REPORT OF THE WSCUC VISITING TEAM

ACCREDITATION REVIEW

To: University of Hawai'i at Hilo

October 22-24, 2014

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The team evaluated the institution under the 2008 Standards of Accreditation and prepared this report containing its collective evaluation for consideration and action by the institution and by the WASC Senior College and University Commission. The formal action concerning the institution's status is taken by the Commission and is described in a letter from the Commission to the institution. This report and the Commission letter are made available to the public by publication on the SCUC website.

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University of Hawai'i at Hilo
Report for Accreditation Review
October 22-24, 2014

Section I. Overview and Context

Description of the Institution and its Accreditation History

The University of Hawai'i at Hilo (UH-H) is a comprehensive regional institution located on the Big Island of Hawai'i. As part of the larger University of Hawaii public post-secondary system, UH-Hilo is the only regionally accredited institution on the island. It is an intellectual, cultural, and social center for many of the community activities of the island. Formerly known as Hilo College, the first baccalaureate degree was offered in 1970. The institution was WSCUC accredited in 1976.

The institution reports enrollment for Fall 2012 as 3,933 students in five colleges which are the College of Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resource Management, the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Business and Economics, the College of Hawaiian Language, and the College of Pharmacy. The institution offers doctoral degrees for two programs, an array of Master's programs across the colleges and over 35 majors for undergraduate students. According to the UH-H self-study and data provided to the visit team, there are 186 FTE faculty with an additional 129 part-time or adjunct faculty.

Accreditation action, since the 2009 Special Visit team report was prepared, includes the following:

10/09 Special visit, October 14-16, 2009; Chair: J. Michael Ortiz.
2/10 Commission Action: 1) Receive the Special visit report and reaffirm accreditation,

and 2) Reschedule the CPR visit for fall 2013 and the EER visit for spring 2015. The proposal will be due fall 2011.

4/11 Substantive Change Committee Action: At its April 27, 2011 conference call meeting, the panel of the Committee acted to grant Interim Approval of the following proposal: Doctor of Philosophy in Pharmaceutical Sciences (new degree program).

5/11 Substantive Change Commission Approval: On May 11, 2011, the Commission acted to grant Final Approval of the following proposal: Doctor of Philosophy in Pharmaceutical Sciences (new degree program).

6/11 Substantive Change Committee Action: At its June 14, 2011 conference call meeting, the panel of the Committee acted to grant Interim Approval of the following proposals: DNP (new degree) and MS in Clinical Psychopharmacology (online).

6/11 Substantive Change Commission Approval: On June 24, 2011, the Commission acted to grant Final Approval of the following proposal: DNP (online) and MS in Clinical Psychopharmacology (online).

9/11 Substantive Change Committee Action: At its September 27, 2011 conference call meeting, the panel of the Committee acted to Not Accept the following proposal: Bachelor of Arts in Psychology (online).

9/11 Substantive Change Committee Action: At its September conference call meeting, the panel of the Committee acted to grant Interim Approval of the following proposal: Bachelor of Science in Nursing (online).

10/11 Substantive Change Commission Approval: On October 12, 2011, the Commission acted to grant Final Approval of the following proposal: Bachelor of Science in Nursing (online).

10/11 Substantive Change Committee Action: At its October 28, 2011 conference call meeting, the Committee acted to grant Interim Approval of the following proposal: MA in Indigenous Language and Culture Education (online).

10/11 Substantive Change Committee Action: At its October 28, 2011 conference call meeting, the panel of the Committee acted to grant Interim Approval of the following proposal: Bachelor of Business Administration (off-campus program). A Federally-mandated post-implementation site visit is required within 6 months of implementation. An updated on the status of the BBA should be included in the institution's next scheduled visit report.

11/11 Substantive Change Commission Approval: On November 4, 2011, the Commission acted to grant Final Approval of Indigenous Language and Culture Education (online).

12/11 Substantive Change Commission Approval: On December 2, 2011, the Commission acted to grant Final Approval of the following proposal: Bachelor of Business Administration (off-campus program). A Federally-mandated post-implementation site visit is required within 6 months of implementation. An update on the status of the BBA should be included in the institution's next scheduled visit report.

2/11 Substantive Change Committee Action: At its December 13, 2011 conference call meeting, the panel of the Committee acted to grant Interim Approval of the following proposals: BA in Communication (online) and Master of Art in Teaching (online).

1/12 Substantive Change Commission Approval: On January 10, 2012, the Commission acted to grant Final Approval of the following proposal: BA in Communication

(online).

4/12 Substantive Change Site Visit: On April 30, 2012, to fulfill the post implementation requirements for the following change: Bachelor of Business Administration (off-campus).

5/12 Substantive Change Commission Approval: On May 8, 2012, the Commission acted t o grant Final Approval of the following proposal: Master of Teaching (online).

5/12 Substantive Change Committee Action: At its May 30, 2012 conference call meeting, the panel of the Committee acted to grant Interim Approval of the following proposals: BA in Psychology (online).

6/12 Substantive Change Commission Approval: On June 15, 2012, the Commission acted to grant Final Approval of the following proposal: BA in Psychology (online).

9/12 Following changes to the institutional review process, the previously scheduled CPR and EER visits have been replaced by an offsite review in fall 2013 and an accreditation visit in spring 2014. The proposal review process has been disbanded.

1/13 Following discussion with the institution, the accreditation visit will now take place in fall 2014, one year after the off-site review.

11/13 Offsite Review conducted at the WASC office, 11/21/13; Team Chair – Leroy Morishita.

1/14 Substantive Change Committee Action, 1/23/14: Grant Fast Track Authorization for Distance Education Modality, no expiration.

Description of the Team's Process

This visit, part of the Pilot II group of institutions to be reviewed with consideration toward the 2013 WSCUC Handbook structure and review model (although all references to the CFRs in this report will indicate the 2008 Handbook). This on-site visit was scheduled following the Off-Site Review (OSR) conducted by the visiting team in November 2013. As a result of the OSR, the team determined a number of necessary lines of inquiry for the on-site visit and requested that UH-H prepare its integrated essay (Essay #5) for the team to review prior to the visit.

Approximately four months prior to the on-site visit, the team met via conference call to discuss the UH-Hilo response to the Off-Site Review findings and additional materials provided via the accreditation web site, a well organized and easily accessible tool for review of the institutional report and supplementary materials. Through that

discussion, the team sought to validate the areas of further exploration identified in the OSR, to determine if additional materials were needed, and to develop the visit schedule. Interviewees for the on-site visit were selected to specifically target the areas slated for further exploration as a way to triangulate the findings determined by the library of materials available to the team.

Once on campus, the team found a very comfortable meeting location equipped with online access and necessary additional materials. As the team came together, the evening before the visit, throughout the visit, and in the final hours spent to review UH-H, each member was struck by the level of candor and transparency demonstrated throughout the time on campus. The UH-Hilo faculty and administration demonstrated a high level of self-awareness and willingness to engage with the team in an effort to pursue the campus goals of continuous improvement. The team felt the materials provided and access to various campus constituents while on-site provided a clear understanding of the issues and opportunities identified during the OSR and pre-visit planning.

Institution's Reaccreditation Report and Update: Quality and Rigor

As the team indicated during the campus exit proceeding, the level of candor, transparency, self-awareness, and commitment to continuous learning demonstrated a high level of quality and rigor invested in the accreditation process. The campus accreditation liaison officer complied with each and every request for additional information, all the while communicating opportunities and challenges to sharing the materials needed. The team observed a campus-wide commitment to engaging in the peer

review process afforded through regional accreditation and took on the task of preparing for this re-affirmation with the seriousness and thoughtfulness required.

In the months following the OSR, UH-Hilo worked diligently to address the items identified for further inquiry through the submission of additional narrative and data. The team felt their efforts provided a comprehensive understanding of the capacity and educational effectiveness of the institution.

Response to Issues Raised in Previous Commission Actions and Reviews

During the Special Visit conducted in October 2009, and the subsequent response prepared on behalf of the WSCUC Commission in February 2010, two particular issues were identified. First is the need for ongoing development and implementation for student outcomes assessment across the institution. The second issue was a need for improved efforts to strengthen student retention and the alignment of those efforts, including recruitment/enrollment activities, with the University's strategic priorities and performance measures.. The institution provided insight to their efforts on both ongoing issues in the institutional self-review documentation and essays. The visiting team for re-affirmation of accreditation reviewed evidence of attention to these matters and comments on these issues in Section II of this report.

Section II. Evaluation of Institutional Essays

Essay 1: Defining the meaning of degrees and ensuring their integrity, quality, and rigor

According to the Institutional Self-Study and Reaccreditation Report, the meaning of the degrees offered by the UH-Hilo "flows" from the mission statement adopted as part of

the 2011-2015 Strategic Plan (CFR 1.1):

> The purpose of our university '*ohana*/family is to challenge students to reach their highest level of academic achievement by inspiring learning, discovery and creativity inside and outside the classroom. Our *kuleana*/responsibility is to improve the quality of life of the people of Hawai'i, the Pacific region and the world (page 16).

The university has also affirmed its "commitment to providing a well-rounded liberal arts education that fulfills students' needs for universal skills (page 21). From these statements, it can be surmised that holders of a UH-Hilo degree are expected to a) have fully realized their academic potential, b) have developed competence in the areas generally associated with a liberal arts education, and c) be committed to using their knowledge and expertise for the betterment of the local and global communities.

The university's aspiration to "engage every student in applied learning that links theory to practice, connects to the distinctive natural and cultural environment of Hawai'i, and promotes skilled participation in a globally society" (Vision Statement) has guided its community engagement efforts and resulted in valuable partnerships as well as in the establishment of several noteworthy projects and programs such as the P-20 inter-segmental collaboration project, the Pre-Vet Club, the Cetacean Rehabilitation Facility, the Adopt-A-Beehive project and the Pacific Islander Mobile Screening Clinic. These, and other, programs represent significant contributions of the university to the external communities and provide opportunities for students to engage in applied learning activities.

In recent years the institution has succeeded in increasing student participation in community-based projects as evidenced by student responses to the NSEE surveys in 2009 and 2011. For example, in 2011 first-time students reported "participating in community service or volunteer work (item 7b) at a greater percentage than all comparison groups"

(page 79).

All of the above mentioned programs and initiatives represent efforts or accomplishments worthy of recognition. The institution also deserves to be commended for having identified overarching domains of learning that are derived from its mission, values and traditions.

Quality, Meaning and Rigor of the Degree

In light of UH-Hilo's focus on community service/applied learning and the development of "universal skills" and their identification as hallmarks of the university's degrees, the quality, integrity, and rigor of the institution's degrees is closely related to its ability to assess the effectiveness of its applied learning and service learning activities and its General Education program (CFRs 2.4, 2.7).

In 2013 the university established the Office of Applied Leaning Experience (ALEX) charged with the mission of maximizing "the breath and depth of applied learning opportunities for students" through activities such as "community based projects, service learning, research internships, *practica*, creative activities and capstones projects" (page 20-21). In addition to promoting applied learning activities, highlighting its importance and celebrating the accomplishments of faculty members who have championed applied learning, the ALEX Coordinator has begun to develop Guidelines for Designing a Course as Applied Learning. However, due to the great variety of courses that could be considered under the category of applied learning (internships, community-based projects, service learning, creative activities, research, *practica*, simulation exercises or capstone experience/projects), his efforts have focused primarily on achieving consensus regarding definitions and examples of different applied learning experiences and the document

remains in draft form.

During the visit, reviewers met with representatives of several departments that offer internship opportunities to their students and, according to the documentation provided during the meeting (syllabi of Political Science internship courses, informational handouts from the History Department and an Internship Field Education Manual developed by the Department of Sociology), students, faculty advisors and internship supervisors are informed of their respective responsibilities and the criteria for the award of credit is clearly spelled out.

While there seems to be general agreement among departments regarding requirements and criteria for internships, the institution would benefit from developing a clear definition of "applied learning" and adopting university-wide policies regarding internships and service learning courses. It would also benefit from assessing the effectiveness of these activities and experiences (CFR 2.6).

<u>Recommendation:</u> That U-H Hilo formally adopt definitions and guidelines for the myriad of applied learning activities available at the institution. In addition to specifying minimal requirements for courses to qualify for the applied learning designation, the guidelines, which should be implemented uniformly across campus, should clearly outline criteria for the placement and supervision of interns and the number of credit hours awarded to them (CFRs 2.3, 2.6).

In order to meet the recommendations of previous reviewers, as well as requirements of the educational statutes of the State of Hawai'i, UH-Hilo has invested significant institutional resources in efforts aimed at creating a culture of assessment on campus. In addition to hiring experts to conduct on-site workshops, it has sponsored

faculty participation in national and regional conferences and workshops where they received training on outcomes assessment.

Faculty members, in turn, have invested valuable time and effort serving on committees, developing assessment rubrics and participating in assessment tasks. Major undertakings in this respect have been:

- In Spring of 2013, UH-Hilo approved learning outcomes for all General Education areas: Critical Thinking, Information Literacy, Communication, Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning, Human Interaction and Cultural Diversity, and Collaborative Skills and Civic Participation (Accreditation Report, pages 22-23)
- UH-Hilo adopted a new GE certification process overseen by the General Education Committee.
- The university developed a tentative Timeline for Assessment: (CFRs 2.4, 2.7)
    - AY 2013-2014 Written Communication
    - AY 2014-2015 Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning (Quantitative Reasoning)
    - AY 2015-2016 Information Literacy
    - AY 2016-2017 Oral Communication
    - AY 2017-2018 Multicultural Fluency (Human Interaction and Cultural Diversity)
- Following the adoption of General Education Learning Outcomes (GLOs), the Assessment Support Committee developed an initial set of "universal rubrics" to measure student performance in the following areas: Critical Thinking, Information Literacy, Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning, and Cultural Literacy. Assessment of Collaborative Skills and Civic Participation, however, was placed on hold and, according to the institution's response to the Lines of Inquiry, the development of assessment criteria in remains in progress.

- Faculty piloted the use of three of the rubrics (Critical Thinking, Communication, and Information Literacy) to assess fourteen research-based papers from three different colleges. As a result of the inability to reach consensus about generic Critical Thinking Skills, the Assessment Support Committee revised the rubrics and decided to imbed Critical Thinking into the other rubrics for Core Skills (page 27).
- The GE Rubric for Written Communication was also revised following the ENG 100 Competency Assessment in 2012-2013.

While General Education has been the primary focus of the university's assessment efforts (also discussed in section titled Essay 2: Achieving the Core Competencies), assessing the contribution of applied and community service activities to student learning has presented a significant challenge. Following the off-site review, the accreditation team requested an update on efforts to develop learning outcomes and policies regarding criteria for service learning courses and placement and assessment of student interns. According to the institution's response, this work is currently in progress (page 81).

Recommendation: Given the centrality of applied learning to the mission of the university and its identification as a hallmark of the UH-Hilo degree, it is recommended that the university develop criteria and processes for assessing the effectiveness of its applied learning activities and their contribution to student learning (CFR 4.7).

Similarly, it would be important to ascertain how the university fulfills its commitment to challenge students "to reach their highest level" and determines that, as required by State charter, upholds a standard of instruction equal to that required "in similar institutions on the mainland United States." (page 23).

According to the report, processes such as program review and secondary accreditation by professional accreditation agencies, provide additional evidence of the integrity and rigor of the university's degrees. The revised Program Review Guidelines, adopted in April 2013, require departments to develop assessment plans and a timeline for the assessment of student learning outcomes. However, as Colleges, Departments, and Programs can choose to target two of the ILOs over the next seven years, units may choose the same ILOs every year based on their mission, or they may choose to assess a variety of these ILOs.

While these revised guidelines are reflective of current good practice in academic program review, they do not appear to be implemented in an expeditious manner (CFRs 2.7, 4.4). To date, only the Department of Mathematics has undergone review under the new policy.

<u>Recommendation:</u> It is recommended that the university faithfully adhere to the published program review schedule and that departments receive constructive feedback on the quality of outcomes, assessment plans and studies and that departments use this feedback to improve student learning (CFR 2.7).

One area of concern, directly connected to the efficacy of the effort to assess the core competencies and understand the rigor and quality of the program is that a lack of clarity in policies and consistent practice have contributed to the perception the university has created institutional road blocks to student success, in particular the General Education program and the high number of waivers and exceptions to program requirements. These are issues of significant risk and can undermine the rigor and quality of your degree programs.

<u>Recommendation:</u> The team recommends that immediate attention be given to these issues, assuring, through outcomes assessment efforts, the importance of articulation policies that do not penalize UH-H students who choose to complete the General Education core at the campus rather than concurrently enrolling or seeking other sources to complete these requirements.

Essay 2: Achieving core competencies

The UH-Hilo faculty have engaged in important activities to apply the WSCUC identified core competencies of an undergraduate degree to the baccalaureate curriculum (CFR 2.2), to develop rubrics for evaluation of each of the competencies, and to develop a calendar that identifies assessment effort across each of the competencies (page 38). As a Pilot 2 institution, UH-H was only responsible for assessing one of the five core competencies. In preparation for the re-affirmation process, the faculty chose to begin the core competency assessment effort with writing communications.

The assessment effort has proved to be thorough and comprehensive. It included direct assessment of student work product and evaluation against a faculty developed rubric and indirect assessment conducted through surveys asking students to reflect on past educational experiences, measuring attitudinal markers that could impact the writing effort, and activities to develop academic writing skills. Efforts to better understand the data collected through this exercise included disaggregating the findings in accordance to the sub-populations served by the institution (CFR 2.10) allowing UH-H to connect writing competency gaps to prior student experiences, opening the door for dialog with the secondary and community college systems in Hawai'i.

The findings, reported in Essay 2 of the self-report, addressed opportunities for improvement in both the assessment process as adjustments were made when significant challenges were experienced (lack of student participation making initial findings statistically irrelevant – pages 47-48) and also in curriculum design and instruction. An example of change in policy/practice is the final project in the English composition course. Prior to the assessment effort, a student could still pass the course without submitting the final assignment based on assessed work product throughout the course. The English faculty, with consultation from the assessment team, determined to make the final project a high-stakes assessment activity essentially requiring each student to submit work product for a passing grade in the course. This substantially improved the available work product for the competency assessment effort. Changes in curriculum were demonstrated in the awareness of the link between reading skill and college-level writing communication skill. The interview with the Assessment Team indicated efforts to adapt curriculum to purposefully connect reading and writing in the UH-H general education program.

The UH-H faculty are in dialog regarding the new WSCUC expectation that institutions define a graduation proficiency level for each of the core competencies. As the campus indicates in Essay 2, UH Hilo will be asking for the first time: How well do students perform at or near graduation? How do we know? and What is "good enough"? (page 55). The willingness indicates a major cultural shift in recognizing the value of learning outcomes assessment and provide evidence that the initial efforts to assess the core competencies of quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, information literacy, and oral and written communication are proving to be fruitful to the assessment initiative.

<u>Recommendation:</u> The team recommends that efforts for the assessment of the core competencies be extended outside of the general education program and are incorporated in the disciplines and majors through continued programmatic assessment and program review, allowing UH-H to better understand the competency level of its graduates and to improve teaching and learning across campus.

In conclusion, while the institution has succeeded in identifying domains of learning (applied learning, community engagement and universal skills) represented by its degrees which are derived from its mission, values and traditions, many of its efforts to document the quality of the degrees are quite recent and, by its own admission, it has faced and continues to face many challenges in this area (Accreditation Report, page 37). The team acknowledges that as a Pilot 2 institution, UH-H did not have adequate time to fully develop this area which will require further maturation in upcoming years.

Essay 3: Defining and promoting student success

In the latest iteration of the University's Strategic Plan, UH-Hilo describes its mission as "Access to Education: we provide access to higher education while holding high expectations for all students and providing support for success." But, access in the absence of clear evidence of accomplishment is not enough in today's higher education environment. What markers identify a successful UH-Hilo student and the nature of the institution's "high expectations" are elements of the University's enterprise that deserve, and require, further definition and discussion across the institution. In its preliminary reflections on these issues, the University described several challenges that it must address in order to retain and graduate its students.

Despite a long history of educating students, the University appears to have only recently begun to think deeply about the nature and processes of student success and the specific structures and programs that the University might implement to improve student performance, retention, and graduation. For example, one notable gap in the University's *Institutional Report* was a clear, holistic and operationalized description of what student success means at UH-Hilo.

One significant weakness which has affected the University's ability to address issues of retention and graduation is that the University has only recently focused its attention (and resources) on collecting and analyzing the sorts of data that would allow UH-Hilo to understand and respond effectively to the challenges the institution faces in the arena of student success. In part, some of the delay in organizing a routine system of institutional research and data gathering was the result of multiple changes in personnel and a lack of consistent processes and policies related to institutional data collection at both the system and campus level.

During the course of the Team's visit, the Institutional Research Analyst shared her work on the WSCUC "balance sheet," which appeared to offer useful information about the retention and graduation of different groups. It is clear that work has begun which has the potential to allow the University to organize a meaningful and helpful set of analytical tools to support its efforts on student success.

However, a comprehensive program of data collection and analysis cannot be effectively undertaken by a staff of one, particularly if additional professional development is needed to be an effective institutional research officer. In the current climate of data-

driven decision-making, the University could find that increased investment in support for an Office of Institutional Research will yield useful and meaningful dividends.

In a learning organization and with ever increasing needs for accountability through data-driven decision-making, the need for a strong institutional research resource cannot be understated. The team appreciates the commitment of the current administrative leadership and applauds the decision to include faculty in the institutional research effort.

Recommendation: Attention and resources, including consideration of a strategic and long-range plan including the creation of a campus data warehouse that both interfaces with the UH system and meets local needs, should be given to the critically important institutional research arena (CFRs 4.2, 4.3).

Retention and Graduation

One significant challenge to the University's efforts to retain and graduate its students is what it describes as the "high risk" community which it serves and the general under-preparation of its students which led to 40%-50% of in-state students being on academic warning or probation.

Certainly, at its most basic level, student success at U-Hilo may be understood as successful completion of a university course of study. In the University's recent retention and graduation report, submitted to WSCUC in May 2013, UH-Hilo reported improved retention when compared with findings from a 2001 self-study. Additionally, the six-year graduation rate was reported to be 36%. Several pertinent details, deserving of further study and attention were also provided. For example, the report identified issues related to general persistence after the first year, as a significant 39% of each year's new students did not persist beyond the first year.

Additionally, the Retention and Graduation Report provided the University with important information and insights about the 55% of each year's new students who are transfer students. Among that student population, students from the US mainland have a low retention rate (45%) which accounts for 24% of the total attrition rate, while they make up only 19% of the new student population. Among first year students, lower division transfer students (LDT) and upper division transfer students (UDT) have low retention rates: LDT students account for 16% of the attrition rate, despite being only 6% of the new student population; "white" UDT students are retained at 45% while 47% of international students are retained.

The University disaggregated its preliminary data for native Hawaiian, Mainland, international and out-of-state students and identified a number of additional data points it will wish to investigate in future reports, such as the effect of NSE or GSE status. Other "at risk" populations were identified by the University, including LDT females, who were reported to have first year retention rates 9%-25% lower than males (but the variation between 9 and 25 was not explained in any detail in the IRP); low high school GPA students; and first-time, full-time freshman from the Big Island.

The University's analysis of the data presented in the IRP led to several important insights and suggested areas for further study. UH-Hilo found that while its six-year graduation rate was "lower than desirable," the University's rate compared favorably to its peers (University of Alaska Southeast, University of Guam and Fort Lewis College.) Furthermore, the University was able to draw on National Student Clearing House Data to demonstrate that 53% of students who attend UH Hilo eventually graduate with a four-year degree. The University advanced the hypothesis that UH Hilo is being used as a

"stepping stone" by students, but further study is needed to determine if that is because students simply planned on a short period of study at the University, found the island lacking in amenities, or discovered that the University did not offer the specific degree they wanted (for example, the University offers a pre-engineering program, but no engineering degree.)

While the University has made some progress in identifying and tracking its students and their progress, it should build on the information provided in its report to more completely pinpoint the specific needs of the aggregated and disaggregated student populations its serves. (CFR 2.10)

Promoting Student Success

Freshmen

In response to a 2008 Commission recommendation, UH-Hilo began to implement an enrollment management plan that "integrates incremental growth with appropriate resource allocation and ensures educational effectiveness." Focusing on freshman students, the University implemented FRE GAS (Freshmen Guaranteed Academic Schedules) in the Fall of 2011. Drawing on the finding that six-year graduation rates were significantly higher for students who completed at least 24 credit hours, including English and Math, during their first year, the University guaranteed that first-time full-time freshmen would be enrolled in ENG 100 during their first year at UH-Hilo. While some factors affecting the pilot of FRE GAS need to be examined more closely to determine their influence, it is clear that students who participated in FRE GAS persisted at higher rates than those who did not, despite some gaps in academic performance. As a result, the University has instituted a

Freshman Guaranteed Pre-Built Schedule Program, a consistent 12-unit course load, as a collaborative effort between Advising in Student Affairs and academic departments.

Freshmen are also the focus of the University's "15 to Finish" campaign, which builds on findings that suggest that students who take at least 15 credits a semester are likely to do better in their classes and graduate in a timely fashion. Campus majors prepared four year maps and advising check sheets which were posted on the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs website, under "Tools for Advising and Curriculum Planning" in August 2013. UH-Hilo will benefit from purposefully soliciting feedback from the student population regarding the efficacy of these tools. Perceptions of "user friendly-ness" will greatly improve student engagement, making this idea something more than just an exercise but rather a tangible tool for student's to visualize completion and graduation. This program is just getting underway, and the University IRP suggested key indicators and goals that will be assessed as the program develops (CFR 2.13).

A final initiative focused on freshmen is the "Freshmen Village" pilot, which began in Fall 2014. Based on research that has demonstrated the positive effects of on campus-residency for undergraduates, the village is intended to act as a first year living and learning experience for first-time, full-time freshmen and combines academic and co-curricular programming. While this program is just getting underway, the University has prepared a plan for assessing the success of the Freshmen Village, beginning in December 2015.Based on its findings, which will be disaggregated by income, ethnicity and other elements the University will investigate the efficacy of requiring all freshmen to live on campus (CFR 2.11). It is important to note that many of these initiatives are in the earliest

stages of implementation and will require close monitoring for their efficacy to insure impact and continuous improvement.

Transfer Students

Given that 55% of UH-Hilo's students are transfers, the University must improve its efforts to serve them. Among the transfer population, different demographic groups have different needs, and the University has begun to identify the particular supports it may need to provide to ensure that Pacific Islanders, women, low GPA students, full-time male students, and students returning to campus after an interruption in their academic careers, receive effective and efficient assistance (CFR 2.10). While the University has purposefully and effectively begun to build an infrastructure to support freshmen students, it has not given as much specific attention to the students who transfer to UH=Hilo. This is not to suggest, however, that nothing has been done for these students.

The Institutional Research Office has surveyed graduating seniors, administered the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the Resident Survey of the Association of College and University Housing. Based on the results of these surveys, several processes were revised. For example, Student Affairs began to provide transfer evaluations at the point of application, rather than at enrollment, hired a Director of Student Development, created an Office of Academic Advising, created an Office of University Disability Services and changed a number of financial aid policies (CFR 2.13). An admissions specialist has been added to the staff, articulation agreements have been written with the Micronesian community colleges, and student recruitment has been adjusted to include the examination of the SAT scores of students with GPAs below 3.0.

During the Team visit, members of the campus community demonstrated their interest in presenting the UH Hilo campus in both positive and realistic ways to prospective students and their service community. Effective outreach to the local community college campus in terms of advising and recruitment seems like an important and basic first step to improving retention and graduation among UH Hilo transfer students. There is a lot of work to do in this area, which is acknowledged by UH Hilo management, and will need continued attention. While the Advising Center website has information for prospective transfer students, the University could, perhaps through director of marketing and alumni affairs, enhance its advising services to transfer students (CFR 2.14).

The University has instituted an "intrusive" advising process through the Office of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. This process depends on the identification of at-risk students based on the general retention and graduation data, targeted advising of students in those populations, and the collection of data about the students and their advising experiences by student affairs or academic department personnel. Evaluation of the success of this program will depend on data collection from a variety of sources and individuals and that may be, at once, the program's strength and weakness. It's a common problem that advising in higher education is somewhat disjunctive---General Education advising taking place in Student Affairs and academic advising happening in the major—and this can prevent students from developing a holistic picture of their university careers, progress and futures. The team strongly suggests that after an initial cycle of intrusive advising for transfer students, the University should examine additional ways that this advising can be provided in a collaborative way by Student Affairs and Academic Affairs personnel.

Crucial to the University's ability to improve its retention and graduation rates is the hiring of a new senior level Strategic Enrollment Manager who will be responsible for the identification, management and assessment of a comprehensive enrollment plan---one that includes recruitment, enrollment, persistence and graduation. At the time of the Team visit, this role had not been filled, despite the University's goal of completing the hiring process by December 31, 2013.

Qualitative Student Success

In addition to personnel and processes directly linked to retention, graduation and student academic success, examination of the campus climate, as a support to retention, led the University to take steps to improve the learning environment for all students----setting up computer labs and resources across the campus; working to improve bus access and service, extending the Library's hours. The creation of a welcoming and well-functioning campus can only enhance the University's retention and graduation efforts and certainly contributes to student success.

In its Institutional Report, UH-Hilo asserts that student success at the University means more than retention and graduation figures. The University makes a compelling argument for a definition of student success that includes the particular characteristics of the UH Hilo experience, and its grounding in the faculty's desire to inspire "learning, discovery, and creativity within and outside the classroom" and to "challenge, mentor and inspire." At UH-Hilo, student success means that students rise to the challenges offered by stimulating classrooms, opportunities like ALEX, and interactions with the faculty. As the Team experienced during its campus visit, UH-Hilo students are maximizing their potential as a result.

Overall, the team recognizes the significant efforts that have been employed to improve student success at UH-Hilo, particularly for the first-time/full-time student population. While new measures tell a better story about UH-H's institutional effectiveness, retention continues to be challenging issue on campus.

<u>Recommendation:</u> The team recommends continued attention and effort to be directed toward retention efforts, particularly for the transfer and continuing student population. This includes examining more about demographic factors which affect retention and graduation rates and why.

Essay 4: Ensuring institutional capacity and effectiveness in the future, and planning for the changing environment for higher education

The campus has strong, well-respected leadership as well as committed staff and faculty – key elements to ensuring longer-term institutional effectiveness and financial sustainability (CFRs 3.1, 3.2, 3.10). The leadership team has a keen grasp of the challenges the campus faces, and appears to be taking concerted and purposeful steps to address.

Like many public institutions of higher education, the UH-Hilo has faced budget pressures due to reduced funding from the state. The impact of the loss of state funds has been exacerbated by lower than projected tuition revenue due to a two-year decline of 5% in new freshman and overall retention rates. The projected current year budget (2014-15), as presented to the Board of Regents (BOR) in July, showed a projected year-end operating budget deficit of $2.8M. The campus has sufficient balances to fully cover this operating deficit. An updated projection of general funds and tuition and student fee revenues and expenditures, provided to the team, puts the operating budget back in balance.

The campus's two year budget plan, as presented to the Board of Regents in July 2014, projects a balanced operating budget, though expenditures related to debt and increased spending on scholarships could result in overall expenditures exceeding new revenue. A sufficient reserve covers these costs, bringing the campus's overall balance down. The revenue projections appear conservative and assume that 1) state funding will remain static; 2) tuition will increase 2% in each of the next two years, notwithstanding earlier actions by the Board of Regents to increase tuition by 7%; and 3) that enrollment will stabilize (CFRs 3.5, 3.6).

Relying on reserves is not sustainable in the long-term but should provide UH Hilo with the time it needs to see the results of other revenue enhancing/stabilizing strategies. In contrast to earlier strategies focused on enrollment growth and increased funding from the state, future financial stability is tuition-driven. The campus intends to maintain financial stability by increasing new freshmen and focusing on improving retention. In addition, the campus leadership is strategically aligning the allocation of faculty FTE. Considerable attention is being paid to communicating and reinforcing these strategies with the long-term budget planning committee, Deans, and the enrollment management implementation team (EMIT). In recognition of the direct link between enrollment and revenues, the campus is in the first phase of discussing the need to establish specific enrollment and retention targets. Focused recruitment, increasing student housing and the introduction of living-learning environments, proactive advising (including the implementation of an early-warning system) activities are among the many strategies aggressively employed by the campus. In addition, the targeted allocation and recruitment of faculty FTE, in contrast to replacing faculty FTE on a one-to-one basis, is a potentially

powerful tool (CFR 4.2). Redistributing faculty FTE to high demand classes is a significant step to ensuring students can get the classes they need, presumably this will help improve retention.

In addition to turning the tide by focusing on the recruitment of new freshmen and improving retention, the campus community has identified a range of options that could also have a positive effect on the overall financial situation, i.e. distance learning; decreasing faculty turnover (and the associated costs to replace faculty) through improved onboarding as well as improving training for academic leadership and faculty development; increasing the enrollment of nonresident students (CFRs 3.4, 3.5, 3.11). The ability to maintain a favorable student faculty ratio thus providing students with access to faculty through small classes is a compelling feature of the UH-Hilo learning environment. As the campus addresses organizational issues by clearly articulating and coordinating responsibility and completes key hires, i.e. Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Assistant Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management.

Staffing is an ongoing concern that merits the attention of campus leadership. The cumulative impact of salary reductions, reductions in operating budgets and the loss of staff means that existing staff are, by necessity, doing more with less. There is a diminishing return both in terms of morale and productivity. The staff we had an opportunity to interact with were clearly committed to the campus, and passionate in their desire to maintain the quality of the campus. The campus leadership may want to consider including staff more directly on the various committees to provide input and develop buy-in for approaches to improve service to students as well as faculty and staff.

The campus currently has limited institutional research capacity, but understands fully the need to have good data. Progress is being made as the campus is beginning to use data to drive decisions and monitor outcomes (CFR 4.3).

With the funding of the new building, the campus appears to have met the final accreditation hurdle for accrediting the School of Pharmacy. Further, with the new space the campus believes it will have sufficient space to accommodate enrollment of up to 5,000 students. While there are challenges inherent in operating and maintaining existing space, the campus is to be commended for the work it has done to maintain its facilities and not build up a backlog of deferred maintenance.

The campus has demonstrated a desire to be inclusive and collaborative through the use of a variety of committees employed to tackle the tough questions facing UH-H. Those committees serve an important function in the governance structure, and for those who serve on them, are a helpful opportunity to exchange information and ideas. For the larger campus community, however, committees are not an appropriate substitution for communication.

Recommendation: The team strongly recommends that efforts be made to enhance and create better lines of communication on campus to deliver news and information to provide more context and ensure stability (CFRs 3.8, 4.1).

Essay 5: Our Sense of Place (integrative essay)

UH-Hilo approached preparation of the integrative essay in the institutional report in the same manner it addressed each of the issues presented in the re-accreditation process and in response to the off-site lines of inquiry – with unapologetic transparency

and an embedded commitment to continuous improvement, a feature for which this team commended the UH-Hilo administration, faculty and staff during the exit interview.

UH-Hilo uses the proverb of rain, often a cleansing and healing resource of the Big Island, that when given too much or too little can have devastating effects on the environment. What makes UH-Hilo a unique institution – its location, diversity, and the connection to the local community – also provides challenges to the success of the campus. As a location, the Big Island offers distinctly celebrated opportunities to study pharmacology, marine biology, plant life, and language that can only be found in the Hawaiian Islands. That same location is highly isolating as it is geographically dispersed from the other islands, particularly Oahu, the location of the state capital, and the mainland. The campus diversity is impressive with students and faculty from the local community, other Hawaiian Islands, the mainland, and a number of international locations. With this diversity of the population comes a unique tension for those from the local community who desire to "get out" to experience something other than the Big Island and for those from far away locations, a sense of homesickness and desire to return to the known. As UH-Hilo explores underlying reasons for attrition (Essay 5, pp. 81-83), many of the issues are those out of the control of the institution – personal health, family issues, finances, and cost of living. The institution strives to further explore reasons for departure and is using both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies to provide further insight. This research effort is evidence of the UH-Hilo commitment to being a data driven learning organization, despite resource challenges to support this effort.

Finally, UH-Hilo discusses the economic challenges it faces on the Big Island and within the state of Hawaii. UH-Hilo explains that one challenge in finding and keeping

adequate professional staff and faculty is the exceedingly high cost of living in Hawaii (p. 83). In addition, the economic downturn since 2007 has yet to demonstrate full recovery in the Islands, leaving the state of Hawaii challenged to find sufficient resources to support the State's needs, including post-secondary education. Essay Five of the institutional report is honest both in the impact and the efforts undertaken by the UH-Hilo campus.

As a side note, the team was on the Big Island as the immediacy of the lava flow crisis came to a head. A new lava flow, threatening to cut off the southern portion of the island from Hilo, changing a 30-40 minute commute to one of more than two hours, would, at the institution's best estimation leave nearly 400 faculty, staff and students in the challenging position of trying to figure out how to get to and from the campus. This of course is following the hurricane that brushed the island just prior to the team's arrival, the second one to hit the area in less than six months. UH-Hilo is a campus of resiliency in action. Essay Five demonstrates a high-level of self-awareness and transparency, as well as the commitment to understand and pursue opportunities for improvement.

Section III. Evaluation of the Electronic Exhibit Portfolio

UH-Hilo provided a comprehensive, easy to navigate, and easily accessible electronic exhibit portfolio for both the off-site review and the on-campus visit. The web page, http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/, was straight-forward to navigate and is publically available to UH-Hilo constituents.

Compliance Checklist

The team was provided access to the Compliance Checklist (please see the appendix for the actual checklist). The links to the required documentation were validated by

members of the team and were found to appropriately connect to required policy and documentation of practice. UH-H was found to be in compliance with this requirement.

Self-review under the Standards

UH-Hilo used the Self Review exercise as a campus-wide survey allowing for broad input for this reflective exercise. In addition, each college also provided insight to the role played by each in the accreditation effort. The compliance checklist provided by the campus is available in the attachment section of this report.

Required Data Exhibits

All required data exhibits were provided by UH-Hilo. The primary review of these exhibits were examined as part of the off-site review. Additional data, as it applied to the OSR Summary of Lines of Inquiry, were updated and reviewed in response to the self-report essays. As with other aspects of the digital portfolio, these files were well-organized and provided ease of access to the team members.

Continued momentum in assessing student learning and program review

UH-Hilo provided comprehensive data regarding the process and methodology used for assessing student learning. In addition, sample work product, rubrics and findings were also shared with the team. In regards to the program review effort, the visiting team was provided with a newly developed policy to define expectations for programmatic review. Unfortunately, the policy has only recently been approved (updated in January 2014) so program reviews were works in progress and the team was unable to review full analysis using the new program review model.

Section IV. Findings, Commendations, and Recommendations from the Team Review

The visiting team was sincerely impressed with the candor and transparency demonstrated throughout the re-affirmation review process. The UH-Hilo community must be commended for the level of engagement with the new review process and the level of response to the self-report structure developed for the 2013 WSCUC Handbook. As a pilot institution, UH-Hilo has contributed to the improvements to the overall process. Prior to leaving the campus, the visiting team chair shared the follow additional **commendations** with the community:

1. **The team sincerely appreciates the candor of the institutional report and openness demonstrated in every meeting and interview conducted during the time on campus.**

2. **UH-H is clear on the institutional mission and values. The team appreciates the connection between the meaning of the degrees offered, a newly emphasized facet of accreditation for WASC, so specifically to the mission and identified values of the organization.**

3. **It is apparent that the initial investments to support learning outcomes assessment work are paying off. The institution has established a solid foundation upon which it can build a robust and sustainable long-term assessment effort.**

4. **Through interviews with alumni, the team learned that UH-H provides students with a transformative educational experience. Alumni spoke of the institution as a living-learning laboratory that offers undergraduate research opportunities in may disciplines. The team agrees with the offered opinion and encourages the campus to consider this feature at the heart and soul of what makes UH-H different from many other institutions.**

In addition, the visiting team makes the follow **recommendations** for further improvement for UH-Hilo:

1. **U-H Hilo should formally adopt definitions and guidelines for the myriad of applied learning activities available at the institution. In addition to specifying minimal requirements for courses to qualify for the applied learning**

designation, the guidelines, which should be implemented uniformly across campus, should clearly outline criteria for the placement and supervision of interns and the number of credit hours awarded to them (CFRs 2.3, 2.6). Given the centrality of applied learning to the mission of the university and its identification as a hallmark of the UH-Hilo degree, it is recommended that the university develop criteria and processes for assessing the effectiveness of its applied learning activities and their contribution to student learning (CFR 4.7).

2. **It is recommended that the university faithfully adhere to the published program review schedule and that departments receive constructive feedback on the quality of outcomes, assessment plans and studies and that departments use this feedback to improve student learning (CFR 2.7).**

3. **The team recommends that immediate attention be given to these issues, assuring, through outcomes assessment efforts, the importance of articulation policies that do not penalize UH-H students who choose to complete the General Education core at the campus rather than concurrently enrolling or seeking other sources to complete these requirements.**

4. **The team recommends that efforts for the assessment of the core competencies be extended outside of the general education program and are incorporated in the disciplines and majors through continued programmatic assessment and program review, allowing UH-H to better understand the competency level of its graduates and to improve teaching and learning across campus.**

5. **Attention and resources, including consideration of a strategic and long-range plan for institutional research including the creation of a campus data warehouse that both interfaces with the UH system and meets local needs, should be given to the critically important institutional research arena (CFRs 4.2, 4.3).**

6. **The team recommends continued attention and effort to be directed toward retention efforts, particularly for the transfer and continuing student population. This includes examining more about demographic factors which affect retention and graduation rates and why.**

7. **The team strongly recommends that efforts be made to enhance and create better lines of communication on campus to deliver news and information to provide more context and ensure stability (CFRs 3.8, 4.1).**

And finally, as a result of the Distance Education compliance review and findings in campus interviews, the team makes the following **recommendation** regarding the online program:

8. **The development and oversight of the distance-learning program, specifically the online courses and degrees, requires a clearly articulated strategy and adequate resource to support faculty and learning. The team recommends that immediate attention be given to all aspects of the online, distance education program.**

Section V. Appendices

Federal Compliance Checklist

COMPLIANCE AUDIT CHECKLIST FOR REAFFIRMATION OF ACCREDITATION

(For Pilot 2 institutions)

Name of Institution: University of Hawai'i at Hilo

Review Date: Fall 2013

Instructions to institution:

Please provide a link to each document designated below, or note where hard copies are filed. Be sure that the reviewer will be able to see where this document is published or located. If the listed document is not available but a comparable document is available, please reference that document. Information or policies published in the institution's Catalog can be referenced as such and not repeated. If a requested document or policy is not applicable to the institution, please mark NA.

The Commission expects institutions to complete the compliance audit once. In subsequent reaffirmation reviews, the institution will update only those documents that have been revised.

Instructions to team:

Please attach this form to the team report. Missing documents should be noted in the recommendations section of the team report as appropriate.

CFR	Documents Required	Link to Website or Document Portfolio	WASC Check
1.1	Mission statement	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/catalog/mission.html http://hilo.hawaii.edu/strategicplan/2011-2015plan.php#mission	
1.2.	Public posting of student achievement (retention/graduation, student learning) if not in Catalog	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/iro/student_persistence.php	
1.3	Organization chart	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/chancellor/documents/Chancellor_Organization_Chart_Aug_2013.pdf http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/vcaa/documents/UH_Hilo_VCAA_Organization_Chart_AUG2013.pdf http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/vcsa/documents/UHHDSAOrgChart.pdf	
1.4	Academic freedom policy	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/teaching/handbook/AcademicFreedom.php	
1.5	Diversity statements and procedures; also for accommodations of disabilities	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/eeoaa/DiversityRecruitingResources_000.php http://hilo.hawaii.edu/research/edge.php http://hilo.hawaii.edu/studentaffairs/uds/students.php http://hilo.hawaii.edu/eeoaa/DisabilityAccess.php	

1.6	Documents setting forth the authority of a controlling or sponsoring entity that is affiliated with the accredited institution, if any	The following is the link to the Board of Regents on the University of Hawai'i System webpage that states: "The affairs of the University of Hawai'i [system] fall[s] under the general management and control of the Board of Regents. The board formulates policy and exercises control over the university through its executive officer, the university president. The board has exclusive jurisdiction over the internal structure, management and operation of the university [system]." http://www.hawaii.edu/offices/bor/	
1.7.a	Catalog (online _X__, hard copy ___) with complete program descriptions, graduation requirements, grading policies	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/catalog/	
1.7.b	Student complaint and grievance policies	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/policies/documents/AcademicComplaintPolicy.pdf	
1.7.c	Grade appeals policies	Imbedded in the Academic Complaint Policy: http://hilo.hawaii.edu/policies/documents/AcademicComplaintPolicy.pdf	
1.7.d	Faculty complaint and grievance policies	http://uhpa.org/grievances/article-xxiv-grievance-procedures/?searchterm=grievance	

1.7.e	Staff complaint and grievance policies	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/eeoaa/documents/a9920.pdf Per the EEOC Officer and Human Resources, UH Hilo follows procedures set by individual unions regarding complaints/procedures. APTs, clerical, white collar professionals, and registered professional nurses fall into several bargaining units in the Hawaii Government Employees Association (HGEA). On the union website, the following is stated: "HGEA is responsible for daily enforcement of the collective bargaining agreements for the more than 27,000 members in Units 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9 and 13. They are responsible for receiving and investigating member complaints/concerns, and filing/presenting formal grievances. The staff also assists members in reorganizations, consultations, unemployment, and interpretation of rules, regulation, and policies and procedures related to conditions of employment. To find the HGEA union agent that represents your department or unit, login to your Members Only account and look for the box labeled 'My Union Agent'. Your bargaining unit and corresponding contract & salary schedule can also be found when you login to your Members Only account." http://www.hgea.org/AboutUs/Services.aspx United Public Workers or UPW is the third union (the faculty are represented by UHPA) which represents Blue collared and clerical staff. Their procedures for grievances and complaints are not accessible to individuals outside of the union. Copies of pertinent section of the HGEA and UPW contracts are available in the Office of Human Resources	
1.7.f	Employee handbook or equivalent	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/teaching/handbook/ http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/vcsa/documents/DSANewEmployeeHandbook.pdf	
1.7.g	Redacted examples of student transcripts with key that explains credit hours, grades, degree levels, and related interpretive information	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/UGrecord.pdf http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/GRrecord.pdf Transcript Key: http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/documents/transcriptkey.pdf Information on Credits and Grades: http://hilo.hawaii.edu/catalog/credits-grades-and-examinations.html	
1.7.h	Policies for changing grades	"Grading and Grade Changes" posted January 2010 (Word document) http://hilo.hawaii.edu/policies/	

1.7.i	Tuition and fee schedule	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/bo/tuition_schedule.php	
1.7.j	Tuition refund policy	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/bo/TuitionandFeeRefunds.php	
1.7.k	Policy on credit hour/award of credit; processes for review of assignment of credit; examples of reviews of syllabi to ensure equivalency among kinds of courses	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/policies/documents/UHHCreditHourPolicy6-1.10.13.pdf http://hilo.hawaii.edu/catalog/credits-grades-and-examinations.html	
1.7.l	Policy on human subjects in research, if applicable	http://www.hawaii.edu/irb/html/about.php	
1.8	Independent annual audits of finances	Please refer to the Annual Report submitted by UH Hilo The link to the larger UH system audit by Accuity can be found here: http://www.hawaii.edu/offices/2012-2011-consolidated-financial-statements.pdf	
2.1	List of degree programs, showing curriculum and units for each	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/catalog/degrees-and-certificates-offered.html	
2.2	For associate and bachelor's degrees: General education requirements	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/catalog/baccalaureate-degree-requirements.html http://hilo.hawaii.edu/academics/gened/	
2.6	Placement data, if available	See "Student Learning Resources" http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/iro/academic.php	
2.7	Program review process and schedule	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/vcaa/documents/PR2013wc.pdf http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/vcaa/documents/Programreviewschedule2009-2017_2-5-13.pdf http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/vcaa/ProgramReview.php	
2.8	Policies re faculty scholarship and creative activity	See "Goal 2" in the new Strategic Plan http://hilo.hawaii.edu/strategicplan/2011-2015plan.php#goal2 http://hilo.hawaii.edu/research/ http://www.hawaii.edu/ansc/IACUC/ http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/vcaa/personnelpoliciesandprocedures.php	
2.10	Policy on student evaluation of faculty	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/teaching/handbook/CourseEvaluation.php	

2.12	Academic calendar	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/registrar/currentterm.php	
2.13	Examples of recruitment and advertising materials	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/blog/chancellor/files/2012/07/UHHViewbook_2011.pdf	
2.14	Policy on transfer of credit	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/studentaffairs/admissions/transfer.php http://hilo.hawaii.edu/policies/documents/transfer_credits.pdf http://hilo.hawaii.edu/policies/documents/General_Education_Transfer.pdf	
3.1	Staff development policies	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/pro_development/	
3.2	List of faculty with classifications, e.g., core, full-time, part-time, adjunct, tenure track, by program as relevant	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/vcaa/ListofFaculty.php (in progress)	
3.3.a	Faculty evaluation policy and procedures	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/policies/documents/Courseevaluations.pdf http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/teaching/handbook/CourseEvaluation.php http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/vcsa/documents/DSAFacultyTPRCHandbookMay-2013.pdf	
3.3.b	Faculty handbook or equivalent	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/teaching/handbook/	
3.4	Faculty development policies	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/vcaa/FacultyDevelopmentPolicies.php (in progress)	
3.4.a	Faculty orientation policies and procedures	(in progress)	
3.4.b	Policies on rights and responsibilities of non-full-time faculty	Larger policy pertaining to all part-time faculty is in progress. However, lecturers who teach seven credits or more per term are covered by the Union Contract under Article XIII: Faculty appointments not eligible for tenure (p. 29-30): http://uhpa.org/uhpa-bor-contract/100129-2009-2015-agreement-for-website.pdf/view	
3.5.a	Most recent financial aid audits	Please refer to the Annual Report submitted by UH Hilo System statement can be found at the following link (with UH Hilo-specific information on pages 84-88): http://www.hawaii.edu/offices/2012-2011-consolidated-financial-statements.pdf	
3.5.b	Last federal composite score if applicable	NA	

3.5.c	Last report of two- and three-year cohort default rates	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/financialaid/other_info.php	
3.9.a	List of governing board members with CVs	http://www.hawaii.edu/admin/regents/index.php http://www.hawaii.edu/admin/executives/index.html	
3.9.b	List of governing board committees with members	https://www.hawaii.edu/offices/bor/committees.html	
3.9.c	Minutes of board meetings for last two years (where located; not the actual minutes)	http://www.hawaii.edu/offices/bor/archive/	
3.9.d	Governing board bylaws and operations manual	https://www.hawaii.edu/offices/bor/policy/index.html	
3.10.a	CEO biographical information	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/blog/chancellor/about/donald-straney-bio/	
3.10.b	Policy and procedure for the evaluation of president/CEO	See item 6 "Administrative Review": http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/congress/bylaws.php See also page 30 of the BOR policies: http://www.hawaii.edu/offices/bor/policy/borpch9.pdf	
3.11.a	Faculty governing body charges, bylaws and authority if applicable	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/congress/bylaws.php	
3.11.b	Faculty governance organization chart if applicable	The Faculty Congress website shows the structure for membership, officers, and representatives: http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/congress/charter.php The following websites show the roll of faculty in decision-making: http://hilo.hawaii.edu/policies/documents/PolicyProposalflowchartNotesFINAL10-6-09.pdf http://hilo.hawaii.edu/policies/documents/CurriculumReviewFlowDiagramNotes10-6-09-FINAL.pdf	
4.1	Strategic plan and related documents	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/strategicplan/2011-2015plan.php	
4.2	Description of planning process including plan for monitoring of implementation	See Strategic Plan Performance Indicators http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/iro/mission.php The planning process is laid out on the following website: http://hilo.hawaii.edu/strategicplan/planprocess.php	

4.4	New program approval process	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/curriculumcentral/documents/3.aCCProposeaNewUndergradProgramREV9-11.pdf http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/vcaa/documents/e5201BORpoliciesonhowtoapply.pdf	
4.5	Description of institutional research function and staffing	http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/iro/ Our local IR is also supported by the system Institutional Research and Analysis Office http://www.hawaii.edu/iro/	
4.8	List of major industry or other advisory committees	http://vcadmin.uhh.hawaii.edu/UHHiloArtAdvisoryCommittee.php http://artscenter.uhh.hawaii.edu/UHHiloPerformingArtsCenterAdvisoryCommittee.php http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/teaching/DLAdvisoryCommittee2011.php http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/vcsa/DiningServicesAdvisoryCommittee.php http://www.malamamaunakea.org/ http://hilo.hawaii.edu/catalog/hawaii-sbdc.html http://hilo.hawaii.edu/diversity/ http://www.hawaii.edu/offices/bor/athletic/ See "Student Life Center Advisory Committee": http://hilo.hawaii.edu/rec/staff.php	

Team Comments:

Accuracy and Availability of Records: Team Only		
	Policies and procedures for students, faculty and staff are stated consistently in all media	
	Policies, procedures, and information are readily available to relevant constituents	
	Records are accurate and up to date	

Team Comments:

Credit Hour Policies

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections as appropriate.)
Policy on credit hour	Is this policy easily accessible? X YES ❒ NO
	Where is the policy located? College catalog and online
	Comments: Please see the compliance checklist for the specific policy URL
Process(es)/ periodic review of credit hour	Does the institution have a procedure for periodic review of credit hour assignments to ensure that they are accurate and reliable (for example, through program review, new course approval process, periodic audits)? X YES ❒ NO
	Does the institution adhere to this procedure? X YES ❒ NO
	Comments:
Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet	Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours? X YES ❒ NO
	Comments:
Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses *Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.*	How many syllabi were reviewed? Two
	What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)? Both
	What degree level(s)? Undergraduate
	What discipline(s)? General Education -
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? X YES ❒ NO
	Comments:
Sample syllabi or equivalent for other kinds of courses that do not meet for the prescribed hours (e.g., internships, labs, clinical, independent study, accelerated) *Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.*	How many syllabi were reviewed? One
	What kinds of courses? Internship
	What degree level(s)? Undergraduate
	What discipline(s)?
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? ❒ YES ❒ NO
	Comments: The only exception to the policy is a newly developed internship program; full evaluation of equivalency is in progress.
Sample program information (catalog, website, or other program materials)	How many programs were reviewed? Three
	What kinds of programs were reviewed? General Education/ BA/BS
	What degree level(s)? Undergraduate
	What discipline(s)? Business
	Does this material show that the programs offered at the institution are of a generally acceptable length? X YES ❒ NO

	Comments:

Student Complaints Policies

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)	Verified Yes/No
Policy on student complaints	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for student complaints?	Yes
	Is the policy or procedure easily accessible? Where? Catalog/Online	Yes
	Comments: Please refer to Compliance Audit for specific URL	
Process(es)/ procedure	Does the institution have a procedure for addressing student complaints? Please describe briefly: Student Life complaints are handled through Interim VC of Student Affairs; Academic complaints are handled through Deans and escalated to VC of Academic Affairs	Yes
	Does the institution adhere to this procedure?	Yes
	Comments:	
Records	Does the institution maintain records of student complaints? Where? In the investigating office	Yes
	Does the institution have an effective way of tracking and monitoring student complaints over time? Please describe briefly:	
	Comments:	

Marketing and Recruitment

Material Reviewed	Questions and Comments: Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this table as appropriate.	Verified Yes/No
**Federal regulations	Does the institution follow federal regulations on recruiting students?	Yes
	Comments:	
Degree completion and cost	Does the institution provide accurate information about the typical length of time to degree?	Yes
	Does the institution provide accurate information about the overall cost of the degree?	Yes
	Comments:	
Careers and employment	Does the institution provide accurate information about the kinds of jobs for which its graduates are qualified, as applicable?	Yes
	Does the institution provide accurate information about the employment of its graduates, as applicable?	Yes
	Comments:	

*§602.16(a)(1)(vii)

**Section 487 (a)(20) of the Higher Education Act (HEA) prohibits Title IV eligible institutions from providing incentive compensation to employees or third party entities for their success in securing student enrollments. Incentive compensation includes commissions, bonus payments, merit salary adjustments, and promotion decisions based solely on success in enrolling students. These regulations do not apply to the recruitment of international students residing in foreign countries who are not eligible to receive Federal financial aid.

Distance Education

Institution: University of Hawai'i Hilo
Name of reviewer/s: Cherron Hoppes, Carmen Sigler and Jackie Donath
Date/s of review: October 23, 2014

1. Programs and courses reviewed (please list)

   - BA. Communication
   - BA Psychology
   - MA in Indigenous Languages and Culture Education
   - Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)
   - MAT Master of Arts in Teaching
   - BBA Bachelor Business Administration
   - Master of Science in Clinical Psychopharmacology
   - Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)

2. Background Information (number of programs offered by distance education; degree levels; FTE enrollment in distance education courses/programs; history of offering distance education; percentage growth in distance education offerings and enrollment; platform, formats, and/or delivery method)

   In the five year period between 2008 and 2013, UH Hilo dramatically increased the number of course sections and enrollments in DL.

AY 2008-2009	76 sections	1390 registrations
AY 2013-2013	187	3411

3. Description of programs and courses:

   - **BA—Communication** http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/DstLrngBAComm.php
     - In 2009, it became possible for majors to complete 50% or more of their program online. Because of this development, the program was found to be out of compliance with WASC guidelines and required to apply for substantive change approval which later granted.
     - According to the institutional report, the program has not adhered to the assessment timeline because the "larger department" was unaware of the timeline (Accreditation Report, page 33).

   - **BA—Psychology** http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/DstLrngBAPsy.php
     - Initiated in 2002 served students in University Centers on Kauai, Maui and West Hawaii
     - Department decided to discontinue offering an online only program but offers DL classes to both on-campus and off-campus students. No new students added after 2011. Teach-out: 3 students remain and are expected to graduate.

   - **Master of Arts in Indigenous** Language and Culture Education http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/DstLrngMAILCe.php
     - The program prepares teachers for the Hawaiian immersion language schools. In 2006, It began offering seats in courses to students across the State. In 2008, began supporting online courses with an incentive and a course design specialist. However, this support was discontinued in 2011.
     - The MA program is expected to undergo Program Review this academic year. An assessment of the effectiveness of the distance learning program should be an integral part of this review.

- **BSN** http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/DstLrngRNtoBSN.php
    - The School of Nursing offers two program options for students. Option I (BSN) is for the basic student who spends the first two years fulfilling UH Hilo General Education and pre-nursing requirements before formal admission into Nursing in the third year. Option II (RN to BSN) is a program that allows returning RNs to acquire a bachelor's degree. The BSN was incepted in 1992. The RN to BSN program has been in place since Fall 2009. Both BSN and RN to BSN students take DL courses for their major requirements; both sets of students do face-to-face clinical practica. Both did not undergo substantive change review until the Fall of 2011, following UH Hilo's discovery that programs with 50% or more of the credits for major upper division requirements delivered via technology or off campus required such review and approval.

Four programs initiated since 2011:

- **Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT):** MAT is 2 a 2-year program. First cohort began in Summer 2013: 24 out of 26 students have received initial license and are currently just 6 credits short of graduation.
    - The program offered two options (Face to Face and Distance Learning). During the visit, the reviewers learned that the DL option has been discontinued for staffing reasons.

- **BBA** (West Hawai‘i) http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/DstLrngBBA.php
    - The BBA in West Hawai'i was developed in response to requests by members of the West Hawai'i community. The offsite BBA was approved by WASC on December 2, 2011.
    - Traditional courses are broadcast via Polycom. According to the institutional report, the program was unable to run assessment for DL students due to the small number of students (pages 33 & 87).

- **Master of Science in Clinical Psychopharmacology** http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/DstLrngMSCP.php
    - The Master of Science in Clinical Psychopharmacology program provides a postdoctoral training program to prepare PhD and PsyD clinical psychologists to safely and effectively use psychotropic medication as one component of their clinical practice. It began in Spring 2011 as an experimental program. It underwent substantive change review and was approved by WASC on June 24, 2011. The program is currently offered to students at the Tripler Army Medical Center in Honolulu and other qualified persons desiring advanced training in clinical psychopharmacology.

- **Doctor of Nursing Practice** http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/accreditation/DstLrngDNP.php
    - The DNP was developed in response to the documented need in Hawaii for professionals with these credentials, in particular in rural and semirural areas of the state. UH Hilo's DNP program was approved by the Board of Regents on May 19, 2011; WASC approved the program on June 24, 2011. The program serves qualified residents of the state of Hawaii. The first cohort entered the program in August 2012 and will graduate in August 2015. According to the report, the program is set to begin collecting assessment data.

4. Nature of the review (material examined and persons/committees interviewed)
   Dr. Cherron Hoppes was granted access to the following two online courses (inactive) to review the instructional design methodology and course structure.

Drs. Donath and Sigler reviewed the Quality Online Course Design Guidelines and met with the following individuals:

- Dr. Jan Ray, Professional Development Liaison, Academic Affairs
- Dr. Robert Chi, Director of Instructional Technology and User Services
- Ms. Cynthia Yamaguchi, Online Teaching and Learning Specialist
- Mathew Baldwin, Media Design and Production Specialist

They also had opportunities to engage in conversations with faculty members and recent graduates who talked about their experience with online courses.

Observations and Findings

Lines of Inquiry (refer to relevant CFRs to assure comprehensive consideration)	Observations and Findings
Fit with Mission. How does the institution conceive of distance learning relative to its mission, operations, and administrative structure? How are distance education offerings planned, funded, and operationalized?	While in the case of graduate programs of a professional nature, distance learning programs have been planned and conceptualized in terms of the mission of the institution, in other cases, they have just "happened".
Connection to the Institution. How are distance education students integrated into the life and culture of the institution?	The level and manner of integration varies with the program. In the case of programs that deliver online courses to on-campus students, the are fully integrated. A few programs expect students to complete some requirements in residence, facilitating their integration to the campus culture. In the remaining programs students have access to online Library resources and, in some cases, assistance from the Division of Student Affairs.
Quality of the DE Infrastructure. Are the learning platform and academic infrastructure of the site conducive to learning and interaction between faculty and students and among students? Is the technology adequately supported? Are there back-ups?	The Learning Management System appears adequate to facilitate engagement between faculty and student and among student peers.
Student Support Services: What is the institution's capacity for providing advising, counseling, library, computing services, academic support and other services appropriate to distance modality? What do data show about the effectiveness of the services?	The institution has the capacity to provide all the required support services to on-campus students enrolled in online course. However, offering the same services to students enrolled in DL programs remains a challenge.
Faculty. Who teaches the courses, e.g., full-time, part-time, adjunct? Do they teach only online courses? In what ways does the institution ensure that distance learning faculty are oriented, supported, and integrated appropriately into the academic life of the institution? How are faculty involved in curriculum development and assessment of student learning? How are faculty trained and supported to teach in this modality?	Courses are taught by both full-time and part-time faculty. Most of them teach both online and face-to-face courses. The support provided to faculty teaching in this modality is limited.
Curriculum and Delivery. Who designs the distance education programs and courses? How are they approved and evaluated? Are the programs and courses comparable	Individual faculty members design the programs and courses. The DL Certification/ Academic Development Specialist serves as resource to faculty

in content, outcomes and quality to on-ground offerings? (Submit credit hour report.)	who request assistance with course development. She also certifies those courses that meet the requirements outlined in the Quality Online Course Design Guidelines. However, the certification process is not required and courses can be offered without having undergone the certification process.
Retention and Graduation. What data on retention and graduation are collected on students taking online courses and programs? What do these data show? What disparities are evident? Are rates comparable to on-ground programs and to other institutions online offerings? If any concerns exist, how are these being addressed?	Data has not been disaggregated at this time.
Student Learning. How does the institution assess student learning for online programs and courses? Is this process comparable to that used in on-ground courses? What are the results of student learning assessment? How do these compare with learning results of on-ground students, if applicable, or with other online offerings?	The institution has established a timeline for assessment of online courses, however, that timeline is not adhered to. Some programs have conducted comparisons of online and face-to-face courses but most of these comparisons focus on grade distribution and not learning outcomes.
Contracts with Vendors. Are there any arrangements with outside vendors concerning the infrastructure, delivery, development, or instruction of courses? If so, do these comport with the policy on *Contracts with Unaccredited Organizations?*	
Quality Assurance Processes: How are the institution's quality assurance processes designed or modified to cover distance education? What evidence is provided that distance education programs and courses are educationally effective?	