

ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES  
Western Association of Schools and Colleges



**Public Disclosure Notice**

*for*

**American Samoa Community College**

**March 6, 2015**

*This Notice has been developed for use in notifying the public and various agencies about the accredited status of an institution that has been placed on serious sanction or has had its accredited status terminated or denied. It should be read in conjunction with the Statement of Accredited Status, which provides additional information about the college's accreditation history and its programs.*

*This Notice concerning **American Samoa Community College (ASCC)** has been reviewed by the institution, and **ASCC** has been notified of the opportunity to submit a response to the Commission's decision. If a college has responded to the Public Disclosure Notice, an electronic link to the institutional response will be found with this Notice on the ACCJC website at: <http://www.accjc.org/directory-of-accredited-institutions> in the Directory of Accredited Institutions listing for **American Samoa Community College**. If this Notice is posted without such link, then the institution has opted not to provide a response.*

**About Accreditation**

Accreditation by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (the Commission or ACCJC) certifies that a college has been found to meet rigorous requirements for quality and that there are reasonable grounds for believing it will continue to meet them. The Commission's Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission Policies can be found in the Accreditation Reference Handbook on the ACCJC website at: <http://www.accjc.org/all-commission-publications-policies>. The *Policy on Commission Actions on Institutions* and the *Policy on Public Disclosure and Confidentiality in the Accreditation Process* are among the policies included there.

The accreditation process requires an institution to open itself to examination by a group of professionals who evaluate the degree to which an institution meets the Standards. The Standards set requirements for quality that cover many aspects of the college, including: instruction, student support services, library and learning resources, physical environment, technology services, financial management, institutional governance, institutional integrity and honesty, and achievement of institutional mission. Accreditation is awarded only after an institution demonstrates that it complies with Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards and Commission policies. The Commission reviews the overall quality of each institution every

six years. If an institution is found to need improvements, it may be required to undergo additional reviews and monitoring by the Commission.

“Informing the Public About Accreditation,” published by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, provides additional information on the nature and value of accreditation. It is available at: [http://www.chea.org/public\\_info/index.asp](http://www.chea.org/public_info/index.asp).

### **Summary of the Commission Action Ordering Show Cause**

The Commission ordered **Show Cause** for **American Samoa Community College** when the Commission, at its January 7-9, 2015 meeting, reviewed the institution’s adherence to the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies as part of a comprehensive external evaluation for academic quality and institutional effectiveness. The Commission found there were deficiencies in **ASCC** policies, procedures, practices and outcomes which resulted in substantial noncompliance with standards. Due the imposition of Show Cause, the **ASCC**’s reaffirmation of accreditation has been delayed. The **ASCC** has been provided a period of time to prove that its accreditation should not be terminated, by demonstrating that it has corrected the deficiencies and that **ASCC** now meets the standards. The College remains accredited during this time, but is on Show Cause status.

### **Next Steps and Expected Accreditation Activities**

**American Samoa Community College** will be monitored by the Commission and required to submit a Show Cause Report to the Commission in **October 2015**. An External Evaluation Team of professionals will visit **ASCC** in Fall 2015 to assess the institution’s compliance with the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, or Commission policies. The Commission will review **ASCC**’s report, and that of the external evaluation team, at its meeting in **January 2016**. If the Commission determines that **American Samoa Community College** has demonstrated compliance with the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies, the Commission will act to remove Show Cause. However, if the Commission determines that the institution has not demonstrated compliance with the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, or Commission policies, then the Commission will take further action as permitted under the Commission’s *Policy on Commission Actions on Institutions*.

**American Samoa Community College** must make the necessary changes to its policies, procedures, practices and outcomes during the allocated period, in order to fully resolve the Commission’s findings and to achieve compliance with standards, and to gain reaffirmation of **ASCC**’s accreditation.

### **Summary of Noncompliance with Standards**

The Commission 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. The language of these cited Eligibility Requirements and Accreditation Standards is provided below:

## **Eligibility Requirements**

### **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. 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 governing board is an independent policy-making body capable of reflecting constituent and public interest in board activities and decisions. A majority of the board members have no employment, family, ownership, or other personal financial interest in the institution. The board adheres to a conflict of interest policy that assures that those interests are disclosed and that they do not interfere with the impartiality of governing body members or outweigh the greater duty to secure and ensure the academic and fiscal integrity of the institution. (Standard IV.C.1, IV.C.4, and IV.C.11)

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

The institution defines standards for student achievement and assesses its performance against those standards. The institution publishes for each program the program's expected student learning and any program-specific achievement outcomes. Through regular and systematic assessment, it demonstrates that students who complete programs, no matter where or how they are offered, achieve the identified outcomes and that the standards for student achievement are met. (Standard I.B.2, I.B.3, and II.A.1)

### **14. Faculty**

The institution has a sufficient number of qualified faculty, which includes full time faculty and may include part time and adjunct faculty, to achieve the institutional mission and purposes. The number is sufficient in size and experience to support all of the institution's educational programs. A clear statement of faculty responsibilities must include development and review of curriculum as well as assessment of learning. (Standard III.A.7 and III.A.2)

### **18. Financial Resources**

The institution documents a funding base, financial resources, and plans for financial development adequate to support student learning programs and services, to improve institutional effectiveness, and to assure financial stability. (Standard III.D.1)

## **Accreditation Standards**

### **I.A. Mission**

I.A.2. The institution uses data to determine how effectively it is accomplishing its mission, and whether the mission directs institutional priorities in meeting the educational needs of students.

**I.B. Assuring Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness Standards**

I.B.1. The institution demonstrates a sustained, substantive and collegial dialog about student outcomes, student equity, academic quality, institutional effectiveness, and continuous improvement of student learning and achievement.

I.B.2. The institution defines and assesses student learning outcomes for all instructional programs and student and learning support services. (ER 11)

I.B.3. The institution establishes institution-set standards for student achievement, appropriate to its mission, assesses how well it is achieving them in pursuit of continuous improvement, and publishes this information. (ER 11)

I.B.4. The institution uses assessment data and organizes its institutional processes to support student learning and student achievement.

I.B.5. The institution assesses accomplishment of its mission through program review and evaluation of goals and objectives, student learning outcomes, and student achievement. Quantitative and qualitative data are disaggregated for analysis by program type and mode of delivery.

I.B.6. The institution disaggregates and analyzes learning outcomes and achievement for subpopulations of students. When the institution identifies performance gaps, it implements strategies, which may include allocation or reallocation of human, fiscal and other resources, to mitigate those gaps and evaluates the efficacy of those strategies.

I.B.7. The institution regularly evaluates its policies and practices across all areas of the institution, including instructional programs, student and learning support services, resource management, and governance processes to assure their effectiveness in supporting academic quality and accomplishment of mission.

I.B.8. The institution broadly communicates the results of all of its assessment and evaluation activities so that the institution has a shared understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and sets appropriate priorities.

I.B.9. The institution engages in continuous, broad based, systematic evaluation and planning. The institution integrates program review, planning, and resource allocation into a comprehensive process that leads to accomplishment of its mission and improvement of institutional effectiveness and academic quality. Institutional planning addresses short- and long-range needs for educational programs and services and for human, physical, technology, and financial resources. (ER 19)

**II.A. Instructional Programs Standards**

II.A.2. Faculty, including full time, part time, and adjunct faculty, ensure that the content and methods of instruction meet generally accepted academic and professional standards and expectations. Faculty and others responsible act to continuously improve instructional courses,

programs and directly related services through systematic evaluation to assure currency, improve teaching and learning strategies, and promote student success.

II.A.10. [2002 Standard II.A.6] The institution makes available to its students clearly stated transfer-of-credit policies in order to facilitate the mobility of students without penalty. In accepting transfer credits to fulfill degree requirements, the institution certifies that the expected learning outcomes for transferred courses are comparable to the learning outcomes of its own courses. Where patterns of student enrollment between institutions are identified, the institution develops articulation agreements as appropriate to its mission. (ER 10)

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

II.B. 3. The institution evaluates library and other learning support services to assure their adequacy in meeting identified student needs. Evaluation of these services includes evidence that they contribute to the attainment of student learning outcomes. The institution uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.

### **II.C. Student Support Services Standards**

II.C.2. [2002 Standard II.B.3.c] The institution identifies and assesses learning support outcomes for its student population and provides appropriate student support services and programs to achieve those outcomes. The institution uses assessment data to continuously improve student support programs and services.

II.C.3. The institution assures equitable access to all of its students by providing appropriate, comprehensive, and reliable services to students regardless of service location or delivery method. (ER 15)

### **III.A. Human Resources Standards**

III.A. 6. The evaluation of faculty, academic administrators, and other personnel directly responsible for student learning includes, as a component of that evaluation, consideration of how these employees use the results of the assessment of learning outcomes to improve teaching and learning.

III.A.12. Through its policies and practices, the institution creates and maintains appropriate programs, practices, and services that support its diverse personnel. The institution regularly assesses its record in employment equity and diversity consistent with its mission.

### **III.D. Financial Resources Standards**

III.D. 9. The institution has sufficient cash flow and reserves to maintain stability, support strategies for appropriate risk management, and, when necessary, implement contingency plans to meet financial emergencies and unforeseen occurrences.

III.D.11. The level of financial resources provides a reasonable expectation of both short-term and long-term financial solvency. When making short-range financial plans, the institution considers its long-range financial priorities to assure financial stability. The institution clearly identifies, plans, and allocates resources for payment of liabilities and future obligations.

**IV.A. Decision-Making Roles and Processes Standards**

IV.A.1. Institutional leaders create and encourage innovation leading to institutional excellence. They support administrators, faculty, staff, and students, no matter what their official titles, in taking initiative for improving the practices, programs, and services in which they are involved. When ideas for improvement have policy or significant institution-wide implications, systematic participative processes are used to assure effective planning and implementation.

IV.A.2. The institution establishes and implements policy and procedures authorizing administrator, faculty, and staff participation in decision-making processes. The policy makes provisions for student participation and consideration of student views in those matters in which students have a direct and reasonable interest. Policy specifies the manner in which individuals bring forward ideas and work together on appropriate policy, planning, and special-purpose committees.

IV.A.3. Administrators and faculty, through policy and procedures, 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.

**IV.B. Chief Executive Officer Standards**

IV.B.2. The CEO plans, oversees, and evaluates an administrative structure organized and staffed to reflect the institution's purposes, size, and complexity. The CEO delegates authority to administrators and others consistent with their responsibilities, as appropriate.

IV.B.3. Through established policies and procedures, the CEO guides institutional improvement of the teaching and learning environment by:

- establishing a collegial process that sets values, goals, and priorities;
- ensuring the college sets institutional performance standards for student achievement;
- ensuring that evaluation and planning rely on high quality research and analysis of external and internal conditions;
- ensuring that educational planning is integrated with resource planning and allocation to support student achievement and learning;
- ensuring that the allocation of resources supports and improves learning and achievement; and
- establishing procedures to evaluate overall institutional planning and implementation efforts to achieve the mission of the institution.

**IV.C. Governing Board Standards**

IV.C.8. To ensure the institution is accomplishing its goals for student success, the governing board regularly reviews key indicators of student learning and achievement and institutional plans for improving academic quality.

IV.C.10. Board policies and/or bylaws clearly establish a process for board evaluation. The evaluation assesses the board's effectiveness in promoting and sustaining academic quality and institutional effectiveness. The governing board regularly evaluates its practices and performance, including full participation in board training, and makes public the results. The results are used to improve board performance, academic quality, and institutional effectiveness.

IV.C.11. The governing board upholds a code of ethics and conflict of interest policy, and individual board members adhere to the code. The board has a clearly defined policy for dealing with behavior that violates its code and implements it when necessary. A majority of the board members have no employment, family, ownership, or other personal financial interest in the institution. Board member interests are disclosed and do not interfere with the impartiality of governing body members or outweigh the greater duty to secure and ensure the academic and fiscal integrity of the institution. (ER 7)

---