of Higher Education at the top. These expectations are repeated in Chapters 08 and 16 under the heading “Subordination to Authority.” These concepts of “subordination to authority” and “chain of command” seem to discourage broad institutional dialogue. (IV.A.1)

Beyond the hierarchical nature of the organizational charts, the College also employs a committee structure as part of the governance and decision-making process. The Committee Structure Manual (2010) identifies the charge and membership of each standing committee at the College but does not indicate the expected meeting frequency of some of the committees except that they meet “regularly.” Committee participation encourages dialogue beyond the organizational chains of command from department to department. Some of the committees contain only administrators. Other committees mix faculty with administrators and staff. For example, the President’s Advisory Committee (PAC) contains only administrators as does the IPECC. In the Curriculum Committee and the Assessment Committee, faculty and administrators work together to improve educational programs and services. The Curriculum Committee contains a mix of deans and faculty department chairs, but this committee is always chaired by the associate dean of academic affairs and not a faculty member.

College policy and procedures assert that administrators and faculty have a substantive and clearly defined role in institutional governance and exercise a substantial voice in institutional policies, planning, and budget that relate to their areas of responsibility and expertise. In the ASCC Governance Manual, Policy 5118 establishes that academic administrators and faculty have primary responsibility for oversight of and decision-making for all learning programs and services. This policy identifies four standing committees of the College where such policy and decision making occur: the Curriculum Committee, the Assessment Committee, the Institutional Planning Committee, and the Faculty Senate. The Curriculum Committee is charged with **and** oversees the curriculum development and revision processes for courses and programs, as well as making policy recommendations concerning academic matters. The evaluation team was able to attend a meeting of the Curriculum Committee, but the meeting observed was not part of their cycle of review. Instead the committee focused on divisional updates, college sponsored events, and a new process for facility rental and media communication. (IV.A.2, IV.A.3, IV.A.4) The policy also establishes that each committee must have by-laws by which they operate. Expectations for faculty involvement in institutional policies, planning, and decision-making are also delineated in the Faculty Handbook. (IV.A.3)

Faculty and academic administrators are clearly identified as the primaries for recommendations and decision-making in regard to curriculum and student learning programs and services. These policy and procedure decisions are made especially within the context of the Curriculum Committee. According to the Committee Structure Manual, the charge of this committee is to “review and [approve] new or revised courses, program revisions, establishing pre-requisites, recommendations to the administration for academic policy changes, and review/revision of the catalog and mission every two years. The Committee recommends academic policies and

procedures for the College and approves all program and course proposals and revisions.” This committee is composed of academic deans and faculty department chairs. (IV.A.4)

Through the Faculty Senate, the faculty makes known their needs to the deans. The deans then pass along this information to the vice president. Through the SGA, students make their needs known to the vice president and the president. Interviews with members of SGA revealed that SGA representatives have several meetings each year with the president. On the other hand, the Faculty Senate President revealed in an interview that she has few meetings with the vice president or president during the year. The protocols call for faculty to submit their needs to the deans. The Faculty Senate president expressed concerns and disappointment that the rank-and-file faculty feel marginalized from some of the policy-setting and decision-making processes at the College. Some faculty participate on the Assessment Committee, along with the department chairs (also faculty) and deans. Except for matters of curriculum, they must follow the chain of command and communicate with their department chairs. (IV.A.2, IV.A.3, IV.A.4)

The Senate president shared that the Senate is currently working on updating its constitution and by-laws. While working on this document, she discovered in Article 2, Section 3, that the Senate is supposed to select a representative to sit on the President’s Advisory Council (PAC). However, this position had not been filled for so long that Senate members had forgotten that they had a place on PAC. Another area where Senate used to participate is the IPECC. According to the Committee Structure Manual, the Senate president is supposed to be a regular member of IPECC, but the current officer has not assumed that seat. Interviews with the deans who do sit on IPECC revealed that one of the administrative members of IPECC used to be the Senate president. However, when she was promoted into an administrative position, she did not step down from IPECC to allow the next Senate president to assume that seat on the committee. (IV.A.2, IV.A.3)

Student participation in college policy-making and decision-making is set as policy in the by-laws of the Student Government Association. Student participation is expected and encouraged through an active SGA. However, according to the Committee Structure Manual 2010, besides SGA itself, the only standing committee of the College in which student representatives are listed as members is the Faculty of the Year Committee. Administrative expectation is that student input is received through the dean. Not mentioned in the Committee Structure Manual is that students also elect a student representative to the Board of Higher Education. Thus students always have a sitting representative at the highest level of governance. (IV.A.2)

The 1998 Board of Higher Education (BHE) Policy Manual provided to the evaluation team does not identify who the members of the Board should be. This BHE Policy Manual is the same policy document that is linked on the BHE website. It contains no language identifying that the BHE has a student trustee or any student representation on the governing board. However, the BHE membership listed on the BHE website does list a student trustee as a member of the Board. In addition to the BHE Policy Manual, the evaluation team was supplied a copy of the Governance Manual (no date). Policy 2003.1 of the Governance Manual prescribes the membership of the BHE and includes a student representative, with eligibility requirements spelled out. The College president clarified that the Governance Manual is a revised version of the BHE Policy Manual. (IV.A.2, IV.A.3, IV.C.6) (IV.A.7)

Regarding timely action on plans, policy, and institutional change for quality improvement, the 2009-2014 Institutional Strategic Plan contains a five-year quarterly timeline containing projected deadlines for institutional planning and evaluations to be accomplished. Timelines for curriculum review are tied to the biennial publication of the College Catalog. The faculty department chairs work with the deans and directors to update all course and program curricula to ensure that the information published in the catalog is up to date. IPECC and the subcommittees for each of the strategic goals identified in the Institutional Strategic Plan, which comprise members from the different constituent groups on campus, set timelines for the completion of tasks related to achieving strategic goals and objectives to further the College's mission. (IV.A.5)

Evidence provided to the evaluation team included samples of agenda and minutes from several committee and department meetings. Interviews with deans, the vice presidents, faculty, and staff revealed that minutes of meetings and results of committee actions are communicated broadly and made public through the various reporting mechanisms—bi-weekly reports to the governor, quarterly reports to the board, semi-annual reports, and annual reports. However, campus personnel on the lower levels of the hierarchy stated that sometimes information is not communicated downward after decisions are made. For example, when department personnel forward resource requests through their department chairs and then on through their deans to the vice presidents and then to PAC and the president, the final resolution of the requests is sometimes not communicated back to the persons who submitted the original request. Nevertheless, the evaluation team saw evidence that College personnel at all levels are heavily involved in many reporting activities. (IV.A.6)

Regarding the regular evaluation of leadership roles, governance groups, governance processes, and decision-making, the College writes and reviews its Standard Operating Procedures, updating the procedures as needed to improve processes and outcomes. The SOPs reviewed by the evaluating team are clear and specific in their directions to personnel on how to complete discrete tasks. Interviews with the deans revealed that SOPs are reviewed by the departments most affected by the process covered in an SOP. Employees work with their supervisors to develop or revise SOPs for clarity and effective instructions. (IV.A.7)

Some policies and procedures receive regular, scheduled reviews. According to Governance Policy 1000, the mission and vision statements are reviewed annually at the board retreat and revised when needed. Policy 2005 establishes that the board will review policy as needed, but it does not establish a regular cycle of evaluation and updating of board policy. Policy 3001.2 states that the board will review strategic goals quarterly. (IV.A.7)

The evaluating team was confused by the multiple policy manuals it received. Because there is a lack of clarity of the relationship between the 1998 BHE Policy Manual and the ASCC Governance Manual (no date), the College should make it clear which set of policies takes precedence. Or if the Governance Manual is the replacement document for the 1998 BHE Policy Manual, then the older document should be archived and removed from the board's website. (IV.A.7)

## **Conclusions**

The College provides ample evidence that it is rich in policy development for governance and decision-making. Governance policies dictate who participates in which aspects of policy development yet encourages participation of persons from the broad spectrum of College constituencies. Policies also dictate how decisions are communicated to the campus. Through its policies and governance structures, including organization charts and committee structures, the College demonstrates its commitment to participatory governance in its decision-making processes. However, the strict adherence to chain of command, though organized and respectful, leaves some constituent groups feeling disconnected from governance and decision-making. In order to cultivate a more collegial atmosphere, ASCC should revise some of its committees to be more representative of the constituent groups. Interviews with the deans revealed that they believe that because they are academic administrators, they represent the voices of faculty when they sit on governance committees. However, it makes more sense to the visiting team that faculty should represent the faculty voice and administrators represent management.

The College does not meet Standards IV.A.1, IV.A.2, and IV.A.3. See Recommendation 8.

## **B. Chief Executive Officer**

### **General Observations**

The president is responsible for the overall operations of the College, for quality of the institution, and for assessing institutional effectiveness. These responsibilities are met through appropriate delegation of related institutional responsibilities to respective vice presidents, deans, and directors. The CEO is well respected and demonstrates knowledge and understanding of the institution's mission in support of student learning and achievement.

The organizational structure supports the achievement of the institution's mission, clearly delineates reporting responsibilities, and provides a framework for representative participation in the decision-making process.

The CEO has the primary leadership role for accreditation and ensures the institution is in compliance with relevant statutes and regulations. It is evident that institutional practices are consistent with its mission and policies. The vice president for academic and student affairs serves as the institution's ALO with responsibility for assuring compliance with accreditation requirements.

### **Findings and Evidence**

Policy 3000 delegates primary responsibility for overall operations of the College to the president. The Board of Higher Education determines the effectiveness of the president in fulfilling this responsibility through an annual performance evaluation. Through the authority of the president, the Institutional Planning Executive Core Committee (IPECC) has the key role of institutional assessment. (IV.B.1)

The president operates within a supportive management structure that includes a chief academic and student affairs officer and a chief administrative services officer. Additionally, the President's Advisory Council (PAC) provides an opportunity for the president to meet with representative administrators with college-wide responsibilities to discuss and develop strategies to address a broad range of institutional challenges.

The president operates within a structure of collegial governance that is inclusive of representative participation. The administrative structure is organized to reflect the institution's purposes, size, and complexity. The organizational chart outlines reporting responsibilities. The College has not formally evaluated its organizational structure and governance processes. The current organizational structure and framework for representative decision-making limits broad-based participation and purposeful dialogue that lead to a more effective governance process. (IV.B.2)

Policy 3001.2 provides that the College's goals are mutually agreed upon between the board and the president, and the president is charged with developing an action plan for implementation. The CEO through Institutional Program Reviews and Divisional Assessments guides institutional improvements. The most recent review was conducted in 2014. The Institutional Effectiveness Division ensures the quality of the research and analysis. The Institutional Strategic Plan 2015-2020 integrates education planning with resource planning to support student achievement and learning. The use of data including the Bi-Weekly and Quarterly Reports focus on student learning outcomes and help the president to advise the board of higher education. The CEO has not yet ensured that the College has established institutional-set performance standards for student achievement and that limits the institution's ability to assess its effectiveness and efforts in support of continuous quality improvement. (IV.B.3)

The president has primary leadership responsibility for accreditation in conjunction with the ALO, faculty, staff, and other administrators. (IV.B.4)

Public Law 22-30 charges the president with the direct management and administration of the College. The Board Policy Manual and the Governance Policy manual clearly define the responsibilities of the president. Through Policy 3002.2 Internal and External Monitoring Reports the board sets expectations for sufficient information on educational quality in the Governance Policy, including institutional data collection, community surveys, placement data, assessment of student learning outcomes, and financial/grant reports. (IV.B.5)

The president is actively engaged in community relations as evidenced by participation in a variety of community activities. The CEO is the primary spokesperson for the College, represents the College on various boards and commissions, and serves on the Governor's Cabinet. The CEO communicates with the communities served by the institution through the President's Advisory Council, Board of Higher Education, legislators, and Governor's Cabinet. (IV.B.6)

## **Conclusions**

The College meets the requirements of Standard IV.B, Chief Executive Officer, with the



exception of the establishment of institutional-set performance standards for student achievement.

The College does not meet Standard IV.B.2 and IV.B.3. See Recommendations 3 and 8.

## **C. Governing Board**

### **General Observations**

There is much evidence that suggests compliance with the Standard. Board of Higher Education policy and procedures are in place and appropriately delegate authority and provide guidance to the institution.

The Board of Higher Education consists of the director of education and seven members, six of whom are appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the legislature. The term of office of six of the board members is four years and is arranged as not to expire at the same time. The eighth member of the board is a second-year student of the College elected at a school-wide election during the first week of school.

Six of the eight members of the board identified themselves as new members. They include the director of education, the student member, and four of the governor's appointees. These new members expressed an interest and need for continued training program for board development regarding the roles and responsibilities as board members. Having six new board members has the potential to adversely impact the effectiveness of the governing board with continuity of board membership and staggered terms.

The Board of Higher Education has policies in place reflecting the intent to act as a whole once a decision is reached and the board's role to advocate for the College and protect it from outside influence.

In the institution's self-evaluation report the College identified several concerns regarding a conflict of interest on the part of one of the members of the board that pose particular challenges to meeting the Standard on the Governing Board. In meetings with College staff these same concerns were raised, and the consensus of the staff is that such a conflict of interest exists.

### **Findings and Evidence**

Public Law and the ASCC Governance Policy Manual provide for the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of student learning programs and the financial stability of the institution. Also included are sections which describe and define the relationship between the board and the president. (IV.C.1, ER 7)

The policy on board committees contains provisions that require the board to act as a whole, including that board committees shall not act or speak for the board except when formally given such authority for specific and time-limited purposes; not provide the president with approval unless it is through the board as a whole; avoid representation of the college, in part rather than

with the whole; and act as a committee of the whole. Further, policy also states that the chairperson shall have no authority on his/her own to make decisions about policies created by the board. At least one example of a board member speaking for the board on a topic it had not discussed was brought to the team's attention. (IV.C.2)

Board policy and administrative procedures contain provisions establishing the board's authority to select and evaluate the president. Full authority is delegated to this individual to implement and administer board policies without undue influence from board. Understanding collegial governance and the respective roles of the board and the president are topics identified to the team that pose particular training challenges given the large number of new members.

Policy states that the Board hires the president to administer the College and to issue rules, procedures, and guidelines necessary to implement the board's policies for governance of the college, consistent with applicable laws. Institutional hiring policies and Standard Operating Procedures apply to the president with final selection resting with the Board of Higher Education. Governance policies describe the employment and evaluation of the president and specifically that the board meets annually in executive session to conduct a performance evaluation of the president. (IV.C.3)

The board acts as an independent body serving in the public's interest in accord with appropriate standards of conduct. Policies are in place which describe the eligibility requirements and exclusions for board membership. The composition of the board reflects the public interest with a cross section of professionals and community representatives. Three of the eight board members are women, three members are clergy, four members are educators, and one member is a retired US military veteran. Six board members are nominated by the governor and must be confirmed by the legislature. The president and the director of the American Samoa Department of Education serve as ex officio members. Both the director of education and the student member have full voting rights. (IV.C.4, ER 7)

According to policy, all policies are to be written, defined, and based on ASCC's mission, vision, values, goals, and objectives with a thorough understanding and appreciation of the needs of the College. The board is also required to ensure the College is effectively managed and supports an environment whereby the College achieves its mission. The board approved the Instructional Strategic Plans for 2009-2014, and 2015-2020, articulating its expectations for quality, integrity and improvement of student learning programs and services. Public Law articulates the board's legal responsibilities, which include assurance of the fiscal integrity of the College. (IV.C.5)

Board policies are published on the College website and there is a plan to include board actions in the form of minutes, as well. Policies contain details related to board membership, duties, responsibilities, structure, and operating procedures. The ASCC Governance Manual and the Board of Higher Education Policy Manual (dated June 16, 1998) are posted on the College's website. (IV.C.6)

The evidence, in the form of minutes, indicates that the board generally acts in accord with its adopted policies and bylaws including annual self-evaluations. There is evidence to indicate the board reviewed and revised policies since July 2014. Prior to July 2014 the board regularly

assessed its policies and bylaws for their effectiveness in fulfilling the mission of the College and makes necessary revisions. The review cycle is not established in policy. (IV.C.7)

Institutional research reports to the office of institutional effectiveness that reports to the vice president of administrative services. The president reviews and approves all institutional reports that are then shared with the Board of Higher Education. An institutional assessment cycle for all outcomes including student learning outcomes is established. The College has not yet established institutional-set performance standards for student achievement. (IV.C.8)

Board policy exists that directly addresses board development. The policy on Board Orientation and Training requires that an annual workshop be conducted to address the training needs of the board members. The White paper, “American Samoa Community College Board Development Workshop Report,” serves as a primary document that supports board development for continuous quality improvement. Board professional development regularly includes presentations and discussions on conflict of interest. Orientation for new members is provided to assist them in understanding the board’s functions, policies, and procedures.

While the term of office of six of the board members is designated as four years, appointments have not been made that support the intended continuity of the membership. The new governor, elected in 2012, made four new appointments to the Board of Higher Education at the start of his term in 2013. (IV.C.9)

Community colleges have distinctive characteristics such as collegial governance and the designation of the president as responsible for implementing policies and for the operation of the college without board interference. Board members with professional backgrounds, experience on other types of boards, or experience as College employees do not automatically function as an effective trustees without training. Having the majority of board members new to the body compromises its knowledge base and creates an urgent need for board development.

Board members engage in a self-assessment of their performance once each year. Policy requires the board to schedule a time and place at which all of its members will participate in this process. The board is required to be evaluated as a whole and not as individuals. The evaluation focused on the internal board operations and performance and goals against which it is evaluated. The policy requires the establishment of strategies for improving board performance. The team verified that board evaluations occur regularly. There is not yet a plan to use the results of the board’s self-evaluations to improve board performance, academic quality, and institutional effectiveness. It is not clear if the board will make public the results of the board’s self-evaluation. (IV.C.10)

The Board delegates authority to the president to fulfill duties and responsibilities supportive of the obligation to enhance the quality of the institution. Participation as the chair of significant planning and governance bodies, as well as involvement in a variety of aspects of internal and external institutional activities, provide the president the knowledge necessary to lead the organization effectively. (IV.C.12)

Board policy delegates primary responsibility for overall operations of the College to the

president and holds him accountable for their effectiveness through an annual performance evaluation. (IV.C.12)

The Board is fully informed of and involved with the accreditation process. A variety of evidence supports this assertion including review of board meeting minutes and interviews with Board members. (IV.C.13)

The board is informed of Accreditation Standards, policies, and processes. The board reviews and approves reports to ACCJC, including the Self-Evaluation Report 2014. The president provides regular updates to the board regarding accreditation, assessment, planning, budget and institutional progress, including responses to Commission recommendations. (IV.C.13)

The board has established and published its code of ethics. Policy 2002 state that “board members shall conduct itself with proper authority and appropriate decorum as an individual or group when serving in the capacity of a board member.” Board professional development regularly includes presentations and discussions on conflict of interest. However, the current policy does not define conflict of interest and does not provide for a process to deal with behavior that violates its code of ethics or a conflict of interest. (IV.C.11, ER 7)

In the institution’s self-assessment report the College identified areas that pose particular challenges to meeting the Standards:

- No detailed policy exists for a board member’s disclosure of any possible conflicts of interest;
- No written policy exists for dealing with behavior that violates the code; and
- There is a current issue that has not yet been resolved regarding a perceived conflict of interest.

The team was informed by several members of the board that they believed a conflict of interest existed and weren’t sure how to proceed in the absence of a conflict of interest policy. In interviews with board members, the team was informed by one member that the board had resolved the conflict of interest at a board meeting held two months previous to the visit. The institution was unable to provide minutes of the meeting reflecting this discussion as requested.

The College reported in its self-assessment, and the team’s review of board meeting minutes indicate that the president informed the board of a possible conflict of interest. The board chair stated that it was good to be in touch with the legal counsel and Governor’s Office in regards to this matter, because it was the governor’s appointment. The team was informed that the member with a conflict (the vice chairman of the board) had been a member of the governor’s cabinet prior to his appointment to the Board of Higher Education. Before the appointment, no one at the College was informed that he was a representative for Argosy University, a four-year institution with a satellite site on the island. When the board expressed concern to the governor regarding a potential conflict, he explained that at the time of the appointment the appointee claimed Argosy did not offer an A.A. or B.Ed. and therefore posed no competition. When Argosy later began to offer A.A.s, the board member did not bring up the issue up to the board and still had not done so by the time of the visit.

When the team inquired about the issue with the board member, he informed the team that there was no conflict of interest because Argosy University did not compete with American Samoa Community College (ASCC), did not offer any programs offered by ASCC, and that Argosy would only accept students who had completed associate's degrees from ASCC. The vice chairman stated that these terms were provided in an agreement between the president of Argosy University and the president of ASCC and that he would provide the team with a copy. The team never received a copy from the board and the College reported that no agreement existed.

When the team questioned the board member on this topic, he stated that Argosy University's purpose was to help ASCC students. Although he had claimed the university did not offer associate degrees, he identified the business degree as an exception. He stated that two or three students were being allowed to attend Argosy classes at night or online because they were unable to attend during the day when ASCC classes were held. He further stated that students must have an associate's degree to be accepted at Argosy. Contrarily, the student trustee and director of education verified that students can be freshmen at Argosy, but those who can afford it typically go to a university off island.

During the visit, the team verified with Argosy University in Hawaii that the American Samoa Argosy Campus offered five bachelor's degree programs and two associate's degree programs, including the Associate's degree in Psychology and the Associate's degree in Business Administration. The team verified through the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities (ACSCU) WASC website that Argosy University reports that it offers the Associate degrees in Business Administration, Criminal Justice, and Information Technology. The ASCC catalog lists associate degrees it offers in business management and criminal justice, and lower division courses in psychology. During the visit, the College discovered and the team verified that Argosy University reported its location as American Samoa Community College through the ACSCU website. The College expressed its intention to contact ACSCU to correct the website. The College informed the team that some of its faculty are teaching for Argosy University on a part time basis. (I.C.12, I.C.13, IV.C.11, ER 7, ER 21)

The team concluded that a conflict of interest exists with a member of the Board of Higher Education who currently serves as vice chairman, who previously served as acting president of the College, and who presently serves as the director of the Argosy University campus in American Samoa.

The team was further concerned regarding Policy 3010.C Communication and Counsel to the Board, which requires the president to "advise the board if, in the president's opinion, the board is not in compliance with its own policies on Governance Process and Board Staff Relationship, particularly in the case of board behavior which is detrimental to the working relationship between the board and the president." and Policy 3010.G, by which the president is expected to "report in a timely manner an actual or anticipated non-compliance with any policy of the board."

These policies assign the president with responsibility to advise the board if he believes there is an issue related to board behavior. The president reports to the board. This responsibility places the president in a difficult position with the board and is inconsistent with Standard IV.C.11 that

requires the board to have a clearly defined policy for dealing with behavior that violates its code of ethics. The team reviewed Board of Higher Education meeting minutes dated July 18, 2014, that indicate the president shared this concern regarding the conflict of interest with the board.

## **Conclusions**

The College meets this Standard with the exceptions of the board policy regarding conflict of interest, procedures to address members who are in violation of the policy, and the requirement that the president advise the board when it is out of compliance with its policies.

The College does not meet Standard IV.C.8, IV.C.10 and IV.C.11. See Recommendations 3, 9, and 10.

## **Recommendations to meet the Standards**

### **Recommendation 3:**

**In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College set institutional standards for student achievement and use them as the basis for evaluation in the program review and institutional planning processes. (Standards I.B.3, I.B.6, I.B.7, I.B.8, I.B.9, IV.B.3, IV.C.8; ER11)**

### **Recommendation 8:**

**In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College evaluate the organizational structure and governance processes to increase opportunities for broad-based participation, purposeful dialogue, and involvement in decision-making processes. (Standards IV.A.1, IV.A.2, IV.A.3, IV.B.2)**

### **Recommendation 9:**

**In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College use and publish the results of Board of Higher Education self-evaluations to improve Board performance. (Standard IV.C.10)**

### **Recommendation 10:**

**In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College establish and implement a Board code of ethics and conflict of interest policy that clearly defines conflict of interest and the process for dealing with behavior that violates its code. (Standard IV.C.11; ER7)**

## **Recommendations to improve institutional effectiveness**

### **Recommendation 13:**

**In order to improve institutional effectiveness, the team recommends that the College publish and implement a systematic review cycle of Board policies and archive outdated policies. (Standards IV.A.7, IV.C.7)**

**Recommendation 14:**

**In order to improve institutional effectiveness, the team recommends that the College develop and implement a continuous training program for Board development regarding the roles and responsibilities of Board members and implement the process intended to ensure continuity of Board membership and staggered terms. Use results of evaluations for improvement (Recommendation IV.C.9)**

**D. Multi-College Districts or Systems**

American Samoa Community College is a single-college system. Therefore, this Standard does not apply.

## COMMISSION POLICIES

### **Policy on Distance Learning and on Correspondence Education**

ASCC does not offer Distance Education or Correspondence Education.

### **Policy on Institutional Compliance with Title IV**

The College demonstrates compliance with Title IV regulations, and validated that Governance Policy Manual, Policy 5327: Institutional Financial Aid is consistent with the regulation. The College also provides a financial aid office that provides information to students.

The College complies with this policy.

### **Policy on Representation of Accredited Status**

The College demonstrates compliance with each of the policy elements, and ACCJC accreditation status is posted on the website and printed in the catalog.

The College complies with this policy.

### **Policy on Institutional Degrees and Credits**

The evaluation team verified that ASCC's associate and baccalaureate degrees and award of transfer credit are of sufficient content, breadth, and length; adhere to appropriate rigor; and define and assess student learning outcomes. College policies adhere to federal requirements regarding a credit hour, and the definition of a credit hour is consistent with commonly accepted academic expectations applicable to a degree or certificate awarded by an accredited institution. Standard II.A provides a more detailed discussion about the Bachelor's degree that addresses general education and expanded degree requirements.

The College complies with this policy.

### **Policy on Institutional Integrity and Ethics**

The Board of Higher Education for ASCC has in place a Code of Conduct and a number of other policies that address integrity and ethics. The Board does not have a policy that specifically addresses conflict of interest or consequences for non-compliance with that policy. The College has a satisfactory history of compliance with accreditation requirements.

The College does not comply with this policy. See Recommendation 10.

### **Contractual Relationships with Non-Regionally Accredited Organizations**

ASCC does not have contractual relationships with non-regionally accredited organizations.

### **Policy on Student and Public Complaints against Institutions**

The College has policies and procedures in place, and readily accessible on the website and in the catalog, including its policy on student complaints, along with information on how to file such a complaint.

The College complies with this policy.



## USDE REGULATION COMPLIANCE

### **Institution set standards on student achievement**

The College has not established institutional-set standards on student achievement.

The College does not meet this regulation. See Recommendation 3.

### **Awarded academic credits/degrees/credentials**

The College clearly states its transfer of credit policies in its catalog. These policies conform to commonly accepted practice regarding course content and time invested.

The College meets this regulation.

### **Credit hour**

The College awards credit based on generally accepted practices. It does not convert clock hours to credit hours. The College has established policies that support awarding credit to students based on student learning outcomes that are necessary to meet standards of quality in transfer institutions, by employers, and for program and degree requirements. Policies are presented in the College Catalog.

The College meets this regulation.

### **Student complaints**

The College demonstrates appropriate procedures for addressing student complaints and grievances. Policies and procedures for addressing student complaints are spelled out in the College Catalog and are in accordance with the requirements for due process of the federal and state law and regulations. When asked about student complaints, the leadership at ASCC indicated that there were none.

The College meets this regulation.

### **Distance and Correspondence Education**

ASCC does not offer Distance Education or Correspondence Education at this time.

The College meets this regulation.

### **Data on fiscal condition**

Despite declining enrollment, ASCC's fiscal condition has not felt a significant negative impact from the amount of tuition and fees collected by ASCC. In fact, for the past six years, the revenue received from ASCC's tuition and fees, per their external auditor's report, has been steadily increasing.

The College meets this regulation.

### **Accreditation information made public**

The College complies with the requirements to make accreditation information public by posting it on the website and printing it in the catalog.

The College meets this regulation.