



**ACCREDITING  
COMMISSION  
for COMMUNITY and  
JUNIOR COLLEGES**

*Western Association  
of Schools and Colleges*

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February 6, 2015

Dr. Seth Galea'i  
President  
American Samoa Community College  
P. O. Box 2609  
Pago Pago AS 96799

Dear President Galea'i:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting on January 7-9, 2015, reviewed the Institutional Self Evaluation Report and the Report of the External Evaluation Team that visited American Samoa Community College September 29-October 2, 2014.

In addition to the evaluation of the overall institution, the external evaluation team also conducted an in-depth evaluation of the Bachelors of Education (B.Ed.) degree program that is part of the College's degree programs and is a component of its mission. The Bachelor of Education program is well funded and is closely coordinated with the College's AA program and the American Samoa Department of Education.

The Commission took action to **order Show Cause**. Show Cause is ordered when the Commission finds an institution to be in substantial noncompliance with ACCJC Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, or Commission policies. American Samoa Community College is required to submit a **Show Cause Report by October 15, 2015**. The Report will be followed by a visit by a show cause external evaluation team.<sup>1</sup> The Commission requires the institution to Show Cause why its accreditation should not be withdrawn by demonstrating that it has corrected the deficiencies noted by the Commission and is in compliance with the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies. The burden of proof will rest on the institution to demonstrate why its accreditation should be continued.

The accredited status of the institution continues during the period of the Show Cause and until the Commission acts to withdraw accreditation or when issues that gave rise to Show Cause are fully resolved and the institution is removed from sanction. The institution must make the necessary changes to its policies, procedures, practices, and outcomes during the allocated period, in order to fully resolve the deficiencies and to achieve compliance.

Dr. Seth Galea'i  
American Samoa Community College  
February 6, 2015

The External Evaluation Report describes in detail the findings, analysis, and conclusions of the 2014 evaluation team. The College is urged to very carefully review the *entire* report and use it as a basis for developing and enhancing strategies to come into compliance with accreditation requirements. The October 2015 Show Cause Report should demonstrate that American Samoa Community College has addressed all the recommendations cited in this action letter, resolved all deficiencies, and come into compliance with Eligibility Requirements 7, 11, 14, and 18 and with Accreditation Standards found within Standards I, II, III, and IV, as noted below as well as linked to the recommendations listed below, and has the ability to sustain this compliance.

### **Need to Resolve Deficiencies**

The Accreditation Standards, as an integrated whole, represent indicators of academic quality and institutional effectiveness. Deficiencies in institutional policies, procedures, practices and outcomes which lead to noncompliance with any Standard will impact quality at an institution, and ultimately the educational environment and experiences of students. The Commission took this action because it determined that American Samoa Community College is out of compliance with the following requirements: 2014 Eligibility Requirements 7, 11, 14, and 18; and 2014 Accreditation Standards I.A.2, I.B.1, I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.5, I.B.6, I.B.7, I.B.8, I.B.9, II.A.2, II.A.10, II.B.3, II.C.2, II.C.3, III.A.6, III.A.12, III.D.9, III.D.11, IV.A.1, IV.A.2, IV.A.3, IV.B.2, IV.B.3, IV.C.8, IV.C.10, and IV.C.11.

#### **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)

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February 6, 2015

**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)

In its report, the team also made recommendations for improving institutional effectiveness. These recommendations (11 through 14) do not identify current areas of deficiency in institutional practice, but do highlight areas of practice for which the College attention is needed in the future.

Dr. Seth Galea'i  
American Samoa Community College  
February 6, 2015

The External Evaluation Report that was sent to the institution provides details of the team's findings with regard to each Eligibility Requirement and Accreditation Standard and should be read carefully and used to understand the team's findings.

The guidance and recommendations contained in the External Evaluation Report represent the best advice of the peer evaluation team at the time of the visit, but may not describe all that is necessary for the College to come into compliance. The College's own self evaluation and responsive action is a vital part of a successful voluntary peer evaluation process. Institutions are expected to take all action necessary to continuously comply with Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies. The Commission wishes to remind you that while an institution may concur or disagree with any part of the Report, American Samoa Community College is expected to use the External Evaluation Report to improve its programs and services and to resolve issues identified by the Commission.

I have previously sent you a copy of the External Evaluation Report. Additional copies may now be duplicated. The Commission requires that the College give the Institutional Self Evaluation Report, the External Evaluation Report, and this letter appropriate dissemination to College staff and to those who were signatories of the College Self Evaluation Report. This group should include the campus leadership and the Board of Regents.

The Commission also requires that the College's Institutional Self Evaluation Report, the External Evaluation Report, and this Commission action letter be made available to students and the public by placing a copy on the College website. *Please note that in response to public interest in disclosure, the Commission now requires institutions to post accreditation information on a page no more than one click from the institution's home page.*

Please call this office if the ACCJC staff can be of assistance or if you have any questions.

Federal regulations require the Commission to post a Public Disclosure Notice (PDN) for institutions placed on Probation or Show Cause, or when accreditation is terminated. The PDN is used to inform the public of the reasons for such a severe sanction.

The Commission will post the PDN on the College's entry in the Directory of Accredited Institutions online at [www.accjc.org](http://www.accjc.org). The institution is permitted to post a response to the PDN. Enclosed find the proposed notice for American Samoa Community College with this action letter, and your comments on it are invited. Please provide the College's response for posting, if any, by March 6, 2015.

Dr. Seth Galea'i  
American Samoa Community College  
February 6, 2015

On behalf of the Commission, I wish to express continuing interest in the institution's educational programs and services. Professional self-regulation is the most effective means of assuring integrity, effectiveness, and educational quality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara A. Beno".

Barbara A. Beno, Ph.D.  
President

BAB/tl

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<sup>1</sup> Institutions preparing and submitting a Show Cause Report are required to follow guidelines for institutional self evaluation and demonstrate that the institution meets all Accreditation Standards, Eligibility Requirements and policies cited by the commission as areas in the institution's policies, procedures, practices, and outcomes were deficient and led to noncompliance. The institution must demonstrate it is compliant with all Standards, Eligibility Requirements and policies.