

**REPORT OF THE WASC VISITING TEAM**  
**SPECIAL VISIT REVIEW OF**  
**UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I AT HILO**  
**MARCH 18 – 20, 2008**

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The evaluation team in conducting its review was able to evaluate the institution according to Commission Standards and Core Commitments and therefore submits this Report to the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges for action and to the institution for consideration.

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## **I. OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT**

### **A. Description of Institution and Visit**

The University of Hawai'i at Hilo is a comprehensive regional university located on the island of Hawai'i, the southernmost and largest island in the Hawaiian archipelago. UH Hilo is part of the University of Hawai'i's ten-campus system of public higher education and is the only accredited, four-year educational institution on the island. Formerly named Hilo College, the University began offering the baccalaureate degree in 1970 and was first accredited by WASC in 1976. The University is comprised of five degree-granting colleges and one outreach college. It offers 32 baccalaureate programs and master's degrees in five fields. Since 2004 the University has added two doctoral programs, one in Hawaiian and Indigenous Language and Culture Revitalization and another in Pharmacy.

In Fall 2007, UH Hilo had 3,071 FTE students and a headcount of 3,573. Of these students, 196 were graduate students including 90 students admitted to the College of Pharmacy. The total FTEF numbered 242.5, with full-time faculty headcount at 211 and part-time faculty at 83.

In Spring 2004, the University underwent its WASC Educational Effectiveness review and WASC reaffirmed the accreditation of the University and scheduled the next review to begin with a proposal in 2010, the Preparatory Review for 2013, and the Educational Effectiveness Review for 2014. In addition, the Action Letter identified four issues that were to be addressed in a March 2008 Special Visit:

1. Mission Planning, and Institutional Resources
2. Institutional Governance and Organizational Structures
3. Diversity
4. Educational Effectiveness

The charge to the Special Visit Team also called for a review of the two newly implemented doctoral degrees at the time of the visit. The Special Visit occurred March 18 – 20, 2008.

During the Special Visit, the Team met with Chancellor Rose Tseng, the vice chancellors, the deans and associate deans, faculty leaders from the Congress and the College Senates, faculty, and community leaders, as well as the chair of the UH system Board of Regents. The team was able to talk by phone with the President of the UH system and two system vice presidents, and team members met with, among others, the Long Range Budget Planning Committee, the General Education Committee, the Standing Committee on Diversity, the Assessment Committee, the Graduate Council, and five department faculties. In addition, a WASC team member with expertise in Pharmacy met with faculty and students from the College of Pharmacy, and another WASC team member with expertise in language and culture met with faculty and students from the College of Hawaiian and Indigenous Languages and Culture Revitalization.

#### B. Special Visit Report

The University's Special Visit Report of January 15, 2008, was organized around the issues raised in the Commission's 2004 Action Letter and the approval letters for the two new doctoral programs. The report documented notable progress in the areas of fund raising and diversity while the sections on institutional resource planning, governance, and educational effectiveness indicated minimal progress, most of which had occurred within the past 9 months. The sections of the report that addressed the doctoral programs and graduate education in general were abbreviated and, in the case of the Hawaiian Indigenous Languages and Culture Revitalization, raised many questions among team members with regard to capacity and stability. The team requested that the University make further documentation available at the time of the Special Visit including:

- Department program review policy
- Department program review documents

- General Education revision
- WASC subchange proposals for the two doctorate degrees
- Department assessment reports
- Samples of doctoral dissertation proposals

All materials were provided. However, only one doctoral dissertation proposal in the Hawaiian and Indigenous Languages and Culture Revitalization program was made available.

## **II. EVALUATION UNDER THE STANDARDS OF THE UNIVERSITY'S RESPONSE TO THE ISSUES RAISED IN THE 2004 COMMISSION ACTION LETTER**

### **A. Mission, Planning, and Institutional Resources**

The Commission letter of June 25, 2004, cited an ongoing concern related to the limitations placed on UH Hilo by the resource allocation model utilized by the UH system. The apparent lack of consideration of program expansion and enrollment growth within the model was identified as a concern. In the Special Report a process was identified that would demonstrate how the resources provided would be used to meet their strategic plan objectives and core mission. The university created a Long Range Budget Planning Committee (LRBDC) to provide:

- broad input to the Chancellor and Chancellor's Cabinet regarding budget criteria
- strategies for obtaining additional university budget resources
- long-range strategic planning for the budget
- suggestions for methods of budget communication

## Budgeting and Planning

An ancillary objective of the LRBDC is to create a transparent budgeting and planning process which provides easily understood information on the current budget status, process for future budgeting, and the distribution of other pertinent budget information that would affect the campus. This effort is noteworthy in that it is inclusive and allows the entire campus to become engaged in the budgetary process. In a meeting conducted with the LRBDC, the members described the process which was being implemented and how the allocation of resources was reflective of the campus strategic plan. They also defined the manner in which the campus was addressing the system's strategic plan. Conversations held with the President, Vice President for Academic Planning and Policy, and Vice President for Budget & Financial/Chief Financial Officer of the University of the Hawai'i System, indicated that the budgeting model could compensate for enrollment growth depending upon the manner in which the university prepared its Program Change Requests (PCR's), which is the vehicle utilized for securing above target ceiling funding. System administrators also indicated that the compensation for growth and the funding level appears to be adequate to support the direction of the campus. Further clarification was provided by the Vice President for Academic Planning and Policy in the form of the proposed *Long-Term Finance Plan for the University of Hawai'i* as well as *Serving the State of Hawai'i: UH System's Strategic Outcomes and Performance Measures, 2008-2015*. The budget analysis provided in the documents does show that while state appropriations to the University of Hawaii System have increased, the percentage of the state budget allocated to the system has decreased from 12.7% to 8.5%. Additionally, when comparing funding in constant dollars, the state appropriation decreased by 16.7% though the total state general funds increased by 24.7%. This situation is not uncommon in higher education, but it becomes critical in a system as small as the UH. These documents do provide further clarification, but one key element which has yet to be determined is whether the current 7.69% target ceiling of the state appropriation for higher education at UH Hilo is adequate for the Hilo campus in comparison, for example, to the 56.5% ceiling for the Manoa campus. The proposed plan will allow campuses to secure

additional funding based upon Performance Measure Incentive Funds. This should advantage the campus based upon its strategic plan.

In the team's judgment, the funding model does negatively limit the growth potential of UH Hilo, yet it is not so restrictive that the current operations of the university cannot be met within the allocated resources. The President acknowledged that UH Hilo has been a successful participant in the current process as it was the only institution that received legislative funding approval for all three levels of PCR's in the past year.

The *Long-Term Finance Plan for the University of Hawai'i* acknowledges the difficulty inherent in using comparative institutional data to establish target ceilings and is attempting to address the issue. Coincidentally, House Bill 2978, introduced and passed by the House, would establish a task force to "...develop an equitable, consistent, and responsive funding formula for the distribution of fiscal resources throughout the UH system." The adoption of this legislation would clearly have an effect on the manner in which campuses are resourced. The institution and the system have differing philosophies regarding the basis for funding, which then leads to a difference of opinion regarding the manner in which the additional resources are distributed. The President, his administration, the Chair of the Board of Regents, and the institution acknowledge that more efficiency of scale could be achieved with an enrollment of 5000 to 7000, but with the exception of the current PCR process it does not appear that funds for this level of growth will be readily available under the current funding model. There also appeared to be different interpretations about the value of recruiting students who are not Hawai'i residents

### External Funding

In the three year period since the Commission letter the university has increased external funding from an average of approximately \$8.1 million per year in the 8 years prior to the Commission letter to an average of \$17.3 million. The comparison of these periods indicates an increase of over 100%. These funds are

being utilized to engage undergraduate and graduate students in research efforts that focus on the uniqueness of the laboratory that is the Big Island. The public/private partnerships which have been cultivated have also supported the academic core of the institution. These include relationships with astronomy and agricultural research units adjacent to the campus (CFR 3.5). The campus also received approval from the Board of Regents to develop the U.S. - China Center. This public-private partnership will create a retail center as well as 1200 resident hall beds for students attending the university. This project alone will play a significant role in the planned growth of the campus in addition to impacting the economy of the area. These efforts have added resources to support the core mission of the university. Likewise, the secured funding reflects the institution's mission and the system's strategic plan to: develop indigenous studies, increase the economic impact of the university, and improve competitiveness with a clear focus on native Hawaiians (CFR 3.5, 3.6). Many of the successful academic programs are supported with extramural funds which could be problematic in the future. A concern was raised in the campus report about the university's lack of involvement in the development of the system's strategic plan. A review of the plan indicates that the goals are general enough that the university's strategic plan is a complementary document which reaches more specificity as it is related to campus activities. The system President indicated that the system's plan was in place when he assumed his role and that it reflected the direction that he and the Board of Regents felt was appropriate for the UH and the long-term needs of the State. The recent approach employed by the President's Office in seeking consultation and input on the *Long-Term Finance Plan for the University of Hawai'i* indicates that the system is now much more inclusive in its approach to system-wide initiatives. The team applauds this effort and encourages this approach when the outcomes of the work directly impact the Hilo campus (CFR 4.2).

Commendations:

1. The team commends the institution on the creation of the Long Range Budget Planning Committee and the overall charge given this group.



2. The institution is commended on its response to the recommendation that it make a concerted effort to secure additional extramural funding and the success that has been achieved.
3. In support of the university's extramural funding efforts, the campus is commended for the manner in which it secured the services of a well-established professional on a 2-year sabbatical to serve as the Vice Chancellor for Research. His presence was seen by the team as very positive in furthering the campus' efforts in securing extramural research funding.
4. The team acknowledges the Chancellor's efforts to improve the resources of the campus and commends her for her leadership in securing legislative, community, national, and international support. The Chancellor is also commended for successfully securing highly qualified, diverse, permanent personnel in the key administrative positions of Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, and Vice Chancellor for Administrative Affairs. In a relatively short period, they have formed a solid team for the campus.

Recommendations:

1. The team recommends that more of an effort be made to improve the transparency and interpretation of the budgetary data from the System level to the individual campus constituents. The LRBPC is positioned to do this but has not been in existence long enough for its effectiveness to be assessed (CFR 4.5).
2. The team recommends that the campus create an Enrollment Committee composed of appropriate faculty, staff, students, and administration to develop a growth plan for the campus. The campus team should work with the system to clarify the value of recruiting students from outside the state of Hawai'i (CFR 3.5, 3.8).

3. The team recommends that cooperative planning with the system should occur in order to continue the successful programs which have been instrumental in increasing the number of students graduating in the STEM disciplines once extramural funding for these programs has ended.
4. The team recommends that campus strategic planning occur in the context of the system level data and planning priorities and take advantage of the campus' unique opportunities within the State.

B. Institutional Governance and Organizational Structures

The WASC 2004 Team Report noted a redundancy in the faculty led University governance structure, which includes both a University level Faculty Congress and in addition, local senates in each of the colleges. The Commission urged the university to monitor the operations of the senates and Faculty Congress and to evaluate the effectiveness of the two-tiered system. Furthermore, the Commission emphasized that the university would be responsible for demonstrating that it has established and implemented effective governance and administration and in the absence of such oversight would be found out of compliance with WASC Standard 3. In response to this directive, the January 2008 Report to WASC states that “the university administration has chosen to leave faculty free to work toward a governance structure that allows college senates to determine internal curricular and academic policies, while giving the Faculty Congress the responsibility of establishing academic policies that affect all degree-granting colleges.” The Report goes on to say that the Congress has acted on policies to standardize student teaching evaluations, a new GE curriculum, the revision of student learning outcomes and assessment plans, and the examination of retention and graduation data. At the same time, the document also states that there is sometimes conflict between the Congress and the local senates regarding the authority of Congress to pass university-wide policy. Moreover, there have also been

conflicts between local senates and deans over issues of authority. The site team verified these selfstudy report declarations.

### Faculty Governance

The two-tiered system remains in place and continues to be duplicative as reported by faculty throughout the university who reported confusion about the role of the senates versus the role of the Congress. Even though the Congress' By-laws indicate its role as the UH Hilo policy making body for all academic matters of concern to more than one unit, the by-laws for the senates are inconsistent and for some colleges they were not available for review.

As reported by faculty and management, the administration has remained uninvolved in resolving the duplication between the Faculty Congress and the college senates, leaving these actions to the faculty. Reports from faculty indicated that it is "easy to derail" any decision in this structure. Multiple interviews indicated that there continues to be significant disagreement, and some unrest by faculty, deans and Cabinet members as to the decision-making authority and efficacy of the Senates. With the College of Arts and Sciences comprising 85% of the entire University, and some of the other Colleges not participating at all in the decision-making discussions at the Congress, the Team is concerned that the two tiered system continues to create inconsistent guidance in the processes for effective decision making. (CFR 3.8).

Even though there continues to be tension between the Congress and the senates, the Faculty Congress has successfully completed academic projects leading to University level academic policies (e.g., the passage of the 2005 program review policy, the course evaluation form revisions and the General Education proposal). In addition, the Congress By-Laws provide guidelines regarding membership and rules of order. The Congress has also established standing committees on Academic Policy, Admissions, Assessment, Budget, and General Education. All of these committees have begun to meet regularly and some have begun to post their minutes to improve communication with the campus.

The Assessment Committee is a learning community of faculty who are serving as Assessment champions. They recently hosted a faculty development assessment workshop seeking to enlist and educate faculty to embrace quality assurance of the University's curriculum.

The Congress' Admissions Committee is now launched with members of faculty, along with staff from Admissions, Student Development and Institutional Research. An interview with the Admissions Committee reported that the committee first met in November 2007 to review data from the Office of Institutional Research. An analysis of undergraduate GPA and surveys of faculty was conducted to better understand student success variables. The committee considered increasing Admission requirements, but after its analysis of the data, decided it was not the solution to supporting freshman in academic need. The committee has also been evaluating the NSSE data, collected from 2001 to the present, and IPEDS, ETS and EBI data.

The Team applauds the Admission Committee for beginning to examine the data that have been collected. The Team recommends that the Admissions Committee meet regularly and formulate an enrollment and retention plan in cooperation with the Chancellors' Cabinet, deans and the new Long Range Budget Planning Committee to ensure their work emerges into a coordinated effort. The team also suggests that the Admissions Committee go beyond what evidence Institutional Research has historically collected and include in its enrollment and retention plan a set of goals with measurable targets for enrollment and retention, as well as proposals for resolving infrastructure problems reported by the Committee. State funding of a new Student Writing and Success Center will be an important addition to that infrastructure. The Team suggests that an assessment component be included in the enrollment and retention plan. Also, this plan should go beyond the undergraduate program, and also include the graduate programs. The Team suggests that the plan determine what types of data will need to be collected and analyzed by Institutional Research.

In the WASC 2004 visit, UH Hilo faculty reported that the two-tiered system appeared to lead to an impasse regarding the University's goal to revise its General Education program. The College of Arts and

Sciences proclaimed GE to be within its preview. The Congress asserted that it was the policy making body to determine the GE. Since the self-study report, the Congress has passed a new General Education program. However, interviews with Congress leaders and the General Education Committee indicated that following the approval of the GE program, non-tenure-track faculty challenged the approval since they were not allowed to vote in the election. The Congress By-Laws prohibit them from participation and voting on Congress matters. Consequently, faculty leadership from the Congress and its General Education Committee agreed to reopen the approval process to allow non-tenure track faculty to vote on the matter. Shortly after the Special Visit the vote from the non-tenured faculty occurred and the GE Revision passed by the same percentage as the tenured/tenure track faculty vote (60% in favor). At the time of the visit, the General Education Committee members reported that if the re-vote had nullified the approval of the new GE, then the committee would need to begin their work again. The team suggests that the Congress examine this example as impetus for improving the policy structures and decision making processes of the newly emerging Congress.

This case is one of a number of examples that concerned the Team regarding UH Hilo policy making structures and decision making processes. Another rather serious issue is the approval of curricula at the local senates. In small colleges, this practice can result in faculty approving their own program with no review by faculty outside the program. It was reported at multiple interviews with deans and faculty that there is inconsistent policy documentation and tracking, and that decision making is either slow or sudden. Faculty reported that too often final decisions and rationales for some decisions from the administration, College Senates and the legislature are not communicated to the campus community in a timely way, and sometimes not at all. Websites of the senates are also inconsistent in providing By-laws and minutes. It was reported that the policies where faculty and deans agree are the ones that seem to be recorded, while other policy decisions seem to fade away. Given the two-tiered system, some policies can be in contradiction to others. For example, each senate has its own retention, promotion, and tenure policies, yet they are not consistently available in writing. Campus constituents reported that these

inadequate organizational processes create confusion and frustration. The Team is concerned that academic and administrative policy making and policy documentation are inconsistent.

Commendations:

1. The Team commends its Faculty Congress for its evolution becoming more accepted by most constituency groups as the university's faculty policy making body.
2. The Team commends the Congress for developing a clear set of by-laws, policies and a website which informs and guides faculty governance.
3. The Team commends the efforts of the Assessment Committee, which has initiated faculty workshops to help move the assessment agenda forward campus wide.
4. The Team commends the Congress for initiating the Admissions Committee as a standing committee under the Congress. This committee has begun to use evidence-based analysis and conversations with University staff to begin an on-going and codified enrollment management process.
5. The team commends the Congress' work of many years resulting in the culmination of the recently passed General Education proposal.

Recommendations:

1. The University should rectify the absence of a systematic method for the creation and codification of university policies (CFR 3.8).
2. The Cabinet should take the leadership in addressing the frequently heard complaint that decision making is often slow and lacks follow-up (CFR 3.11).
3. The Cabinet should perform a significant role in ensuring the effectiveness of all divisions on campus by providing clear and transparent information regarding decision-making and resource allocation (CFR 3.11).

4. The University should continue to evolve its governance structure to support effective decision-making. The Congress appears to have become the recognized policy-recommending body on curricular issues that involve all colleges, and the Senates have become the entity that have purview over department program review and educational effectiveness (CFR 3.8).
5. These structures and their responsibilities need to be formally resolved through a formal determination among the Cabinet, the Deans, the Faculty Congress and the College Senates and codified in the University Faculty Manual (CFR 3.8 and CFR 3.11).
6. Purview over curricular revision and new curricula should move to the Faculty Congress to ensure appropriate university-wide input and to avoid redundancy in courses across the university curricula.

#### University Organizational Structures

After many years of several interim Cabinet positions, the Chancellor has a full time team of executive administrators qualified and able to provide effective educational leadership and management (CFR 3.10). However, based upon interviews with faculty, deans and the Chancellor's Cabinet, the Team was concerned that academic leadership and faculty's role in governance continue to be less than effective and efficient. For example, the deans appear to lack the authority to match their responsibility for both academic leadership and fiscal matters. The communication conduit between the Chancellor's Cabinet and the deans and faculty bodies is reported to be inconsistent in the way it authentically engages deans and faculty in the decision making process.

The Team was concerned that Deans lack the authority to make decisions over which they have accountability, and the Deans appear to lack a learning community of their peers where cooperation and collaboration could thrive. Also, faculty and Faculty Congress interviewees expressed concerns of overwork by the faculty as a consequence of faculty committee participation, enrollment increases and receipt of several funded grant projects. Yet, there appear to be ineffective structures in place to discuss how to resolve faculty workload complaints, and how the two-tiered duplications and exclusion of

engaging full time non-tenure track faculty in the governance process might lead to some of the workload issues. The campus governance lacks a formal problem solving structure that includes a Dean's Council to provide effective leadership and management.

The evolution of faculty led academic governance is demonstrably improving. However, the Team is concerned that the campus has not clarified the difference between consultation with faculty to inform academic and administrative decisions compared to the authority to make final decisions. For example, the Faculty Congress declared to the WASC team that its Budget Committee should have decision making authority and have representation on the Cabinet. The Team observed that campus constituencies had varying opinions on the role of shared governance in decision making processes for both academic and administrative decisions. The Team was concerned that the campus has not been clear on the difference between consultative components of institutional governance and decision making authority.

#### Recommendations:

1. UH Hilo should consider the creation of a Deans' Council to promote communication and consistency in policy coordination and documentation of academic and administrative policies, as well as cooperation in problem solving with the Cabinet and the Faculty governance bodies. (CFR 3.10).
2. The Chancellor's recently constituted Cabinet must form a strong leadership team that manages the internal affairs of the campus and allows the Chancellor to focus her energies on securing support from the external constituents (CRF 3.10).
3. The University community needs to come to an understanding regarding the role of shared governance in the decision-making process (CFR 3.11).



### C. Diversity

In its 2004 action letter, the Commission notes the university's commitment to diversity was quite evident, but that there remained areas in need of attention. Specifically, the letter noted that the diversity of faculty and staff lagged well behind the diversity in the student population. The Commission also observed that the commitment to diversity did not extend across the entire university curriculum, specifically with respect to infusing understanding of indigenous culture and ways of knowing throughout the curriculum.

Based on evidence reviewed through the special visit, the team finds that the university has made substantial progress in addressing these concerns. With respect to faculty and staff diversity, since 2004 the role of the EEO/AA office has improved. The full-time EEO/AA officer consistently meets with all search committees, informing them of EEO/AA policies, and encouraging them to engage in affirmative recruitment to develop diverse candidate pools. Search committees also appoint Diversity Coordinators to work with the EEO/AA office to ensure that affirmative recruitment and fair deliberations takes place (CFR 1.5).

In January 2005, faculty leaders and administrators organized a Faculty Diversity Summit. Thirty-two faculty, professional staff and administrators, along with five community professionals and two students attended this summit to generate short and long-term strategies to improve the diversification of faculty, staff and administration.

In Fall 2007, the Chancellor appointed a Committee on the Diversification of the Faculty and Staff. This group has developed a preliminary plan which was presented to the team. It seeks to take a more aggressive approach to the diversification of faculty and staff. This involves working with the University administration and the State Legislature to secure resources for "opportunity hires," (i.e., faculty and staff positions designed to attract diverse candidate pools and thereby increase the chances for diversity hires). The plan is being revised and will be presented to the university community for review and discussion later in Spring 2008. While it remains to be seen how the plan to diversify the faculty and

staff will impact the campus, the team recognizes that the work of Chancellor's Committee represents a University commitment to take steps to turn widespread support for diversity to the level of concrete plans and actions.

The team also commends the university for making significant gains in the diversification of executive administrative positions (CFR 1.5). The recently hired Vice Chancellor for Administrative Services is female. The Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs is an Asian female. Four of the five sitting college deans are from racial minority backgrounds.

In the area of diversity in the curriculum, the university has made notable progress. Between 2002 and 2007, Keaholoa STEM, funded by the National Science Foundation, brought together UH Hilo faculty, Native Hawaiian and other cultural experts to help faculty gain an understanding of and appreciation for Native Hawaiian culture and ways of knowing. The program provided seminars and off-campus retreats for faculty to deepen exposure to Native Hawaiian culture. The Keaholoa STEM internship program for Native Hawaiian students has provided impressive opportunities for faculty and students to work together on research projects to develop reciprocal knowledge about science and Native Hawaiian ways of knowing. Between 2002 and 2007, sixty-two Native Hawaiian student interns worked with twenty-eight faculty on fifty-four research projects (CFR 2.11).

The Kīpuka Native Hawaiian Student Center has increased faculty knowledge and understanding of Native Hawaiian culture through a number of activities. In 2005, Kīpuka began offering Hawaiian language courses to UH Hilo faculty and staff. This exposure to Hawaiian language helps faculty and staff to create a welcoming environment. As one faculty noted, being able to properly pronounce the names of Native Hawaiian students makes them feel more connected to the university. In Fall 2006, Kīpuka began the Eia Hawai'i lecture series, which brings to campus speakers with expertise in various aspects of the Native Hawaiian experience.

Kīpuka's Uluakea Faculty development program recently completed its first cross-disciplinary training cohort. Six faculty from a range of academic disciplines participated in a year-long series of seminars, "talk story" sessions and symposia designed to deepen their understanding and appreciation of

Native Hawaiian ways of knowing. Participating faculty have already begun infusing this knowledge into their courses. Interestingly and perhaps unexpectedly, participation in the Uluakea program offers a promising way to enhance faculty retention. One faculty participant interviewed during the visit commented that he feels much more connected to UH Hilo, the Big Island, and his Native Hawaiian students because of his time in the faculty development program. A second cohort began last fall. This program appears to be a particularly effective way of bringing the Native Hawaiian perspective fully into courses (CFR 2.11).

Student learning appears to be enhanced by the infusion of Native Hawaiian ways of knowing into courses. Two students spoke eloquently about a class where the scientific study of evolution and ecology was made more meaningful by the Native Hawaiian creation story that was woven into the course.

Finally, the revised General Education Program for the University includes a requirement to study the Native Hawaiian culture and ways of knowing. This has the potential to expose all UH Hilo students with information pertaining to the Native Hawaiian experience.

#### Commendations:

1. The team commends the University for recent successes in the area of diversity.

#### Recommendations:

1. The campus, in concert with UH system wide officials, should begin discussions and planning regarding the institutionalization of successful diversity programs (Keaholoa STEM project and Kipuka, Native Hawaiian Student Center programs). Both of these programs are currently supported with extramural funds. If the campus and the system are to make on-going progress in raising the educational capital of Native Hawaiian students and in strengthening its unique work in the area of Native Hawaiian language and culture, it is vital to secure stable funding for these

programs which have demonstrated effectiveness.

2. The University should continue development and implementation of the faculty and staff diversification plan. At this point, the plan is in an early stage of development. It is important to finalize the plan and secure support from the campus and UH system officials for implementation. The plan's main focus is on the recruitment and hiring of faculty and staff. It will also be important to develop activities to mentor diversity hires to increase retention and advancement. The standing Diversity Committee is scheduled to provide continuing oversight of the Faculty and Staff Diversification Plan after it leaves the Chancellor's Committee. We urge campus administrators to work closely with the Diversity Committee to facilitate the on-going commitment to diversifying faculty and staff.
3. A formal campus-wide plan should be developed regarding the infusion of diversity issues across the curriculum. At this moment, there are a number of successful activities taking place, but there is a need for a plan to help coordinate and guide these on-going efforts, and to situate these efforts in the context of broader campus discussions on curricular development.
4. Diversity should be included as a priority in the university's long-term strategic planning efforts. Currently, there is widespread support for diversity in the university community, and a number of effective programs and activities. However, as noted above, the support and programs are not institutionalized. Making diversity a priority in the university's long-term plans is consistent with UH's system-wide priorities to serve underrepresented minority groups, and to position UH Hilo as an internationally recognized center for the study of indigenous cultures and languages. The team believes diversity's inclusion in long-term strategic planning will help to bring the pockets of effective diversity work toward the center of the university's efforts.
5. The campus should remain cognizant and committed to a broad definition of diversity. During this visit much of our attention was focused on activities related to Native Hawaiians. Though certainly an important emphasis, issues of diversity and inclusion extend beyond this focus. In particular, the team recognizes the need to place on-going attention on issues relating to the under

representation of Filipinos among staff and faculty and in the curriculum.

#### D. Educational Effectiveness

In its June 2004 Action Letter, the Commission noted that efforts to implement assessment initiatives had not yet reached the level of campus-wide engagement and urged the University to ensure that faculty would understand that the purpose of assessment was to improve student learning. In its Report to WASC in January 2008, the University stated that there had been only modest progress in involving faculty in student learning assessment over the past four years. The campus assessment plan, which was crafted in 2001, was finally approved by the Congress in April 2006. According to the Report, all departments have student learning outcomes but most are not assessing the outcomes nor is there a requirement to include the outcomes on syllabi and there is no campus system for collecting and reviewing the syllabi (CFR 2.4, 2.6).

During the March 2008 Special Visit, the WASC team met with faculty and department chairs and examined assessment reports and program review documents that were available to the team. The documents confirm the university's own conclusions in the January 2008 report that most departments have not begun to actually assess student learning although there are notable exceptions. It was clear from our conversations with faculty that they still do not understand the real purpose of assessment, and the campus is far from developing a culture of evidence or embracing the assessment paradigm (CFR 4.4). This is not to say that faculty do not care about their students' educational experiences. In meetings with the Assessment Committee and the chairs, they spoke passionately of their programs and the special initiatives that the campus has undertaken. However, they do not see how assessment is related to their efforts. They expressed a commitment to the assessment work as it relates to securing accreditation, but their remarks suggested a compliance orientation. The Hilo faculty were surprised by the suggestion that assessment should work for them, that it should be consonant with their own philosophies of teaching and

learning, that it should include a variety of methodologies, and that it should be meaningful with regard to understanding their students. When assessment was discussed in these terms, many faculty seemed more open to the enterprise. The team noted the need for the university to develop a deeper understanding of assessment, and it would greatly benefit by placing assessment advocates in central administration, the colleges, and the departments. The team applauds the university for passing an assessment policy and for holding a university-wide workshop on assessment though this occurred only recently. The visiting team also appreciated the \$40,000 in funding that Academic Affairs has provided annually for assessment activities. Hopefully, more departments will take advantage of this resource.

The program review policy which was passed in 2006 has been fully implemented. The university should be commended for the work done in this area and particularly for the process developed in Student Affairs. On the academic side, the development of specific program review guidelines, which include assessment of student learning, is clearly an aid to departments. However, the 2006 UH Hilo Program Review Policy is unusual in that the review process does not involve oversight from faculty (CFR 4.8). According to the 2006 policy and the program review documents examined, the self-study is reviewed by the college dean and the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. However, no faculty outside of the department being reviewed are involved. With this structure program review at UH Hilo will likely become a summative exercise rather than a formative process. If the overarching purpose of program review is program improvement, then the University should consider developing a governance structure embedded in the Faculty Congress that would oversee the program review process.

With regard to General Education assessment, it appears that much activity has occurred since the 2004 WASC visit. Although the 2004 WASC team lauded the General Education revisions documented in that visit, the faculty strongly objected to many aspects of that revision. Using the results of a Spring 2007 faculty survey on GE, and Fall 2007 faculty survey administered by the Congress Admissions Committee, and its own Fall 2007 faculty survey on possible GE revisions, the GE Committee has taken a new approach to designing a program that would be acceptable to most faculty. This program includes a

proposed list of learning goals for the entire GE divided into three phases, a requirement for syllabi to include learning goals, a requirement for courses to include more sustained work in critical thinking, writing, and analytical skills, and a GE certification process. This plan requires a recertification process for GE courses and a possible university-level GE examination.

Commendations:

1. The Office of Academic Affairs is to be commended for maintaining an annual fund of \$40,000 for the development of department assessment plans and for supporting the University-wide assessment workshop.
2. The University is commended for implementing its 2006 assessment policy.
3. The faculty is commended for creating a new General Education policy that includes an assessment plan and for securing faculty buy-in from tenure/tenure-track faculty for the policy.

Recommendations:

1. The University should create strong visible support of student learning assessment at all levels. A faculty assessment coordinator with release time should be appointed to assist departments in moving forward on their assessment implementation.
2. The University should consider bringing to campus for an extended period a well-established assessment professional to provide significant positive expertise in educating the campus with regard to the purpose and process of institutional and program assessment.
3. The University should continue to make every effort to educate the campus on the value and purpose of assessment aside from compliance.
4. Administration and faculty should work together to create a faculty governance structure that would become a part of the program review process.

### **III. THE DOCTORATE IN HAWAIIAN AND INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES AND CULTURE REVITALIZATION**

In its charge to the Special Visit team, WASC requested a report on the implementation of the doctorate in Hawaiian and Indigenous Languages and Culture Revitalization (HILCR). According to the Report to WASC, the Ph.D. program began in 2006 with an initial cohort of 5 students, each with no less than 10 years in Hawaiian or New Zealand Maori language education. The students have all completed their coursework and sat for their comprehensive examinations in January 2008. They will soon begin their dissertations. The first student is expected to graduate in December 2008. According to the Report, assessment of the program has taken the form of informal discussions of strengths, weaknesses, and outcomes of the program. The Report further states that obtaining faculty is the greatest challenge of the program. Six of the College's 12 teaching faculty are focused on post baccalaureate education and only 3 members of the faculty teach in the doctoral program.

The review of this program was abbreviated because it was part of a larger Special Visit for the entire university. A WASC team member met with the doctoral faculty and the five doctoral students on the second day of the WASC visit. Many serious issues requiring further discussion and follow-up arose in these conversations.

Four of the five doctoral students are assistant professors or associate professors in the HILCR program and three of the four teach in the HILCR MA program. In a program of this size, there are obvious conflict of interest issues regarding the objectivity in evaluating the work of students who are also colleagues (CFR 1.8). Although the WASC team requested copies of the students' doctoral proposals, the only proposal provided was that of the one student who is not teaching in the program. She is a Maori from New Zealand, who is studying language proficiency assessment. Having no UH Hilo



faculty with this specialization, the student flies to Manoa at her own expense to study there, where she has no library privileges (CFR 3.1).

At the time of this visit, there was no published curriculum for the HILCR program. It did not appear in the substantive change report, the University catalog, or the department's website. When asked, administrators could not explain the difference between the MA program and the Ph.D. program with regard to course requirements. The faculty stated that the MA required a set number of courses in which students enrolled as cohorts, taking the same courses. The faculty further said that the Ph.D. program curriculum shifted depending on who could be brought in as visiting scholars and the interests of the students. (CFR 1.7, 2.12)

Issues have also been raised with regard to the curricular review and approval process. At UH Hilo, course and program approval occurs at the college level. Since HILCR is its own college, the people who review and approve the curriculum are the same people who write the curriculum thus precluding objective oversight. Although proposals are reviewed by the Graduate Council, the Council only provides advisement (CFR 2.2).

Faculty capacity and stability is a critical issue. It appears that only one permanent faculty member has the academic background necessary to teach the linguistics courses in the program, and there are only three permanent faculty members involved in the doctoral program. To supplement the faculty, the program has invited visiting scholars to teach for a semester. However, the faculty themselves say that the university's support for this arrangement has been problematic. Paying visiting faculty, arranging for housing, providing clerical and secretarial support for the program, and finding office space are all issues that have not been resolved (CFR 3.1, 3.5).

When asked about assessment, the faculty stated that they "had just begun to think about this." They said that they had developed a set of student learning objectives, eight rubrics, and an assessment

plan, but the plan has apparently not been implemented and these documents were not available to the team (CFR 2.6, 2.4).

Having cited the great difficulties of the program, its enormous value should also be highlighted. This program is unique in the world. At this moment in time, there is no other place in the world where language and culture revitalization is occurring at an institutional level. The research opportunities in the immersion schools at both a theoretical and an applied level are rare and interesting. In addition, the issue of Hawaiian cultural revitalization and maintenance is a strategic priority for UH Hilo and the entire University of Hawaii system. The faculty are greatly committed to their work. In particular, Dr. William “Pila” Wilson has dedicated much time and energy to the program, especially to the operation of the immersion schools. However, the implementation of the program does not appear to be unfolding smoothly. Further study of the infrastructure, courses, and faculty scholarship should be undertaken before any conclusions can be drawn.

Commendations:

1. The University is commended for beginning the implementation of the HILCR doctorate.
2. The faculty are commended for managing to move the students through their first 2 years despite significant capacity issues.

Recommendations:

1. There must be a further study of the following areas in terms of both capacity and educational effectiveness:
  - a. Faculty capacity
  - b. Efficacy of allowing HILCR faculty to enroll
  - c. Oversight of curricular development

- d. Development of educational effectiveness practices
  - e. Transparency of curriculum requirements
  - f. Institutional commitment to the program
  - g. Review of student work
  - h. Review of faculty scholarship
  - i. Observation of immersion schools (actual visits)
2. Any decision regarding new enrollments in the program should be put on hold until such time as the above studies are completed.

#### **IV. THE COLLEGE OF PHARMACY**

In its charge to the Special Visit team, WASC asked for a report on the implementation of the College of Pharmacy. Following the WASC substantive change approval, the College of Pharmacy received approval from the American Council for Pharmaceutical Education (ACPE) in June 2007, and the inaugural class of 90 students began instruction in August 2007. In April 2008, the College will undergo a second site visit scheduled by the ACPE for advancement to candidate status, and full accreditation is expected when the first cohort graduates in 2011.

The College of Pharmacy (COP) is a new college on the UH Hilo campus. The College offers the Doctor of Pharmacy or PharmD degree. This is the first professional doctorate offered on the UH Hilo campus. The dean of the College has been in residence 1.5 years. He is a highly qualified scientist who has a long history of involvement in pharmacy education whose most recent previous post was Dean of the College of Pharmacy at Purdue University. The Dean has assembled a management team that includes an Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, an Associate Dean for Research, a Chair of Pharmaceutical Sciences and a Chair of Pharmacy Practice. Additional administrative personnel are responsible for

admissions and students, technology, marketing and public relations, development and research coordination. The faculty members that the dean has recruited to date are ethnically diverse, qualified for their positions and many are research-oriented.

The College's Doctor of Pharmacy program is described as 2-4 program (i.e., no less than two years of pre-pharmacy classes followed by the four-year professional program). While the pre-pharmacy requirements emphasize biology and chemistry, a broad variety of liberal arts courses, including calculus, humanities, public speaking and English, are also required. The Dean has worked with the CAS Dean and faculty to provide UH Hilo students who wish to enter pharmacy with a well-sequenced pre-pharmacy program. Because of the number of pre-pharmacy requirements, it is likely that not all students will complete these requirements in two years.

. Within the four-year professional program, often referred to as the P1 to P4 years/classes, the P1 through P3 years are characterized principally by classroom or didactic learning while the fourth year is totally committed to pharmacy practice experiences in a variety of practice settings. Additionally, recent trends in pharmacy education have led to a requirement of 300 hours of introductory pharmacy practice experiences or IPPEs prior to the P4 year. These early experiences are intended to prepare the students for the more intensive practice experiences of the P4 year. The UH Hilo College of Pharmacy is already involving students in a variety of IPPEs as part of their curriculum. The College will soon be recruiting practice sites for the P4 rotations. Many of these rotation sites may become available based on relationships built through the IPPE program.

Student recruitment to the program has been successful with over 1,000 applications received for the class entering Fall 2008. In addition to the Pharmacy College Aptitude Test or PCAT and use of the centralized Pharmacy College Application Service or PharmCAS, the College's admission process includes personal interviews. In each of the last two years, over 200 applicants were interviewed for the

90 class seats. Because of the airline costs to travel to Hilo, some interviews have been held on the Mainland.

The charter class of 90 students matriculated in Fall 2007 and are close to completing two semesters of study. The WASC team had the opportunity to visit with a sample of the P1 students and found them diverse, collegial and satisfied with the program. The students reported that they were challenged by the 16 units per semester but able to manage the workload. The students interviewed were primarily from Hawaii; of these, several had completed their pre-pharmacy coursework outside of Hawaii. The average entering GPA for the charter class was over 3.1 and over 60% of the P1 class matriculated with completed bachelor's degrees.

The COP has invested to enrich the UH Hilo campus library with pharmacy books, journals and other resources. At the present time, e-resources from the College of Medicine at UHM are not shared by the UHH campus. Many of these resources are used by both pharmacy students and faculty and medical students and faculty. The team believes that the UH system and librarians may benefit from sharing library resources across campuses rather than duplicating resources.

The College operates under a five-year Pro Forma budget that supports the faculty build-out to 60 FTEs and the student body to four 90-person classes. Budgetary planning for the College build-out also reflects expansion of biology and chemistry classes at the undergraduate level for anticipated increases in UHH pre-pharmacy students.

The Dean is participating in the Vice Chancellor's Council and other UH Hilo administrative committees. He has appointed a COP faculty member to the UH Hilo Congress. While the Dean and faculty are principally absorbed in launching the new college, the team observed that a spirit of collegiality exists in both directions between the COP and the other UH Hilo academic units and personnel. Overall, there is evidence that the addition of the COP to the programs offered on the UH Hilo campus is already having a positive campus impact that is likely to increase over time.

Space is an issue. College faculty and administration presently occupy offices in the Institute of Pacific Islands Forestry near the campus according to the Report. The office facilities are attractive and allow the College faculty to be close to one another and to staff support. Research space is likewise being rented in a different facility close to the campus. On-campus classrooms and laboratory space are being shared by the other colleges, and study space has been found for students in the Campus Center during afternoon and early evening hours. Additional office space will be provided for the six new faculty, and new facilities with office and classroom space are being constructed above the main UH Hilo campus and should be available for use by late Fall 2008 or early Spring 2009 according to the Report. The plan has two phases with the addition of a temporary, modular building by Fall 2008 and a permanent building later. The University of Hawai'i foundation has assigned a development officer to procure gifts for the college.

The College Curriculum Committee has revised the preliminary curriculum. The proposed new curriculum has been presented to the faculty and was approved for implementation. The curriculum is organized around four themes or strands: basic science, clinical science, social and administrative science, and experiential learning in clinical settings. According to the Report, the core of the curriculum are courses in pharmacology, medicinal chemistry, pathophysiology, and therapeutics, all to be taught in an integrated fashion. The College Assessment Committee has been at work since May 2007 on a proposed set of assessment activities, and a detailed list of program learning objectives have been presented to the faculty and approved. All syllabi include course learning objectives formulated in terms of program objectives.

Commendations:

1. The campus is commended for successfully establishing the Pharmacy Doctorate.
2. The College of Pharmacy is commended for contributing to the diversity of the campus in terms of faculty, staff and students.

3. The campus is commended for rapidly establishing collegial relationships between the new college and the existing programs.

Recommendations:

1. The College is urged to move forward in the acquisition of temporary and permanent spaces for classes, faculty, staff and research.

## **V. CONCLUSION**

Between the conclusion of the WASC Educational Effectiveness Review in 2004 and the WASC Special Visit in March 2008, the University of Hawai'i, Hilo has made significant progress in responding to a number of the issues raised in the 2004 Commission Action Letter. Great progress has been made with regard to external funding, diversifying the faculty and incorporating issues of Hawaiian culture into the curricula, and implementing the new doctoral programs in Pharmacy and Hawaiian Indigenous Languages and Culture Revitalization. In each of these areas the team acknowledges and appreciates the tremendous effort and the remarkable success. Having noted this progress, there are four areas in which further immediate focused attention is called for.

### Budgeting and Planning

The creation of the Long Range Budget Planning Committee is a major step forward in developing a transparent budgeting and planning process, which provides easily understood information for all constituents. However, since this committee has only been in existence for about 9 months, it is impossible for the WASC team to assess its effectiveness. The Committee should work toward reconciling the fundamental differences in philosophy between the Hilo campus and the system office with regard to enrollment budgeting.

## Governance

The evolution of faculty-led academic governance is demonstrably improving. However, the Team is concerned that the two-tiered system continues to create inconsistent clarity in the processes for effective decision making. The University has also taken positive steps with the appointment of a complete team of qualified and committed executive administrators to partner with faculty leadership. However, the enrollment growth has strained UH Hilo's administrative operations. The Academic and administrative policy making and implementation is too often slow and lacks transparency and its documentation is inconsistent. The campus lacks agreement on the difference between consultation with faculty to inform academic and administrative decisions compared to the authority to make final decisions by the academic administrators. Therefore, UH Hilo organization structures and decision making processes require a formalized and codified determination of the roles, responsibilities and authority of the Cabinet, the Deans, the Faculty Congress and the College Senates.

## Educational Effectiveness

While the university has made a major step forward in passing and implementing a new program review policy, that policy needs to include more faculty involvement in and oversight of the process and a greater degree of buy-in from the faculty on the assessment requirement in the policy. In addition, the entire university would benefit from immediate, focused attention on the value of assessment in fulfilling the faculty's responsibility for student learning.

## Doctoral Program in Hawaiian Languages and Indigenous Culture Revitalization

While the team notes and appreciates the value of this program and the pride that the Hilo campus and the UH system take in this program, many issues have been raised that are related to the long-term viability and stability of the HLICR program. The University would benefit from immediate, focused study of these issues. Any decisions regarding new enrollments in the program should be put on hold until such time as the above studies are completed.