WASC | Senior College and University Commission

July 11, 2025

Dr. Bonnie Irwin
Chancellor
University of Hawaii at Hilo
200 West Kawili Street
Hilo, HI 96720-4091

Dear Chancellor Irwin:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning University of Hawaii at Hilo (UHH) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting June 27, 2025. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Special Visit to University of Hawaii at Hilo April 29-30, 2025 using the 2023 Standards of Accreditation. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by University of Hawaii at Hilo prior to the Special Visit and the institution's June 6, 2025 response to the team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you, and your colleagues Seri Luangphinith, ALO, Kalei Rapoza, VC Administrative Affairs, Keiki Kawaiaea, Interim VC Academic Affairs, and Donnette Kapono, Interim VC Student Affairs. Your comments were very helpful in informing the Commission's deliberations. The date of this action constitutes the effective date of the institution's status with WSCUC.

Actions

1. Receive the Special Visit team report that focused on: (1) strategic planning; (2) strategic enrollment management; and (3) long-range budgeting
2. Remove Formal Notice of Concern
3. Schedule an Interim Report to be submitted by November 1, 2026 to address:
    a. Fall enrollment
    b. Implementation of the Strategic Plan
    c. Implementation of the Strategic Enrollment Plan
    d. Status of long-range budgeting
4. Proceed to the next scheduled Offsite Review in fall 2027 and Accreditation Visit in spring 2028

Areas for Development

The Commission requires the institution to respond to the following areas for development:

1. Implement the strategic plan, HOʻOLŌKAHI, establish milestones and a timeline, allocate resources, record and document progress with data and evidence, and regularly update the campus community on progress. (CFR 4.8)
2. Operationalize the Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan 2025-2026 by determining measurable enrollment targets, allocating resources for each focus area, and determining the responsible personnel for analyzing and communicating progress on the plan to the campus and broader community. (CFR 3.4)
3. Advance the long-range budgeting and planning process with realistic assumptions and forecasts. Continue to involve all the various constituent groups across the university throughout the process as well as regularly communicate the financial status of the institution at all levels. (CFRs 3.4, 3.5, 3.6)

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter is being sent to the chair of University of Hawaii at Hilo's governing board. A copy of this letter is also being sent to President Hensel, University of Hawai'i. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on the University of Hawaii at Hilo's website and widely distributed throughout the institution to promote further engagement and improvement and to support the institution's response to the specific issues identified in these documents. The team report and the Commission's action letter will also be posted on the WSCUC website. If the institution wishes to respond to the Commission action on its own website, WSCUC will post a link to that response on the WSCUC website.

Finally, the Commission wishes to express its appreciation for the extensive work that University of Hawaii at Hilo undertook in preparing for and supporting this Special Visit review. WSCUC is committed to an accreditation process that adds value to institutions while contributing to public accountability, and we thank you for your continued support of this process. Please contact me if you have any questions about this letter or the action of the Commission.

Sincerely,

A. Maria Toyoda
President

AMT/mbg

Cc: Tracy Poon Tambascia, Commission Chair
Seri Luangphinith, ALO
Gabriel Lee, Board Chair
President Wendy Hensel, University of Hawaii
Members of the Special Visit Team
Mark B. Goor, Vice President
Amy Wallace, Vice President