

## Introduction

*Hilo i ka ua Kanilehua, nahele paoa i ke 'ala:*  
Hilo of the Kanilehua rain, where the forest is imbued with  
fragrance

– *Hawaiian Proverb*

### A Community Profile: Hilo and the Big Island

The University of Hawai'i at Hilo is a comprehensive, public liberal arts institution that originally began as "Hilo College" in 1947. In 1970, Hilo College was renamed the University of Hawai'i at Hilo (hereafter referred to as "UH Hilo") as it became a baccalaureate granting institution.

UH Hilo is situated in a small, rural community on the southernmost island in the Hawaiian chain. The calmness of the Big Island belies a rich and dynamic history. The development of the Hawaiian kingdom begins with the story of Kamehameha I, born in North Kohala, whose legacy is tied to the larger conquest of the archipelago and the ending of perpetual warfare among the districts of Hawai'i (otherwise known as the Big Island).<sup>1</sup> This was also the Island that witnessed the death of Captain James Cook at Kealakekua in 1779.<sup>2</sup> Hilo, in particular, was the birthplace of Liholiho, who challenged the *kapu* (the socio-religious system underscoring the traditional political clout of the priests) and who became Kamehameha II in 1819.<sup>3</sup>

In later years, the verdant landscape, fed by continual rains that have made Hilo famous in the proverb quoted above, provided the opportunity for the development of the sugar industry – beginning in 1863 with operations started at Onomea, just North of Hilo, and at Kohala farther north. By 1926, 27,427 acres were under cultivation at Onomea alone.<sup>4</sup> Such large-scale agricultural production necessitated a large influx of foreign labor from places such as China, Japan, Portugal, Korea, and the Philippines. These groups came and established themselves as permanent members of the community. Hilo and the rest of the Big Island is proud of its indigenous heritage – it is the family home of noted scholar Mary Kawena Pukui (1895-1986), one of the primary leaders of the Hawaiian Renaissance, which enabled the survival of *‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i* (the Hawaiian Language) and the preservation of cultural practices; and it is here that the language, song, and *hula* are continually celebrated in such events as the Merrie Monarch Festival. But given its history of in-migration, Hilo also embraces its multicultural diversity. That diversity is reflected in our current student population; as of 2011 full-blooded Native Hawaiians and other indigenous Pacific Islanders made up 11.9% of the total student population of undergraduates; Asians

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<sup>1</sup> Kamakau, Samuel Mānaiakalani. *Ke Kumu Aupuni: Ka mo'olelo Hawaii no Kamehameha Ka Na'i Aupuni a me kāna aupuni i ho'okumu ai*. (Honolulu: 'Ahahui Press, 1996): 1.

<sup>2</sup> Kuykendall, Ralph S. *The Hawaiian Kingdom: 1778-1854 Foundation and Transformation*. (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1938) 19.

<sup>3</sup> Kamakau, Samuel Mānaiakalani. *Ruling Chiefs of Hawai'i*. (Honolulu: Kamehameha Schools Press, 1992), 222-228.

<sup>4</sup> "Register of the Onomea Sugar Company." *Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association Plantation Archives*.

[http://www2.hawaii.edu/~speccoll/p\\_maunakea.html](http://www2.hawaii.edu/~speccoll/p_maunakea.html)

(including Filipino) 19.2%; Mixed Ancestry 29.7% (a category which includes a majority of Native Hawaiians); and Whites 23%.<sup>5</sup>

The importance of agriculture cannot be understated for this Island. According to William H. Dorrance and Francis S. Morgan, “Two statistics can give an idea of the importance this one island placed in the [sugar] industry as a whole. In 1936 the 16 mills then operating on Hawai‘i produced 318,163 tons of sugar, 34.66 percent of the Territory’s total production. In 1990 Hawai‘i’s three remaining mills produced 212,524 tons, 25.93% of the state’s total production. The last of the Big Island’s plantations was shut down in 1996.”<sup>6</sup>

Since the decline of the sugar industry, Hilo and the rest of the Big Island have faced a number of socio-economic problems. As of 2010, Hilo town had an estimated population of 43,263 with a density of 45.9 persons per square mile; demographic information reveals that for the whole Island, 17.8% speak a language other than English at home, and only 29.5% of persons over the age of 25 hold a bachelor’s degree.<sup>7</sup> Hawai‘i County is also home to roughly 53,630 Native Hawaiians, roughly 30% of the total population of the Island (178,351).<sup>8</sup> In April 2013, the Hawai‘i Health Data Warehouse issued data from the Department of Health that shows a majority (54.7% – 58.3%) of live births were of Native Hawaiian ancestry for the County of Hawai‘i between 2000 and 2011.<sup>9</sup> Despite the development of a rather strong tourism economy on the west side (Kona and South Kohala), per capita income for Hawai‘i County was pegged at \$46,444, ranking it below the other counties: City and County of Honolulu, \$67,519; Kaua‘i, \$52,714, and Maui, \$56,206<sup>10</sup> Based on national poverty thresholds, Hawai‘i County also lags behind other districts: roughly 10.6% of all families fall below poverty levels on the Island as opposed to 6.5% for O‘ahu, 7.2% for Kaua‘i and 6.4% for Maui.<sup>11</sup> Of special note is the fact that 24.6% of families, headed by a single female in Hawai‘i County, fell below national poverty thresholds.<sup>12</sup> These statistics indicate

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<sup>5</sup> UH Hilo IR, Fall 2012 Campus Enrollment Overview, <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/iro/documents/OverviewCompileFall2012.pdf>. Problems with the reporting of under-represented minorities will be further discussed in Essay Three.

<sup>6</sup> William H. Dorrance and Francis S. Morgan, *Sugar Islands: The 165-year Story of Sugar in Hawai‘i* (Honolulu: Mutual, 2000) 81-82.

<sup>7</sup> United States Census Bureau, Hilo CDP, <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/15/1514650.html>.

<sup>8</sup> State of Hawai‘i Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism, *The State of Hawaii Data Book 2012*, Table 1.41–Ethnic Stock by County: 2010, <http://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/economic/databook/db2011/section01.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> The Hawaii Health Data Warehouse, “Hawaii Births by County of Residence and Infant’s Race-Ethnicity,” April 8, 2013, 6. [http://www.hhdw.org/cms/uploads/Data%20Source %20Vitals/Vital%20Statistics\\_Live%20Births%20in%20Hawaii\\_IND\\_00002.pdf](http://www.hhdw.org/cms/uploads/Data%20Source%20Vitals/Vital%20Statistics_Live%20Births%20in%20Hawaii_IND_00002.pdf).

<sup>10</sup> State of Hawai‘i Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism, *The State of Hawaii Data Book 2012*, Table 13.21–Income Type and Per Capita Income, By County: 2010 and 2011,” <http://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/economic/databook/db2012/section13.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., Table 13.25–Poverty Status, for the State and by County: 2007-2011, <http://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/economic/databook/db2012/section13.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., Table 13.25–Poverty Status, for the State and by County: 2007-2011, <http://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/economic/databook/db2012/section13.pdf>.

the University is located in and serves an at-risk population. Attention to this has been reported as far back as the 2001 Self-Study for WASC.<sup>13</sup>

### Institutional Mission

Our unique position in a community that is both rich in history but also victim to the collapse of large-scale colonial-era agriculture provides us with a responsibility not only to uphold respect for the values and lessons of the past but also to lead the way in sustainable development. Both of these charges underscore the newest iteration of our Mission Statement and what we stand for:

- Access to education: We provide access to higher education while holding high expectations for all students and providing support for their success.
- Learning from many sources: We offer an engaging atmosphere-of-learning where knowledge is created and shared, values and wisdom are preserved, and individuals can learn from one another. Learning occurs not only in the classroom, but in the laboratory, in the field, in the studio, through performance and presentation, in partnerships with our community, and in our everyday lives.
- Excellence in teaching and scholarship: We value the integration of teaching with scholarship, connecting instruction with research, service, and professional experiences that empower our students to achieve their academic and career goals. We strive for excellence in teaching by promoting effective and innovative teaching methods that have a positive impact on student learning, while also seeking the advancement of scholarship in its own right.
- Student-faculty interaction: We recognize the value of dialogue, discussion and debate between and among students and their faculty, fostered by quality student-faculty engagement and collaboration, and out-of-class experiences.
- Diversity and cultural infusion: We celebrate different people, their backgrounds and history, and the unique cultural mosaic of Hawai'i that brings the feel of a global community to our local campus.
- Stewardship of the natural and cultural environment: We respect the *'āina*/land and appreciate the many lessons it has to teach. We work in partnership with the community to study, protect, preserve and sustain the unique cultural and natural environment of Hawai'i Island.
- Community partnerships and economic impact: We are dedicated to our role as a major economic and knowledge-based resource for the Island, state and region. We work in partnership with local government and agencies, businesses, non-profit groups, alumni, and other educational institutions to create a positive impact on our students, local community and economy.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> "Self Study Report: Submitted to the Western Association of Schools and Colleges for Reaffirmation of Accreditation," 13 July 2001, 5-6, <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/SelfStudy2000-2001.pdf>.

<sup>14</sup> *Papahana Ho'Olālā Hikiāloa 2011-2015*, 5, <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/strategicplan/documents/2011-2015StrategicPlanWebVersionFINAL.pdf>.

Our *kuleana* or “duty” is to provide educational opportunities for an Island that trails other counties in terms of educational attainment among the adult population. The education we provide, however, is grounded in the indigenous value of *aloha ʻāina* – respectful stewardship of our landscape, dutiful mentorship of our students, and hands-on partnerships with our peoples, who represent a wide array of different nationalities, ethnicities, and heritages. At the same time, we are a major economic “engine” in that we directly impact Hilo via an operating budget of over \$40M per state budget allocations and \$40M in tuition/fees (combined) that fund 926 employees and 900 student employees, all in the service of some 8,056 students (a combined total of Hawaiʻi Community College students and UH Hilo undergraduates and graduates given shared infrastructure).<sup>15</sup> Given the predicted growth of Hawaiʻi County (19.3%) and the projected need of tertiary education and post-secondary occupational training (60.6% of the total workforce, ages 16 and above, for the east side of the Island), UH Hilo stands at the crux of a critical time in the emerging socio-economic evolution of the Big Island.<sup>16</sup>

### Accreditation History

UH Hilo was first accredited by WASC in 1976. At that time, UH Hilo was operationally integrated with Hawaiʻi Community College (henceforth referred to as HAWCC). HAWCC and UH Hilo formally separated in Fall of 1990 (though we still share some of the same facilities). At that time, enrollment was pegged at 2,874 with the institution offering baccalaureate degrees in 29 disciplines and certificates in another 12.<sup>17</sup> Today, we have an enrollment of 4,058 with 36 undergraduate programs (with 25 possible minors), 24 Certificate or Licensure Programs, 6 Master’s Degrees, and 4 Doctorates.<sup>18</sup>

Since 1990, UH Hilo has undertaken a Preparatory Review (2002) and an Educational Effectiveness Report (2004); we also hosted a site visit from WASC in 2004 and a Special Visit in 2008, “organized around the four issues raised in the Commission’s 2004 Action Letter [ . . .].”<sup>19</sup> Those four issues were outlined by the Commission as follows: (1) Mission, Planning, and Institutional Resources; (2) Institutional Governance and Organizational Structures; (3) Diversity; and (4) Educational Effectiveness. Per the 2004 letter, the Commission articulated:

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<sup>15</sup> Donald O. Straney, “Toward a Vibrant economy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” Presentation to the Joint Chamber Economic Development Committees, Hilo, July 25, 2012, 2, [http://hilo.hawaii.edu/chancellor/documents/2012-07-25\\_Donald\\_Straney\\_at\\_Joint\\_Chamber\\_Committees.pdf](http://hilo.hawaii.edu/chancellor/documents/2012-07-25_Donald_Straney_at_Joint_Chamber_Committees.pdf).

<sup>16</sup> Donald O. Straney, “Toward a Vibrant economy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” Presentation to the Joint Chamber Economic Development Committees, Hilo, July 25, 2012, 3-4, [http://hilo.hawaii.edu/chancellor/documents/2012-07-25\\_Donald\\_Straney\\_at\\_Joint\\_Chamber\\_Committees.pdf](http://hilo.hawaii.edu/chancellor/documents/2012-07-25_Donald_Straney_at_Joint_Chamber_Committees.pdf); DBED&T and U.S. Census data compiled by the System IRO.

<sup>17</sup> “Self-Study Report, Submitted to the Western Association of Schools and Colleges for Reaffirmation of Accreditation,” 13 July 2001, 1, 7, <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/SelfStudy2000-2001.pdf>.

<sup>18</sup> *UH Hilo at a Glance*, <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/prospective/glance.php>. For a listing of current degrees, please see: <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/catalog/degrees-and-certificates-offered.html>. Please note that the current enrollment figures can be found at: <http://www.hawaii.edu/iro/>.

<sup>19</sup> “Final Report of the WASC Visiting Team Special Visit Review of University of Hawaiʻi at Hilo,” October 14-15, 2009, 5, [http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/WASC\\_TmRpt\\_2009fall\\_UHH\\_Spec-1.pdf](http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/WASC_TmRpt_2009fall_UHH_Spec-1.pdf).

1. [A] strong recommendation that the University continue its efforts to attract external funding from donations, grants, and contracts, and to make certain that anticipated enrollment growth does not occur at the expense of currently enrolled students or already thriving programs.
2. [T]he University will be responsible to demonstrate that it has established and operates with effective governance and administration.
3. The program of study in Hawai'ian [sic] Language and Literature is recognized worldwide and is a model for the study of the culture of indigenous people. Nevertheless, that commitment did not appear to extend equally to the diversification of the faculty and staff or across the entire University curriculum. [ . . . ] Further, it was not clear to the Commission how the institution planned to diffuse throughout its curriculum the important ways of knowing that are unique to indigenous people.
4. [E]fforts to implement assessment initiatives have not yet reached the level of campus-wide engagement. Many faculty still resist the assessment initiatives and much work remains to be done with the general education.<sup>20</sup>

The 2008 Special Visit noted progress on “addressing diversity-related concerns identified in the 2004 Commission action letter.”<sup>21</sup> However, challenges still persisted in terms of “campus strategic planning need[ing] to occur within the context of system planning priorities, and not only in relation to the university’s unique position in the state, in order to be ultimately successful. Specifically, there appears to be some disagreement between the campus and the system regarding the proportion of students who are not Hawaii [sic] residents and whether UH Hilo should function within system guidelines.”<sup>22</sup> Concern was further raised by the team, who found “that most departments have not begun to actually assess student learning, and, while the program review policy that was passed in 2006 has been fully implemented, the policy itself is ‘unusual in that the review process does not involve oversight from faculty’ outside of the department being reviewed. (CFR 4.8) [.]”<sup>23</sup>

Additionally, “the visiting team noted some significant areas of concern, namely governance/decision-making and the Hawaiian doctorate.”<sup>24</sup> Regarding governance, the team cited UH Hilo for not having “Roles and responsibilities [ . . . ] adequately differentiated” in terms of curriculum and policies; specifically, the problem was defined as involving conflicts between the larger University Congress and college Senates and between academic deans and their school senates, with the “shared governance process [needing to] be clarified in order to articulate the ‘difference between consultation with faculty

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<sup>20</sup> Ralph A. Wolff to Rose Y. Tseng, 25 June 2004, 2-4,  
[http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/ActionLetterJune2004\\_000.pdf](http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/ActionLetterJune2004_000.pdf).

<sup>21</sup> Ralph A. Wolff to Rose Y. Tseng, 30 June, 2008, 5,  
<http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/WASCActionletterJune2008.pdf>.

<sup>22</sup> Ralph A. Wolff to Rose Y. Tseng, 30 June, 2008, 4,  
<http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/WASCActionletterJune2008.pdf>.

<sup>23</sup> Ralph A. Wolff to Rose Y. Tseng, 30 June, 2008, 5,  
<http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/WASCActionletterJune2008.pdf>.

<sup>24</sup> Ralph A. Wolff to Rose Y. Tseng, 30 June, 2008, 2,  
<http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/WASCActionletterJune2008.pdf>.

to inform academic and administrative decisions compared to the [administration's] authority to make final decisions.”<sup>25</sup>

Regarding the Hawaiian doctorate, the Commission called for immediate attention to the following:

- Clarifying admissions requirements for the PhD;
- Delineating the curriculum of the PhD vis-à-vis that of the MA and publishing a curriculum showing the differentiation between the two;
- Assessing student learning for both the master's and the doctorate;
- Developing a conflict of interest policy covering individuals simultaneously as students and faculty;
- Building faculty capacity.<sup>26</sup>

Our Special Visit Report, dated October 14-15, 2009, outlined a number of measures UH Hilo initiated in specific response to the 2008 Action Letter, including: (1) standardizing and systematizing institutional policies and procedures, communicated via new flow-charts (that visualize the roles of college deans in academic and fiscal matters), an Academic Policies Website, a UH Hilo Faculty Handbook, and the implementation of a new curriculum review process; (2) the development of a new General Education Program, built around competencies and disciplinary specializations; and (3) ongoing training of faculty on assessment at WASC-organized retreats and events.<sup>27</sup> The Special Report also included an external review conducted by University of Kansas indigenous, First Nation linguistics specialists Dr. Akira Yamamoto and Dr. Kimiko (Fumiko) Yamamoto of the Doctorate in Hawaiian and Indigenous Language and Culture Revitalization; their review made multiple recommendations on improving the language for admissions policies, program description, and faculty performance indicators.<sup>28</sup>

Issued as a summary of the 2009 Special Visit, the 2010 Action Letter noted progress in all areas previously identified as a source of major concern. The 2009 Special Visit Team noted crucial changes to governance structures, including the predominant role now assigned to the Faculty Congress, and the establishment of an institution-wide Curriculum Review Committee, an institution-wide Graduate

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<sup>25</sup> Ralph A. Wolff to Rose Y. Tseng, 30 June, 2008, 2-3, <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/WASCActionletterJune2008.pdf>.

<sup>26</sup> Ralph A. Wolff to Rose Y. Tseng, 30 June, 2008, 4, <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/WASCActionletterJune2008.pdf>.

<sup>27</sup> April Komenaka Scazolla, “Special Visit Report, University of Hawaii at Hilo, October 14-15,” 6-10, [http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/Special\\_Visit\\_Report\\_Aug\\_12\\_final.pdf](http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/Special_Visit_Report_Aug_12_final.pdf). The link to the UH Hilo website on Governance Roles and Responsibilities (with a link to the current flowchart) may be found at <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/chancellor/GovernanceRolesandResponsibilities.php>; the Academic Policies website may be found at <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/policies/>; the link to current Faculty Handbook is found at <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/teaching/handbook/>. The new General Education and Integrative requirements can be accessed through the following website: <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/academics/gened/documents/Fall2013GenEdREV.pdf>.

<sup>28</sup> Akira and Kimiko (Fumiko) Yamamoto, “Site-visit Report on the Doctorate in Hawaiian and Indigenous Language and Culture Revitalization, Ka Haka ‘Ula o Ke‘elikōlani (College of Hawaiian Language), University of Hawai‘i at Hilo,” [http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/A.5.PhDHILCRSiteVisitReport\\_Yamamoto\\_12-16-08.pdf](http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/A.5.PhDHILCRSiteVisitReport_Yamamoto_12-16-08.pdf).

Council, and a Deans Council.<sup>29</sup> The letter also cites “significant improvement” made on the quality and integrity of the Doctorate in Hawaiian and Indigenous Language and Culture Revitalization, suspended while accreditation concerns were addressed. Improvements included the development of the clearly differentiated curricula for the MA and PhD levels, plans for building faculty capacity, and the drafting of a conflict-of-interest policy addressing individuals serving as both students and faculty within the same program.<sup>30</sup> The Commission concurred with “the team’s recommendation that demonstrated assessment of student learning, with data, analysis, and results, continue to occur within the [PhD program of the] HILCR College [College of Hawaiian Language] and that there be a careful review of the doctoral program within the context of the next scheduled Capacity and Preparatory Review (CPR) and Educational Effectiveness Review visits.”<sup>31</sup> The larger Final Report of the WASC Visiting Team also recommended “That university administration provide leadership for further development of programmatic student outcomes assessment. Special attention should be paid to this recommendation in preparation for the next WASC reaccreditation review.”<sup>32</sup>

### Strengths and Challenges

One of UH Hilo’s greatest strengths comes from being in a unique position to meet the needs of our community. The Strategic Planning Committee undertook numerous “town hall” meetings in order to cultivate “effective consultation with UH Hilo stakeholders – faculty, staff, students, alumni, local community and others, including actively seeking input on the mission and vision of UH Hilo and identified priorities, goals and potential strategies.”<sup>33</sup> Between 2010 and 2011, the Committee helped to develop a new Strategic Plan that more assertively embraces indigenous values and further communicates our commitment to the economic welfare of the Island. The goals of the 2011-2015 Strategic Plan are:

Goal 1: Provide learning experiences and support to prepare students to thrive, compete, innovate and lead in their professional and personal lives.

Goal 2: Inspire excellence in teaching, research and collaboration.

Goal 3: Foster a vibrant and sustainable environment within which to study, work and live.

Goal 4: Cultivate, sustain and reflect a diverse, multicultural university that is rooted in the indigenous history of Hawai’i.

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<sup>29</sup> Ralph A. Wolff to Rose Y. Tseng, 3 March 2010, 2, [http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/WASC\\_action\\_letter\\_March\\_3\\_2010\\_rev.pdf](http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/WASC_action_letter_March_3_2010_rev.pdf).

<sup>30</sup> Ralph A. Wolff to Rose Y. Tseng, 3 March 2010, 2, [http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/WASC\\_action\\_letter\\_March\\_3\\_2010\\_rev.pdf](http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/WASC_action_letter_March_3_2010_rev.pdf).

<sup>31</sup> Ralph A. Wolff to Rose Y. Tseng, 3 March 2010, 3, [http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/WASC\\_action\\_letter\\_March\\_3\\_2010\\_rev.pdf](http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/WASC_action_letter_March_3_2010_rev.pdf).

<sup>32</sup> Final Report of the WASC Visiting Team, Special Visit Review of University of Hawai’i at Hilo, October 14-15, 2009, 30, [http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/WASC\\_TmRpt\\_2009fall\\_UHH\\_Spec-1.pdf](http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/WASC_TmRpt_2009fall_UHH_Spec-1.pdf).

<sup>33</sup> UH Hilo Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) – 2011-2015 Strategic Plan, <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/strategicplan/2011-2015plan.php>.

Goal 5: Strengthen UH Hilo’s impact on the community, Island and state of Hawai’i through responsive higher education, community partnerships, and knowledge and technology transfer.

Goal 6: Facilitate organizational excellence through continuous innovation, responsible resource development, and effective communication.<sup>34</sup>

Our second strength lies in our continual commitment to addressing educational effectiveness. Looking back to the 2004 Action letter reveals the strides made by this University in addressing core issues of governance and educational quality.

Steps were taken to clarify the roles of Vice Chancellors and Academic Deans and to communicate the responsibilities of key governance bodies – the Faculty Congress, the Campus-wide Curriculum Review Committee, the College Senates, and the Graduate Council.<sup>35</sup> Many academic policies have been codified and posted, including Conflict of Interest Provisions for Ka Haka ‘Ula o Ke‘elikōlani (henceforth referred to as the “College of Hawaiian Language” or “KH‘UOK”).<sup>36</sup>

In response to a 2009 recommendation, the University developed an Enrollment Management Implementation Team (EMIT) to meet the challenges posed by growing enrollment and to facilitate “more effective planning and institutional coordination.”<sup>37</sup> At that time, EMIT was cited as having “helped [ . . . ] forge important collaborations and partnerships between academic affairs and student affairs.”<sup>38</sup> As was stated in the Retention and Graduation Report filed in April of 2013, UH Hilo has been developing assessment activities to gauge the efficacy of established initiatives, including EMIT, which will be presented in Essay Three: Defining and Promoting “Student Success.”

In response to the concern stated in the June 30, 2008 letter from WASC “that most departments have not begun to actually assess student learning, and, [ . . . ] the [program] review process does not involve oversight from the faculty,” institution-wide training of faculty began in AY 2008-2009, with regular groups flying to and attending WASC-sponsored workshops on assessment. As more individuals became familiar with key concepts, teams started becoming more goal-oriented. In AY 2009-2010, the entire Assessment Committee attended a WASC retreat, where upon draft rubrics were developed for the newly adopted General Education Program. Four rubrics in particular – Information Literacy, Communication, Cultural Diversity, and Quantitative/Scientific Reasoning – were cited in a letter by Amy

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<sup>34</sup> *Papahana Ho‘olālā Hikiāloa 2011-2015*, 6-11, <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/strategicplan/documents/2011-2015StrategicPlanWebVersionFINAL.pdf>.

<sup>35</sup> “Governance Roles and Responsibilities,” <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/chancellor/GovernanceRolesandResponsibilities.php>.

<sup>36</sup> “UH Hilo Academic Policies,” <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/policies/>. The Conflict of Interest Policy for the College of Hawaiian Language is the 25<sup>th</sup> bullet from the top.

<sup>37</sup> Final Report of the WASC Visiting Team, Special Visit Review of University of Hawai’i at Hilo, October 14-14, 2009, 14, [http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/WASC\\_TmRpt\\_2009fall\\_UHH\\_Spec-1.pdf](http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/WASC_TmRpt_2009fall_UHH_Spec-1.pdf).

<sup>38</sup> Final Report of the WASC Visiting Team, Special Visit Review of University of Hawai’i at Hilo, October 14-14, 2009, 15, [http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/WASC\\_TmRpt\\_2009fall\\_UHH\\_Spec-1.pdf](http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/WASC_TmRpt_2009fall_UHH_Spec-1.pdf).

Driscoll to then-Chancellor Rose Tseng as “excellent examples” that she had wished to share with other institutions in the future.<sup>39</sup>

Polished versions were included by Mary Allen and Amy Driscoll in the handbook for the February 2012 Assessment 101 session in Honolulu given the unique approach we took in simultaneously embedding critical thinking as a key component of the core skills noted above.<sup>40</sup> The Rubric for Cultural Diversity was touted as an example of how assessment could be adapted to cultures in the Pacific – the rubric attempts to measure what are considered key Hawaiian concepts of place, self, and others vis-à-vis the metaphorical growth of a coconut tree, taken from the famous Big Island story of Ni‘auepo‘o and his coming of age. Trial use of these Rubrics will be reported in the Essay Two: Achieving “Core Competencies.”<sup>41</sup>

Another composite and larger group (made up of returning members of the Assessment Support Committee, junior faculty, and Chairs of Academic Departments) attended that same February 2012 retreat, with the more senior members staying on to revise the Program Review Guidelines under the mentorship of both Linda Buckley, Associate VP of Academic Planning and Educational Effectiveness at San Francisco State, and Amy Driscoll, Associate Senior Scholar with the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Through follow-up efforts spearheaded by Chair of the Academic Policy Committee of the Faculty Congress, those guidelines were revised to make assessment a more meaningful pathway to self-reflection by a department and to keep the channels of communication ongoing past the issuance of an MOU. Those guidelines have since been vetted by Department Chairs, passed by the Faculty Congress, and (along with the newly drafted credit hour policy) is now lodged with the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, which will hammer out final implementation and a new timeline for programs. The Faculty Congress also established this past academic year the Program Review Advisory Committee to provide mentorship and assessment expertise to departments coming up for Program Review and to offer feedback to both faculty and administration on the integrity and quality of degree programs. To facilitate implementation, the Math Department undertook Program Review in AY 2012-2013 based on the new guidelines; that document will be posted as an example of how the new guidelines are to be used.

In AY 2010-2011, the Chair of the Assessment Support Committee was sent to the Assessment Leadership Academy, where she began what has evolved into a 3-year project to assess student writing in the freshman year. The initial collection of surveys (indirect assessment) from Fall of 2010 – which compared HAWCC and UH Hilo ENG 100 student attitudes and experiences – was also featured in the February 2012 Assessment 101 handbook. The larger study analyzes a two-year collection of surveys and the direct assessment of 184 sets of student artifacts. The study involves a comparison between Writing Placement Exams and Final Research papers in ENG 100 (Composition I), the results of which will be discussed in Essay Two: Achieving “Core Competencies.”

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<sup>39</sup> Amy Driscoll to Rose Tseng, 1 March 2010,

<http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/congress/documents/AssessmentOfStudentLearningMarch2010.pdf>.

<sup>40</sup> Western Association of Schools and Colleges, “Assessment 101: The Assessment Cycle, Clear and Simple,” 91-95.

<sup>41</sup> See Item 9 General Education Rubrics: <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/2013-2014AccredDocs.php>.

And a recent survey (May 2013) of Departments (in the College of Arts and Sciences, henceforth referred to as “CAS”) and of the smaller colleges like Pharmacy (henceforth referred to as “CoP”) and Business (henceforth referred to as “CoBE”) reveal a majority are undertaking assessment. For units like CoP and CoBE, which are guided by secondary accreditation, assessment activities are complex and multi-layered, often involving standardized tests (NAPLEX for CoP and ETS and the CLA for CoBE) as well as indirect (surveys) and direct assessment of student work. A summary of CoP’s assessment activities is included in Essay One: The Meaning, Quality, and Rigor of the Degree. For the departments in the much larger College of Arts and Sciences, the results have been mixed. While many do engage in some form of assessment, it is often not regular and/or not done with standardized measurements so cross-institutional analysis of data is not feasible at this time.<sup>42</sup>

These program surveys, as well as the Self-Review per Colleges and the larger Survey based on the “Worksheet for Preliminary Self-Review under the Standards,” indicate that much work still remains to be done in the areas of governance and assessment. Two areas in particular were raised by the collective body of faculty, staff, and administrators as needing significant development and were given high priority:

- 3.1 The institution employs personnel sufficient in number and professional qualifications to maintain its operations and to support its academic programs, consistent with its institutional and educational objectives.
- 3.5 The institution has a history of financial stability, unqualified independent financial audits and has resources sufficient to ensure long-term viability. Resources are aligned with educational purposes and objectives. If an institution has an accumulated deficit, it has realistic plans to eliminate the deficit. Resource planning and development include realistic budgeting, enrollment management, and diversification of revenue sources.

The larger Survey also revealed a number of problems that harken back to the initial concerns raised by WASC in 2004: there is still some dissatisfaction expressed with decision-making, especially in terms of infrastructure, hiring priorities, and expenditures; assessment is still seen by some as an unnecessary imposition upon faculty time as opposed to a valuable exercise leading to pedagogical improvement; and there is a concern that the rapid growth of the University over the years has led to a compromise of the quality of instruction. It is also important to state that assessment of Distance Learning has proven a challenge. In March of 2011, the University was issued a notice that five (5) distance learning programs were implemented without substantive change approval.<sup>43</sup> In October of 2011, UH Hilo was issued another letter citing a need to resubmit the substantive Change Proposal for the online BA in Psychology with further documentation needed on: (1) a plan of assessment that could demonstrate types of formative and summative assessment methodologies; (2) schedule of assessment of PLOs; (3) identification of individuals responsible for the assessment; (4) how assessment would lead to “closing the loop”; (5) a curriculum matrix which mapped out PLOs to all courses in the Major; and (6) sample

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<sup>42</sup> See Item 8 Program Assessment: Surveys at: <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/2013-2014AccredDocs.php>.

<sup>43</sup> Ralph A. Wolff to Donald Straney, 28 March 2011, <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/SubstantiveChangeapprovalmissing.3.28.2011.pdf>.

syllabi that demonstrated adaptation to the online modality.<sup>44</sup> All programs have since submitted fully develop assessment plans; DL program summaries are now posted.<sup>45</sup> DL certification and review is still a problem as there are no mechanisms in place to evaluate the integrity or rigor of classes that are offered.

In many ways, faculty do understand the importance of assessment; however, most assessment plans seem to have been done to simply satisfy accreditation and the adoption of best practices has not always been consistent. New leadership in Academic Affairs has led to the first comprehensive assessment initiative of written communication at the senior baccalaureate level that was rolled out as of May of 2013, the results of which will not be ready until Fall of 2014 for the on-site visit. Details about this large-scale, institution-level assessment will also be further discussed in Essay Two.

The recent findings of the WASC Retention and Graduation Committee issued to UH Hilo and dated May 22, 2013, “reflects their [the Committee’s] concerns that the institution has sufficient institutional staff to sustain the kind of capacity needed for this work.”<sup>46</sup> The institution was operating without a full-time IRO for several months over the summer and fall of last year; it hired a new IRO in December of 2012, but that person has now left to assume the management of the Fiscal Office. A casual hire is now temporarily tasked with the management of institutional data. Ensuring stability and adequate capacity to meet our growing assessment and reporting needs will be a challenge given current fiscal constraints.

UH Hilo, like many schools in the UH System, was hard-hit by the national downturn in the economy. Chancellor Don Straney noted in his legislative testimony on January 3, 2011 that “UH Hilo’s cumulative budget reduction now totals \$8.5 million, which is 24% of our FY 2008-09 general fund allocation.”<sup>47</sup> Further fiscal restrictions imposed by the State Legislature have stalled much needed building growth, including a permanent building for the College of Pharmacy, which is now in violation of accreditations standards in terms of adequate infrastructure.<sup>48</sup> Declining enrollment is also a concern with the system reporting UH Hilo experiencing a 3% decrease in enrollment from Fall 2012.<sup>49</sup>

### Preparation for the Review

This Institutional Report was preceded by the study undertaken for the Retention and Graduation Report, which was spearheaded by Seri Luangphinit (ALO), Susan Brown (Associate Dean of CAS),

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<sup>44</sup> Brenda Barnham Hill to April Komenaka Scazzola, 6 October 2011, 2. See document number two, “SC Action Letter,” <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/BAinPsychologyOnlineSubchangeMaterials.pdf>.

<sup>45</sup> Documents for 2013-2014 Institutional Review for Reaffirmation of Accreditation, <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/2013-2014AccredDocs.php>.

<sup>46</sup> Maureen A. Maloney to Seri I. Luangphinit, May 22, 2013, <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/2013-2014AccredDocs.php>.

<sup>47</sup> “Testimony by the Chancellor to the Hawai’i State Legislature,” 3 January, 2011, <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/blog/chancellor/2011/01/03/testimony-chancellor-hawaii-legislature/>.

<sup>48</sup> Colin M. Stewart, “UH-Hilo Pharmacy school still homeless,” *West Hawaii Today*, 27 April 2013, <http://westhawaiitoday.com/sections/news/local-news/uh-hilo-pharmacy-school-still-homeless.html>.

<sup>49</sup> Institutional Research & Analysis Office, “Opening Enrollment,” accessed August 26, 2013, <https://www.hawaii.edu/institutionalresearch/openingEnrollment.action?reportId=OE>.

Mitchell Anderson (Chair of Academic Policy and incoming Chair of Assessment Support), and Mason Kuo (Institutional Researcher) with input from Donald Straney (Chancellor), Matthew Platz (Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs), and Paula Zeszotarski (College of Pharmacy). This study was presented for feedback to a larger group that serves as the Accreditation Planning Committee. Those members include(d):

- Donald O. Straney, Chancellor
- Matthew S. Platz, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
- Marcia Sakai, Vice Chancellor for Administrative Affairs
- Luoluo Hong, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
- April Komenaka Scazzola, Curriculum Officer (transitioned to work for the UH System, July 31, 2013)
- Seri I. Luangphinit, Chair of Assessment Support (AY 2009-2010 – AY 2012-2013), Accreditation Liaison Officer
- Todd L. Belt, Chair of General Education (AY 2012-2013)
- Michael J. Bitter, Chair of General Education (AY 2013-2014)
- Mitchell J. Anderson, Chair of Academic Policy (AY 2012-2013) and Chair of Assessment Support (AY 2013-2014)
- Susan G. Brown, Associate Dean of CAS
- Mason Kuo, Institutional Researcher (December 2012 – August 2013) and Director of Business Services (August 1, 2013 – present)
- Kelli Okumura, Institutional Researcher (August 1, 2013 – present)
- Cathy A. Travis, University Registrar
- Pila Wilson, Academic Programs Division Chair, Ka Haka 'Ula o Ke'elikōlani (KH'UOK)
- Hiapo Perreira, Ka Haka 'Ula o Ke'elikōlani (KH'UOK)
- Lei Kaponono, Ka Haka 'Ula o Ke'elikōlani (KH'UOK)
- Karla S. Hayashi, Director of Kilohana: The Academic Success Center
- Thora O. Abarca, Mookini Library
- Paula Zeszotarski, Assessment Coordinator, College of Pharmacy
- Michael H. Shintaku, Chair of Faculty Congress
- Candace Wheeler, Distance Learning Coordinator (retired August 31, 2013)
- Kurt Delacruz, Advising Center

The opening introduction was written by Seri I. Luangphinit (ALO) in consultation with Kalena Silva (KH'UOK), Pila Wilson (KH'UOK), Lei Kaponono (KH'UOK), and Mary-Louise Haraguchi (Mookini Library – Hawaiian Collection).

The main body of the report was divided to key committees of the Faculty Congress.

Todd Belt and the General Education Committee were placed in charge of the larger survey (based on the "Worksheet for Preliminary Self-Review under the Standards"). Todd Belt provided a summary of findings that was reworked with input from the entire Accreditation Planning Committee into Essay One:

The Meaning, Quality, and Rigor of the Degree. Additional information was provided by Paula Zeszotarski (CoP), Cheryl Ramos (CAS – Psychology), Faith Mishina (CAS – Languages), and April Komenaka Scazzola (Curriculum Officer). Data was rendered by Mason Kuo. Additional feedback was provided by Monica Stitt-Berg (UH Mānoa Assessment Specialist).

Seri Luangphinit and the Assessment Support Committee – which include Paula Zeszotarski (CoP), Karla Hayashi (Kilohana), Thora O. Abarca (Mookini Library), Kirsten Mollegaard (Associate Professor of English), Andrea Vasconcellos (Lecturer, Department of English), Spencer Kealamakia (Lecturer, Department of English), Sarah Marusek (Associate Professor of Political Science), Lari-Anne Au (Mookini Library), Mary-Louise Haraguchi (Mookini Library), Donna Ohora (Mookini Library), J. Elise Pratt (Former Student and now Hawai'i Public School Teacher), and Miranda Erikson (Former Student and now Hawai'i Public School Teacher) served as the vehicle to undertake writing competency baseline assessment which underscores the body of the Essay Two: Achieving “Core Competencies.” This essay was further developed with input from Mason Kuo, Michael Bitter (CAS – History), Kirsten Mollegaard, Susan Brown, Paula Zeszotarski, Matt Platz, Monica Stitt-Berg (UH Mānoa Assessment Specialist), and Linda K. Johnsrud (UH System Vice President for Academic Affairs) with data rendered by Mason Kuo and Drew Martin (CoBE).

Mitchell J. Anderson of the Academic Policy Committee developed student success profiles. Both he and Luoluo Hong undertook an analysis of student populations and initiatives with data provided by Kelli Okumura. Susan G. Brown, Jim Mellon (Executive Director of Global and Intercultural Education Programs – UH Hilo), Ginger Hamilton (Interim Director of Kīpuka: the Native Hawaiian Student Center – UH Hilo), Seri Luangphinit, and Paula Zeszotarski provided additional information and/or edited the narrative which further delves into the Retention and Graduation Report – a new exercise required by WASC that helped us to identify problematic student populations of whom we were previously unaware. Three major issues are defined and initiatives to address them are discussed in Essay Three: Defining and Promoting “Student Success.”

Marcia Sakai, Luoluo Hong, and Matthew S. Platz provided initial feedback to Chancellor Don Straney, who directed Essay Four: Ensuring Institutional Capacity in the Future.

The final, integrative essay was written by Seri Luangphinit with guidance from Pila Wilson, Kalena Silva, and Drew Kapp (Lecturer, Department of Geography and Environmental Science).