

COLLEGE OF MICRONESIA – FSM BOARD OF REGENTS

Board Meeting Minutes for 25-29 August 2025 | COM-FSM Chuuk Campus

Zoom link: <https://comfsm.zoom.us/j/3061339702?pwd=dnM3UmJKWW83V0JFdjhCNDNMbmVsUT09&omn=94670540507>

Meeting ID: 306 133 9702

Passcode: 133187

Present: Regent Suzanne Gallen from Pohnpei (Chair); Regent Jeffrey Arnold from Chuuk (Vice-Chairman via Zoom); Regent Geraldine Mitagyow from Yap (Member); Regent Lynn Sonden from the FSM National Campus; and President & CEO Dr. Theresa Koroivulaono (*ex officio member*)

Absent: Regent Cornelius from Kosrae State and Andrea Hadik, Dean of Kosrae Campus

Resources: Vice-President for Instructional Affairs, Mrs. Delihna Ehmes; Vice-President for Enrollment, Management and Student Services, Mr. Joey Oducado; Vice-President for Innovation & Sustainability, Mr. Steven Young-Uhk; A/g Vice-President for Instructional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance, Mr. Gee L. Bing (HR Manager); A/g Dean of Chuuk Campus Ms. Genevy Samuel; Dean of Career and Technical Education Center Ms. Phyllis Silbanuz; Dean of the Yap and FSM-FMI Campuses, Ms. Lourdes Robomoan.

Additional Resources: Comptroller, Ms. Roselle Roboman, IT Consultant, Mr. Dhiraj Bhartu, Director for Student Life, Mr. Loatis Seneres, Executive Officer, Mrs. Lisa N. Dereas; Executive Secretary II to the OTP, Ms. Senniesha Santos; and Raymond & James representative, Mr. Jason Miyashita.

Special Guest: Kosrae Campus Student Body Association Secretary, Ms. Mia Neth.

1. **Call to Order** – Chair Gallen called the meeting to order. Meeting convened on Tuesday, 26 August at 8:40am.
2. **Opening Prayer** – VPIA Delihna Ehmes opened the meeting with a prayer.
3. **Reading of the Mission Statement** – the College Mission Statement was recited by all present.
4. **Roll Call; Declaration of Quorum** – Regent Geri called roll. Four (4) Regents were present. Quorum is met.
5. **Review and Approval of the Agenda** – Regent Lynn moved to adopt the agenda. **CARRIED.**
6. **Approval of Minutes** – Regent Lynn moved to adopt the minutes. **CARRIED.**
 - a. **10-12 June 2025 Board Meeting****
7. Communications from the Office of the President (OTP)
 - a. **1 July 2025:** Memorandum: Administrative Leave for Pohnpei State Special Elections
 - b. **10 July 2025:** Memorandum: Administrative Leave for Sapwuahfik Massacre Holiday
 - c. **21 July 2025:** Letter from Pohnpei State Governor re: Joint-Use Baseball Field
 - d. **6 August 2025:** Pre-JEMCO Meeting
 - e. **8 August 2025:** Meeting with Ramp & Mida
 - f. **12 August 2025:**

- i. MOU Signing for the Nett Point Hatchery
 - ii. Congressional Education Committee Meeting
 - g. **13 August 2025:** Meeting with Gender Consultant Anna Cowley (Draft FSM Gender Policy)
 - h. **20 August 2025:** Accounting Technician Graduates Ceremony
 - i. **21 August 2025:** Meeting with Dr. Nicole Yamase (United Nations Ocean Summit in France)
8. Regents Reports
- a. **Chair Gallen** – JEMCO taking place two days from today in Honolulu (HI). COMFSM has a budget maintaining the same amount this year with “maybe” an additional \$1million. The Chair also touched upon the visit by the US Navy, thus recommending the drafting of a resolution to acknowledge the visit. The Chair also added that as of July this year, Pohnpei elected its first female Lt. Governor. One of the few, but growing number of FSM women leaders who was also one of the first female graduates of the prestigious Jesuit high school (Xavier High School) in Chuuk, since it became co-ed.
 - b. **Vice-Chair Arnold** – Nothing much to report, however, he said that the Chuuk State Governor and some key members of the FSM and state governments are in Honolulu for the JEMCO Meeting.
 - c. **Secretary/Treasurer Mitagyow** – Two items: 1) Possibility of state funding and according to the Senator, he thinks there is a possible chance it will be picked up by YSL. However, was recently told that this may not happen. 2) There is a strong sense that the State of Yap may be able to cover the student fees that are long overdue.
 - d. **Regent Cornelius** – *Absent due to health issues.*
 - e. **Regent Sonden** – Reported that the FSM Congressional Special Session has concluded. Informed the meeting that the College’s resolution seeking additional Board members was taken to Congress so we might be hearing back about it soon. Other than that, not much to report.
9. President’s Report
- a. **President:** The President’s Report to the COMFSM Board of Regents (August 2025) provides an overview of college activities, progress, and key initiatives across all six campuses and four states, highlighting strategic planning, accreditation, workforce assessment, curricular renewal, institutional advancement, mental health programming, and employee performance management.

Strategic Direction

COMFSM’s mission remains focused on student success through academic and career programs, with an emphasis on **access**, **innovation**, and **resilience**—the three pillars guiding its 2025–2030 Strategic Plan. Planned actions include continuous improvement, performance evaluation, and alignment with best practices.

Accreditation Updates

The college maintains accreditation with the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges. It is preparing for several reviews: the next quarterly accreditation update (December 2025), a mid-term report (March 2027), comprehensive review (Fall 2029), and a focused site visit (Spring 2030).

Institutional Advancement

A new online alumni portal is being populated and an ambitious fundraising campaign aims to raise at least \$60,000 by April 2026. These efforts are intended to strengthen community ties and resource development.

Mental Health Initiatives

COMFSM has prioritized mental health and suicide prevention, hiring Pat Ryan in July 2024 as a dedicated specialist to bolster student wellness and support resources.

Workforce Needs Assessment

An 18-month workforce needs assessment has begun, using surveys and mixed-methods research to identify skill gaps and link education with FSM's labor market needs. Findings will directly inform college strategy on **access**, **innovation**, and **resilience**.

Curriculum Review

A 24-month curriculum review is underway:

- Phase 1: Logic model and theory change development.
- Phase 2: Reviewing curriculum and integrating indigenous knowledge.
- Phase 3: Planning new curriculum implementation.
- Phase 4: Piloting new curriculum.

Performance Development & Review

The college's evaluation program includes three employee evaluation types (staff, management, faculty), with specific timelines for probationary and permanent employees. PDR reports guide promotions, rewards, and development needs.

Viii. Other Highlights

Ongoing projects include support for work-ready graduates, the Yap Student Choir, and continuous engagement in policy, growth, and investment planning. The report concludes affirming COMFSM's commitment to empowering students as future leaders.

b. Vice President for Innovation & Sustainability

i. Financial Status Report: Comptroller

- Clarified the utilities situation with the Chuuk Campus. The campus is billed weekly; however, the billings were not submitted on time so the \$12K accumulated. The Board is questioning this exorbitant amount which the Acting Dean will need to investigate and report back on.
Question by President Mori: When do we get to see an actual audited financial statement? How often do we get the financial statement?
- President Mori further stated that there are many missing components that need to be reflected and shared.

- President Mori expressed his dissatisfaction with the duration of the auditing process and recommended that we ask for expedient auditing because the College cannot really do much with past reporting, especially where its finances are concerned. “How different is the Comptroller’s audit report from the auditor’s?”
- The VPIS presented a proposed resolution aimed at enforcing the College’s existing policies regarding students with unpaid tuition balances. Under the proposed resolution, students with outstanding financial obligations would be prohibited from enrolling or registering for courses. This resolution was accompanied by a draft directive from the President & CEO supporting its implementation.

ii. Investment Report: Raymond and James (presented by Jason Miyashita)

iii. Cooperative Research and Extension

CRE’s mission is to improve agriculture, aquaculture, nutrition, youth and family well-being, and climate change adaptation across the FSM. The programs give communities, schools, and farmers science-based training, resources, and hands-on projects to improve food security, health, and income.

Key Highlights:

- Student-managed farms at COM-FSM now produce large amounts of tomatoes, cucumbers, and peppers, while teaching students modern farming and hydroponics.
- In Kosrae, 25 food vendors completed food safety training and are now certified to sell legally.
- A UNICEF-supported project is helping households in Pohnpei and Kosrae get access to clean drinking water with Sawyer filters.
- Over 50 Upward Bound students received entrepreneurship training, launched mini-businesses, and earned real profits.
- Aquaculture projects across the states are producing and studying sea cucumbers, giant clams, crabs, and other marine resources to boost livelihoods and conservation.
- Research on bush pepper and citrus aims to support small farmers with new cash crops.
- Nutrition and health programs are teaching communities safe food handling, cooking, gardening, and obesity prevention.
- Climate-smart farming and atoll projects are improving local food and water systems to help communities adapt to climate change.
- Youth and school programs in all states combine gardening, healthy lifestyles, and entrepreneurship, reaching thousands of students and families.
- A new MOU was signed in Pohnpei to develop the Nett Point Hatchery for aquaculture research and training.

c. **Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Services**

- **Fall 2025 enrollment:** 1,665 students (down 3.7% from Fall 2024) and 20,148 credits (down 5.9%).
 - Growth at **Kosrae** (+9.9%) and **Chuuk** (+4.5%).
 - Declines at **CTEC** (–15.1%) and **Yap** (–20.7%).
 - National Campus is stable (+1.0% students).
- **Summer 2025 graduates:** 56 students across all campuses.
 - Largest group was **Certificate in Agriculture & Food Technology** (20 grads, 36%).

Financial Aid & Scholarships

- **Pell Grants:** \$8.01M awarded to 2,574 students in AY 2024–2025 (down from \$9.78M to 3,401 students in 2023–2024).
- **New federal aid:**
 - \$230K in **FSEOG** to 171 students.
 - \$208K in **Federal Work Study** to 158 students.
- **FSM/state scholarships:** \$22,900 awarded to 26 students.
- **APIA/AANAPISI scholarships:** The special partnership ended in August 2025, but students remain eligible for general APIA scholarships.

Student Services & Life

- Orientation held for new and transfer students in Fall 2025.
- Residence Hall activities included a picnic and a fire drill training with Pohnpei Port Authority.
- **Dispensary use:** 332 visits between May–August 2025 (42% students, 58% staff).
 - Top reasons: family planning, health screenings, preventive care, and minor illnesses.

Safety & Security

- Preparing for the **2025 Clery Act Campus Safety & Security Survey**.
- Installed new/replacement **fire extinguishers** at most campuses (over 180 units).

Health Workforce & Training

- Awarded **\$100K** from Hawai'i Pacific Basin AHEC to support health workforce programs (CNA, Public Health, and community-based training).
- Dental health training expanding under the **Doctors and Dentists of Tomorrow grant**:
 - 29 ASCC graduates completed the Penn Foster Dental Assistant program.
 - Graduates also from FSM, Palau, CNMI, and RMI

i. Student Body Association (SBA) Report – by Mia Neth, Kosrae Campus

The SBA emphasizes a *unified approach* to student success: improving student life, retention, and recruitment through cultural, academic, and recreational activities.

Campus Highlights

- **National Campus:** Cultural events created space for dialogue and led to three new cultural clubs.
- **CTEC:** Students learned mapping and GIS skills through a University of Guam presentation.
- **Chuuk Campus:** Strengthened community connections via a state visit; launched student-led cleanup and improved common areas.
- **Yap Campus:** “Revive & Thrive Friday” improved the campus environment and established regular cleaning schedules.

- **Kosrae Campus:** Students engaged in learning field trips (forest, clam farm, snorkeling, ruins). Internet, food services, and transport were improved.
- **Fisheries & Maritime Institute (FMI):** Students gained real-world experience through U.S. Navy/Coast Guard engagements.

Strategic Alignment

- **Resilience:** Build supportive environments to help students overcome challenges.
- **Access:** Strong student life helps retention and makes college more attractive.
- **Innovation:** Use technology, partnerships, and cultural programs to expand opportunities.

Student Success & Well-being Priorities

- Support holistic needs beyond academics.
- Expand student aid and workshops.
- Enrich student experiences to improve retention and recruitment.

Challenges

- Limited funding for extracurriculars.
- Lack of adequate campus facilities for social/recreational use.
- Shortages of sports gear at state campuses.
- Declining enrollment is linked to population decline and out-migration.
- Difficulty hiring/retaining faculty and staff.
- FMI lacks work-study and structured breaks.
- Need for better tech for inter-island engagement.

Proposed Investments

1. More extracurricular activities (clubs, cultural/recreational).
2. Better campus facilities (housing, common areas, tech).
3. Student wellness programs (mental, physical health, counseling).
4. Community partnerships and engagement.

Looking Ahead

- Centralized student engagement platform (in progress).
- College-wide mentorship program.
- Inter-campus cultural exchange events (using technology).
- Online feedback requirement for instructors (within 7 business days).

In conclusion, the SBA asks for College leadership's partnership in addressing challenges and investing in facilities, programs, and wellness to ensure student success, retention, and recruitment.

d. Vice President for Instructional Affairs

Academic and Faculty Initiatives

- The Fall 2025 Faculty Workshop boosted professional growth, cross-departmental learning, and enhanced faculty skills with training on Moodle, Cengage, and Google Workspace.
- Recruitment for full-time faculty continues, with qualified part-time instructors engaged across all campuses to ensure quality and access.
- Training for the Nuventive Improvement assessment platform was launched for faculty at multiple campuses.

Curriculum and Collaboration Projects

- The VPIA is leading a two-year curriculum redesign for FSM, collaborating with educational consultants to foster cultural relevance, innovation, and workforce readiness.
- University of Guam partnered with Yap Campus to align Agriculture and Marine Science programs, aiming for a 2+2 pathway and discussions around online Master's degrees.
- Significant collaboration with stakeholders, including the World Bank, DOFA, and local agencies, focused on digital literacy, early childhood education, and blended learning environments.

Student Programs and Campus News

- Kosrae Campus signed a Dual Enrollment MOU with high schools, letting students earn college credits and removing financial barriers; clubs and student activities have been expanded.
- Yap UB celebrated its 25th anniversary of serving high school students, and the campus choir performed at a regional expo.
- Chuuk Campus reported on new student enrollment, professional development activities, and US Navy Pacific Partnership events with CPR and recruitment sessions.
- CTEC and FMI campuses hosted faculty development and specialized training, such as NORMA observer courses and career preparation.

Technology and Library Developments

- *MoodleMoot* attendees learned about AI, cybersecurity, and course design, with a central message that institutional policies and human educators are crucial.
- Faculty surveys on Moodle highlighted positive and negative experiences, with technical and pedagogical challenges addressed.
- Learning Resource Centers across campuses increased student use, expanded digital resources, improved infrastructure, and digitized culturally significant materials.

Assessment and Graduation Highlights

- The 2024-2025 cycle included consolidated reports on student learning outcomes.
- Kosrae Campus graduated eight students in August, featuring inspirational community engagement and continuing outreach for open admissions island-wide.

e. Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance

Information Technology & Digital Transformation

- **Starlink Internet Expansion:** Now deployed at Chuuk, Kosrae, and CTEC; Chuuk using dual-provider model for reliability.
- **Infrastructure Upgrades:** Replacing old cabling and switches with gigabit-capable systems.
- **Cloud & AI Initiatives:** Piloting Google Workspace's Gemini AI, Otter.ai transcription for SLT/Executive meetings.
- **Policy & Governance:** Draft AI policy completed; IT policies under review for alignment with digital practices.

Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE)

- **New Dashboards:**
 - Student Tracking (IDP completion, unmet credits, campus filters).
 - Dual Enrollment Student Performance monitoring.
- **Targeted Early Registration Reports:** Identifies “near completers” to boost graduation and retention.
- **Strategic Plan Tracking App:** Integrates Power BI and Google tools for real-time monitoring of strategic initiatives.

Strategic Workforce Development

- **Trainings Delivered:**
 - Compliance Training (46 participants) – punctuality, contractual obligations.
 - HR Forms Checklist & Routing (29).
 - Calculating Faculty Workload (14).
 - Google Workspace (66).
- **Outcomes:** Improved accuracy in HR/workload processes, stronger tech and time management skills.

Publications & Graphics

- **Ongoing Promotions:** Ads, newsletters, and Kaselehlie Press features.
- **New Kamorale Newsletter:** Monthly, highlighting all campuses.
- **General Catalog 2024–2025:** Now online.
- **Video Productions:** Regular posting on college social media (YouTube).

10. Old Business

- a. Review of **Chapter 1 (Board of Regents) Policies****
 - i. **Board Policy No. 1450 – Endowment Fund Policy** (to be presented by the VPIS)
 - VPIS consolidated three policies relating to the Endowment Fund (**BP Nos 1440, 1450 & 1460**). All three policies pertain to the Endowment Fund, therefore the VPIS is proposing to the Board the new policy (No. 1490) which consolidates said policies. The new policy is aligned with the newly amended IPS and it strengthens the responsibilities of the Investment Committee which is made up of only Board members. The new policy should be reviewed every five (5) years depending on the market.

- The Board has decided to table the recommendation to consolidate all three policies because all three policies serve a purpose, especially dealing with large amounts of money.
- b. Review of **Chapter 6 (Human Resources) Policies**
 - i. **Board Policy No. 6010 – Leave Policy (Annual Leave)**

*Note: **BP No 6010** was not endorsed by the Executive Committee (EC), thus deferred to the December meeting providing proper review and endorsement by the relevant committees.*

- c. Review of **Chapter 8 (Information Technology) Policies****
 - i. **Board Policy No. 8600 – Computer Hardware Acquisition Guidelines**
 - Amendments: Revise the policy title and expand its scope to include procedures for the purchase of computer hardware. The revision should also incorporate guidelines for selecting energy-efficient equipment to help control and reduce costs.
- d. Program Modifications**
 - i. Associate of Science in Public Health Program
 - ii. Associate of Science in Computer Information System Program
 - iii. Certificate of Achievement in Law Enforcement Program
 - iv. Associate of Applied Science in Building Technology Program
 - All proposed amendments presented by the VPIA were endorsed by the Board, therefore adopted and **PASSED**.

11. New Business

- a. Review of **Chapter 1 (Board of Regents) Policies****
 - i. **Board Policy No. 1220 – Officers of the Board and President Policy** (presented by the VPEMSS)
 - the proposed amendment of the policy is to ensure that the language of this policy is aligned “at verbatim” with the **PL No. 7-79, PL No. 8-144** and *Article 3 & 5* with the Board bylaws.
 - The Board endorsed the amendment, therefore adopted and **PASSED**.
 - ii. **Board Policy No. 1510 – Associate Degree Programs Policy** (presented by the VPIA)
 - presented “as is” – no changes. Endorsed and **PASSED**.
 - iii. **Board Policy No. 1520 – Certificate of Achievement and Programs Policy** (presented by the VPIA)
 - amend the existing policy to include the Law Enforcement Program under letter “b” (certificate programs).
- b. Review of **Chapter 2 (General Institution) Policies****
 - i. **Board Policy No. 2200 – Participatory Governance Policy** (presented by the VPEMSS)
 - Proposed amendments are: title change; enhancing the core principles of the College’s governance structure (Participatory Governance) to ensure accountability and exclusivity.
 - The Board endorsed and approved the proposed changes, therefore **PASSED**.
- c. Review of **Chapter 3 (Instructional Affairs) Policies**** (presented by the VPIA)
 - i. **Board Policy No. 3112 – Course Grading Policy**

- proposed to the Board “as is” with no changes. Endorsed and **PASSED**.
- ii. **Board Policy No. 3113** – Grade Point System Policy
 - proposed to the Board “as is” with no changes. Endorsed and **PASSED**.
- d. Review of **Chapter 4 (Student Services) Policies**** (presented by the VPEMSS)
 - i. **Board Policy No. 4208** – Transfer Students and Transfer Credits Policy
 - proposed “as is”.
 - ii. **Board Policy No. 4209** – Readmission Policy
 - with amendment and that is to delete the last sentence of the second paragraph of the policy. The responsibility now rests with the Office of the Registrar.
The Board endorsed all proposals, therefore **PASSED**.
 - iii. **Board Policy No. 4802** – Transcript Policy
 - proposed “as is”. Endorsed by the Board. **PASSED**.
- e. Review of **Chapter 6 (Human Resources) Policies**
 - i. **Board Policy No. 6005** – *Positions and Classes of Positions Policy*
 - ii. **Board Policy No. 6006** – *Kinds of Positions and Appointments Policy*

*Note: Board Policies under **Chapter 6** were not endorsed at the EC level. The EC deferred said policies to the next Board meeting in December providing they are all properly reviewed and endorsed by the relevant committees.*

- f. Review of **Chapter 8 (Information Technology) Policies**** (presented by the ITO Consultant)
 - i. **Board Policy No. 8000** – *Technology Fee Policy*
 - ii. **Board Policy No. 8940** – Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy
 - new policy; Board endorsed. **PASSED**.

*Note: **BP No 8000** was not endorsed by the Executive Committee (EC), thus it is deferred to the December meeting providing proper review and endorsement by the relevant committees.*

- 12. Miscellaneous
- 13. Next Meeting: Tentatively scheduled for **3-5 December 2025** in Yap.
- 14. Executive Session: **27 August at 3pm**
- 15. Adjournment