Midterm Report

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

Standard I
Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

Standard II
Student Learning Programs and Services

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GCC
GUAM COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Kulehon Kumunidåt Guåhan

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Statement on Report Preparation

In the Commission's letter of June 29, 2006, Guam Community College's accreditation was reaffirmed. The College was commended for its response to the recommendations of the previous evaluation team and for the extensive assessment process and infrastructure which, as the report documents, "places it in the forefront in meeting the assessment expectations of the 2002 standards." Moreover, the visiting team also noted the resilient characteristic with which Guam Community College addressed the natural and fiscal difficulties in recent years and lauded the College's unwavering focus on the effectiveness of its educational programs and services.

This document is the Midterm Report, which is due to the Commission by March 15, 2009. The next comprehensive evaluation of the College is scheduled to occur in Spring 2012.

Dr. R. Ray D. Somera, the institution's Accreditation Liaison Officer and Vice President for Academic Affairs, prepared this report. He replaced the recently-retired AVP, Dr. John R. Rider, who presided over the preparations for the 2006 team visit. Substantial information for this report was gathered from the 6th, 7th, and 8th Annual Institutional Assessment Reports (AIAR), two annually-written Self-Study Reports, various institutional research reports from the Office of Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness (AIE), as well as diverse documents from the Academic Affairs Division Management Team, Faculty Senate, President's Management Team, and the Board of Trustees.

In keeping with the participatory governance processes at the College, this report benefited from input provided by the Steering Committee of the four existing Standards Committees comprised of faculty, staff, and administrators, Academic Affairs Division Management Team, as well as the President's Management Team, and the Board of Trustees. It was approved by the Board at its March,11, 2009 meeting.

Response to Team Recommendations and the Commission's Action Letter

This report is organized to address four areas: 1) Major Recommendations of the Report, 2) Specific Recommendations in the Report, 3) Update on Substantive Change, and 4) Status of Self-Identified Recommendations from the Self-Study. Each recommendation is followed by a response. In each of the four identified sections, progress made on each recommendation is documented, and evidence of results is presented in the Appendix. The main bulk of evidence for each of the responses is provided in the appendices.

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

Major Recommendations

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Addressing Accreditors' Specific Concerns through the AIAR

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

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

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

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

Communication and information dissemination

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

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

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

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

Update: The mission statement of 2005 undergoes review this year. The Standard 1 Self-Study Committee will lead the campus-wide effort to further the dialogue on this issue. As the College's electronic newsletter, the **Chachalani** has now been regularized through its monthly publication by the Communications and Promotions office since December 2007. This has served as a convenient channel through which highlights of assessment reports are disseminated campus wide. Likewise, the Office of Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness has developed Assessment Report Highlights in newsletter format to disseminate key findings of assessment studies to the campus community. A series of these Highlights included findings and were placed in faculty packets during the Fall 2008 convocation. The newly-revamped public website and MyGCC have also become important sources of campus news for many college constituents. Also see the section, "Newest Plan the Institution Has Developed" in this report (p. 15) to learn how the College has embarked on a campus wide dialogue on mission, vision, and goals that will guide the College in addressing the impending military buildup on island.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

terms of student access, progress, learning and success" without a real basis for determining the extent and quality of such a variability. Of considerable importance to this issue was the team's expressed concern that "the College's established approach to assessment may not lend itself to studying and researching concerns related to the educational needs of students and the disproportionate impact of policies and practices on specific students." The team's final conclusion was blunt and simple: "No clear evidence was found that specific learning support needs are researched or identified and that information then guides the development or improvement of services and programs."

It is apparent from this discussion that student outcomes data in terms of demographics, characteristics, needs, and other variables are severely needed as a useful guide to successful program implementation of various student services. Since the College has not systematically collected and analyzed student data through the years –though sporadically available––, no such documents existed for the accrediting team. What is available however are pieces of student data extracted from NIAS (the currently-existing student database system), if and when the need for such data arises[1]. For example, there is no regularized schedule for systematic data collection at the College nor is there an existing structure that manages data collection and analysis. Likewise, the team also concluded that the "data from the COMPASS instrument is not comprehensively used to inform the College about the academic needs of the students or to help in planning course offerings and scheduling of courses." Ostensibly, the lack of an Institutional Researcher position at the College has been largely responsible for this shortcoming. What substantive impact has this brought to the way student needs are addressed at the College? How has this influenced the present assessment approach that the College has adopted? To what extent has the student services area been impacted by this shortcoming? This brings us to a corollary point, that of assessing student services, which is the subject of the next section of the report.

Update: In December 2006, the College hired a full-time Institutional Researcher under the Office of Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness (AIE). A few months thereafter, the College also instituted the BANNER integrated database system, which was part of the administration's decision to achieve a Unified Digital Campus (UDC). Although the evaluation team report released to the College *did not* specifically suggest that the College be transformed into a UDC campus to gain accreditation points, the report's implications, insofar as data collection and reporting were concerned, made it clear that an efficient, integrated data management tool would help sustain the College's aim of maintaining its forward momentum in assessment and other equally-important learning-related processes. To date, two GCC Institutional Fact Books (2007, 2008) –with assistance from Banner's report generation features --have been produced by the Assessment office. The goal of the UDC towards seamless integration of information systems across campus is beginning to meaningfully guide the College in systematizing data collection and analysis. Most

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[1] NIAS stands for National Integrated Administration System, the former student information database system implemented by the College. The BANNER integrated system's student module was fully implemented on campus beginning June 2007, with the rest of the modules –Financial Aid, Procurement, Human Resources– following thereafter. The BANNER system, though not a perfect one, has assisted greatly in addressing institutional data needs for federal and ACCJC reporting requirements.

importantly, this has made it possible for the Institutional Researcher to focus on research-based topics (e.g, Gen Ed impact) that have developed into full blown studies. The AVP office has also developed an incentive program (called AVP SAGA) to encourage departments or faculty members to engage in small research projects (see **APPENDIX O**) on specific topics identified in the team's report. One faculty member in Counseling has taken on the COMPASS project to determine student needs in support services based on information routinely collected from them. Through these initiatives, the College is gradually building research capacity that has tremendous implications for a data-driven assessment process.

Holistic approach to assessing student services
It is apparent from the report that the level of student support services at the College needs to improve to fully meet the standards set by ACCJC. The report makes clear that in several instances, the College "cites the need to improve its marketing and recruitment efforts," yet the team concluded that a "comprehensive effort to address outreach and recruitment efforts has not materialized." Because of the lack of student data that is systematically-collected and analyzed on a regular basis, the report reiterates the urgency of such an effort. This is also probably the reason why the team found "not all departments have yet measured their effectiveness, either through quantitative or through qualitative measures." The team's last sentence in the Student Support services section of the report is very revealing: Coordination in the overall assessment and evaluation of student support services has yet to be established, with many different models being followed in the attempt to develop student learning outcomes. One implication becomes readily clear. Assessment in the student services area needs to be done in a holistic and integrative manner, with clearly articulated umbrella-like goals that should govern each and every component of the support services offered to students, so that a coherent model is established.

This brings home the point that the team emphasized in the report which contends that the way the assessment process at GCC has been set up does not lend itself easily to a research exploration of student data. Perhaps with an integrated assessment approach to student support services, there would be a more focused task in obtaining student outcome data that would be routinely explored to develop an agenda for improvement. The upcoming transition from the old student database system into the new portal --SCT Banner-- would facilitate this task even more.

Update: See Update in the section above.

Assessment leadership and support
The members of the Board of Trustees who sat through an interview with the visiting accreditation team were probably surprised when they were asked this simple question, "What is a student learning outcome?" Their answers probably did not impress the visiting team for the report stated that the "Board did not indicate strong knowledge of student learning outcomes and assessment, and its relationship to accreditation." Yet, the team acceded that while they were not "conversant on the specifics of student learning outcomes," they are nonetheless "committed and supportive of the work the College has begun. The

president is fully aware and supportive of the effort, the report also added. Although there is top level support of the College wide assessment process from the Board, the team also seemed to express disappointment about the Board's ceremonial function vis-à-vis the accreditation process. The team's observation was blunt, in this respect: The Board approved the accreditation Self-Study; however members of the Board did not seem to be well versed on the Commission standards and were not directly involved in the development of the study, other than the sign-off of the documents. Despite this conclusion, the team also commended the Board for its participation in the assessment of the members' functional roles. The President and the Board of Trustees, the report stated, discussed their assessment with the College and indicated that the process helped them in various ways.

In order to exert leadership, the team believes that Board training is essential. The need for more formal board development activities and training was a priority in the team's agenda for the Board. The team also recommended that, after the recently-revised manual is adopted by the Board, a regular review of board policies be started immediately in order to ensure currency and appropriateness of policies affecting the College and its constituents.

Update: See Response to Major Recommendation #4 above.

Update on Substantive Change

The ACCJC Substantive Change Committee approved the Certificate and Associate of Arts Degree in Emergency Management as the newest academic programs at GCC in October 2007. In the Commission's letter of 22 October, the Committee requested that "in upcoming reports as required by the Commission, the institution include an update of this program during its stages of implementation." The brief report in this section addresses this request.

In conjunction with the Guam Homeland Security and the Office of Civil Defense, as well as the Office of the Governor of Guam, the Certificate and Associate's Degree in Emergency Management was officially launched on 21 March 2008. As part of its student recruitment strategy, the program has also been showcased in several law enforcement-related activities (such as Emergency Readiness Week) at the mall and other places within the past year.

The Criminal Justice Department, where the program resides, has received several inquiries about the program and the Chair has taken an active role in promoting the program to law enforcement agencies on Guam. According to the Registrar's report, there are six applicants who have officially submitted their documents for review and evaluation by the Registrar as of January 2009. As of Spring semester 2009, however, only one student has officially declared Emergency Management as a major field of study. The College expects that this number will increase within the next year.

This year, two substantive change proposals are also planned for submission to the Commission. This will be for the following programs:
- Applied Associate Science in Medium/Heavy Diesel Technology

- Associate of Science in Surveying Technology

The internal Curriculum Review process has just been completed for the first program. The second program's paperwork is currently being prepared for the curriculum approval process. The Commission has already been informed about these planned substantive change proposals from the College.

Status of Recommendations in the Self-Study (AY 2004-2005)

Central to an understanding of the Self-Study process at GCC is to situate it in the context of the planning process. The College calls it the *Continuous Self-Study for Strategic Planning* that requires a yearly Self-Study of the previous academic year. This is a radical departure from the typical practice of most institutions to conduct their Self-Study on the year prior to the visit. In fact, since the team's visit in 2006, there have been two annual Self-Study Reports (AY2006-2007, AY 2007-2008) that have been produced. The bulk of the work for the Self-Study is covered under the Faculty Senate structure, it being an integral part of the participatory governance processes and is embedded in the GCC Board-Union contract.

As it had been originally conceptualized by the previous Academic Vice President, the Self-Study and the institutional processes feed recommendations into the Institutional Strategic Master Plan (ISMP) for required action. This was how the ISMP template was set up, it being a compilation of recommendations culled from the Self-Study for AY 2004-2005. As such, the ISMP was an "institutional to-do" list or matrix that enumerates recommendations culled from the annually-produced Self-Study report. As key administrators in the College hierarchy examine these recommendations, they gradually develop a specific plan and a timeline to address them.

By way of background summary, the AY2004-2005 Self-Study (prepared in November 2005 and was subsequently submitted to the Commission prior to the visit) listed a total of 168 recommendations under the six ACCJC themes. This is not an unusual number, given the "laundry-listing" format that characterized the recommendations in the Self-Study report, which were expected to be carried over to the ISMP template. For this Self-Study, the recommendations were organized around the four ACCJC Standards though utilizing a thematic approach to reporting the findings. Because it is less problematic, this report will use the standards approach (not thematic) to track and report on the College's progress in its self-evaluation of its performance.

As reported in the Self-Study, the breakdown of recommendations per standard is as follows:

Standard 1   63 recommendations
Standard 2   30 recommendations
Standard 3   44 recommendations
Standard 4   31 recommendations

Total   168 recommendations

The status of each of these recommendations is given below based on the careful analysis of various institutional reports from the Office of Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness, including the yearly Self-Study reports and the annual institutional assessment reports. The following matrix reflects the College's substantial progress on the 168 recommendations per standard and category:

Standard	Closed/Completed	Continuing	Pending	Total
Std1	40	20	3	63
Std2	24	3	3	30
Std3	20	4	20	44
Std4	19	6	6	31
Total	103	33	32	168

As the above table reflects, sixty-one percent or 103 recommendations have been completed or closed since the team's departure. Approximately 20% or 33 recommendations are being acted upon on a continuous basis and 32 or 19% are pending action. The following reflects the planning agenda for selected recommendations that are still pending and also a summary breakdown of recommendations that are currently being acted upon.

Planning Agenda for Pending and Continuing Recommendations

A very important recommendation that is pending calls for the continuous development of programs that meet community needs, while ensuring continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes. While efforts to address this recommendation have been ongoing, it will further be addressed under the Educational Excellence initiative of the college's new Five-Year Institutional Strategic Master Plan (ISMP) and evaluated under the institutional assessment processes already in place at the college since 2001. In addition, the college has recently created the Career Technical Education Advisory Council that will serve as an advisory body to the college on community and industry needs for educational programs and training. The section on substantive change in this report documents the responsiveness of the college to take action on these emerging training needs in the community.

One other pending recommendation revolves around students' access to comprehensive learning resources. This specific recommendation advocates building a new library that complies with all applicable standards and budget for adequate staff and resources. Currently, this recommendation is being addressed through federal grant applications and other means of revenue seeking efforts to secure funds to improve the existing library's infrastructure and resources. In November 2008, the college was awarded approximately 2.3 million in federal monies (**APPENDIX P**) to expand the existing library. More funding is currently being sought to finance this important initiative.

Another recommendation calls for the formal integration of information literacy SLOs into the curriculum for General Education and Liberal Arts. This is part of the purview of the Curriculum and General Education Committees under the Faculty Senate structure. One action that has come up to address the recommendation is to have all curriculum documents reviewed for information literacy SLOs before they are approved. As an integral part of its charge, the Curriculum Committee of the Faculty Senate reviews all curriculum documents to ensure the inclusion of SLOs.

In the new Five-Year Institutional Strategic Master Plan (ISMP: 2009-2014) the Dedicated Planning initiative section is designed to address and oversee the development, implementation, and monitoring of these institutional plans. The new ISMP was approved by the Board of Trustees on December 4, 2008 and the President has assigned the Vice President of Administrative Services to oversee the Dedicated Planning initiative section of the ISMP.

The college's goal is to have all master plans (institutional, technology, facility, and assessment) integrated into one complete document, and widely disseminated to all campus constituents, as well as government legislators, business leaders, and other community stakeholders. Two events are being planned for this formal presentation of the ISMP to the campus and the community at large: one, during the Professional Development Day on campus in February, and two, during a special dinner event billed as Leadership Dinner in March. This will also be the kick-off event for the Community Interaction initiative of the ISMP. This is in keeping with the college's plan to continue with institutional activities that promote the college's role as Guam's leader in workforce development. This recommendation is in fact already reflected in GCC's new vision statement, as embodied in the new ISMP. It is further emphasized under the Pioneering Initiative (dealing with workforce development) section of the new plan. Making GCC a leader in workforce development remains a continuous initiative for the college.

Recommendations regarding the college's mission statement all focus on the development and review process associated with the mission statement. Key words such as *improving, reviewing, creating, implementing, clarifying, disseminating* and *aligning* in the verbiage of these recommendations point to the requirement that the campus community must review and update the mission statement on a regular basis. The recently-concluded campus dialogue on the ISMP development was an exercise that addressed this very issue.

Several recommendations were also directed towards the improvement of the currently existing assessment process at the college. Key phrases in these recommendations such as *providing training, conducting program reviews, collecting artifacts, aligning SLOs, publishing assessment reports, and reviewing assessment plans* are geared towards strengthening and improving the assessment initiative currently in place at the college. While these recommendations are mostly process oriented, the College Committee on Assessment (CCA) has emphasized the careful linking of outcomes (at the program level) to goals (at the institutional level) to standards (at the ACCJC level) within the whole assessment process. Training in TracDat --the college's assessment data management tool-- for faculty, staff, and administrators is a critical factor in moving this initiative forward.

One program related recommendation that is being acted upon continuously is the strengthening of the apprenticeship program to better meet community needs. In light of this recommendation, the apprenticeship program has shown a significant growth and expansion within the last two years. Additionally, more employers are having standards prepared and registering their employees into the program.

There are two SLO related recommendations that are considerably significant. One of the recommendations places emphasis in evaluating programs which will lead to more planning in the development of SLOs within programs and courses and will result in improvements of student learning. In addressing this recommendation, the AIE Office continuously guides out-of-sync programs (in the 2-year assessment cycle) to fulfill their assessment requirements. This brings them back in sync with the already established assessment cycle, thereby allowing the uninterrupted evaluation of programs and courses as they relate to student learning.

The other significant recommendation pertaining to SLOs places emphasis on including improvements to insure continuity, such as revisions of the curriculum manual to align student outcomes at the course and program level; focus on student learning outcomes, reflect consistency in language with AIE assessment process. In addressing this recommendation, the AIE Office has instituted an ongoing collaboration with the Curriculum Committee to ensure that assessment terminology remains consistent in usage in both the curriculum manual and in daily language use on campus. Also, AIE works closely with the Curriculum Committee chair to respond to curriculum revision issues.

GCC is committed to utilize its self-evaluation process to improve the quality of educational programs and services it provides to students, employers, and the community. The self-study recommendations that are being addressed on a continuous basis support this deeply entrenched commitment.

Appendix Q at the back of this report provides the detailed explanation of the status of each of these specific recommendations as categorized by Standard in the AY 2005-2006 Self-Study Report. As the matrix illustrates, the yearly process of going through the Self-Study reporting cycle, and consequently importing the recommendations to the ISMP for action, has been quite fruitful for the College in two ways. First, there was immediacy in responding to the recommendations so that the feedback loop became continuous, and second, the resulting quicker pace of responding to recommendations aligned perfectly with the two-year assessment cycle that the College adopted since 2003. Despite these benefits, however, there were some critical issues associated with the current ISMP format that demanded a revisit of its form and substance.

Toward the end of April 2008, the College embarked on a project to recast the Institutional Strategic Master Plan (ISMP) because its format had become largely problematic. As the ISMP template underwent review, three major issues emerged: (1) a visioning piece that integrates all activities/recommendations was critically missing; (2) the significant time lag

that occurred between the time the recommendations were given and the time of analysis became an issue as recommendations were continuously being addressed by the Annual Institutional Assessment Reports (AIAR) as well; and (3) there was confusion among the various offices dealing with the recommendations because the ISMP pieces were being done independently of one another. The ISMP template was soon regarded by many in the institution as being disjointed, fragmented, and without a unifying thread.

Newest Plan the Institution Has Developed

In this light, a new format for the ISMP – this time, with a visioning piece—gained not only support but momentum toward the end of 2008. With the assistance of a consultant, a campus-wide dialogue occurred from April to December 2008 where input from faculty, staff, administrators, and students were solicited regarding the institutional direction that the College needed to go. A Strenghts, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis was conducted, and a new vision statement was likewise developed in the process. Four strategic initiatives began to take shape as the conversations gained impetus and strength. As the campus- wide dialogue later validated, this new plan became more urgent with the impending military build up on island. As the Department of Defense is transferring military assets from Okinawa, Japan to Guam from 2010 through 2014, this will require expanding the island's infrastructure to accommodate 8,000 Marines and an estimated 9,000 dependents. This will also have a great impact on educational and training opportunities at the College because of expansion needs that will have to respond to the needs of service members and adult dependents as well as potential workforce needs.

The resulting document is *Moving Forward: Institutional Strategic Master Plan, 2009-2014* **(see Appendix R)**. In this new plan, four key initiatives are identified –Pioneering, Educational Excellence, Community Interaction, and Dedicated Planning-- and the three Vice Presidents and the President will assume responsibility for each of these initiatives for purposes of accountability. As a comprehensive plan, this document likewise integrates the Institutional Assessment Plan into it. The Campus Facilities Plan and the Technology Plan are also included in this integrated ISMP, whose implementation begins January 2009. Changes to the reporting flow of recommendations from the Self-Study to the ISMP (and now perhaps vice versa) are currently being discussed.

Next Steps

Despite the College's forward momentum in addressing the 2006 team report's recommendations, there exists several areas that demand greater focus and sustained discussion among the critical constituents of the institution. Areas of growth that deserve institutional attention in the next three years prior to the visit are the following:

Linking Planning with Resources

The greatest challenge that the College faces concerns how planning processes remain on course despite unpredictable funding support from the Government of Guam. The budgetary

crisis that has plagued the island for several years now is partly responsible for this situation. As a result, plans often go awry because the lack of resources becomes the largest barrier to successful implementation. Through the years, the College's reliance on legislative funding support has severely constrained its ability to pursue dynamic and creative solutions to problems directly impacting programs and services. The College has therefore gradually turned to grant-writing in order to secure critically needed federal funds, and has had moderate success in attracting federal monies within the last two years. It continues to explore other funding sources that support and maintain institutional planning processes. The college believes that funding stability will contribute largely to a culture of planning that is sustained and data-driven. This is the reason why the College is currently exploring potential economic benefits that may be derived from its 314-acre property that has remained idle because of ancestral land claim issues in the past.

From an assessment perspective, the College needs to do more in ensuring that budgetary decisions made at all levels (from department to division to institution) reflect data and evidence gathered through the two-year assessment cycle. The yearly budget plans must contain goals extracted from assessment plans stored in TracDat –the College's assessment data management software-- so that tracking and monitoring of activities are goal-based and assessment-driven. The VP for Finance and Business Office will coordinate with the Office of Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness to integrate goal development and monitoring into the department-based budget process. This will ensure that eventually the assessment goals perfectly align with the budgetary goals of each department and unit at the College. In the long run, meaningful data will demand that decisions on the allocation of resources based on assessment results (including hiring of personnel) would ultimately become an institutional policy and priority.

Forecasting Program Expansion and Growth

Due to the impending military build up on island, the Guam community is increasingly looking at the College as the primary training provider that will contribute significantly to workforce development on Guam. The situation presents an enormous challenge, given the current fiscal environment. Because the College is legislatively mandated to provide career and technical education programs to the entire community, it will seek more collaborative partnerships with both public and private institutions to fulfill this responsibility. One such partnership that has already developed is with the Guam Contractors Association's Trades Academy. The College needs to cultivate more collaborative relationships with business organizations, village mayors, and other entities that will provide wide-ranging support to the College's mission.

Advisory committees, comprised mostly of industry practitioners, will also be progressively more relied upon to provide substantive input on curricular programs that reflect critical needs in industry and the community. Planning for expansion of curricular programs will entail substantial faculty input in the content areas as well. Proposals for substantive change to be submitted to ACCJC will require early planning and consultation with the Commission. The College ensures that curriculum expansion at the College will call for wide-ranging dialogue that would bring together various stakeholders' perspectives on

how best to proceed in addressing the workforce needs of an ever-growing island community.

Engaging the Community and the Region

Since the installation of the new CEO of the College in June 2007, there has been a greater and more sustained effort in engaging the community in multifaceted ways. Through the initiative of the new President, village outreaches have been conducted to bring educational opportunities available at the College down to the grassroots level. The College will continue to position itself in the community as an active partner of both the government and private sectors.

As an active member of the Pacific Postsecondary Education Council (PPEC), the College will also seek more articulation agreements with neighboring Pacific colleges in the next three years. This involvement in the regional arena is important because of the many potential training opportunities that the impending Guam military build up will bring. Providing many options for students to succeed in their educational goals is a responsibility that the College takes seriously.
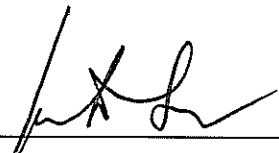
Conclusion

With the College's new leadership team, a renewed vigor and momentum has continued to permeate throughout the College. The assessment infrastructure, incrementally built through the years, has provided the framework with which data and evidence is consistently relied upon to inform decision-making at all levels of the institution. As it now reaches a certain level of maturation, the College continues to sustain assessment activities that identify, recognize and promote student learning outcomes at the course, program, and institutional levels. Undoubtedly, assessment results have fueled forceful dialogue in many parts of the institution. The new atmosphere of participatory governance on campus has likewise given rise to faculty's greater engagement with issues that impact program or institutional improvement.

The systematic follow-through of the recommendations contained in the various annually-produced institutional assessment reports and the yearly Self-Study process, as well as the regular monitoring being done by the Office of Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness, will sufficiently address the four major recommendations contained in the 2006 Evaluation Report. The College is likewise committed to institutionalizing the feedback loop of assessment-- that which utilizes the cycle of planning, reporting, and using of assessment results as a matter of routine institutional functioning-- to instill a culture of accountability and improvement throughout the college campus. This Midterm Report documents more than sufficient progress made towards this goal thus far. By the time of the next comprehensive site visit, it is certainly anticipated that the College would have met and exceeded all of the recommendations.

The College stands ready and prepared to welcome the Commission representatives in the next team visit in Spring 2012.
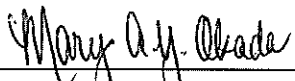
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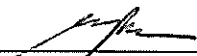
R. Ray D. Somera, Ph.D., Accreditation Liaison
Officer

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Date

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Mary A. Y. Okada, President

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Date

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Gina Y. Ramos, Chairperson, Board of Trustees

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Date