To: Don Straney, Chancellor
   ✔ Matthew Platz, VCAA

From: Jean Ippolito, Faculty Congress Chair

Date: April 20, 2016

Subject: Faculty Congress motion to request a DL policy

At the April 15, 2016, Faculty Congress meeting, a motion (#16) was unanimously passed to “request the VCAA to formulate and implement policy and procedures that assist departments in meeting WASC concerns by assuring that each DL section adheres to the rigor and credit hour requirements mentioned . . .”

Faculty Congress voted in favor of the motion: 22 approved, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

The complete motion, with footnotes citing sources for quoted information, is attached to this memo.
Distance Learning Policy Formulation and Process Implementation

Motion for the UHH Faculty Congress

April 2016

Whereas WASC is concerned that every course maintains sufficient rigor, regardless of the delivery mode, and has specifically requested UHH to address WASC concerns regarding Distance Learning in our next Interim Report that is due Spring 2017, by recommending that "the development and oversight of the distance-learning program, specifically the online courses and degrees, requires a clearly articulated strategy..." ¹, and

Whereas UHH has in place a "credit hour" policy that is consistent with both Federal DoE regulations and the WASC Credit Hour requirement, which states that every credit hour awarded must be consistent with the amount of work needed to be expended on average for one-hour of face-to-face delivery and 2-hours of homework, regardless of the delivery mode ²; and

Whereas some departments and/or department chairs have voiced concerns that we currently lack a policy and process to ensure that distance learning (DL) sections require the same rigor as their face-to-face counterparts (in particular that they meet the same learning objectives), and that they adhere to the UHH Credit Hour Policy; and

Whereas many institutions have instituted the policy that they will not accept DL credits for transfer, which behooves UHH to do whatever it can to ensure that UHH DL courses will be viewed positively with respect to transfer requirements at other institutions; and

Whereas the VCAA's number one charge to UHH's Distance Learning Advisory Committee is to "Identify and help resolve distance learning policy issues through formulation and recommendation to the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs on UH Hilo Distance Learning Policies" ³; and

Whereas a policy and procedure for ensuring adherence to the aforementioned WASC recommendations would be beneficial to both students and departments;

It is hereby moved that the UHH Faculty Congress formally request the VCAA to formulate and implement policy and procedures that assist departments in meeting WASC concerns by assuring that each DL section adheres to the rigor and credit hour requirements mentioned above.

¹ See page 4 of http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/CAL_150306_UHH_AV.pdf
² See http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/UHHCreditHourPolicy.pdf
³ See http://hilo.hawaii.edu/academics/dl/advisory-committee.php