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July 10, 2013

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

Dear President Galea'i:

At its meeting June 19-21, 2013, the WASC Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities (ACSCU) considered the report of the Special Visit team that conducted a focused, technology-mediated review of the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) program at American Samoa Community College (ASCC) on March 18, 2013. The Commission also had access to the Special Visit report prepared by ASCC prior to the review and the report by the Special Visit team that conducted an on-site visit on April 6 - 7, 2012. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the review with Kathleen Kolhoff, Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs, and, Lina Galeai-Scanlan, Director of the Teacher Education Program. Your comments were helpful in informing the Commission's deliberations.

The ASCC B.Ed. program was granted candidacy in July, 2012. That visit combined both a capacity and an effectiveness focus on all ACSCU Standards and Criteria for Review (CFR) as they relate to the offering of the bachelor's degree, with the understanding that the institution will remain with the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) as its institutional accreditor. This most recent and focused review represents the program's final step toward Initial Accreditation.

The Commission's action letter of July 11, 2012, highlighted two areas for attention and development between the on-site visit and focused review. The Commission, first, recommended that ASCC continue its development of summative assessments that will ensure the consistent culminating achievement of program learning outcomes. ASCC was expected to provide evidence of achievement by their first small cohort of graduates. Specific attention to creating strategies to assess lower- and upper-division general education competencies of the graduates was also expected. Second, the Commission recommended that ASCC find resources to provide faculty with release time and hire new faculty to address heavy teaching and advising loads.

American Samoa Community College addressed these areas in a thorough manner and produced a solid report that included evidence of genuine progress.

The Commission endorsed the following commendations:

Culminating Assessment. As highlighted in the team report ASCC provided documentation of assessment of upper division general education student learning outcomes (SLOs) and lower and upper division program level learning outcomes. ASCC confirmed that five B.Ed. graduates were employed as public school teachers in Samoa and two of five were working on a master's degree in education. The Director of Teacher Education visits local schools to assess the quality of both student teaching and faculty supervision in B.Ed. student practicums. In addition to graduates, there are 20 upper division students currently in the program, some of whom said "they were grateful they did not have to leave the island and could continue to care for their families while pursuing their degree." The Commission commended the College for its work in the summative assessment of program learning outcomes.

Faculty Workload. The Commission also commended ASCC for adjusting faculty workloads and beginning a process to hire additional faculty to support the B.Ed. program. Beginning in January, 2013 B.Ed. faculty teaching loads were reduced from 15 to 12 credits per semester. ASCC is in the process of hiring two additional B.Ed. faculty by summer 2013. These adjustments enable faculty to "engage in professional development activities and focus on balance with current faculty while satisfying disciplinary needs."

The Commission recommended that ASCC continue to give attention to the following areas:

Assessment and Program Review. As highlighted in the team report, ASCC should continue its attention on assessment and program review to accomplish thoughtful, reflective development of a maturing program. (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.7, 4.4, 4.7)

General Education and the B.Ed. Program. Further attention needs to be given to linking general education outcomes to program-level outcomes to ensure an integrated experience for students. (CFR 2.2a)

The Commission was pleased to learn that, since the review, ASCC has finalized a contract with the American Samoa Department of Education that shows strong support for the program. This will provide substantial financial assistance to ensure a stable program.

The Commission acted to:

1. Receive the Special Visit report and grant initial accreditation for the Bachelor's of Education (B.Ed.) program.
2. Should ASCC remain accredited with this Commission, schedule the next comprehensive review to concur with the next ACCJC comprehensive review though not later than five years from the date of this letter.

In taking this action to grant Initial Accreditation for the B.Ed. program, the Commission confirms that American Samoa Community College has met WASC ACSCU Standards at a substantial level and has successfully completed the multi-stage review conducted under the 2008 Standards of Accreditation.

This action authorizes American Samoa Community College to offer the B.Ed. degree. The College will need to notify staff if it plans to offer a second bachelor's degree in order to review the process to be used in such a case.

In addition, the Commission is aware that the US Department of Education has determined that the B.Ed. program is ineligible for federal financial aid. This determination may require the College to modify these accrediting arrangements with both ACCJC and the Senior College Commissions. If so, the Commission will work with the College to facilitate those arrangements.

This Initial Accreditation is granted for five years. Accreditation status is not granted retroactively. Because ASCC remains accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, the institution should use the following statement if it wishes to describe the status publicly;

The Bachelor of Education program at American Samoa Community College is accredited by the WASC Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities, 985 Atlantic Avenue #100, Alameda, CA 94501; 510-748-9001; wascsenior.org.

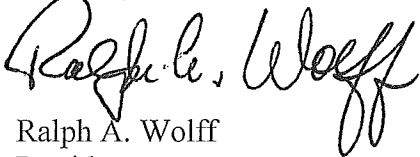
In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter will be sent to the chair of the American Samoa Community College governing board in one week. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on the ASCC web site and widely disseminated throughout the institution to promote further engagement and improvement, and to support the institution's response to the specific issues identified in them. The team report and the action letter also will be posted on the WASC website.

Please note that the Criteria for Review cited in this letter refer to the *2008 Handbook of Accreditation*. The *2008 Handbook* continues to be available on the WASC website at www.wascsenior.org.

Finally, the Commission wishes to express its appreciation for the extensive work that the American Samoa Community College undertook in preparing for and supporting this accreditation review. WASC is committed to an accreditation process that adds value to institutions while assuring public accountability, and we are grateful for your continued support of our process.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about this letter or the action of the Commission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ralph A. Wolff". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "W" at the end.

Ralph A. Wolff
President

RW/gc

Cc: Harold Hewitt, Commission Chair
Kathleen Kohlhof, ALO
Uta L. Tagoilelagi, Board Chair
Barbara Beno, President, ACCJC
Members of the Special Visit team
Maureen A. Maloney, WASC Staff Liaison

List of currently conferred degrees at the American Samoa Community College, Samoa (March 2013):

Degree	Program Name
Bachelors	Education