Higher Education for Sisters in Africa (HESA)
Phase I, Year 2 Evaluation Report

Reporting Period: July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015

The HESA project is in Phase I, Year II of its four-year grant cycle. **The goal of HESA is to provide opportunities for Catholic sisters in Africa to access higher education, both through online distance learning and onsite in Africa.** The Higher Education for Sisters in Africa (HESA) project furthers the African Sisters Education Collaborative (ASEC)'s mission to empower African girls and women to become responsible leaders and citizens in their communities and in society. HESA provides African sisters access to quality, affordable higher education leading to a bachelor's degree or diploma in professional fields identified as relevant and needed – including education, business administration, nursing, and religious studies – in the Sub-Saharan Africa countries ASEC serves. HESA is designed to open new pathways to higher education, and to be partially delivered via online distance education.

Phase I of the HESA program targets sisters in seven countries – Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia – where over 34,000 sisters and 487 local and international congregations serve. Understanding the regional context and present need among congregation, ASEC administrators established the long-term objective to educate 233 sisters through the HESA project; 185 with bachelor's degrees and 48 with two-year diplomas. HESA is on track to exceed that goal and serve 250 students in, 200 with degrees and 50 with diplomas.

Program Objectives
The long-term desired impact of the HESA program is to provide participating sisters the opportunity utilize the knowledge, skills and resources of higher education to improve the educational, social, and economic conditions and sustainability of their religious communities and ministries.
The following Program Objectives have been established:
1. To provide opportunities for catholic sisters in seven African countries to access and obtain post-secondary credentials through onsite in Africa and online distance learning
2. To increase African sisters' competencies and leadership capacities in their respective fields of study toward greater effectiveness in accomplishing their ministries
3. To increase potential for African sisters to assume higher leadership responsibilities toward support of their ministries and congregations
4. To increase sisters' competencies and leadership capacities to improve functioning of their congregations

Enrollment and Departures (by Graduations or Drops)

During this evaluation period (July 2014- June 2015), 186[1] sisters were enrolled in degree (150) and diploma (37) programs for the HESA program. The sisters are studying at 11 universities in the U.S. and Africa and represent 7 countries (ATTACHMENT 1) and over 100 congregations (ATTACHMENT 2). In the Year II evaluation period, 18 of 26 planned cohorts are enrolled (ATTACHMENT 3).

13 sisters graduated, 12 with diplomas in Leadership and Resource Management and 1 with a certificate in Leadership and Resource Management from Tangaza College.[2]

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[1] Four of the 186 sisters enrolled were admitted to degree programs that have an intake date of August 2015.
[2] Falling outside of the reporting period for this evaluation, but of interest: Three sisters will be graduating from CUEA in October 2015 from cohort 1

During the reporting period for this report, 2 sisters dropped out of the program[3]. One sister dropped due to health concerns and one due to the advisement of her congregation (ATTACHMENT 4).

The retention rate for the program (98.9%) is above anticipated levels and meets evaluation standards as highly successful.

HESA Year II Evaluation

Overall Performance:
HESA is on track and we anticipate accomplishing the program goals within the schedule.

Objectives Evaluation:
This report will evaluate progress toward meeting the four established Program Objectives in the order listed above. For the purpose of clarity and overall evaluation, unlike the report for Year I, in which cohort by cohort descriptions and findings were listed (there were only five cohorts included in the previous reporting period), this report will transition to combined results, reporting based on the broad objectives. In cases where it is relevant to single out cohorts for discussion (such as in post-graduation data), it will be noted. Cohort by cohort data is internally tracked and housed in the secure ASEC database hosted by Marywood University and available on request.

The data for this report was collected using surveys and observations in site visits and ongoing communication with sisters and other constituencies. Surveys were administered in both electronic and paper formats and the individual results are housed in the secure ASEC database hosted by Marywood University.

Program Objective 1: *To provide opportunities for catholic sisters in seven African countries to access and obtain post-secondary credentials through onsite in Africa and online distance learning.*

The program has been **successful** in meeting this program objective and all indications point toward continued fulfillment. The number of sisters educated via HESA's two models of delivery is set to exceed originally projected figures of enrollment and degrees granted by the end of Phase I (2019).

Models of Study:
As stated, HESA currently offers two models of delivery in order to meet the needs of sisters living in various contexts. Model A is an online-onsite hybrid program and Model B is delivered entirely onsite. Given the high demand for upgrading sisters' credentials, the provision of both online distance learning and onsite instruction at African universities will allow ASEC to serve more sisters, and to multiply the effect to reach more people through the sisters' ministries.

Model A uses an innovative design to deliver higher education through partnerships between American and African higher education institutions to offer a hybrid online and onsite degree program for sisters. This model opens opportunities to access education for sisters for whom it might be otherwise inaccessible. To begin, the program was designed for the sisters to take two years of education online (i.e. 64 credits) while enrolled at the American partner institution. After successful completion of their coursework, the sisters transfer to the African partner institution to complete their degrees onsite. Due to curricular requirements at the degree conferring institutions and variation between

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of the Marywood-CUEA program with Bachelor of Education degrees, and 4 will be graduating from Tangaza in December 2015 with diplomas in Leadership and Resource Management. Additional graduations are coming in 2016.

[3] An additional sister from the cohort 1C3 (Maywood-CUEA) dropped from the program in August 2015. Since she was enrolled for the full reporting period the departure will be reported in next year's report.

U.S. and African education systems, the program has evolved and sisters are completing three to five semesters online over the course of one to one-and-a-half years. Courses taken online are carefully selected to correspond with the curriculum at the partner institution, and are accepted as transfer credits when the students transition to onsite study. Online courses delivered by the American university prepare sisters for their degree programs, and help remediate prior educational inadequacies. Taking classes online also allows sisters to continue serving in their ministries. Additional benefits, include: development of computer skills, access to learning resources available online at American institutions, and global knowledge and competency through interaction with American instructors and students via a virtual, spatial interface. Model A's mode of delivery uses pertinent technological innovations readily available in Africa by accessing the Internet via cellular signals.

Two partnerships exist for the online-onsite model, between Marywood University and Catholic University College of Ghana, and Chestnut Hill College and Catholic University College of Ghana. Through both partnerships sisters are enrolled in Bachelors of Education degree programs. In the Year II grant period, 72 sisters were enrolled in the online-onsite model, 42 through Marywood-CUEA, and 17 through Chestnut Hill College-CUCG[4]. The sisters are completing 27 to 42 credits online before transferring to the African partner university. In January 2015, 5 cohort 2 sisters transferred to CUEA after completed 27 credits online at Marywood. Another 9 sisters from cohort 2 transitioned to CUEA in May 2015, while completing 6 credits online at Marywood, they completed 42 credits online[5].

Model B provides onsite educational opportunities for sisters to study at local colleges and universities in their countries. In Tanzania, for example, it is sensible for sisters to study in person because internet access and signal strength is low, and language may be a barrier to online learning and access. Not all individuals are able to learn easily via the online model. Moreover, because not all content, instruction, and required experiences can be delivered online, courses such as practicums will only be delivered onsite. To support and monitor the progress of sisters studying onsite at African universities, ASEC partners with carefully selected African institutions. In the Year II grant period, 115 sisters were enrolled in the onsite model, at 8 universities in 6 countries.

In both Model A and B sisters are admitted as a cohort. They participate together in an orientation session before coursework begins in order to prepare them for their studies, and in an annual reflective learning workshop which allows sisters time to support each other in the learning process, and in order to provide valuable feedback to ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

Partnerships:
ASEC facilitates two types of partnerships for the HESA program: Memorandums of Understanding and Frameworks of Reference. Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) are between two colleges/universities, one in the USA and one in Africa, to deliver and online-onsite (Model A) collaborative degree program.
Frameworks of Reference (FOR) establish partnerships between ASEC and universities in Africa to offer onsite (Model B) educational opportunities for sisters. To date, 11 partnerships exist for the HESA program; 3 MOUs for online / onsite

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[4] Twelve sisters from transferred to CUCG in August 2015 after completing 27 credits online. CUCG curriculum requires students to enroll in teaching subject area courses in year 2 of their studies because CUCG does not offer a basic diploma in education students must specialize in teaching subjects. The partnership is designed for Chestnut Hill College to deliver core and education courses. A document was sent to Chestnut Hill College and CUCG to formalize this adjustment for cohort 2 (ATTACHMENT 5).

[5] The need for a transition onsite after 27 and 42 credits is because several sisters held prior credentials and were admitted to 2-year and 3-year programs of study at CUEA. Those admitted in the 2-year program entered HESA holding diplomas in education and thus qualified for a 2-year program at CUEA; they transition after completing 27 credits online. Additionally, of the 9 sisters to transition after completing 42 credits online, 8 were admitted to CUEA's 3-year program and 1, the 4-year program. A document was sent to Marywood University and CUEA to formalize this adjustment for cohort 3 (ATTACHMENT 6-7).

programs and 8 FORs for onsite programs.

Figure 1. Phase 1, HESA Partnerships

HESA Partnership	Partnership Type	Year Established
Marywood University & Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA) in Kenya	MOU	2012
Chestnut Hill College and Catholic University College of Ghana (CUCG)	MOU	2013
ASEC & St. Augustine University of Tanzania (SAUT)	FOR	2013
ASEC & DePaul Program at Tangaza University College (CUEA) in Kenya	FOR	2013
ASEC & Catholic University of South Sudan (CUSS)	FOR	2013
ASEC & Catholic University College of Ghana	FOR	2014
ASEC & Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA) in Kenya	FOR	2014
ASEC & Kisubi Brothers University College (KBUC) in Uganda	FOR	2014
ASEC & Veritas University Abuja in Nigeria	FOR	2014
ASEC & the Association of Sisterhood of Kenya (AOSK) at	FOR	2014
Marywood University and KBUC	MOU	2014

Program Objective 2: *To increase African sisters' competencies and leadership capacities in their respective fields of study toward greater effectiveness in accomplishing their ministries*

Program Objective 3: *To increase potential for African sisters to assume higher leadership responsibilities toward support of their ministries and congregations*

Due to shared Activities (Provide Education specific to sisters' major fields of study), Outputs (Enrollment and completion of courses relevant to sisters' ministries) and Outcomes (Successful completion of those courses and degree programs) the evaluation of Program Objectives 2 and 3 are combined in this report.

The program has been **successful** in meeting these program objectives and all indications point toward continued fulfillment. Since the program is only in its second year, the long-term outcomes regarding increased responsibility in sisters' ministries or workplace cannot yet be assessed. The short-term outcomes of enrollment in courses relevant to ministry work and degree completion are on track to exceed projected evaluation success measure (90% completion base goal, currently at 98% retention).

Fields of Study:
A majority of sisters, 52% are studying for a bachelor's degree in education, followed by 18% for diplomas in leaderships and resource management, 13% for degrees in business studies (i.e. business administration, economics, accounting, and commerce), 7% for degrees in Theology/Religious Studies, and 7% for degrees in social sciences (i.e. social work, social science, development studies, and political science and diplomacy).
Additionally, computer science, nursing, and English and literary studies, are each represented by one sister studying for a degree (ATTACHMENT 8). The sisters are studying for degrees at 11 universities (ATTACHMENT 9).

Students studying education at CUEA, CUCG, Veritas and SAUT must specialize in one or two teaching subjects. Of the 96 sisters studying for education degrees, a large percentage are electing English (14%), History (14%), Geography

(11%), Christian Religious education (10%), and Kiswahili (9%) as their subject 1 specializations (ATTACHMENT 9).

Of the 96 sisters studying for education degrees, sisters studying at CUEA and SAUT must select a second teaching subject. In total, 68 sisters are required to hold a second subject specialization. Of the 68 sisters, the majority are selecting Christian Religious education (41%), History (25%) and Kiswahili (12%) as their second teaching subject.

Orientation:
In order to prepare sisters for success in their programs, HESA conducts an Orientation for all HESA students prior to beginning classes (ATTACHMENT 11– 17). The Orientation is evaluated using a survey conducted following attendance. During this reporting period, the tool used to evaluate the Orientations was not consistent. 3 different surveys were administered, depending on the Orientation time and location. The content of the survey was similar but the Likert scale differs in one of the forms. As a result of this inconsistency, and in order to maintain integrity of data, the results are split into three tables below.[6] In all three forms, the higher number represents greater satisfaction or agreement. As seen in all 3 results tables below, the satisfaction rate is high on all measure. In scales of 5, the means for each question were all above 4 and on the 4 point scale, all were above 3, with all except for 1 question averaging above 3.5. This indicated a high level of success at all of the orientations regardless of the form.

Figure 2. Orientation Evaluation Detailed Results:

SURVEY TYPE 1: Orientation Evaluation Includes Members from Cohorts 1C2, 1C3, 2C1					
Question	**N**	**Min.**	**Max.**	**Mean**	**SD**
Course objectives were clearly stated on the first day of the course	39	3	4	3.92	.270
The assignments related to the course content	39	3	4	3.97	.160
The course content was related back to practical situations	38	3	4	3.97	.162
Materials were provided to supplement the lectures	38	3	4	3.92	.273
The environment was favorable for learning	39	3	4	3.97	.160
The temperature at the site was comfortable for learning	39	2	4	3.74	.498
The lighting at the site was adequate for learning	39	4	4	4.00	.000
The computers at the site were satisfactory for the tasks that needed to be performed	39	3	4	3.95	.223
The amount of time spent on each lesson was appropriate for learning a new skill	39	2	4	3.64	.584
The course content met my expectations	39	3	4	3.69	.468
The remote delivery of course content was an effective method for learning	39	2	4	3.56	.598
The remote delivery method of course content was as effective as the face-to-face instruction	39	2	4	3.46	.600

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[6] This issue of multiple survey forms was identified during the course of the reporting year. It is related to changes in program evaluator and has since been corrected.

Question	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Any technical difficulties that occurred during course instruction were addressed quickly	39	3	4	3.97	.160

SURVEY TYPE 2: Orientation Evaluation
Includes Members from Cohorts 3C2, 4C2, 5C1, 5C2, 6C1, 7C1, 8C1, 9C2, 10C1

Question	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
It was easy to attend the orientation sessions	75	2	5	4.37	.835
Session objectives were clearly stated on the first day of the orientation	75	2	5	4.60	.637
The instructor's presentations were clear and understandable	75	4	5	4.64	.483
The amount of time spent on each topic was appropriate for understanding the information	73	2	5	4.07	.855
Materials were provided to supplement the lectures	74	2	5	4.38	.676
The laptops used at the workshop were satisfactory for the tasks that needed to be performed	72	3	5	4.61	.571
The environment was favorable for learning	73	3	5	4.68	.497
The orientation met my expectations	75	3	5	4.47	.528

SURVEY TYPE 3: Orientation Evaluation
Includes Members from Cohorts 1C2, 1C2B, 2C1, 3C1, 3C2, 4C2, 5C1, 5C2, 6C1, 7C1, 8C1, 9C1, 9C2, AK, 10C1

Question	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Session objectives were clearly stated on the first day of the orientation	114	2	5	4.67	.575
The instructor's presentations were clear and understandable	114	3	5	4.67	.492
The environment was favorable for learning	112	3	5	4.73	.465
The laptops used at the workshop were satisfactory for the tasks that needed to be performed	110	3	5	4.66	.547
The amount of time spent on each topic was appropriate for understanding the information	112	2	5	4.20	.847
The orientation met my expectations	114	3	5	4.54	.534
It was easy to attend the orientation sessions	75	2	5	4.37	.835
Materials were provided to supplement the lectures	74	2	5	4.38	.676

In addition to the Likert scale questions, open-ended questions allowed for more qualitative feedback regarding the Orientation. Sisters provided valuable feedback for the ongoing adjustment of both the curriculum and program overall. In response to questions regarding how to improve the Orientation and what the sisters would like to have covered more, the most common themes were to increase the amount of computer skills training and to increase the amount of time for the orientation. In response to questions regarding challenges faced during the Orientation, the two most common themes among responses were again, computer skills and the short time of the orientation. Regarding the most effective

aspects of the Orientation, the two most common themes were learning about ASEC and HESA overall and making connections with other sisters in the program. In the future, HESA program administrations are planning to extend orientation to four weeks for online cohorts.

Pre and Post Skills (Self) Assessments for Online Cohorts:
The Orientation program for the cohorts that study online includes a self-skills assessment at the beginning and conclusion to measure sisters' confidence with key skills and activities necessary for success in online learning. The survey employed a 4-point Likert type scale with higher scores indicating higher confidence or comfort with the skill listed. The results show marked improvement in confidence with a number of key skills, as well as indication of the content of the Orientation curriculum.

The sisters reported the most growth in categories related to specific programs such as Moodle, Excel, and PowerPoint. Questions regarding Library Research skills and Research Writing Skills both indicated low levels of confidence (>2 points) but showed significant growth in the post-assessment. The sisters indicated the most initial confidence in email skills and use of Word, but still demonstrated an increased confidence in all categories measured.

Overall, the lowest post-orientation mean of any skill (3.11 for "Use Excel's Built-in Help feature to find answers when I encounter a problem) still indicated a high degree of confidence. Detailed Pre and Post means for specific skills are listed below.

Figure 3. Pre and Post Orientation Skills Assessment Results (Divided by Category)

Email Skills	Pre-Orientation Mean	SD	Post-Orientation	SD
Find unread email in my inbox	3.36	.959	3.71	.835
Search my sent mail to find an email that I sent to a specific person	3.16	1.014	3.84	.547
Set up a folder/labels to help organize the mail I	2.64	.959	3.47	.647
Add a contact for a person with whom I frequently correspond	2.64	.959	3.74	.601

Skype Skills	Pre-Orientation Mean	SD	Post-Orientation Mean	SD
Find a Skype user and save them as a contact in	2.08	1.201	3.84	.370
Initiate a call from my computer on Skype	2.00	1.235	3.87	.343
Answer a call that was coming into my computer on	1.97	1.203	3.89	.311

Online Learning Platform Skills (Moodle)	Pre-Orientation Mean	SD	Post - Orientation Mean	SD
Join a class on Moodle	1.38	.877	3.79	.410
Upload an assignment to my instructor from Moodle	1.28	.686	3.89	.319
Download a document that my instructor has posted	1.41	.910	3.86	.347

	Pre-Orientation Mean	SD	Post-Orientation Mean	SD
Find a classmate's email address	1.33	.806	3.86	.347
Create a topic in a forum or discussion board	1.15	.489	3.73	.608
Respond to topics created by other students	1.21	.570	3.75	.604
Contact/ Address the instructor directly	1.41	.910	3.81	.397

PowerPoint Skills	Pre-Orientation Mean	SD	Post - Orientation Mean	SD
Choose the theme I want to use for my presentation	1.82	1.121	3.82	.457
Create a new slide	1.92	1.178	3.84	.495
Insert an image into a slide	1.87	1.174	3.68	.620
Choose how I want transitions between slides to look	1.66	1.072	3.61	.595
Begin a presentation of slides from the beginning	1.72	1.099	3.58	.683
Begin a presentation of slides from the current slide	1.59	.966	3.58	.642

Library Skills	Pre-Orientation Mean	SD	Post-Orientation Mean	SD
Send a message to a librarian to ask for help.	1.18	.556	3.22	.712
Find a specific journal in the online collection	1.13	.409	3.38	.794
Search the database for an article on a specific topic	1.21	.522	3.38	.721

Research Writing Skills	Pre-Orientation Mean	SD	Post-Orientation Mean	SD
Formulate a thesis statement about a topic	1.69	1.030	3.47	.830
Research information to help me support my thesis	1.77	1.135	3.55	.760
Write an effective introduction paragraph	1.87	.991	3.55	.795
Form topic sentences for each paragraph	1.72	.999	3.37	.819
Cite the research I am using in my paper	1.64	.959	3.32	.784
Write a concluding paragraph	1.92	1.109	3.34	.847

APA Formatting Skills	Pre-Orientation Mean	SD	Post-Orientation Mean	SD
Create a cover page for a research paper	1.38	.782	3.26	.795
Properly use on-line citations in a research paper	1.21	.570	3.18	.692
Format a reference page for an APA formatted research paper	1.18	.601	3.21	.704
Know which font type and size are appropriate for an APA formatted research paper	1.21	.570	3.53	.687
Find resources for help with APA formatting online	1.10	.384	3.24	.714

Excel Skills	Pre-Orientation Mean	SD	Post-Orientation Mean	SD
Save an Excel workbook and give it a specific name	1.89	1.203	3.87	.414
Use Excel's SUM function to obtain the total of a column of numbers	1.67	1.060	3.79	.528
Sort a list from lowest to highest value	1.62	1.016	3.68	.525
Build a formula that performs a mathematical calculation	1.33	.701	3.55	.602
Format a cell or group of cells as currency	1.33	.662	3.42	.642
Preview a spreadsheet to see how it will look when printed.	1.76	1.218	3.61	.679
Copy a mathematical formula from one cell to another	1.38	.794	3.55	.724
Use Excel's Built-in Help feature to find answers when I encounter a problem	1.15	.366	3.11	.689
Create a chart or graph from the data in an Excel spreadsheet	1.28	.647	3.66	.627
Word Skills	Pre-Orientation Mean	SD	Post-Orientation Mean	SD
Open and edit and already existing document	3.05	1.099	3.95	.226
Change the amount of space between lines of text	3.05	1.050	3.92	.273
Change the font (style, size, color, etc.)	3.10	1.095	3.97	.162
Insert a table or image into a document	2.42	1.328	3.89	.311
Create numbered or bulleted lists	2.77	1.180	3.97	.162
Change the margins in a document	2.22	1.290	3.66	.627

Transitioning from Online to Onsite:
Upon completion of the online component of their education, cohorts 1C1 and 1C2 completed surveys evaluating their experience as online students and their readiness to transition to onsite learning. The survey consisted of a 4 point Likert type scale with the higher number indicating greater confidence or satisfaction. The sisters also completed a number of open-ended questions, providing qualitative data that supports the quantitative findings. The survey indicated a high level of satisfaction in the online model. The two lowest scores (2.84 and 2.76) were related specifically to operationality of Skype. Recognizing the instability of Skype has been included in the ongoing evaluation and other models of online communication (such as Blue Jeans) are currently being employed. With the exception of the questions regarding Skype, all of the questions indicated satisfaction (3.0 -3.5) or high satisfaction (3.5-4.0). Particularly notable are the satisfaction rate with ASEC/HESA program staff. In response to the questions, results were

marked at the highest possible measure.

Figure 4. Means Related to Satisfaction with ASEC/HESA Staff after Online Experience

Issue	Mean (1-4 Scale)
Communicating with the ASEC/HESA staff helped to ease my difficulties	4.0
I felt supported and encouraged to continue the program by the ASEC/HESA staff	4.0
The ASEC/HESA staff addressed my concerns in a timely manner	3.96

The results of the survey indicate high level of success overall at meeting the program objective to provide effective educational opportunity using the online platform. Comments from sisters echo the satisfaction of the quantitative data. The most common theme in responses to the question, "What was the most valuable/satisfying part of this experience?" were an increased confidence with computer literacy and usage and appreciation for the resources and support of the HESA staff and faculty. The issue of appreciation for the ASEC/HESA staff was also the most common theme in response to the opportunity to make additional comments at the end of the survey. This indicates that the active role of ASEC/HESA staff is an important component in the success meeting the program objective. With regard to the question of "What was the most difficult part of your experience?" sisters overwhelmingly reported that time management[7] was the greatest challenge (There were more than double the number of comments related to time management than any other challenge theme). A large portion (>60%) reported that they continued to work full time during the online portion of their studies. Several sisters volunteered information in the comments that they will work less as they transition to onsite learning.

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[7] To address expressed concerns regarding time management among HESA students and instructors, sessions on time management were included at the 2015 Reflective Learning workshops for students enrolled in both models of study, online-onsite and onsite (ATTACHMENTS 19 – 24).

Figure 5. Post-Online Experience Assessment (Cohorts 1C1 and 1C2)

Overall Experience	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I feel connected to the instructor and other students	3	4	3.96	.200
Online instruction is an effective way for me to learn	2	4	3.44	.583
As a result of my experience this past semester, I am comfortable taking online courses.	2	4	3.68	.627
My fellow classmates were a resource for me during this past semester	3	4	3.72	.458
I was able to balance my studies, my work and my personal responsibilities	2	4	3.36	.638
Skype has been an effective learning tool for me this past semester	1	4	2.84	.850
Technical difficulties are addressed quickly.	2	4	3.56	.712
Communicating with the ASEC/HESA staff helped to ease my difficulties	4	4	4.00	.000
I felt supported and encouraged to continue the program by the ASEC/HESA staff	4	4	4.00	.000
The ASEC/HESA staff addressed my concerns in a timely manner	3	4	3.96	.200
The funds provided for my modem and internet access were enough.	3	4	3.84	.374
The information that I received about Moodle registration and support was sufficient.	3	4	3.84	.374
Using Skype was an effective way to resolve Moodle challenges.	1	4	2.76	.879

History of Education Course

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I have an opportunity to provide feedback to the instructor of my History of Education course	3	4	3.96	.200
I was able to get clarification from my instructors when I needed it	4	4	4.00	.000
I was able to understand the instructor's expectations for the assignments in this course	3	4	3.92	.277

The number of assignments in this course was doable	3	4	3.88	.332
The language level in this course was appropriate for me.	3	4	3.96	.200

Introduction to the Bible Course

I have an opportunity to provide feedback to the instructor of my Introduction to the Bible course	4	4	4.00	.000
I was able to get clarification from my instructors when I needed it	3	4	3.92	.277
I was able to understand the instructor's expectations for the assignments in this course	3	4	3.76	.436
The number of assignments in this course was doable	3	4	3.80	.408
The language level in this course was appropriate for me.	3	4	3.88	.332

Educational Psychology course

I have an opportunity to provide feedback to the instructor of my Educational Psychology course	4	4	4.00	.000
I was able to get clarification from my instructor when I needed it.	3	4	3.88	.332
I was able to understand the instructor's expectations for the assignments in this course	3	4	3.80	.408
The number of assignments in this course was doable	2	4	3.76	.523
The language level in this course was appropriate for me.	3	4	3.88	.332

Onsite Learning:

The onsite model of delivery performs equally well as the online model in terms of student satisfaction and confidence. Following the completion of a semester of onsite attendance, sisters are evaluated on their progress and satisfaction using a 4 point Likert type scale and open ended questions. Across the different cohorts and institutions the results were consistently satisfied (above 3.0) and have thus been combined in the results below. In the open-ended questions, there was general agreement in the answers among cohorts with the exception of the question regarding challenges. There was a significant difference in the responses from West Africa than from East Africa on the issue of power and network availability (West Africa surveys had a greater incidence of this theme in open-ended responses). This is not a new finding as variances in the resources regionally have been a consideration since the program's inception. While the program endeavors to create the best learning environment for the students, issues of network and power supply are beyond the scope of the program's capacity. Regarding what is going well in the program, across all cohorts the two most common themes were appreciation and satisfaction with the high quality of

the teachers and enjoyment with meeting sisters from other congregations.

Figure 6. End of Semester Experience Evaluation Onsite Learning

End of Semester Assessment Includes Participants in Cohorts 3C1, 3C2, 4C2, 5C1, 5C2, 6C1, 8C1, 9C1, 9C2, 10C1, AK					
	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
As a result of my experiences this semester, I am comfortable taking undergraduate	85	1	4	3.86	.467
The format of the courses were an effective way for me to learn	85	1	4	3.55	.681
I feel connected to the instructors and other students	86	3	4	3.76	.432
My fellow classmates were a resource for me during this past semester	85	3	4	3.64	.484
I am able to balance my studies, my work and my personal responsibilities	86	2	4	3.50	.526
I was able to understand the instructor's expectations for the assignments in the courses	86	3	4	3.48	.502
The number of assignments in my courses was doable	86	1	4	3.45	.645
The number of courses this semester was manageable	62	1	4	3.40	.586
The language level in the courses was appropriate for me	86	2	4	3.72	.477

Reflective Learning:
Another aspect of the HESA program is the inclusion of Reflective Learning Workshops to help sisters with the skills necessary for success in higher education (ATTACHMENT 19 – 24). In the Year II reporting period, Reflective Learning Workshops were held in six countries – Kenya, Uganda, Zambia, Ghana, Nigeria, and Zambia. Sisters report a high level of satisfaction with the workshops and indicate in both quantitative and qualitative evaluations that the Reflective Learning workshops add value to their educational experience. In particular, sisters reported satisfaction with the workshop's potential to add to their future success in the program (relevant results below). Sisters also reported overall satisfaction (4.7 on a 5 point Likert type scale) with the performance of the laptops.

Figure 7. Selected Survey Results from the Reflective Learning Workshop Evaluation

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
The open discussion related to the program and online learning allowed me to express my concerns	146	2	5	4.23	.812
The open discussion related to the program and online learning allowed the group to find solutions to common concerns	146	1	5	4.23	.771
The information in the time management presentation will be helpful to plan for next semester	149	1	5	4.76	.515
Participating in this workshop assisted me in setting goals.	148	3	5	4.64	.535
My laptop is satisfactory for the tasks that need to be performed during the semester.	149	2	5	4.70	.564

Degree Completion:

During the reporting year for this evaluation, 12 sisters graduated with diplomas in Leadership and Resource Management and 1 with a certificate in Leadership and Resource Management from Tangaza College (Cohort 4C1). All studied through the onsite model. This group represents the first set of sisters to complete the End of Experience Survey, which assesses their overall experience with HESA and higher education. The results of the survey speak to the high level of success and satisfaction of HESA in providing educational opportunity for sisters. Using a 4 point Likert type scale of agree to disagree (4 is Strongly agree), the results on all evaluation points was highly satisfied, with may scores having unanimous responses of Highly Agree to affirmative statements of value. In the open-ended responses, sisters expressed their gratitude and delight with the program.

Figure 8. End of Experience – Graduated Sisters (Cohort 4C1)

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
I gained specific skills from participating in the HESA program that I would otherwise have not achieved.	12	4	4	4.00	.000
I felt the HESA Orientation and Semester Reflection activities experience added positive value to my education.	12	3	4	3.92	.289
I feel participating in HESA made me a better student.	12	4	4	4.00	.000
My fellow HESA cohort was a resource for me during my program	12	3	4	3.75	.452

I felt connection to my fellow classmates that were not HESA participants	11	3	4	3.64	.505
The overall quality of my classroom experiences met my expectations	12	3	4	3.67	.492
I was able to balance my studies, my work and my personal responsibilities.	11	3	4	3.73	.467
I felt more confident as a result of participating in the HESA program.	11	4	4	4.00	.000
Communicating with the ASEC/HESA staff helped to ease my difficulties	12	3	4	3.83	.389
I felt supported and encouraged to continue the program by the ASEC/HESA staff.	12	3	4	3.92	.289
The ASEC/HESA staff addressed my concerns in a timely manner	12	3	4	3.67	.492
The funds provided were enough to cover my needs	12	3	4	3.42	.515
I had an opportunity to provide feedback to my classroom instructors.	12	3	4	3.83	.389
I was able to get clarification form my instructor when I needed it.	12	3	4	3.92	.289
I was able to understand the instructor's expectations for the assignments	12	3	4	3.58	.515
The number of assignments within my courses was doable.	12	2	4	3.33	.651
The language level in the courses was appropriate for me.	12	3	4	3.92	.289
There was effective use of technology in my classes	12	3	4	3.92	.289

Figure 9. Open commentary from End of Experience Survey:

Do you have additional comments or concerns you would like to add?
I would like to thank ASEC for the opportunity given to me to upgrade my studies through HESA program. The skills I have acquired will help me to change /better, the face of my congregation and the people entrusted to me (apostolate)
I thank the HESA program for the support and encouragement, which made me to gain skills which has made me confident in life. God bless HESA team to continue with the same spirit of helping many to gain different skills in life. Keep it up.
I express my sincere gratitude to SLDI, HESA and the entire Hilton Foundation for their support. I am still humbly requesting to be considered for my BA God willing. I had spoken to Sr. Jane about my request at the Alumni meeting this year.

Am grateful to having been given an opportunity to pursue my academics. It was a great moment having to increase my knowledge and to develop more skills to benefit my congregation.

Thank you to HESA programme and All the staff members for your generosity and love.

I wish to thank ASEC/HESA officials for granting me this opportunity to pursue my diploma studies. It is through them that I have become what I am today. May God bless and reward you abundantly.

I would like to comment that ASEC/HESA programs are tremendous help to the sisters and should continue even for further training not just Diploma levels.

Thank you very much for what you have been able to empower us with.

I want to thank you sincerely for your generosity and support. We are so grateful as African Sisters. Wishing you all the God's blessings.

In addition, sisters were asked about their continuing education plans. All survey respondents indicated a desire for ongoing educational opportunity and many listed specific plans already in place. This is an indication of satisfaction with the program and of increased potential for the sisters.

Program Objective 4: *To increase sisters' competencies and leadership capacities to improve functioning of their congregations*

The evaluation of this Program Objective plans to primarily measure long-term outcomes and impacts of the congregations that sisters serve. Given that the program is only in its second year, it is not possible to conduct a true evaluation of this Objective at this point. Based on the success of the 3 other Program Objectives, indications are good for long-term success and impact as well, but future reports will address this in more depth than this report can at this time.

Overall, this project is progressing toward the *ultimate desired impact* outlined in the grant proposal.
Ultimately HESA is on course, and the Year II objectives have been attained—not only to provide degrees, but also skilled women who can move forward development agendas in their countries.

Notable Successes
First HESA Graduates:
The first graduating class of HESA students (Tangaza College, Cohort 1) is a great accomplishment. Sisters reported the role of HESA as fundamental to their success. Among the graduates, 1 sister completed a Certificate in Leadership and Resource Management in July 2014[8], 11 received Diplomas in Leadership and Resource Management in December 2014, and 1 received a Diploma in Leadership and Resource Management in May 2015. ASEC East Africa Director, Sr. Lina Wanjiku Ndung'u, SE, attended the graduation ceremony in on December 6, 2015.
HESA Online Faculty Meetings:
Stakeholders from partner colleges/universities have been proactive in planning and finding ways to support HESA students to succeed. Faculty in the U.S., at Marywood University and Chestnut Hill College, have been open with feedback and have collaborated to share best practices.
Faculty meetings were held in the fall 2014 and spring 2015 semesters, at Marywood University and Chestnut Hill College, respectively (ATTACHMENT 25).
During the fall 2014 semester, faculty meetings were held at Marywood University and Chestnut Hill College. On October 9, 2014 (ATTACHMENT 26), Chestnut Hill College faculty teaching in the HESA program gathered, and on

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[8] The sisters who graduated with a certificate did not qualify to advance to the diploma program at Tangaza College

November 12, 2014 (ATTACHMENT 27), Marywood University faculty teaching in the HESA program gathered. Topics discussed include, new faculty/staff introductions, research opportunities, programmatic updates, and best practices.

Similar themes emerged in the discussion at both meetings, including:

- Communication with sisters: Instructors shared best practices for online learning, describing their use of multifaceted resources for engagement with the sisters, e.g. of chat rooms, Skype, email, and online learning platforms.
- Office hours: Faculty shared their practice of holding office hours. The instructors use different techniques for holding office hours. For example, one instructor schedules three time slots for office hours each week, requiring students to attend at least one of the three sessions; another meeting with students via Skype upon request, while maintaining an open chat room for sisters to ask questions.
- Awareness of cultural differences: Instructors shared their emergent awareness of cultural differences that exist between themselves and the sisters, especially with regard to academic language. Use of terminology including fall/ spring semester and time zone differences were among the challenges faced by faculty. Early on in the semester faculty learned that sisters were not familiar with some U.S. terminologies related to college education, another instructor recounted scheduling a chat session after the transition of daylight savings in the U.S. and failed to adjust for the time change.
- Internet and Communications Technology Challenges: The instructors discussed Internet and technological challenges reported by students. They expressed a desire to increase their knowledge on the status of Internet access in the sisters' countries.
- Finally, recommendations also emerged from the meeting: Particularly, faculty recommended the creation of a shared drive for faculty resources and sharing or best practices for online learning. Additionally, at Marywood, Sr. Kathleen Burns shared a time zone sheet to be shared with instructors and students.

Combined minutes from the sessions at Chestnut Hill and Marywood are included in this report ATTACHMENT 28) and offer a complete overview of the meetings.

In spring 2015, the faculty meetings were designed to focus on Internet and communication challenges face by the sisters, as well as to introduce innovations that emerged from the fall 2014 semester meeting. Meetings were held on March 30, 2015 (ATTACHMENT 29), at Marywood University, and April 9, 2015 (ATTACHMENT 30), at Chestnut Hill College. Topics addressed at the meeting included: program successes, student experience, and challenges (i.e. communication, cultural differences, Internet and electricity challenges, and meeting deadlines). The HESA Program Coordinator presented to the faculty, providing insight into the experience of the sisters and providing background on the challenges of Internet access, consistent electricity, and work/congregations time demands. Interventions based on the discussion at the fall semester meeting were also introduced at the spring 2015 meetings. Particularly, the faculty were introduced to a shared drive designed to be a resource and area to share best practices; a time difference reference was shared with faculty at Marywood University (ATTACHMENT 31) and Chestnut Hill College (ATTACHMENT 32)[10]; and faculty were provided updates regarding ASEC's website and social media presence to increase their engagement with the program and awareness of ongoing events.

Again, similar themes emerged in the discussion at both meetings, including:

- Terminology / language: Faculty explained their interventions to use appropriate terminology. One instructor shared that she began to list the U.S. time and time in each country where her students are studying to schedule group meetings.
- Buddy system: Faculty at Marywood praised the buddy system, which was developed by CUEA during HESA

orientation. Each sister has a buddy in her cohort, with whom she can collaborate. Sisters often contact instructors if their buddy cannot attend class or if she is having Internet access challenges. The buddy system was also introduced to Chestnut Hill instructors and plans were made to implement the system with Chestnut Hill students.

- Best practices: Faculty continued their discussion on best practices for student communication, online learning, etc.
- Time management: Faculty cited time management as a common challenges for the sisters. It was agreed that time management would be a relevant topic for HESA reflective learning.

Combined minutes from the sessions at Chestnut Hill and Marywood are included in this report ATTACHMENT 33) and offer a complete overview of the meetings.

Site Visits:
Successful site visits and meetings were held with partners in Africa. This generated additional familiarity with the program and created stronger buy-in among constituencies. A site visit was conducted in January, 2015 by Dr. Donald Miller, external evaluator, Dr. Samantha Christiansen and Sr. Jane Wakahiu, LSOSF. In this visit, they met faculty and students at the CUEA, Tangaza and Chemichemi. In addition, Samantha travelled to Uganda and met faculty and students at Kisubi University College, while Donald and Jane met with faculty at Saint Augustine University, Dar es Salaam. In August, 2015, Sr. Jane travelled to Nigeria and Ghana and held meetings with both students and faculty at Veritas University, Nigeria and the Catholic University College of Ghana. Meetings provide firsthand information about both success and challenges and facilitated decision on ways to strengthen the program. In addition, during site visits meetings were held with leadership conference officials and national secretary generals. Throughout the Year II reporting period, ASEC staff visited several partner institutions in the U.S. and Africa. HESA Program Coordinator, Rosemary Shaver, and Sr. Jane held meetings at Marywood University and Chestnut Hill College. Sr. Jane visited numerous partner institutions in Africa and the sisters studying there. Specifically, she visited: Catholic University of Eastern Africa (Kenya), Tangaza University College (Kenya), Chemchemi Ya Uzima Institute (Kenya), Saint Augustine University (Tanzania), and Kisubi Brothers University College (Uganda).

More site visits will take place in the next reporting year. Already, Sr. Jane traveled to Nigeria and Ghana. Rosemary Shaver and Sr. Jane will travel to partner institutions in West Africa in December 2015, also attending HESA orientations and a graduation ceremony at Tangaza University College. Dr. Christiansen will travel to Ghana in January 2015.

Student Success:
HESA students report high levels of satisfaction, not only with the opportunity to study, but also with the curricular model of study and with the quality of support they receive from faculty, administrators, and their colleagues.

HESA sisters perform well academically and have demonstrated their capacity as leaders. Collectively as a cohort, students are averaging between an A and B average. For example, the average for Marywood-CUEA, Cohort 2, is 3.44 (A-) online with a range of 4.00 (A) - 2.07 (C+), and 67.45% (high B[9]) onsite with a range of 70.1% (A) to 63.4% (B). Using the example of an onsite cohort, the students who graduated from Tangaza Cohort 1, averaged 67.9% (high B[10]) with a range of 72.08% (A) – 58.98% (C) (ATTACHMENT 40).

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[9] According to CUEA's grading scale an A is above 70%.
[10] According to Tangaza College's grading scale an A is above 70%.

Improved Communication:
HESA sisters were given an ASEC-SLDI email in April 2015, to streamline and make more frequent communications.

Additionally, considering the conversation at the fall 2014 semester HESA faculty meetings, the HESA Program Coordinator created a shared drive for HESA faculty to share relevant resources – i.e. time equivalents reference, HESA program information, and academic resources. A separate shared drive was also created for ASEC field staff in Africa.

Outreach to the public has also increased. With the introduction of ASEC Development Office and a graduate research assistant to post to the website and social media, HESA milestones and news are updated regularly shared. Program informational materials are in the process of being developed.

Attendance at Reflective Learning and Orientation Workshops:

Attendance at HESA reflective learning was strong. 153 students out of 169 students scheduled to attend reflective learning attended, an attendance rate of 91%. Of the 17 who could not attend, excused absence letters were collected. Many absences were related to religious life obligations (e.g. preparation for final vows, etc.). Additionally, 4 sisters who were admitted with Year II cohorts to begin classes in August 2015, and the 12 sisters who graduated from Tangaza College in December 2014, were not anticipated to attend.[11]

Orientation attendance is a requirement of the program. Of the 186 sisters, the 4 admitted to begin classes in August 2015, 1 from Tangaza College-cohort 2 and 3 from CUEA onsite cohort 2, did not orient in Year II and participated in August 2015 orientation sessions in Kenya. Additionally, 5 sisters – 1 sister from CUEA onsite- cohort 2, and 4 from Tangaza Onsite-cohort 2 – could not attend orientation in December 2014, due to travel distance to Kenya from their respective countries (e.g. Tanzania, Nigeria), and oriented in August 2015.

Successful Recruitments:
HESA is on track to fulfill, and even exceed, enrollment goals cited in the grant proposal, within the budget for Phase I (ATTACHMENT 34). In the Year II reporting period, HESA added an additional 122 sisters.
Particularly, enrollment for 61 students with an August 2014 stating date was finalized, and recruitment, admission, and enrollment for another 61 students with a January 2015 starting date was carried out, and their enrolment finalize. Additionally, in the Year II reporting period, HESA successfully recruited 44 sisters to cohorts scheduled for September/ August 2015 intake.

Notably, HESA recruited 16 sisters to enroll at Veritas University in Nigeria. The original recruitment plan was for a cohort of 6 sisters to begin at Veritas in August 2013, followed by 6 in August 2014. Recruitment for cohort 1 was delayed in 2013 due to political circumstance and an adjustment to Nigeria's central admission system for college and university enrollment. Consequently, 16 sisters were recruited in 2014 to enroll as one cohort. No additional students will be recruited to enroll at Veritas in Phase I.

HESA recruitment, admission, and enrollment, requires a coordinated effort between ASEC headquarters staff in the U.S. and ASEC field staff in Africa. To initiative the recruitment of a cohort, letters and admissions materials are drafted by the HESA Program Coordinator and provided to ASEC field staff to be distributed to superiors and associations of women religious. Admissions packets include an announcement letter, intent to apply form, and college/university application. ASEC field staff meet with Associations of African women religious to announce and distribute information on recruitment for relevant cohorts. Furthermore, they coordinate admissions boards, including congregational and national association representatives to ensure broad representation among congregations, and coordinated with partner colleges and universities to deliver admissions materials and finalize student enrollment. The HESA Program Coordinator coordinates with U.S. partner universities to deliver admission materials and finalize admission of online-onsite cohorts.

Successful Delivery New Online Courses:
HESA students enrolled at Marywood University and Chestnut Hill College completed online courses delivered by instructors in the U.S.

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[11] Plans for a HESA alumnae meeting are ongoing; the 13 graduates of Tangaza College are also SLDI alumnae and will attend the SLDI alumnae workshop.

Marywood, Cohort 2: Between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015, cohort 2 sisters enrolled at Marywood University completed between 24 and 9 credits online. Five sisters completed 9 credits at Marywood and transferred to CUEA in January 2015, completing 27 total credits at Marywood. Nine sisters completed 24 credits online, completing 42 total credits before beginning coursework at CUEA in May 2015[12] (ATTACHMENTS 35 – 36). Additionally, 2 sisters who dropped from the program completed 9 and 18
credits online, respectively, between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015.

Marywood, Cohort 3: Between July 1, 2014, and June 30, 2015, 23 cohort 3 sisters enrolled at Marywood completed 18 credits online (ATTACHMENT 37 - 38).

Chestnut Hill College, Cohort 1: Between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015, 17 cohort 1 sisters enrolled at Chestnut Hill College completed 27 credits online (ATTACHMENT 39).

Partnerships with National Associations of Women Religious:
ASEC continues to partner with Associations of Women Religious in each country. The Association of Sisterhood of Kenya (AOSK); Association of Religious of Uganda (ARU); Zambia Association of Sisters (ZAS); Tanzania Catholic Sisters Association (TCAS); Association of Women Religious of Malawi (AWRIM); Nigeria Conference of Women Religious (NCWR); and Ghana Conference of Religious (CGR). Secretary Generals work closely with ASEC Coordinators during recruitment to ensure representation of congregations within their countries. Also, they provide facilities during orientation and reflective learning.

Research:
Research interest continues to grow and the program has presented numerous opportunities for scholars to engage with women religious. Notable international collaborations have taken place and continue to be developed. Furthermore, a research-training workshop for African partners will be conducted in the next year and will capitalize on the potential for international collaboration among faculty and participants in the program in both the U.S. and in Africa.

Challenges Encountered and Responses
Transition from Online to Onsite Study:
The transition from online to onsite emerged as an area for improvement and development in the next phase, particularly among sisters required to study at a university that is not in their home country. Marywood's partnership for the B.Ed. Program is with CUEA in Kenya; however the program serves sisters in Kenya, Uganda, Zambia, and eventually, Malawi. Similarly, Chestnut Hill's Partnership is with CUCG; however, the program serves sisters in Ghana, Nigeria, and Cameroon. Concerns raised are particularly strong among Nigerian sisters due to transition to Ghana. Superiors cited higher cost of living, cost of travel, demand on congregational resources, and time away from ministries.

Interventions have been made to formalize a transition plan based curricular requirements of the degree conferring institution. First, In 2014/15, adjustments were made to the plan of study for the sisters in the online-onsite programs at Chestnut Hill College and Marywood University. Regarding the Marywood-CUEA partnership, the transition arose as a problem because several sisters held diplomas in education and other credentials, qualifying them for 2-year and 3-year

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[12] In May 2015, 9 cohort 2 sisters transferred to CUEA, while also enrolled in 6 credits online; completing a total of 42 credits online at Marywood.

programs of study, rather than 4-year programs. This necessitated the sisters' transition to the onsite institution at an earlier date in order to meet the requirement of completing at least 51% of credits at CUEA, the degree conferring institution. A similar problem arose with the sisters enrolled online at Chestnut Hill College, some of which were admitted to the 3-year program at CUCG. Additionally, CUCG requires students to begin teaching subject area courses in year 2, as the institution does not offer a degree in basic education.

> Marywood – sisters will complete 27 or 42 credits online; 27 if they are admitted into CUEA's 2 year program ,and 42 if they are admitted to the 3 or 4 year program.

> Chestnut Hill – sisters will complete 27 credits online to meet CUCG's curricular requirements (i.e. sisters must begin subject area courses in year 2).

Second, Nigerian superiors and sister students enrolled online at Chestnut Hill College expressed concern regarding the transition to onsite study at Catholic University College of Ghana. Seventeen cohort 1 sisters enrolled at Chestnut Hill College were due to transition onsite in August 2015, after the adjustment. When the transition to CUCG was announced in the spring of 2015, superiors and sisters enrolled online at Chestnut Hill College cited concerns, including cost of travel to and from Ghana, residence in Ghana, higher cost of living in Ghana, and a drain on congregational resources. In August 2015, 12 sisters, 6 from Ghana and 6 from Nigeria successfully transferred to CUCG; and 4 Nigerian sisters deferred their studies for one semester to January 2016. Two sisters deferred due to requirements for their final vows, which demanded they remain in Nigeria, and two because their congregations could not release them from their ministries at the time of the transition.

In response to concerns cited by the sisters, a MOU between Chestnut Hill College and Veritas University, Abuja, Nigeria, was signed August 24, 2015. The partnership is in the process of being formalized through curriculum review and will serve sisters enrolled Chestnut Hill College. Sisters from Nigeria will have the option to transition to Veritas University, rather than CUCG. The four Nigerian sisters who requested to defer
their studies for the August – December 2015 semester will likely transition to Veritas University. This will be reported on in more detail in the Year III report.
Recognizing the validity of the sisters concerns – cited higher cost of living, cost of travel, demand on congregational resources, and time away from ministries – in the long-term ASEC plans to develop a partnership with universities in each of the countries served by HESA, and, in the online-onsite model, for the
U.S. institution to partner with multiple African universities so that sisters can transfer to a university in their home country. To begin this process, in addition to Chestnut Hill signing a MOU with Veritas, Marywood University signed a MOU with Kisubi Brothers University College in Uganda. ASEC staff are beginning to plan for additional partnerships to fulfill this goal.

Internet and Communication Technology Challenges:
Network and power problems continue to plague many sisters in rural or less-served electronic environments. While ASEC/HESA's capacity to address the overall issue of connectivity is limited, ways to mitigate the inconvenience and hardship are an ongoing point of assessment.
In particular, faculty teaching online courses have been provided background on the circumstances of their students and have shown great flexibility with regard to the needs of the sisters. Each semester, HESA instructor meetings are held at Marywood University and Chestnut Hill College. During the 2014-105 reporting year, two meetings faculty were held at Marywood University, and two at Chestnut Hill College, to address the faculty. The meetings in the spring 2015 semester focused on challenges of Internet and communication technologies in sub-Saharan Africa.

ASEC's field staff is also essential to assist the sisters and answer questions related to technological concerns. Timely interventions are made in coordination with HESA instructors, the HESA Program Coordinator, and ASEC field staff. For example, support meetings were held in Ghana, October 12-19, 2014, and in Nigeria, October 24-26, 2014, to support sisters studying online in their first semester online.

Catholic University of South Sudan Recruitment:
No additional sisters were recruited to attend Catholic University of South Sudan. Due to political instability in the country, the three South Sudanese sisters recruited during the scheduled CUSS cohort 2 recruitment for August 2014 intake enrolled at institutions in Kenya; specifically, 2 sisters enrolled at CUEA and 1 at Tangaza College. In 2015, another sister was recruited through CUSS cohort 3 recruitment for August 2015 intake at CUEA.
ASEC is planning to create a field office in South Sudan, which will facilitate stronger recruitment and deeper familiarity with the country and congregational needs.

Evaluation Team Turnover:
Due to turnover in the evaluation team there was inconsistency in some of the forms and organization of evaluation data. A major overhaul of the evaluation data was completed and a new organization plan was put into place. In the upcoming year, there will be a comprehensive review of the evaluation tools and practices to eliminate redundancy and make the process more efficient for program administration as well as to reduce the burden on HESA participants and coordinators completing evaluation materials.

Research and Publications about the Project
Cabral, Gail. (2015). Reflections on "Ubuntu": Experiences Teaching African Catholic Sisters. Comparative and International Education Society Conference, Washington D.C., March 8-13, 2015.

Christiansen, S. & Christiansen, J. "Identifying Constraints and Support Systems in Leadership Development for Women Religious in Africa" [Ongoing Research, funded with ASEC Research Grant]

Christiansen, S. "In Her Own Words: Empowerment, International Aid and Women Religious in East Africa." [Ongoing research]

Wakahiu, J. & Kangethe, S. (2014). Efficacy of online distance learning: lessons from the higher education for sisters in Africa program. *European Journal of Research and Reflection in Educational Sciences*, 2(1), 1-25.

Wakahiu, J. & Shaver, R. "Perception and Experience of Distance Learning for Women: Case of HESA in West Africa" [Ongoing Research]

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