Report:
Institutional Review
of
Educational Effectiveness

University of Hawaiʻi at Hilo

Submitted to
The Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

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Contact: April R. Komenaka
University of Hawaiʻi at Hilo
komenaka@hawaii.edu

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1.1. The Institution

The University of Hawai'i at Hilo is a comprehensive university located in Hilo on the island of Hawai'i, the southernmost and largest island in the Hawaiian archipelago. Organized in 1970, UH Hilo is one of three baccalaureate-degree-granting institutions in the University of Hawai'i system. It is the only accredited, four-year institution of higher learning on the island of Hawai'i.

Our primary mission is to "offer high quality undergraduate liberal arts and professional programs." Effective January 2004, UH Hilo will be comprised of four degree-granting colleges, the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), the College of Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resource Management (CAFNRM), Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani College of Hawaiian Language (CHL), and the College of Business and Economics, formerly a unit of CAS. The College of Continuing Education and Community Service (CCECS) operates the Summer Session and the English Language Institute and offers credit and non-credit courses. In addition to baccalaureate degrees in 35 programs, we offer two MA programs, with three more graduate programs expected to begin in Fall 2004. Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani College of Hawaiian Language offers the nation's first BA and first graduate programs in an indigenous language.

1.2. The educational effectiveness review and this report

The review and the format of the report. For the past two years, UH Hilo has been moving steadily along the paths laid out by the 2000-2001 preliminary self study, establishing standing committees and sustainable procedures and policies that will promote both institutional effectiveness and educational effectiveness over the long term. Following our 2002-2003 preparatory review, the July 2003 report of the WASC site team has provided additional impetus to our efforts.

In this first chapter of the report we respond briefly to the recommendations of the 2003 WASC site team and the WASC action letter. The succeeding chapters, organized around the three WASC principles for institutional review, describe our activities in pursuit of greater institutional effectiveness and educational quality.

In chapter 2, we show how we are "organizing to provide and sustain learning and teaching." We discuss progress in realizing the goals and objectives of the new Strategic Plan 2002-2010, the new program review process, changes in faculty governance and university organization, new policies and procedures regarding such matters as budgeting, faculty hiring, and faculty diversity—all in light of how these bear on our ability to deliver quality education. A central issue, identified in previous reviews and highlighted in the WASC action letter, continues to be institutional budgeting and planning.

In chapter 3, we describe our efforts to "become a learning organization": what institutional research is showing and how such research is leading to changes in the way we work with students. While we are rich in data, UH Hilo is still evolving as a "culture of evidence" and trying to cultivate widespread commitment to "continuous improvement."

In chapter 4, we describe our struggles to develop "a collective vision of educational attainment." The chapter outlines four areas in which the institution is striving to come to agreement: explicit statements of student learning goals and their inclusion in syllabi; support for under-prepared students; appropriate hallmarks and review processes for General Education; and student learning assessment. Progress is being made towards a "collective vision of educational attainment" and how it is to be documented.

Chapter 5 includes an integrative and reflective essay and a series of recommendations growing out of the 2001-2004 institutional review. We are pleased at our gains over the past three years and see clearly what we need to achieve as an institution in the coming years if we are to demonstrate strong commitment to educational effectiveness as defined by WASC.

Preparation and documentation. This report has been prepared by the Accreditation Steering Committee, drawing on information provided by various campus committees and the offices of academic and administrative units, and has been reviewed by many in the campus community. Several faculty have contributed their editing skills in the preparation of this final version. A complete draft has been posted on the UH Hilo website since December 1, 2003 with comments and corrections invited.

Appendix A summarizes our progress in meeting the goals set forth in the institutional review proposal; Appendix B links the recommendations of the March 2003 WASC site team to relevant sections of the report; Appendix C reviews the status of the recommendations of the preparatory review report, our compliance with the WASC criteria for review, and our Strategic Plan objectives and strategies. Appendix D presents the current status of the performance indicators of our Strategic Plan. Other appendices provide data tables, recent academic initiatives by academic departments and support units, and membership of university committees.

Appendix F.1 and F.2 summarize current assessment activities by academic units and by the Institutional Research Office and other units. Results of academic program assessment will be provided in the site team room in March 2004, along with samples of authentic student work.

The institutional portfolio is posted at http://www.uhh.hawaii.edu/~accred. It is a work in progress that will serve the university community over the long term as well as to document the assertions of the two reports on institutional review.

1.3. Institutional response to WASC site team recommendations

The 2003 WASC site team concluded their report with seven recommendations, five of which the university could attend to immediately, and two of which they admitted would

likely take some time to accomplish. The first five recommendations echo the institution's own priorities as stated in our institutional review proposal and preparatory review report, and the last two outline practical ways of addressing other problems described in that report. Appendix B lists these seven urgent recommendations and all of the team's other short-term and long-term recommendations, and directs the reader to sections of this report which describe relevant activities of the university.

The university's response to **recommendation 1**, that student learning outcomes for all programs and for General Education be stated in assessable terms, is described in sections 4.1, 4.2, and 4.4. **Recommendation 2**, that the university compile a set of approved syllabi for all courses in our current catalog, is addressed in section 4.1.

Much effort has been expended to establish a more "inclusive budget planning process," **recommendation 3**; these efforts are described in section 2.4. With respect to **recommendation 4**, that the university draw on the 2002-2010 Strategic Plan and institutional data for decisions on budget cuts and reallocation, several processes are under way. These are also described in section 2.4.

The Institutional Research Office and the Office for Student Affairs have for some time led the effort to improve student retention and graduation rates, the substance of **recommendation 5**. In addition to individual department initiatives, faculty contribute directly through membership on the Advising Committee established by the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (VCAA) and the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs; the VCAA's Committee on Faculty Development and Teaching, and the Congress Committee on Student Success and Retention. Discussion of these efforts are provided in sections 2.3.4, 3.3, and 3.6. Appendix G lists academic and support initiatives aimed at educational quality and student retention; Appendix H lists university committees and governance membership, showing a reasonably high level of faculty participation.

Recommendations 6 and **7** involve the college senates, specifically the Senate of the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), the senates of the other colleges being senates of the whole; and the administrative structure of CAS. In December 2003 CAS faculty voted against reorganization, and the administration will respect this decision. College senates will continue. Governance is discussed in section 2.3.4 and CAS reorganization in section 2.3.5. The second half of **recommendation 6** echoes the belief of both the Congress and the administration that the areas of responsibility of the congress must be both broader and more clearly defined. Section 2.3.4 describes efforts to address this need.

1.4. Institutional Response to WASC Action Letter.

The WASC action letter highlights four areas for immediate action by the institution. The first and third areas of concern involve the unversity's budget and planning processes. The institution's responses to these concerns are described in section 2.4. The action letter's second area of immediate concern is that of institutional governance and organizational structures. Sections 2.3.4. and 2.3.5 describe the university's efforts in these areas.

The fourth area of concern is that the university needs to develop a plan to improve the ethnic and gender diversification of faculty. Since faculty composition is consistent with federal requirements, the goal for UH Hilo is to make it more consistent with that of the general population of the state of Hawai'i. The Office of Equal Opportunity Employment and Affirmative Action will address this issue in the Affirmative Action Plan now being developed (sec. 2.3). Strategies will be included in the Faculty Hiring Handbook, a document currently in use and under continuous review.

Chapter 2. Organizing to provide and support student learning

Our 2000-2001 self study identified, and the preparatory review reaffirmed, the need for documented procedures and guidelines in many of the university's academic and administrative operations. The growth of the university, the move into graduate programs, and turnover of administrators have made such guidelines and procedures especially urgent.

In the past three years, we have made considerable progress in designing and implementing these sustainable processes. Most notable have been the 2002-2010 Strategic Plan with its performance indicators and the revised program review process, but such routine functions as the college catalog, the student registration and information system, faculty hiring, academic personnel review, and the responsibilities of the faculty Congress are also being revised.

Internal review, planning and budgeting processes have received particular attention. We are including academic performance indicators in budgeting and planning at the college and campus levels. The library, Office for Student Affairs, and Office of Technology and Distance Learning have also developed systems of regular review and continuous improvement of their operations.

2.1. Strategic Plan performance indicators and UH Hilo strategic initiatives.

Strategic Plan performance indicators. At the request of the UH president, by Spring 2002 the UH Hilo Strategic Plan had been revised by a large and representative congress committee on Strategic Plan Review, with ample university and community input (Preparatory Review Report, pp. 7-8).

As its final act, in May 2002, the Strategic Plan Review Committee developed a set of performance indicators to be used to mark the institution's progress in achieving the goals set by the plan. Appendix D lists these indicators and their status as of Fall 2002 and as of December 2003. Current data is not yet available for some of the indicators, but the VCAA is responsible for seeing that the indicators are updated annually and that updates are posted on the Strategic Plan webpage.

Some of these indicators and other student data are discussed in section 3.1. We anticipate that as the numerous activities described in this report are sustained and strengthened, their success will be reflected in improvement in such indicators as graduating senior satisfaction with their education at UH Hilo, freshman-to-sophomore retention, and rates of degree and certificate completion.

UH Hilo strategic initiatives. Despite budget constraints, the university continues to make significant progress in implementing the May 2002 strategic initiatives compiled at the request of the UH president by the UH Hilo administration from requests submitted by academic, support, and other units across the campus,. Many of these initiatives continue to be moved forward by individual programs, and the principles and procedures now being established by the Congress Academic Policy Committee and its Budget and Planning

Committee will serve to prioritize initiatives in university decision-making and resource allocation. In addition to the prioritizing process, there should be a process to cull them and to add new ones periodically.

Faculty-based academic strategic initiatives carried forward include the transformation of the CAS School of Business and Economics to a separate college (effective January 2004; an increase in faculty positions in Ka Haka ʻUla O Keʻelikōlani (effective Fall 2004); implementation of the master programs in Counseling Psychology and in Conservation Biology and Environmental Science; and UH Hilo leadership and faculty participation in the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) and the Pacific Basin Agriculture Research Center (PBARC). The Office for Student Affairs has led the university in actions to improve academic advising, enrollment management, retention, and marketing to prospective students (ongoing).

2.2. Program review as an ongoing process

2.2.1. Academic programs. Academic program review procedures were first adopted by the UH Hilo Congress in the Spring of 2002 and revised in March 2003. In the Fall of 2002, seven programs began the review process: Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Geology, Mathematics in the College of Arts and Sciences and the bachelor of science program in the College of Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resource Management (CAFNRM) that includes seven areas of specialization.

As of December 2003 only the CAFNRM program review has gone through the entire review process. The review has produced in a memorandum of understanding between the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (VCAA) and the college. The CAFNRM program review will lead to curriculum restructuring to reduce the number of programs by eliminating low-demand programs and by combining stronger programs and will seek to develop new interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary curricula. The college has also committed to collaborate with UH Mānoa's College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources to share faculty expertise and to explore opportunities for offering joint academic degrees and joint faculty appointments.

Program review reports for Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, and Mathematics in the College of Arts and Sciences were responded to by the interim dean of CAS in summer 2003 and are now being reviewed by the CAS Faculty Senate. They will then go to the Congress for review and recommendations, then to the VCAA for action. Their process should be complete in early 2004. In Fall 2002, the Department of Nursing completed its accreditation process with the National League of Nursing, equivalent to internal program review. The Nursing review will lead to recommended changes in the program as outlined in the memorandum of agreement between the VCAA and the department; at least one change has already been implemented. (More discussion of the Nursing program is in section 4.4.3.)

The Department of Computer Science department has for many years practiced assessment and continuous review and improvement of curriculum; the 2002-2003 program review was an extension of their usual activities. These are described in section 4.1.1. The Department of

Mathematics has been notably prompt in responding to the findings of their self study and the recommendations of the external reviewer. Their actions are described in section 4.3.

The Assessment Support Committee solicited feedback from the programs that engaged in the review process and conducted exit interviews with the external reviewers. As a result, modifications were made to the process and an expanded set of guidelines created to assist programs scheduled for the next cycle of reviews. One major change was that the self-study process will start in the Spring preceding an external review in the fall. Timelines were extended to make it possible for all level of review to be completed during the review year. Ka Haka ʻUla O Keʻelikōlani College of Hawaiian Language (CHL) along with programs in the Humanities Division of the College of Arts and Sciences began drafting self-studies in the Spring of 2003 and are being externally reviewed in the fall of 2003. The continuous-improvement activities of CHL are described in section 4.4.6.

Appendix F.1 summarizes current academic assessment activities, section 3.1 discusses assessment of student satisfaction and achievement, and sections 3.4 and 4.4 describe recent initiatives of academic programs to improve student learning, many of them motivated by input from students and by review of student performance. In general, more attention is being given to student learning outcomes and the use of data in program decision-making. As additional memoranda of understanding are agreed upon and published, the program improvement process will help UH Hilo become more responsive to new research and changing national, state and local community needs.

At the same time, it is also clear that many more departments must assess student learning and that faculty development in this area requires funding. Effective December 2003, the colleges are responsible for their personnel ("A") and operating ("B") budgets; they will each need to make academic assessment a line item in their annual budgets. The chair of the Congress Assessment Support Committee must receive reassigned time equivalent to a course per semester to manage the many responsibilities of that committee. While the committee can offer training to departments to develop assessable student learning objectives, the institution must also offer assessment workshops drawing on campus expertise (sec. 4.4) and on external experts who have proven their ability to inspire commitment and action.

2.2.2 Program review in support units.

The Library. The Mookini Library revised its mission statement in early 2003 and has drafted a five-year plan. The library regularly monitors its services and other activities to determine the extent to which we are meeting our stated objectives and the extent to which particular activities within the library contribute to those objectives. As the result of such assessments, library programs are modified.

Internal prioritizations for resource allocation are influenced by changes in the institution and opportunities to take advantage of important advances in the information environment. Changes in student/faculty use of information and their expressions of needs and satisfaction

also drive our efforts to improve. The library's many mechanisms for gathering input have included:

- The *pilikia* ("problem") comment system (library users are invited to offer complaints, suggestions, and opinions, which are then addressed by the library Director.)
- Library-related questions on the Incoming Student Survey
- Library-related questions on the College Student Experiences Questionnaire
- Library-related questions on the Graduating Student Survey
- Pre- and post-testing for the required library instruction component in English 100 as well as student evaluations of the program
- Focus groups to discover student experience of the library

An improved, annual profile of library statistics covering activities (such as book circulation and database use) and resources (such as budget for collections) is being developed by library administration and should be in place by spring of 2004. The profile of statistics will include information on how this library compares to the libraries of similar institutions. These indicators will form the basis of an annual report, which will discuss the outcomes of the changes the library has made in its attempts to improve. This information will, in turn, be used to plan further adjustments to better advance the mission of the library.

The Office for Student Affairs. Since Fall 2001 the Office for Student Affairs (OSA) has had a well-developed system of program review and strategic planning that is undergoing continuous refinement. Each year, OSA units write an annual performance review which is submitted to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (VCSA). The VCSA then meets with each unit director to discuss the report. Additionally, the OSA conducts program reviews for systematically assessing the status, effectiveness, and progress of its departments. The department's effectiveness and its level of contribution to the overall mission of the university are central to the process. Plans and recommendations resulting from the program review assist the department in strategic planning and budgeting. Most importantly, the reviews provide the mechanism and impetus for change.

Two to three programs are reviewed each year; at the end of five-year cycle, every program will have been reviewed. The program prepares a departmental self-study report, which is reviewed by the Student Affairs Assessment Committee and an external reviewer. The reviews prepare a set of specific recommendations for maintenance or improvement of overall program functioning. Finally, the director of the program with the concurrence and approval of the VCSA prepares an action plan based on the recommendations.

The Office of Technology and Distance Learning. In recent years, student competence in and use of academic technology has become widespread. Of incoming students, 75.4% of first-time freshmen and 80.1% of transfer students expected to have access to a home computer in Fall 2002; 97.2% of traditional students and 90.9% of nontraditional students used the Internet for homework occasionally or frequently (Incoming Student Survey). And 10.9% of 2002-2003 graduating seniors had taken a course delivered by distance technology (Graduating Senior Survey). Drawing on such data, the Office of Technology and Distance

Learning (OTDL) constantly monitors the adequacy, effectiveness, and currency of computer- and internet-based instructional resources on campus.

The OTDL director submits an annual report to the chancellor that includes program gains, challenges, and a list of initiatives for the following year. The 2002-2003 report outlines OTDL activities in terms of the campus Strategic Plan 2002-2010. Among these are wiring all dormitory rooms with Internet access; completing installation of networking equipment in the new University Classroom Building (UCB), 11 sets of multi-media equipment for classrooms and labs, and five electronic computer labs; upgrading the library instructional lab, school of business lab, and language lab. In Spring 2003, a technical assistance team from NSF-TCUP visited UH Hilo in connection with the new NSF-STEM grant and submitted a report that focuses on technical resources available for instructional purposes.

While assessment of student learning in DL-delivered programs is the responsibility of the academic departments, OTDL solicits and responds to student input. An OTDL-sponsored Fall 2002 survey of students in UH Hilo degree programs delivered by distance technology indicated that students are both satisfied with and challenged by the DL programs. Results of the survey were reported at the WASC April 2003 meeting. An expanded student survey will be administered to 2003-2004 DL students, with results to be available in Spring 2004.

In Fall 2003, OTDL staff held two workshops on webpage development for faculty and staff, and additional workshops are scheduled for Spring 2004. Also in Fall 2003 the Congress reconstituted an ad hoc Academic Technology Committee to develop a campus academic technology plan that will include computers and related acquisitions as well as scientific and multimedia instructional equipment.

2.3. Defining and clarifying the way we work

Here we report on our progress in defining and clarifying some of the most important of the university's processes that bear on the quality of student learning and of the student experience at UH Hilo. In the 2000-2001 self study, the university acknowledged that a number of practices needed to be reviewed, formulated, and stated in the form of written policies, procedures, and schedules. The previous academic program review process was the most seriously flawed, and as we saw in section 2.2.1, the new process is now being implemented and continuously refined. Other changes include the following.

A campus affirmative action plan is being drafted by the AA/EEO officer in consultation with the Affirmative Action Plan Advisory Committee, which includes three faculty members appointed by the Congress. In addition to other matters, the committee will address the desirable goal of bringing faculty ethnic and gender distribution into closer alignment with Hawaiʻi state distributions, in response to observations in our preparatory review that were reinforced by the WASC action letter.

The faculty research council and research coordinator have specific charges from the VCAA, in recognition of the continuing growth in extramural funding and the desirability for faculty to continue to manage overhead funds. For FY 1996-1999, total extramural funding was $15.1 million; for the period FY 2000 through the first quarter of FY 2004, it

totaled $50.4 million, according to the November 2003 report of the Hilo office of the Research Corporation of the University of Hawai'i (RCUH). Overhead funds totaled for FY 2002-2003 totaled $688,910.84; RCUH projects that for FY 2003-2004, the figure will be $1.089 million.

Responding to changes in the 2003-2005 agreement between the Board of Regents and the University of Hawai'i Professional Assembly (UHPA) , the VCAA, deans, and division chairs have made the necessary revisions to the instructions for applying for contract renewal, tenure and promotion provided to eligible faculty. Criteria for teaching excellence and provisions for different program missions and expectations for research and publication will also be reviewed.

The interim dean of CAS has drafted a handbook for hiring tenure track faculty in response to years of confusion among faculty search committees about the complex recruitment and hiring process, The intent of the handbook has been to bring together all the documents and procedures used in a search and to lay out in a single list the numerous steps and offices involved in the process. The handbook is currently in use for faculty hiring. Feedback from the governing bodies and from users will lead to revision of the handbook and procedures for searches undertaken in subsequent years.

The effects of such changes on student learning, satisfaction, and persistence to graduation may be less direct than changes in teaching and curriculum, but gradual improvements in such data may be read as confirmation that our strategy has been effective.

2.3.1. A new UH Hilo catalog. In 2003-2004 the university's print catalog is undergoing major revisions, the goals being to make the catalog more useful to students as a tool for self advisement and in general a more "student-centered" document. The UH Hilo webmaster , the Office for Student Affairs, and the catalog editor are devising ways to ensure currency and consistency between the print catalog and information posted on the UH Hilo website by departments and other units.

Among the new features that will appear in the 2004-05 and subsequent catalogs:

- Each academic program's description will follow a consistent format to ensure that all necessary information about majors, minors, and certificates is provided. Past practice had resulted in inconsistent descriptions, incomplete information, and often confused organization.
- All academic program descriptions will include a statement of mission and a current list of program learning goals. It is generally accepted that students are entitled to be informed about what they can expect to acquire in the course of a major program. Presently, many learning goals are stated in terms of instructional input rather than student outcomes, but it is expected that, with training and modeling, departments will gradually shift to student outcomes.
- A new section, "Baccalaureate Degree Requirements," integrates and organizes information formerly scattered in several different sections.

- Throughout the catalog, students are reminded of the importance of academic advising and urged to meet with their advisors regularly**.**

2.3.2. A new student information and registration system. In Fall 2002, UH Hilo and the rest of the UH system transitioned to Banner, a new student information and registration system. Until then, UH Hilo had been the only campus in the system with a fully integrated, self-sufficient student information and registration system, which provided online registration to students, easy access for faculty and staff to student information essential to advising, and prompt generation of special reports by the Records office.

Banner is a potentially rich source of student data which faculty as well as staff and administration will eventually be able to use for planning, assessment, and program review (sec. 3.1). Training has been offered to administration and faculty throughout the transition period and will continue as the system becomes fully operational. By Fall 2003 registration, enough of Banner was functioning so that online registration was fairly smooth. Scholarships, other forms of financial aid , and refunds can now be handled by direct transfer to student accounts. Using the interface system MyUHPortal, students can now add, change, and withdraw from courses online with greater ease than in the old online registration system. Student email addresses and basic student information are available to instructors through MyUHPortal; faculty are also able to directly permit and authorize student registrations, track course enrollments, and submit final grades on line.

The transition to Banner has, however, been a difficult one, requiring innumerable hours of additional labor for OSA staff and the clerical staff of the colleges and divisions. Because it was not possible to simply transfer data from our old system to Banner, much data entry will be taking place over the next year, and some data are not correct. Academic advisors continue to rely on the old student information system for student information current through Summer 2003, supplementing this with information on the current semester provided by Banner. Entry of course prerequisites and checking of prerequisites is not yet routinized, but inconsistencies and inaccuracies are gradually being eliminated

2.3.3. A new Graduate Council and growth in graduate programs. In Spring 2003, acknowledging that UH Hilo would continue to develop select graduate programs, the UH Board of Regents approved a separate Graduate Council for the campus. In addition to the M.A. in Hawaiian Language and Literature and the Master in Education, UH Hilo plans to begin offering three new graduate programs in Fall 2004: an M.A. in China-U.S. Relations, an M.A. in Counseling Psychology, and an M.S. in Conservation Biology and Environmental Sciences. The Graduate Council was appointed by the VCAA in Summer 2003, comprised of faculty representatives of each of the existing and incoming graduate programs, and with a faculty coordinator.

During 2003-2004, the council will develop graduate program policies and procedures. With student recruitment already underway and new positions being filled for Fall 2004, several issues before the council require immediate resolution. These include membership and responsibilities of the Graduate Council; membership, nomination, appointment and review of graduate faculty; graduate grading policy; reassigned time for graduate instruction ; and provisions for student learning assessment. It is expected that a draft will be available for

review by the Congress and the VCAA's Academic Council in time for inclusion in the 2004-2005 catalog, on the web, and materials sent to prospective students.

2.3.4. **Governance.** As UH Hilo grows in numbers of students and faculty, adds new graduate programs, and reorganizes into four degree-granting colleges, the Faculty Congress will need to define more clearly its relationships with the administration, the college senates, academic programs, the system's All-Campus Council of Faculty Senate Chairs, and the faculty represented by these bodies. The broad outlines have been laid out by Board of Regents policy 1-10, on faculty governance, and details are being worked through.

As noted by the WASC site team, the current structure of academic units at UH Hilo tends to result in overlapping jurisdictions of faculty representative bodies and committees. The Congress has been charged with primary responsibility for working with the administration to develop academic policies and procedures that affect all academic programs. In addition, the Congress represents faculty interests in the budget and planning processes of the university. The college senates deal with internal academic policy issues. Because the senates are well-established, their operations and areas of responsibility are reasonably well-defined. However, because the boundaries between college and university policy concerns are not always clear, considerable duplication of effort and expenditure of faculty time occurs. This boundary problem is compounded by the absence of clear policies and procedures to guide and empower faculty involvement in the budgeting process, review and prioritizing of new program initiatives, and ongoing reviews of academic programs.

In September 2002, the VCAA charged the congress Academic Policy Committee with prioritizing the strategic initiatives of the Strategic Plan and with drafting a process by which new programs and initiatives would be reviewed and prioritized. No decisive action was taken until May 2003, when the congress held a special meeting to draft a process for the review and approval of new programs and to define the relationship between the Congress and the Graduate Council.

The results of the meeting were still in draft form when a case arose which added urgency to the projects. This was the movement of a proposed Master's degree in Conservation Biology and Environmental Science from the CAS and CAFNRM programs to the Graduate Council and to the administration without review of any governance body. In October 2003, the Congress was asked to endorse the program a few days before the program went to the UH Board of Regents for final approval. Despite some concern about the absence of previous governance involvement, the Congress unanimously endorsed the program, acknowledging that the program was well-designed and was an authentic faculty initiative, but asserting that the university must develop a process for the review and approval of new programs that explicitly requires governance participation.

In late Fall 2002 and early Spring 2003, disagreement between the VCAA and the Congress about the constitution and selection of university committees led to the resignation of the chairs of the four Congress standing committees. A temporary resolution allowed the chairs to be re-appointed. However, it was clear to all that more detailed guidelines needed to be instituted, this time with broader faculty support and involvement in their design.

During the current academic year considerable progress has been made by the Congress. In August 2003, the VCAA made a formal request that the congress handle certain crucial tasks bearing on the educational effectiveness review. The congress Assessment Support Committee continues to advise programs undergoing review (sec. 2.2.1), and the General Education committee has developed hallmarks and a review process for the UH Hilo General Education program (sec. 4.3). Three ad hoc committees have been revived: the Committee on Course Evaluation, the Student Success and Retention Committee and the Academic Technology Committee (ATC) to address issues raised in student surveys and various reports. For example, the ATC has an expanded charge that includes all scientific equipment used for instructional purposes, as well as computer-related equipment. As was pointed out by external reviewers in the 2002-2003 program reviews and as student surveys have documented, science laboratories are inadequately equipped and outdated.

The Congress committees on budget and planning and on academic policy are currently reviewing and prioritizing program change requests or "strategic initiatives" developed in support of the UH Hilo Strategic Plan. They are also developing a set of guidelines to formalize this review process within the campus system of faculty governance.

The Congress Executive Committee and the ad hoc Governance Committee are now drafting policies on the extent and nature of congress involvement in university operations, how and by whom faculty should be appointed to university committees, and released time for Congress committee chairs. To this end, the committee is working collaboratively with the current university and college administrations to jointly clarify and define the decision-making boundaries concerning:

> Areas where faculty should exert primary authority
> Areas where faculty should be included in the decision-making process
> Areas where faculty consultation and advice is appropriate
> Areas where faculty need to be informed of administrative decisions

The first cases to be addressed will be how faculty get appointed to university-level committees and how the Graduate Council is to interact with the faculty, congress and the college senates. The committee's proposals for procedures and guidelines will be submitted to the faculty for review and approval.

The proposed revisions to the UH Hilo General Education program, one of the highest priority initiatives for the institution, will be an important test case for the evolving relations between the Congress, senates, faculty, and administration (sec. 4.2.). These will go from the Congress to the senates in December 2003 and will be reviewed and revised by the senates and the faculty before finalization by the Congress in Spring 2004.

2.3.5 Reviewing the administrative structure of the College of Arts and Sciences. Organizational structure is a matter that has occupied both faculty and administration during 2003. The major issues include:

- The size and complexity of the current College of Arts and Sciences (CAS)

- Lines of authority and realms of responsibility of the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Deans, Division Chairs, and Department and Program Chairs
- Recurring costs from reorganizing into a larger number of smaller units
- Reassignment of authority and responsibility due to the deletion of one level of administration including issues of governance, curricular control, and budgetary authority.

Following some years of planning, the School of Business Administration and Economics will separate from the College of Arts and Sciences on January 1st, 2004. In December 2003, the faculty of the remaining CAS divisions participated in a faculty plebiscite to gauge the sentiment for and against reorganizing into three separate colleges. Approximately fifty percent of the eligible faculty participated; forty percent favored reorganization while sixty percent opposed it. Natural Sciences favored reorganization, Humanities was nearly evenly split, and Social Sciences was strongly opposed. While reorganization into separate colleges does not seem possible at this time, there is still interest in strengthening the role of departments and eliminating the divisions. Such a change will be studied during the coming semesters.

2.4. Budget and planning processes

UH Hilo gives priority to academic and student support programs. In the 2003-2004 budget, budgeting for these programs has not been cut; rather, they have been raised modestly so as to sustain instructional and support services to students. Other programs have suffered cuts as high as 26%.

Institutional commitment to education is not at question. However, the WASC action identifies as one of the four most urgent needs for UH Hilo is for "a clearly defined and predictable process . . . To [enable UH Hilo to] accommodate enrollment growth without jeopardizing its base infrastructure both in personnel, normal operating expenses, and in maintenance of its facilities and groups." It is clear that inadequate funding is already fraying the university infrastructure, and the cuts sustained by support and administrative units will inevitably impact educational processes.

A more rational budget process. UH Hilo is striving to shift from historically based budgeting to needs- and data-driven budgeting within the framework of its mission and Strategic Plan. The VCAA and deans/directors are using institutional data to make decisions about position allocations and to encourage departments to be more enterprising in curricular innovation and pursuit of external funding. They are establishing a list of performance indicators that will tie budget allocation to outcomes assessment. The list of likely indicators includes those required for program review and derivations of those indicators: ratio of output to input, measures of student preparation and satisfactory performance, faculty accomplishments, program accomplishments, program cost data, and a graduation index.

Data for such purposes is easily available in the UH system's Management and Planning System (MAPS) website. Select data are presented in Appendix E of this report. Appendix E.1 shows a steady, modest growth in headcount enrollment overall and in total full-time

enrollment (FTE) headcount from Fall 1998 through Fall 2002. Final enrollment data for Fall 2003 was not available when the tables were constructed, but Banner showed that as of October 15, 2003, total headcount enrollment was 3,217 undergraduates and 88 graduate and post-baccalaureate students, well above Fall 2002. Appendix E.2 shows a modest increase through Fall 2002 in the percentage of students who are full time and a decrease in those who are part time. The percentage of off-campus students had increased from under 3% to 6.5%. Appendix E.3 shows a sudden increase from an average of 452 for 1998-2001 to 502 in total degrees granted in 2002-2003. Meanwhile, as Appendix E.4 shows, faculty have increased in number from 159 in Fall 1997 to 184 in Fall 2002; 98.9% of faculty were fulltime in Fall 2002.

The UH Hilo Institutional Research Office provides considerable institutional data on student satisfaction and engagement, academic programs are beginning to assess student learning outcomes in systematic ways (section 3.1), and most such programs revise their curricula with an eye to student demand and professional trends. Our preparatory review acknowledged that assessment and continuous improvement does not yet permeate the entire institution, and that we have some distance to go before we can claim to have "a culture of evidence." The WASC action letter urges the university to expand assessment and quality improvement processes to all aspects of the university, "tying measurement of effectiveness to student outcomes but also performance indicators to the strategic plan and the annual planning, budget, and evaluation cycle."

The Congress Academic Policy Committee and the Budget and Planning Committee are using prioritizing principles established in the Strategic Plan to review and prioritize the 19 UH Hilo strategic initiatives developed in May 2002 at the request of the university president. In the CAS dean's review of the 2002-03 program reviews of four natural sciences departments, program data provided the foundation for many recommendations. Program review has produced memoranda of understanding between the VCAA and CAFNRM and between the VCAA and the Nursing program, based on program data.

In addition to academic units, other campus units are moving in the direction of allocating resources based on outcomes assessment. The College of Continuing Education and Community Services has established performance indicators and self sufficiency goals. The Conference Center has modified its accounting system to reflect efficiency and establish a four-year plan to transfer profit to support university operations. The Office of International Affairs is in the process of moving toward a performance- based funding with a self sufficiency goal in four years, although hurdles remained to be overcome. The internal review processes of the Library, the Office for Student Affairs, and the Office of Technology and Distance Learning are described above.

Tuition income and user fees. In the spring and summer of 2003, the VCAA reported on a study of ways in which current resources could be used more effectively and by which additional resources could be acquired and directed to instruction-related activities. A logical means of linking enrollment growth more directly to increased resources was abolition of the long-standing arrangement in which lower-division students paid less than upper-division students, so that all students are be subject to the same tuition charges. Tuition hearings were

conducted on all four islands in Spring 2003. Students were apparently persuaded by the argument that the resulting increase in tuition income would allow the university to maintain and increase services.

Following UH Board of Regents approval, the new tuition structure went into effect in Fall 2003. The change has already resulted a substantial increase in student tuition income: it is projected that it will raise such income by $$600,000 to $700,000 for 2003-2004 over 2002-2003 and by $400,000 to $500,000 for 2004-2005 over 2003-2004. It must be pointed out that the increased tuition resulting from this change only pays for portions of the enrollment increases in the last few years at UH Hilo and that no additional funding has yet been allocated to UH Hilo by the UH system.

Other actions to increase revenues are currently under study at UH Hilo. One is elimination of the flat rate tuition schedule for full-time registration and using a strictly per unit schedule. The impacts include increased tuition revenues, reduction in the gap between initial registration numbers and census registration numbers due to deliberate over registration and dropping, and reduction in the number of students who request overload registration for economic rather than academic reasons. A second strategy is to peg UH Hilo tutition at ninety percent of UH Mānoa tuition. A third is to assess user fees for laboratory expenses, field trips, art and music supplies, and technology and access.

Financial planning. As the WASC action letter asserts, the UH system must develop a financial plan that incorporates "a set of priorities for development among and within campuses." UH Hilo's VCAA has brought the issue to the attention of the System Council of Chancellors. A study examining the possibility of a formula-based funding is being conducted by the Office of Planning and Policy at the system level. The WASC executive director also conducted a briefing with the UH Board of Regents during which the funding for enrollment growth at Hilo was mentioned.

In the meantime, campus planning and budgeting continues to be subject to restrictions and unpredictable and abrupt assessments by the governor, legislature, and president of the university system. In any event, the campus allocation is not known until October. Gaining control of tuition income has helped the campus to some extent, but tuition figures vary from semester to semester.

Progress towards implementing a planning and budgeting process is underway. In November 2003, the Chancellor's cabinet committed to use revenue projection as the basis for resource allocation. As performance indicators become routinely collected and campus priorities clearly defined, there is real promise that planning and budgeting will become more rational and mission-focused, despite the inevitable uncertainties of state and system allocations.

During December of 2003, the various academic units forecasted their needs for the 2004-2005 AY. These forecasts were based on detailed analyses of staffing and scheduling. Concurrently, forecasts of tuition revenues and other funding sources were made and are being reconciled to the requests. Although uncertainty about the level of state funding will

persist through the early fall of 2004, having in place an assessment of needs and resources will allow UHH to:

- proactively deal with the UH system and the state legislature in acquiring an appropriate level of funding
- selectively implement strategic initiatives and delay others according to likely funding and priorities
- focus on the budgetary decisions with sufficient lead-time to implement actions affecting both revenues and expenditures.

A more inclusive and transparent budget process. The university has, since 2001, been striving to institute a more inclusive budget planning process. The VCAA conducts budget hearings for all academic units annually with the participation of Congress Budget Committee. Beginning in Spring 2004, the Dean of CAS will develop an annual faculty hiring plan with the participation of CAS Senate.

Since Spring 2003, the VCAA and the interim Dean of CAS have been urging that the colleges be given primary responsibility for their own personnel ("A") budgets as well as operating ("B") budgets. This turnover was achieved in November 2003. The CAS dean in turn has turned A-budgets over to the division chairs, so that decisions about staffing and instructional resources are now in the hands of those most knowledgeable about academic program needs and performance. During Spring 2004, division chairs and dean will work together, planning strategically to make the most productive use of these resources.

The deans/director of the three colleges will continue to develop their own budgets. These budgets are discussed by the VCAA and each dean/director, with the chair of the Congress Budget and Planning Committee present, in terms of college and university needs and priorities. The college budgets are compiled, and the total academic budget is submitted to the VC for Administrative Affairs, and then to the Chancellor's Cabinet.

In an effort to build on the gains in transparency that it had made in Spring 2002, the Congress Budget and Planning Committee has asked the administration to provide it with the current UH Hilo budget so that it can be made available to the university community. It is expected that this will be posted at the committee website in December 2003. In the meantime, information on the university's budget is disseminated through deans and division chairs.

Other steps can be taken. When the budget is announced by the administration to the university community, it should be accompanied by a written explanation of the priorities that it reflects, the reallocations and cuts that have been made, and the long-range objectives that it preserves. And as was recommended in our preparatory review report, the administration might consider having a Congress representative present at cabinet meetings when budgetary matters are being discussed. Finally, assessment (including program review and accreditation-related activities) will need to be a line item in the budgets of divisions, colleges, and the university.

Chapter 3: Becoming a learning organization

WASC Standard Four includes two guidelines on institutional research, dissemination of results, and use of those results in planning and resource allocation. The commission expects that the institution will have "clear, well established policies and practices for gathering and analyzing information that leads to a culture of evidence and improvement." At UH Hilo, the Institutional Research Office (IRO) is responsible for gathering and analyzing such data and for making it quickly available for planning at all levels. The commission also expects that the institution will exhibit

> clear institutional research capacities with appropriate reporting lines and support appropriate to the institution's size and scope. Institutional research or equivalent databases are developed that are sufficient to meet all external reporting needs (e.g. IPEDS), and there are appropriate ways to access or disseminate this information through publications, reports, or widely-accessible databases.

The IRO is a one-person operation reporting to the VCAA whose first priorities are to meet the data demands of the academic units and to disseminate crucial student data to the campus community. WASC recommends that institutional research be extended to all university units. As more of the university's processes become more data-driven, it will become necessary for the university to provide additional staffing, training, and access to powerful new software to the IRO. Faculty and administrators also need training in understanding and using data in planning and allocations. Appendix F.2 summarizes current campus assessment activities, while Appendix F.1 details assessment in the academic units as of December 2003.

3.1. Student data: Changes and analysis.

The introduction of the Banner student information and registration system in December 2002 is already beginning to modify the way UH Hilo (and other campuses in the UH system) are thinking about such matters as cross-registration and student data. The Banner system, in combination with the newly acquired software Web for Executives (EXSS), will eventually enable administrators at all levels to obtain critical operational and performance-indicator information without the aid of a data professional. The UH Hilo institutional researcher is working with others in the UH system to customize Web for Executives so that financial and human resources data can also be accessed, because those units were not purchased with Banner.

UH Hilo is continuing the graduating senior survey (GSS) incoming student survey (ISS), adding items that are enabling us to focus on specific factors that seem to influence retention and graduation rates. Freshmen and seniors have taken the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) in Spring 2001, 2002, and 2003. Henceforth, the NSSE will be administered in alternate years, beginning in Spring 2005. NSSE results are posted at the Institutional Research Office website.

Sections 2.2 through 2.5 of our 2001-2002 preparatory review report discusses results of surveys through Spring 2002. Results of the 2002-2003 GSS and ISS are posted on the Institutional Research Office website. While it will be a while before the effects of the many

initiatives described in this report will become apparent in the GSS, we have been using both the GSS and the ISS to identify areas where action can be taken to improve student satisfaction and retention.

Occasional surveys have also been administered: the student preferences survey of Spring 2002 and the faculty survey conducted in association with the review and revision of the Strategic Plan. Results of these are also available on the IRO website.

Increasing opportunities for hands-on learning, internships, and student participation in faculty research projects. The Graduating Student Survey of 2002-2003 indicated that, by the time they are seniors, six out of ten UH Hilo graduating students have participated in an internship and/or service learning project. These two areas were of particular interest to UH Hilo as 93.5% of respondents to a student preferences survey in the summer of 2002 ("What Students Want") said they wanted more internship and service learning opportunities. According to the NSSE 2003, UH Hilo has increased its emphasis on and opportunities for internship and/or service learning. Seventy-two percent (72%) of UH Hilo seniors in Spring 2003 said they had done or planned to do an internship before they graduated, compared to 65.5% in Spring 2002; 70% said they had done or planned to do a service learning project before they graduated, compared to 63.1% in Spring 2002.

UH Hilo students also indicated the desire for more opportunities to participate in faculty research projects: 80.4% of the respondents to the student preferences survey (Summer 2002) indicated they wanted improvement in this area. According to the NSSE 2003, UH Hilo has made significant improvements in the percentage of seniors who had worked (or planned to before graduation) on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements: in 2003, 45% of UH Hilo seniors answered "yes" to this question, compared to only 33.3% in 2002. In NSSE 2003, the 45% of UH Hilo seniors who answered "yes" to this question was significantly above those in its "peer" baccalaureate-liberal arts institutions (39%) and the entire NSSE national sample (27%), indicating that UH Hilo is indeed distinguishing itself in this area.

Surveying graduating seniors and alumni. Students who persist to degree at UH Hilo rate UH Hilo quite highly in many areas. Respondents to the 2001 Alumni Survey gave UH Hilo very high marks overall, and of those who pursued further study in graduate or professional school, 36% said their UH Hilo education prepared them very well, 47% moderately well, and 15% adequately for their post-baccalaureate study. Academic skills, such as those needed to pursue post-baccalaureate study are of real interest to many seniors. According to the 2002-2003 Graduating Student Report, about six out of ten UH Hilo graduating students planned to enroll in graduate school, and more than a quarter of these had already applied and been accepted. In this same report, 50% of UH Hilo graduating seniors said that the quality of academic programs at UH Hilo was better or much better than expected (only 5.3% said they were worse than expected), and almost six out of ten (57%) said they felt the quality of their baccalaureate degree from UH Hilo was above average.

The demographics of our graduating seniors show that UH Hilo is contributing substantially to the lives of its students, the state of Hawai'i and the island of Hawai'i. Of the Spring 2003

graduating class, almost half (49%) were low-income (according to the definition used by federal TRIO programs) 80% were first-generation college students, and 70% were ethnic minorities. The NCES (National Center for Educational Statistics) in its "Special Analysis 2001" on students whose parents did not go to college, concluded that "after five years, first-generation students are less likely than others to have stayed enrolled and attained a degree." The NCES analysis found that, of students who began their postsecondary education in 1989-90, first-generation students were less likely than other students to have earned a bachelor's degree (13 versus 33 percent), and more likely than others to have left without earning any degree (45 versus 29 percent). Against these national trends, UH Hilo's record with high-risk students is a strong and promising one.
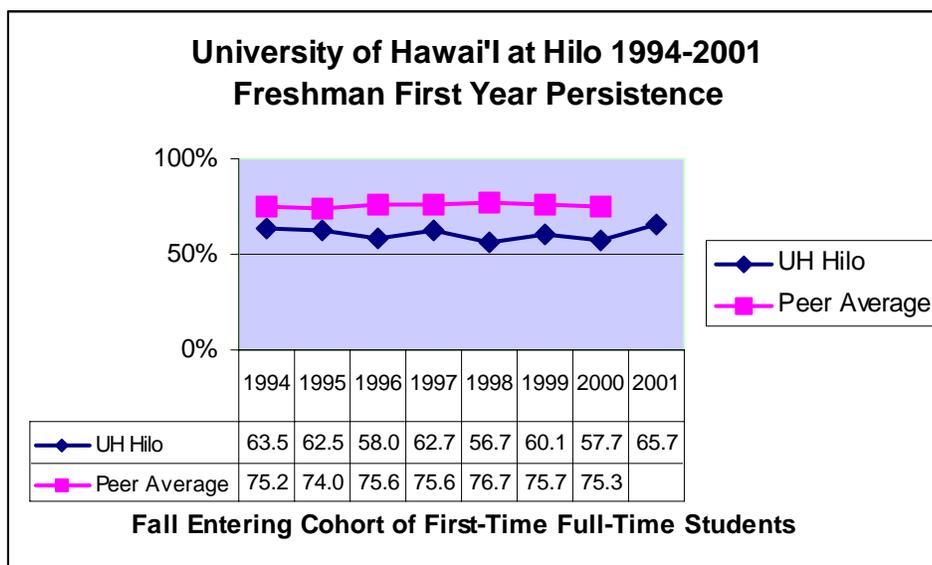
What has become clear through the examination of the results of the Graduating Student Survey and the NSSE, is that upper-division students enjoy smaller classes, closer interaction with faculty and, perhaps even better teaching than lower-division students. The NSSE 2003 Benchmark Report is quite telling in this regard. For first-year UH Hilo students, the benchmark score for student-faculty interaction was 33.3 (lower than 70% of the national sample). This compares to a score of 49.5 for seniors (higher than about 70% of the national sample). First year UH Hilo students scored a 58.4 on the benchmark for supportive campus environment. Although UH Hilo exceeded its predicted score by 4.9 points (predicted scores are determined through institutional and student characteristics), it still fell below more than 70% of the national sample on this benchmark. On the other hand, UH Hilo seniors, with a score of 61.5, scored higher than 70% of the national sample on this same benchmark. To increase the satisfaction and, therefore, the retention of lower-division students, UH Hilo must consider balancing the professor-student ratio between lower- and upper-division students, and must assign its best teachers to work with freshman students.

Retention and graduation. The 2002 Incoming Student Survey (ISS) is being utilized as the source of predictor variables for students at high risk of attrition. With relatively small retained/not-retained group sizes, however, observations from the 2003 Incoming Student Survey will have to be added to the 2002 observations to get more useful (more statistically significant) results.

UH Hilo has at least two distinct groups of entering students: local students from the state of Hawai'i and students who travel at least 2,500 miles to UH Hilo from the mainland United States. UH Hilo's Office for Student Affairs has initiated a number of strategies to increase the retention of local students, but it is our (primarily Caucasian) mainland students who have the lowest retention rates. The Institutional Researcher recently gained (restricted) access to a rich federal longitudinal database (BPS), which will help UH Hilo direct its mainland recruitment efforts toward students for whom UH Hilo is a good fit; i.e. those who successfully persist and graduate at UH Hilo and institutions similar to UH Hilo. (Data for a third distinct group, international students, is being reviewed.)

Focused attention on retention has already had results. Between its 2000 and 2001 entering first-time full time freshman cohorts, UH Hilo has increased its first year retention rate by eight percentage points and is closing the gap between itself and its peer institutions (Fig. 1).

Figure 1.

University of Hawai'I at Hilo 1994-2001
Freshman First Year Persistence

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
UH Hilo	63.5	62.5	58.0	62.7	56.7	60.1	57.7	65.7
Peer Average	75.2	74.0	75.6	75.6	76.7	75.7	75.3	

Fall Entering Cohort of First-Time Full-Time Students

Source: UH MAPS Graduation and Retention Rates, Peer and Benchmark Group Comparisons, University of Hawaii at Hilo, Fall 1994 to Fall 2000: http://www.hawaii.edu/cgi-bin/iro/maps?gchi01.pdf. Data on 2001 cohort provided by the UH Hilo Records Office.

In the meantime, Table 3.2, prepared for the Preparatory Review report, displays graduation and retention rates for Fall 1991 through Fall 1995 cohorts; current data on retention and persistence are at the IRO website and at the Records office website. The Banner system will eventually enable us to track and report retention and graduation rates with greater efficiency than is currently possible.

The Graduating Student Survey suggests that course availability is a long-standing and widespread issue. The 2001-2002 survey found that 68.8% of respondents took more than 4 years to graduate; 69.4% of those said course availability was at least a slight influence; 31.5% said it had a fair to very strong impact. Figures in the 2002-2003 survey were 70.1%, 69.2%, and 31.3%. At CAS, division chairs and department chairs work continuously on enrollment management and have used a range of strategies to increase the number of required courses available to students. The problem will require even greater diligence and creativity if the university is to serve its students effectively.

The Incoming Student Survey also provides some insight to UH Hilo's relatively low retention rate of 58% for students who started college in Fall 1997. Only 42.8% of first-time freshmen in 2002-2003 planned to complete their bachelor's degree at UH Hilo. While only 18.3% had definite plans to transfer to another institution to complete their degree, more than a third, 38.9%, did not know whether or not they wouldl complete their degree at UH Hilo. Transfer students wer more committed to UH Hilo: 69.7% planned to complete their degrees at UH Hilo and 9.1% planned to transfer. Steps are being taken to address retention in general, but such data suggest that faculty and others would do well to cultivate these

undecided students, both first-time freshmen and transfer students, to encourage them—if UH Hilo offers their program of study—to complete their degrees here.

Attracting and retaining more in-state students and students from under-represented groups. In Fall 2002, only 1.8 percent of all Hawai'i high school graduates enrolled at UH Hilo, down from 2.1 percent in 1997. On the island of Hawai'i, 9.2% of public high school graduates came to UH Hilo in 2002, below the 10.4 percent in 1997, but above the 2000 level of 8.5, indicating that UH Hilo is enjoying some success in increasing its enrollment of Hawai'i Island high school graduates.

With respect to students of Hawaiian ancestry, fall-to-fall semester retention has increased from 66.3% in Fall 1998 to 74.6% in Fall 2002. On the other hand, representation of such students at UH Hilo declined between 1998 and 2002 from 20.2% of the student population to 15.8%. (More data on this group is available in a presentation prepared by the institutional researcher.) The decline has been more precipitous for Filipino students, whose representation dropped from 7.5% in 1998 to 4.1% in 2002.

Increasing the "going rate" of in-state students—and particularly students of under-represented groups, such as native Hawaiian and Filipino students—is a special focus of the Office for Student Affairs as well as faculty and others drawing on the resources of NSF and other federal agencies. This sharpened focus may help to make the most of an only modest overall increase in the number of public high school seniors predicted in the state.

3.2. Extramural funding to bring students from under-represented groups into agriculture and the natural sciences.

UH Hilo has been awarded several grants to attract students of native Hawaiian ancestry to college. These include:

- A $1.7 million Title III grant, 2000-2005, "to increase native Hawaiian students' access to UH Hilo programs, increase their retention and graduation rates, and increase their technological competencies." Programs benefiting from this grant include the relatively new Kīpuka Native Hawaiian Support Program, the long-standing Hawaiian Leadership Development Program, and Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani College of Hawaiian Language.
- A $675,000 National Science Foundation (NSF) New Opportunities for Minority Initiatives in Space Science (NOMISS) grant, 2001-2004, to encourage students of Hawaiian and Pacific Island ancestry to seek higher education and careers in astronomy and related fields, to improve undergraduate access to Mauna Kea observatories and associated research facilities, including student internships. Website: http://hubble.uhh.hawaii.edu/. This program is described in section 3.4.
- Annual $150,000 grants (2001-2002, 2002-2003, renewable) to the College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Natural Resource Management from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service to enhance undergraduate agriculture education for students from under-represented ethnic groups. This program is described in section 3.4.
- A $2.4 million NSF Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)

grant, 2002-2007, through the NSF Tribal Colleges and Universities Program, is being used to increase Native Hawaiian student participation in science and math disciplines by educating faculty about Native Hawaiian ways of knowing, revising curricula to reflect cultural issues and values, providing mentorship and research opportunities, and extending outreach efforts to K-12 students. STEM internships for Native Hawaiian students are described in section 3.2. This program is also described in section 3.4.

Departments with faculty involved in the STEM project are making curricular changes to attract and accommodate native Hawaiian students. Among the projects currently underway in the Department of Physics and Astronomy are the development of new courses with particular attention to native Hawaiian students. The department is expanding internship opportunities for students at facilities on Mauna Kea. Physics 197, Introduction to Natural Sciences, which is being team-taught by faculty in the natural sciences and philosophy, is one of the courses developed with STEM support.

A UH Hilo ad hoc committee has begun to design strategies for increasing the number of students of Hawaiian and Filipino ancestry, both groups under-represented at UH Hilo (and at other UH campuses) in comparison with their distribution in the state and on the island of Hawai'i. Among the strategies being considered are the production of recruitment materials targeted for Filipino and Hawaiian students; having Hawaiian and Filipino students assist in recruiting statewide; working with high schools, community colleges, and communities and the U.S. mainland with large Filipino and Hawaiian communities (such as Las Vegas and the San Francisco bay area); and participating in Hawaiian and Filipino cultural and community events to publicize UH Hilo.

3.3. Administration and Congress initiatives

- In Fall 2002, the VCAA and VCSA formed an Academic Advising Committee, whose purpose is to make recommendations to improve advising on campus, a need that has been well documented by student surveys and graduation audits. A number of the committee's May 2003 recommendations are being implemented, and the committee is continuing to devise new ways of improving academic advising. A November 2003 workshop on advising for new faculty drew a large number of participants.
- In Spring 2003 the Congress established two ad hoc committees to address long-standing problems related to educational effectiveness: a committee to devise a more teaching-focused course evaluation form and the Student Success and Retention Committee.
- In Fall 2003, the Congress re-established the ad hoc Academic Technology Committee, this time with an expanded charge that includes a plan covering all scientific equipment used for instructional purposes, as well as computer-related equipment. As was pointed out by external reviewers in the 2002-2003 program reviews and as student surveys have documented, science laboratories are inadequately equipped and outdated.

- In Fall 2003, the VCAA's Committee on Faculty Development and Teaching proposed a pilot program that would encourage departments to select outstanding advanced majors and train them to work with professors in high-risk courses or large lecture sections (sec. 3.2). The program will begin modestly in Spring 2004. End-of-semester assessment of the assistantships will determine whether program funding will continue in the succeeding semester.
- In November 2003, acknowledging that a minority of faculty may need to be reminded of the need to provide students with timely evaluation, the Congress passed the following resolution and announced it to the university community via the university's internal "'ohana" e-mail list:

> Students have a right to expect information about their progress and performance in undergraduate courses prior to the deadline for withdrawal. This information may take the form of quantitative assessment such as test grades or qualitative assessment such as graded papers, or interviews with professors; the form will vary from professor to professor.

- By April 2004, renovation of Portable Buildings 10, 11, and 12 will be completed. Former faculty offices and classrooms will be converted to rooms for student use: meeting rooms, tutoring rooms, and study rooms with wireless access to the Internet.
- Since May 2003 a coordinator of distance learning has been providing advising and other services to students in distance-learning programs.
- A cross-campus Math Needs Group has been working since August 2003 to analyze the "math needs" of students and take action to address their needs (sec. 4.3.).

3.4. Academic program initiatives. Curriculum review and revision and the strengthening or introduction of courses, certificates, minors, majors, and degrees are of course part of the responsibility of all full-time faculty at any institution. Appendix G lists the many other recent student- and learning-centered initiatives undertaken by the library, by the Office for Student Affairs (OSA), and by those academic units that had responded by the time this report was submitted. In this section, the CAFNRM's Agriculture Development Program is described, as well as important initiatives by Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani, CAS, the Library, and the OSA. Sections 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5 discuss the initiatives of specific academic programs in more detail.

Student research, internships and practica. The NSSE and Graduating Senior surveys indicate that UH Hilo is doing well with respect to student research and hands-on learning. Such teaching practices are strongly established in many departments. Virtually all full-time natural science professors work with individual students in directed research projects that combine true research, field work, and writing, as do CAFNRM faculty. In the Department of Biology, these research projects are explicitly directed towards publication. The Department of Physics and Astronomy is using a federal grant of approximately $475,000 to design an instructional telescope facility which will be situated on the Mauna Kea summit. The telescope should be operational within two years and will represent a unique opportunity for UH Hilo astronomy majors. (Details of student-faculty research are presented in the 2000-2001 self study report, section 2.3.)

In internships offered through the UH Hawaiian Internship Program and coordinated through the Pacific Aquaculture and Coastal Resources Center, 69 undergraduates have participated in 96 internships over the past seven years. Forty interns have earned their baccalaureate degree. Twenty-nine former interns (73% of those who graduated) are in work related to the environment or science here in Hawai'i or the Pacific, while two are working in Hawai'i in other fields and areas. Three interns have completed a higher degree and four are attending graduate school.

Other research-focused internships are offered to students through the NSF-New Opportunities through Minority Initiatives in Space Science (NOMISS) and NSF-Science Technology Engineering Math (STEM)/Keaholoa programs. The NOMISS grant (2001-2003) supports six student interns per year who work at the telescope facilities of Gemini, Keck, the Joint Astronomy Center, the InfraRed Telescope Facility, and the UH Institute for Astronomy; and between three and six student assistants who work with the education and astronomy and physics departments.

A three-year NSF Research Experience for Undergraduates Site Program grant, (2002-2005) has allowed 22 interns to conduct research in conservation biology during summers, four more student interns have completed projects during the academic year, and ten additional internships are planned for 2004-2005. The principal investigators will submit a renewal proposal in the fall of 2004.

In summer 2003, seven STEM/Keaholoa student interns conducted research with faculty mentors; in Fall 2003, nine interns have been at work. Five additional students will join the group in Spring 2004. Among the research projects being pursued are

- impact of invasive species on forest water balance: geology mentor
- responses of native plants to passive volcanic emissions: geography mentor
- ahupua`a climatology: study climatic variables and water balance along mountain transects on hawai'i island: geography mentor
- restoration of wet lowland 'ohi'a/hapu'u forest: mentors from biology and State of Hawai'i Division of Forestry and Wildlife
- research and explorations in astronomy: astronomy mentor

Career-related internships are offered by several departments in the social sciences. Political science majors can complete internships with government agencies. In Spring 2003, six majors served as legislative interns in the offices of Hawai'i Island senators and representatives. Each semester between nine and 12 majors complete internships with such agencies as the prosecutor's office, the Hawai'i County Office of Research and Development, and the Legal Aid Society. Psychology offers majors the option of a community practicum. Over the past five years, an average of 25 majors per year have completed the practicum course.

The Department of Sociology places student interns at a range of agencies, including those providing social services to adults and children, a health care facility, government agencies, and the university itself. These internships number 10 or 11 per semester. The Department of

Geography has placed up to six student interns per year with such agencies as the County of Hawaiʻi Departments of Planning and Public Works and the resources management division of Hawaiʻi Volcanoes National Park.

College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Natural Resource Management. The UH Hilo's Agriculture Development Program (ADP) has increased recruitment and retention of students from State high schools in rural communities. Funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian Educating Institutions, the ADP seeks to increase the role of under-represented minorities in agriculture by increasing access to a college education. Informational visits to more than 17 high schools has increased enrollment by more than ten percent in the College of Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resource Management.

Because many of these students are the first in their families to attend college, the ADP helps them with admissions and housing applications and helps to smooth the transition into college life. Some seniors in high school agriculture programs that do not meet all requirements are granted special admission into the college. By tracking and keeping high school freshman, sophomores, and juniors informed of college admissions standards the ADP seeks to assure all future seniors will be granted regular admissions.

Focusing retention efforts on this small group of six special-admission freshman along with six regularly admitted students resulted in 75% retention from freshman to sophomore year, an increase of 15% over regularly admitted students. These retention efforts are being expanded to all College freshman and include cohort registration to increase group study, tutoring by fellow agriculture students, and a special agriculture section of University 101, with emphasis on self assessment/career planning and Hawaiian cultural values, with development of a Hawaiian Eco-Cultural Garden, and special sessions taught by community teachers of celestial navigation, sailing, use of throw and surround nets, and culture and use of plants brought by the first Hawaiians. More than 20% of CAFNRM students are native Hawaiian.

College of Arts and Sciences. Appendix G lists CAS initiatives in support of student learning, among them:

- The Division of Natural Sciences has established an open computer lab for students in the Life Sciences building.
- Through its seminar series, the Department of Marine Science offers students and the university community frequent presentations by researchers in the field.
- The Department of Computer Science was awarded a National Science Foundation grant under the CSEMS (Computer Science, Engineering, Mathematics Scholarship) program. This $203,000 grant will support 15 academically qualified and financially needy Computer Science majors through their four years of study.
- The English and linguistics programs, with the English Language Institute, have launched a certificate program in Teaching English as a Second Language. The first cycle of courses is being offered in 2003-2005.

- The Department of Performing Arts has launched a baccalaureate program that combines the study of drama, music, and dance. A full-time dance instructor has been added to the faculty.
- Student resource/meeting rooms have been established by a number of programs in different buildings. These are rooms where students can meet and study together, generally near the offices and laboratories of the professors in their major fields. Among the departments that provide these spaces are History, Sociology, Political Science, Business and Economics, Biology, and Marine Science.

Ka Haka ʻUla O Keʻelikōlani. A recent student survey and suggestions from students have led to a number of actions in support of student learning. Students have asked for interaction in the medium of Hawaiian in many different venues. In Fall 2003, three guest speakers met with Hawaiian studies students on Sailing on the Hōkūleʻa to the northwest Hawaiian islands, the Kamehameha Schools' admission policy, and the native Hawaiian herb ʻawa. Also in the fall, the college sponsored three talk-story sessions for students about current issues within the Native Hawaiian community with our Hawaiian studies professors. The topics were Native Hawaiian entitlements, the last will and testament of Bernice Pauahi Bishop, and the Mauna Kea Astronomy Educational Center. In Spring 2004, the college's Visiting Mānaleo Program will receive Title III support in bringing to campus native speakers of Hawaiian to engage in weekly conversations with students. A complete list of college initiatives is in Appendix G. Among other highlights are:

- The college shares an educational specialist funded by UH Hilo's Title III program who advises students academically, directs students to tutoring and counseling programs, reaches out to and counsels students at risk or on probation or academic dismissal, and in many ways eases the transition into the college for new students.
- Two student tutors for Hawaiian language students have been hired by Kīpuka (a Title III-funded program to benefit native Hawaiian students).
- The college assists students in finding a career in a Hawaiian studies field, in meeting with Hawaiian language places of employment such as ʻAha Pūnana Leo and Hale Kuamoʻo as well with the State of Hawaii Department of Health and Lyman Museum

3.5. Initiatives of support units

The Mookini Library. The practice of identifying program goals and focusing on mission has promoted student learning and co-curricular life in a number of different ways. A complete list of recent initiatives is in Appendix G. Among these are:

- The library has worked with Hawaiʻi Community College carpentry students and the student governments of UH Hilo and Hawaiʻi Community College to provide five more picnic tables on the lanai, and with the university's Sodexho food service to continue coffee service on the lanai during the week. The library lanai has become an important gathering place for students throughout the day and into the evening.
- Students can now borrow wireless-access laptops free of charge while in the library and can now access the Internet from within the library and from the library lanai.

- The number of wired student carrels has been increased to allow students to research using their lap tops.

The Office for Student Affairs. While OSA professionals continuously receive feedback from students about specific procedures and conditions of student life, the Graduating Student Survey (GSS) offers a comprehensive review of how students rate the performance of the various units. Over time, results of the GSS will enable the university to track the effectiveness of initiatives undertaken by such units as Admissions, Records, Advising, Career Planning and Placement. For example, graduating seniors rated academic advising at UH Hilo as more than adequate: 32.2% in 2002 and 34.3% in 2003; adequate, 40.0% and 45.1%; and disappointing, 22.6% and 18.3%. The Advising Committee, working with the Vice Chancellors for Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, concluded their first year with a number of recommendations, many of which are already being implemented, and is now tracking these and developing additional ones.

Appendix G lists many of the recent activities of the Office for Student Affairs on behalf of students.

In the past year, the office has, among other gains,
- Established a service learning program, coordinated by a full-time Student Affairs staff member. Activities include one-time service events like Make a Difference Day (Fall) and Good Neighbor day (Spring); ongoing projects such as Break-Through Adventures, Freedom from Hunger, tutoring, Mauna Kea Visitors' Center, and projects in cooperation with academic departments such as Nursing and Education.
- Revised financial aid application procedures that simplify the process for most students
- Revised Satisfactory Academic Progress guidelines for financial aid eligibility that are more supportive of student success
- Devised a new method of disbursing financial aid payments so that students do not have to stand in long lines: financial aid is disbursed directly to a student's account.

Housing has also seen some improvements:
- High speed internet access from all residence hall rooms
- A 16% increase in off-campus rental units between Fall 2002 and Fall 2003.
- Increased social programming in the residence halls.

New services to students include:
- Improved on-campus health care: in addition to a full-time nurse at the campus student health office, a physician is on campus twice a week
- Enhanced Career Center activities and services, including the center website, which now allows users to search for on-campus jobs as well as post-graduation positions

3.6. Faculty development and support for teaching

At the same time that UH Hilo is more strongly directing its energies at improving our educational effectiveness, we are also striving to bring together the faculty of the colleges.

- Since August 2002, the two-day New Faculty Orientation organized by the Office of the CAS Dean has served new faculty, including lecturers, from all three colleges and has included representatives of the three colleges among presenters. Since August 2003, the primary focus of the orientation sessions is on teaching and students and includes discussion of the National Survey of Student Engagement and effective teaching practices.
- In Fall 2003 the *CAS Faculty Handbook* became the *UH Hilo Faculty Handbook* and includes both campus-wide information and descriptions of college-specific policies. The handbook is posted on the UH Hilo website.
- System training in WebCT, used by faculty on all UH campuses, and other instructional technology, is offered to all UH system faculty via interactive television through the Teaching And Learning with Electronic Networked Technologies (TALENT) program
- The statewide Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) program includes faculty of both CAFNRM and CAS, and connects UH Hilo more closely to UH Mānoa. Among the faculty development activities sponsored by EPSCoR during Fall 2003 was a series of grantsmanship workshops held throughout the UH system between November 14 and November 20; UH Hilo was the site of the November 14 morning and afternoon sessions.
- The STEM-Keaholoa program and the Office for Student Affairs offer occasional speakers and working sessions on student learning to which all faculty are invited.
- The VCAA's Committee on Faculty Development and Teaching include representatives of all degree-granting colleges and offers workshops and other development activities to open to all faculty and staff.

Committee on Faculty Development and Teaching. In summer 2003, the VCAA formed a committee charged with coordinating and promoting improved teaching and learning at the university. Members include the Advising Coordinator, an instructional technology expert, and faculty who have received one of the two UH system teaching awards or who are principal investigators of major teaching-centered grants.

The committee is operating without university funding and counts on good-will contributions for training workshops and on resources shared by other units and extramurally funded programs. There are campus experts, both staff and faculty, who can offer their colleagues training in instructional technology, classroom assessment, and effective teaching strategies. However, as the WASC site team points out, it may be necessary to bring outside experts to campus to engage and train faculty in assessing student learning. Efforts from within the campus have not yet succeeded in thoroughly infusing the practices of assessment and continuous improvement, as section 4.4 and Appendix F indicate.

In Fall 2003 the committee initiated a pilot proposal for a program that would encourage departments to engage qualified senior majors as student teaching assistants. The proposal was supported by the university's Academic Council, received the Congress's blessing in November 2003, and will begin on modest scale in Spring 2004.

With the STEM Keaholoa grant leadership, the committee co-sponsored the presentation in October 2003 of a native American expert on indigenization of the curriculum. In Fall 2003 the committee sponsored four instructional technology workshops, on basic PowerPoint, multimedia PowerPoint, and departmental web pages. The committee also maintains the teaching resources webpage set up in Fall 2002.

Spring 2004 projects for the committee include:

- identifying and coordinating a panel of mentors, experienced and capable teachers who are willing to work one-on-one on teaching skills with junior faculty who either refer themselves or are referred by their departments

- expanding on the successful Fall 2003 workshop series, repeating the PowerPoint and Webpage workshops, and adding workshops on writing to learn, classroom teaching, syllabi and course goals, and other practical and high-demand matters

- working more closely with Student Affairs, STEM/Keaholoa, and partner with other groups to coordinate funding, scheduling and publicizing of events, presentations, and workshops that will be of benefit to faculty (and therefore to students)

- following up on the student assistantship program, informing departments of its advantages to students and prodding administration as needed

- drafting a revision to the CAS Faculty Productivity form so that there is a separate heading for teaching innovation/curriculum development

- drafting a revision of the "Vignettes of Promotion and Tenure" section of the instructions for applying for contract renewal, promotion and tenure, so that the descriptions of teaching documentation make a clear distinction between competent teaching and excellent teaching, and so that there is less reliance on the course evaluation form and more on the varieties of documentation that DPCs actually rely on in evaluation teaching.

- proposing revisions to the section "Teaching" in the section "Preparation of the Dossier" to ensure that it too provides adequate guidance to untenured faculty as to what constitutes good teaching.

Chapter 4: Striving for a collective vision of educational attainment

Enacting the educational mission of a university requires the agreement of most members of the community on most questions that bear on student learning—that is, a collective understanding of the answers to these questions: What do our students learn? How well do they learn? How does the university foster learning?

Chapter 4 describes some of the processes under way as the campus seeks consensus on a number of issues .

- Should the university provide course work and other support for students who meet our admissions requirements but, once enrolled, do not demonstrate college-level skills?
- Are faculty obliged to include explicit statements of assessable course goals in their syllabi?
- Must courses offered in the General Education program meet hallmarks or course criteria, and should these hallmarks be linked to assessable student learning outcomes?
- Should all UH Hilo degree programs share a common core of General Education requirements?

In 2003-2004, faculty will be answering these questions and thereby defining these elements of educational attainment means at UH Hilo.

In the meantime, there appears to be a growing acceptance among faculty that assessment of student learning is beneficial to students and to programs. Some programs are well along in the practices of student learning assessment and continuous improvements, and others are making thoughtful starts.

4.1. Changing the way people think about learning outcomes and syllabi

The commission expects that academic programs will engage in systematic, scheduled assessment of student learning, and our institutional review proposal set the following goal:

> By Spring 2004, we expect that all academic departments will have formulated current mission statements and student learning objectives. We expect that half of all academic departments will have identified performance indicators (also called assessment criteria) and begun to collect evidence of student learning; a third will have thorough documentation of student achievement.

As is apparent from the academic missions and goals in the institutional portfolio, most departments have formulated such objectives, but most are not formulated as assessable learning outcomes. WASC also expects that syllabi must provide students with course objectives in terms of competencies. The site team recommended that the institution

"implement a procedure that will ensure the University maintains a current set of approved syllabi for the approved courses in the official University Catalog."

Since Spring 2003, the UH Hilo teaching resources website has posted a syllabus checklist and model syllabi for current UH Hilo courses, and the Faculty Handbook includes syllabus guidelines. Workshops are being offered in Fall 2003 and Spring 2004 that show faculty and staff how to develop web pages and post course materials and syllabi so that faculty who wish to make their syllabi more available can do so. The General Education proposal submitted to college senates in December 2003 includes a review process that requires that syllabi clearly indicate that a course meet GE category hallmarks.

CAFNRM, the School of Business and Economics, the Social Sciences Division, and the Humanities Division have routinely collected and filed syllabi in hardcopy. Beginning in Fall 2003, all of these and the Natural Sciences Division are collecting syllabi in electronic format. The intent is to maintain a collection of syllabi for institutional research and articulation and student transfer purposes.

There has been some resistance from faculty to requests from the administration and from the accreditation steering committee that all course syllabi include statements of assessable learning objectives. Of the 266 Fall 2003 syllabi collected by the four units of the College of Arts and Sciences, 88.3% included clear descriptions of course content and general purpose, and 57.5% included enough information so that student learning objectives could be inferred. Of School of Business and Economics syllabi 68.8% were this specific; natural sciences, 62.0%; humanities, 57.9%; and social sciences, 48.2%. Assessable student learning outcomes were specified in 39 or 14.7% of the 266. These figures give us useful benchmarks and also suggest that a little encouragement and modeling could bring most faculty to the desired level of specificity about assessable learning outcomes.

The Congress Assessment Support Committee and General Education Committee plan to help faculty to build on existing program goals and proposed GE hallmarks and to work through departments to develop core course objectives which are assessable and which can eventually become part of all course syllabi. The basis for these changes is the assumption that the primary beneficiaries of consistent and informative course descriptions are our students.

The General Education hallmarks and examples of learning outcomes statements developed by the General Education Committee will provide templates for the core objectives for courses which will apply towards the GE requirements. These objectives will be stated in the syllabi of courses proposed for GE inclusion. The hallmarks are broad enough to encompass a range of learning objectives and will be supplemented with examples of appropriate and assessable student learning outcomes and student performances or assignments.

Finally, the Assessment Support Committee will work with individual departments undergoing program review to formulate core course objectives in terms of assessable student learning outcomes.

4.2. Reviewing and revising General Education

The Congress GE Committee has proposed a revision of the UH Hilo General Education program that brings us into compliance with WASC guidelines that General Education should cross all four years of the baccalaureate experience, that the GE program should include a minimum of 45 credits, and that student learning should be documented in terms of assessable outcomes.

The committee is proposing the following changes to the current General Education program:

- that all degree-granting colleges at UH Hilo share the same core of basic requirements (written communication, quantitative reasoning, and world cultures), area requirements (humanities, social sciences, and natural and computational sciences), and graduation requirements (writing intensive and Hawai'i-Asia-Pacific); the hallmarks defining the courses that fulfill these requirements; and the GE course review process
- that UH Hilo explicitly include the graduation requirements for writing intensive coursework and study of Hawaiian or Asian or Pacific cultures or natural environments as components of "General Education" along with the basic and area requirements
- that hallmarks (to be referred to by the Hawaiian term "mākia") be used to identify those courses that would fulfill the basic requirements, the area requirements, and the Hawaii/Asia/Pacific requirement
- that UH Hilo require that two out of the three writing intensive courses required for graduation be at the upper-division
- that UH Hilo require two courses in the study of Hawai'i, Asia, or the Pacific, and that at least one be at the upper-division
- that upper-division as well as lower-division courses be eligible to apply towards the area requirements, provided the courses meet the area mākia.
- that the university adopt a syllabus review system to ensure that individual courses offered as "General Education" courses do in fact meet the appropriate mākia .

The hallmarks or mākia will be stated as course input criteria in the university catalog. Examples of statements of assessable student learning outcomes and evidence of student mastery will be provided on the General Education webpage.

The schedule for review, approval, and implementation is:

2003-2004: develop hallmarks and an approval process, get feedback and approval fromUH Hilo faculty, UH system colleagues, and UH Hilo administration. If appropriate, the revised GE program will be submitted for UH BOR approval.

2004-2005: develop assessment plan, train faculty, and begin implementation.

2005-2006: new GE program in place. The program will undergo continual refining as assessment findings indicate.

The faculty of UH Hilo will decide, in Spring 2004, whether or not to approve the proposed hallmarks and review process. Some modifications to the proposal will be probably be negotiated, but a sound and common General Education program is essential to a "collective vision of educational attainment"at UH Hilo.

4.3. Providing developmental support for students: The Department of Mathematics

A substantial number of students entering UH Hilo are not prepared for college-level mathematics work in natural science and business courses. Enough faculty believe that the university should not provide "remedial" courses for such students that a college algebra course has not been offered for several years and a proposed tutorial version of an existing pre-calculus course was rejected by the CAS senate in January 2002.

In Fall 2000, the Math department instituted, on an experimental basis, the Compass Placement Examination as an optional placement instrument. Almost half of those who took the exam between Fall 2000 and Spring 2001 performed at below the level required for the pre-calculus course. Students performing at below pre-calculus levels are recommended to take courses at the Hawaiʻi Community College. The placement recommendations have not been enforced, however, and many students opted to attempt pre-calculus regardless. Some of these students have managed to complete the course successfully, but others have not, and instructors have been forced to adapt presentation and pacing to less prepared students. Those students who chose to take courses at the community college are obliged to pay additional tuition, a practice which faculty and administrators agreed needed to be rectified.

In 2002-03, the mathematics department undertook a thorough program review. Their external reviewer made a number of recommendations, including one that addressed the responsibility of the department to respond to the long-felt need for developmental math strategies, especially for students who hoped to major in science. The reviewer supported the department's own findings, including the need for core course objectives.

In the summer of 2003, the VCAA asked an ad hoc remediation committee to devise ways of meeting remediation needs in English and mathematics. The committee recommended a multi-pronged approach for math skills, including expansion of the Math Lab, use of student tutors and teaching assistants, cooperation with Hawaiʻi Community College, and on-line and computer-based instruction.

In August 2003, the interim Dean of CAS called together an ad hoc Math Needs Group comprised of the entire math faculty, the dean, assistant dean, the dean of CCECS, the division chairs of Natural Sciences and Social Sciences, the director of the School of Business, and the Coordinator of General Advising. The group was to design a coordinated approach to meeting the math needs of students. Meeting twice a month over the fall semester, the group designed a coordinated approach to the math challenge. Math faculty has taken primary responsibility for curriculum and placement, the two deans worked on on-line

and computer-based instruction, the assistant dean worked with Hawaii Community College to enable UH Hilo students to take prerequisite math courses there.

Math faculty have also undertaken to develop core learning goals for each course, upper-division as well as lower division, with the goal of Fall 2004 implementation. This meshes with the efforts of the General Education Committee with respect to hallmarks for all GE courses (sec. 4.3): the department also helped to formulate the proposed new hallmarks for the Quantitative Reasoning requirements for General Education.

By December 2003, substantial progress had been made in supporting student math skills.

- Beginning in Spring 2004, students who placed into college algebra will be allowed to register for a special section of pre-calculus. The section will meet four times a week, and the instructor will be assisted carefully selected advanced Math majors who will attend all class sessions and meet weekly with the instructor . One assistant will earn Math 496 credits and one will be funded through the CAS Dean's office as part of the student teaching assistant pilot program (also discussed in section 3.6).
- The Math department has submitted a course proposal for Math 103, College Algebra, to the CAS Faculty Senate with the intent of offering it in Fall 2004. It is not clear whether the proposal will be approved by the senate.
- The Math Placement exam requirement and course prerequisites will be enforced beginning in Fall 2004. This would allow the General Advising office, admissions, and others to inform students of the requirement, the Math faculty to plan for an adequate number of supplemental math sections, Hawai'i Community College to set up additional sections of math to accommodate UH Hilo students, and the university to make alternative self-study options available to students.
- The Math Placement exam is being calibrated for more valid results. Results are also being stated so that UH Hilo students can readily enroll in Hawai'i Community College Math courses. The possibility remains that the Compass exam will be replaced by a more appropriate instrument and that the Math department will delegate responsibility for administration of the exam to a support unit.
- The Math Tutoring Lab is being actively promoted as a resource to all students; a full-page notice about this service is included in the current course schedule.

In Spring 2004 the CAS Senate will decide whether or not to approve the revitalized Math 103 (college algebra) course. The natural sciences division will decide whether or not to fund the student teaching assistant for the experimental section of Math 104G (precalculus) and to continue funding needed for the Math Lab and for the Math Placement Exam. Administration or natural sciences faculty will decide whether funds will be made available to defray the tuition costs of students required to take Hawai'i Community College courses. Affirmative decisions will mean that there is general acknowledgement that the university should provide courses and other support to students under-prepared in critical areas like mathematics.

4.4. Assessing student learning

Appendix F.1 summarizes assessment activities of UH Hilo academic programs as of December 2003. Comparison of this table with the December 2002 indicates some modest improvement, but we have not yet achieved the high level of activity to which we aspired in the October 2001 proposal for institutional review. Twenty-two of 29 degree-granting programs offer capstone courses such as senior seminars, and six currently use a standardized achievement test, but few mine these for information on student learning that could be used for curricular review and revision. As performance indicators—including student performance on standardized tests and program completion—come to be used consistently in planning and budgeting, more faculty will begin to think in terms of using such evidence. The institution will also need to consider measures of program effectiveness that reflect the quality of student learning in qualitative as well as quantitative terms.

The Congress Assessment Support Committee has been charged with providing training to faculty on formulating assessable student learning outcomes and plans to work with programs undergoing review, so that eventually all programs will have developed such statements. As the WASC site team has pointed out, external experts may be helpful in educating faculty about the benefits to students of systematic assessment and in training them in the practices of assessment and continuous improvements.

Several programs provide assessment models from which other programs can learn, and some programs new to assessment are making notable progress.

4.4.1. Student learning assessment in the Department of Computer Science. The UH Hilo program with the most tightly integrated system of assessment and continuous improvement is the Computer Science program. Computer science seniors and some juniors have taken the Major Field Test in Computer Science (MFT) each spring since 1988. In spring 2003, 29 students took the test, the largest group to date. This group included 10 students from the second distance-delivered cohort of the BS degree program.

In 14 of 16 testings, UH Hilo computer science majors have performed above national norms on the test overall and on each of the sub-areas. The 2003 test-takers achieved a mean score of 157, placing them in the 68th percentile of the 2002 student scores used by ETS this year as the national normative data. This places UH Hilo in the 79th percentile of the 24 institutional scores making up the new national norm. (Details of testing will be available in the site team room in March 2004.)

In addition to testing, Computer Science majors develop portfolios in their junior and senior years that not only track their learning experience but are also used when graduates apply for positions. The individual work and team projects documented in these portfolios have reportedly contributed to the high rate of employment in the field enjoyed by CS graduates.

Such sustained student success is the result of equally sustained efforts of the department faculty in the face of fiscal and staffing constraints that would have daunted the less committed. Faculty respond not only to the results of standardized testing but also to student

needs and aspirations revealed in frequent advising conferences, course-related conferencing, and student performance.

Service to other departments is a major element of the department's mission. CS 100 is a general education course, while CS 101 and 102 offer reality-based problem-solving courses to students preparing to major in the natural sciences and in business. The department is designing a similar 100-level course for majors in the social sciences. These courses have grown out of collaboration with colleagues in these areas.

As well serving students on the UH Hilo campus, the department has offered the bachelor's program via distributed learning to three cohorts of students statewide. Testifying to the effectiveness of the department's adaptation of materials and instruction to distributed learning formats, the performance of the distance-learning students in the MFT has been comparable to that of on-site students..

In addition to constant up-dating of content and addition of learning aids, recent initiatives completed by the department that address student needs directly and indirectly affecting learning and retention to graduation are the following:

- The department's National Science Foundation grant under the Computer Science, Engineering, Mathematics Scholarship(CSEMS) program supports up to 15 academically qualified and financially needy computer science majors through their four years of study.
- The CSEMS grant also funds student tutors CS 150 and CS 151 students.
- The department configured an additional computer lab, rebuilding many of the machines that were present, tying this facility into the departmental network, and upgrading all software. With the new lab facility, the CS 150 class (Introduction to Computer Science) has been able to schedule eight closed lab sessions per semester, and lab activities have been written for these sessions.
- The department tracks its graduates through email correspondence and news of their success is shared routinely with current majors.
- A practice module has been created for CS101 to provide automated feedback about the student's attempts to write syntactically correct SQL code. Likewise, self-scoring modules were added to some assignments so students could improve their skills during class instead of simply turning in faulty assignments.
- The CS 460-461 Software Engineering team project combined both on-campus and distance ed students, and resulted in a software package for evaluation in a distance learning environment for technical courses, including both an authoring/grading tool and a student-side test-taking tool. The student Computer Science Club was revitalized and now is meeting regularly. Computer Science Club members, under the supervision of several faculty, have assembled, configured, and carried out preliminary testing on a parallel computing cluster.

A complete list of current computer science academic initiatives is in Appendix G.

4.4.2. The School of Business and Economics. The School of Business and Economics (to become the College of Business and Economics in January 2004) has been working for some years towards accreditation by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). Their self study report has been submitted, and the site visit will occur in 2004-2005. The mission statement and statement of student learning outcomes of the business administration program, the result of long and intense discussion among faculty permeate their entire curriculum.

Recent and current results of the Educational Testing Service Major Field Test (MFT) in quantitative business analysis and the MFT in Economics place majors above the national norm. In 1998-1999 and in July 2000-January 2001, business majors placed at or slightly above the national norm; in January 2000, July 2001, and January 2002, they placed significantly above it. Though the national norm rose substantially in July 2002 and January 2003, UH Hilo seniors maintained their lead. Economics majors have performed with similar success: beginning below the national norm in June 1997, they have stayed well above the norm in June 1998, 1999, 2001, and 2002, rising to 20 points above the national norm in June 2003. (Details of these tests will be available in the site team room.)

In addition to the standardized test, majors in business administration must also complete a capstone course, MGT 490. They may elect to also complete an internship course, BUS 400 or MGT 491, Small Business Consulting. Integrative oral and written group assignments and case reports are being assessed by faculty teams.

 4.4.3. The Division of Natural Sciences. Natural science departments have always required senior majors to complete senior seminars and to present their findings to audiences comprised of faculty and classmates. The entire UH Hilo community is invited to these presentations.

Departments maintain complete collections of these presentations and the evaluations completed by professors and others in attendance. In general departments do not systematically review evaluations, but informal discussion about the presentations and student performance in general has resulted in incremental changes in the seminar format and in curriculum. In Fall 2003, the Department of Physics and Astronomy established a Thesis Review Committee consisting of three faculty members who review all senior thesis proposals and, when they are completed, review the final project report. Presentations from Fall 2003 natural science senior seminars will be available for review in the site team room in Spring 2004.

With appropriate guidance, these natural science departments can use the data that they have been gathering to document student learning outcomes and to consider how they might improve the learning opportunities they are offering their students.

Department of Nursing. The nursing program has been engaged in systematic student learning assessment since 2001. The primary means of program assessment have been the capstone course, Nursing 457, and the NCLEX, a national exam which program graduates must pass in order to practice nursing. The capstone course combines integration of program

content with student involvement in community projects. In Spring 2002, all full-time faculty reviewed students' capstone reports for the purpose of determining how well program goals are being met.

The first-time NCLEX pass rate for program graduates is the hallmark by which the educational effectiveness is gauged by the National League of Nursing, the commission that accredits the nursing program. (NLCEX results will be provided in the site team room in March 2004.) Pass rates below the national norm of 87% prompted the department to contract with Educational Resources Inc. for a testing program integrated into the non-clinical major courses. The program, implemented for the first time in Fall 2000 and renewed each academic year, measures student performance in standardized exams against national norms and familiarizes students with the computer format of the NCLEX. It provides students with instant feedback and individualized instruction on specific areas of difficulty. NCLEX practice is offered as part of the senior year curriculum.

In previous years, a significant number of admitted students were poor readers and writers or had not achieved a satisfactory level of understanding of the biological sciences. After struggling unsuccessfully to provide and to find tutorials and other support for such students, the department changed admissions standards so that effective 2003-2004, students admitted to the program must have earned a minimum 2.7 in natural science courses with no grade below a C and have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.7. A formal student survey led the program reschedule courses to accommodate students, and informal input from students has led to such innovations as the new RN mentorship program. In Spring 2004 and subsequent spring semester, each senior nursing student will work with an registered nurse for 45 hours spread over two weeks, earning one semester credit.

4.4.4. The Division of Social Sciences. As Appendix F.1 shows, most social science departments offer senior seminars and internships, but most do not systematically use the student work produced in these integrative experiences for assessment information or curricular revision.
The Department of Psychology is moving in this direction, and the Department of Education has undertaken assessment wholeheartedly.

The Department of Psychology does not answer to accrediting commissions other than WASC, but faculty recognize the importance of assessing student learning and responding through curricular change. In Spring 2003 the department gave the ETS Major Field Test (MFT) in Psychology to a hundred of its majors, including students in the introductory course, the statistics and methods course, and the practica. Their purpose was to identify the best predictors of scores in the MFT from among the number of psychology courses taken, cumulative g.p.a., or class standing. They found that the best predictor was overall g.p.a., that class standing was not significant, and most informative, that the number of psychology courses taken was not a clear predictor. A committee has been formed to respond to this last finding by designing appropriate curricular changes. Revision of the undergraduate curriculum is expected to take some time, for the faculty are intensely involved in preparing for the new master's program in counseling psychology, scheduled to admit its first students in Fall 2004. (Details of the testing will be provided in the site team room in March 2004.)

Department of Education. The department generates ample documentation of student learning, practices multiple means of assessment in individual courses and in the Teacher Education Program (TEP), and annually reviews and revises its curriculum and teaching practices. In the TEP, the professional portfolio has served for many years as culminating documentation of each student's learning experiences. The *Field Experience Handbook* is revised and updated each summer in response to solicited and voluntary feedback from students, cooperating teachers, and others involved in the field experience.

Before being admitted to the TEP, students must pass the Praxis tests in reading, writing, and math at levels set by the Hawaiʻi Teacher Standards Board (HSTB), the state of Hawaii's accrediting commission for teacher education. While students in the secondary TEP have always had to pass Praxis content area exams at DOE-set levels, they had not been required by the department to pass these prior to admission to the program. Effective this academic year, they must pass these content exams as a prerequisite to admission to the secondary TEP. The department will begin compiling Praxis results in Spring 2004. It is clear that results would be very useful to the mathematics, English, and other content departments in assessing the educational effectiveness of their own programs.

The department is currently undergoing a self study for reaffirmation of accreditation by the HSTB. In September faculty underwent training provided by INTASC (Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium), an experience that has given faculty clearly defined performance goals. The faculty have drawn together energetically to develop an assessment system for the TEP. The new system will be holistic, continuing the program practice of multiple means of assessment with multiple reviewers and of student professional portfolios, and will be marked by defined assessment at entry, at intermediate checkpoints, and at exit.

Alumni had not been tracked in a systematic way by the department until Fall 2003, when the department chair and another faculty undertook a survey of the professional disposition of recent TEP graduates with respect to professional skills, attitude, and behavior. This is part of the department's self study for accreditation, but the aim is to develop an annual, sustainable follow-up system. Principals, colleagues, and students of these graduates will eventually be included in the survey. A similar survey of M.Ed. graduates is planned.

4.4.5. The Division of Humanities. It is expected that humanities departments undergoing program review in 2003-2004 will move into student learning assessment. The Department of Art has been using student portfolios for many years, and their work is critiqued regularly by art faculty. Each year, their work is displayed to the campus in exhibitions in the campus center. Each semester, the work of an art major is selected for display in the CAS Dean's office; the student receives a semester tuition waiver. The department is notable for maintaining contact with graduates; in Fall 2003, it is sponsoring an alumni art show at the campus center and library. (Art student work will be available for review in the site team room in March 2004.)

The Department of English administered the ETS Major Field Test in Literature in English in Spring 2001 and Spring 2002. (Details of the testing will be provided in the site team room in March 2004.) Results of the test and review of the test questions led the department to

conclude that the test did not reflect the curriculum and that an introduction to the major and a capstone course would be more effective means of both preparing students for careers or graduate study and of assessing student learning. In Fall 2003 student work from the new introduction to the major course will be reviewed by several department faculty for the dual purpose of identifying students who should be encouraged to continue in the major and determining how the course might better prepare students for further literary study. In Spring 2005, the capstone course will be offered for the first time. (Representative work by English majors will be included in the institutional portfolio in the site team room in March 2004.)

In Fall 2001, English majors completed a survey that queried them on such factors as areas of interest and perceptions of level of challenge and faculty expectations. Effective Fall 2003, new requirements are in place for the literature track that reflect student preferences expressed in the survey and in student-faculty conferences. Ethnic and gender-focused literature is now a separate category which students can choose in developing their major In Spring 2004, a new course in the backgrounds of western literature will be offered, a response to faculty observation that students were inadequately prepared in classic literature, mythology, and the Bible.

4.4.6. Ka ʻUla O Keʻelikōlani College of Hawaiian Language. The college is beginning to assess the educational effectiveness of its programs. The capstone course of the baccalaureate program, Haws 497, embodies the college mission of strengthening and preserving the Hawaiian language, "the fiber that holds our culture together," in the university and the community. While the format of the course varies from year to year, student work is always situated in the community and directed towards enhancing language acquisition and use. Other capstone activities include working with the non-print media division of the ʻAha Punana Leo, where videos and other graphic media are used for instruction and training in Hawaiian language immersion schools across the state.

The college has learned to be attentive to data collection and analysis, a by-product of the need to get federal grants to support its academic and teaching certificate programs. Four years ago the college undertook a student survey of its own design, which addressed student satisfaction with the academic program and on co-curricular student satisfaction, and the results of which led to some curricular changes. One result of the survey findings and informal student input has been an arrangement with the Title III program, which has assigned an educational specialist half-time to the college to work with Hawaiian language students in academic advising and general academic support. The specialist is also developing another student survey and compiling CHL-related data from the UH Hilo and UH system institutional research offices and from the UH Hilo Alumni Office.

Responding to student input, faculty participated in a two-day FORMAT workshop in the summer of 2003, learning how to accommodate to different learning styles among students. In another step to improve teaching and learning, the college has begun a project with its consortium partner the 'Aha Punana Leo, Inc. and the National Indian Education Association to assess the progress of elementary and high school students in its main laboratory school site. The data from this study will be used to support Native American language and culture-based learning on a national basis. It will also support baseline information from which to implement changes in the College's B.A. program

4.5. Achieving a "collective view of educational attainment": The History Department

The faculty of the Department of History have developed a strong collective sense of mission and work deliberately and collaboratively to increase the educational effectiveness of their General Education courses and major program. They have also enjoyed notable improvements in both performance indicators and the quality of student work. History faculty cultivate three attributes:

- a strong and unified understanding of and commitment to the mission of the program
- a high level of faculty involvement and interaction with colleagues and with students
- a steady focus on continuous curricular review

The department's two-semester World Civilizations course is the foundation of the world cultures requirement in the General Education program. History majors can choose specialties in East Asia, Europe, Pacific, or American history. Its faculty are trained in the history of East Asia (modern Japan); Europe (eighteenth-century Russia), Pacific (Melanesia), and the United States (nineteenth century). The incumbent has been chair of the department since 1990, guiding the department through a difficult period of transition from 1998 to 2003 from the first generation of UH Hilo historians to the current generation. There are presently four tenured or tenurable faculty.

Between 1998 and 2003, the number of majors increased from 28 to 48, the number of graduates per year ranging between nine and 11, and upper-division FTE taught between 15 and 30. Lower-division FTE has been steadily increasing. History has among the largest average enrollments at UH Hilo: average enrollment in lower-division courses for the last four years has been 48.5, while enrollments in upper-division courses have averaged 20. Initially, the department was able to respond to increased demand for History 151-152 by raising enrollment caps. In Fall 2003, the department and the Dean agreed that an fifth tenure-track position was justified to maintain an adequate number of sections of these world civilizations courses. This position will be filled in Fall 2004.

Mission and collegiality. The department's mission and learning goals were formulated in Fall 2001, when the major curriculum was restructured. Informally, the department chair characterizes the program's mission in these words: "To nurture our students and hold them to high, achievable standards so that they develop strong, basic knowledge of history, strong communication abilities, and strong analytical thinking skills."

Recent departmental achievements have been possible because of a very high level of faculty interaction. In addition to impromptu discussions, the department regularly meets every two weeks, or weekly as needed. During advising week at the beginning of each semester, they meet for a four-hour session to preview the semester and establish priorities, for example, development of assessment instruments, curriculum issues, and departmental policies.

Focus on student learning. Since Fall 2001, the department has articulated an emphasis on teaching in all courses.

- Faculty are sensitive to different learning styles. In addition to traditional lecture and discussion formats, faculty incorporate student group work, use of primary and literary course readings, Web/internet technology for teaching and learning, audiovisual materials, course websites, access to professors through email and office hours. Now that the department is fully staffed, it will begin planning non-quantitative methods of teaching assessment
- Faculty are aware of the "Seven Best Practices in Undergraduate Teaching" and the UH Hilo results in the National Survey of Student Engagement. One consequence of this awareness is the department decision to explicitly stress oral and written communication and critical thinking as cornerstones of the curriculum. Course syllabi include these as course objectives or emphases
- Syllabi are informative and effectively organized, with clear statements of course goals. Syllabi for multi-section World Cultures courses History 151 and 152 state the department's common objectives for those courses
- The department is designing its own departmental webpage to provide students with timely and detailed information on the department, the faculty, and the program.

Student support continues outside the classroom. Faculty serve as advisors to the History Club and the national history honor society, Phi Alpha Theta. Students with 12 credits of history, a 3.2 GPA in those history courses, and a 3.0 overall GPA are invited to join Phi Alpha Theta at an annual induction event. Activities of the History Club and Phi Alpha Theta have included tutoring, "Hollywood Does History", and social events.

History majors have their own study and resource room near department offices. The room offers two computers with Internet access; a networked printer, history texts and reference works, a bulletin board, white board, a refrigerator and microwave. While modest in size, the room has become an important gathering place for students and the department believes that it is promoting intellectual interaction and friendships as well as providing a healthy academic atmosphere.

Assessment of student learning. History faculty are involved in student learning assessment on several fronts.

- Participation by the department chair in the 2001 AAC&U conference in General Education. Materials and information from this conference have informed development of assessment tools for both General Education courses and the major.
- Faculty commitment to assessment of the General Education courses. In 2002-2003, the department developed a pre- and post-testing instrument for both History 151 and 152. Full implementation began this year. Although meaningful results will take up to five years to generate, the design of the instrument has generated much fruitful discussion about the goals and emphases of these two important courses.

- Faculty commitment to student learning assessment in the major. Majors must complete two capstone courses: the historiography course (Hist 490), required of all majors; and either a thesis (Hist 491) or an internship (Hist 492).
- Students will present the results of their study at a symposium in Spring 2004.
- The department is developing a 300-level methods course that will provide students with basic skills and the department with baseline assessment information. A learning portfolio will include student work from the methods course, a 300-level course, and the capstone paper. The portfolio will be reviewed by department faculty.

Examples of the work of History majors will be available in the site team room in March 2004.

Chapter 5. Integrating, Evaluating, and Looking to the Future

5.1. The accreditation process: What we are achieving and what we are learning

UH Hilo began the institutional review process in spring 2000 well aware of long-term problems in student learning assessment, student retention, program review, budgeting and planning, and operating procedures, but without a clear vision of how to address these. The WASC standards, criteria for review, and guidelines have given the university models of good practice in all of these areas.

In the intervening years, the university has adopted many of these practices, adapting them to the special conditions of the campus and the characteristics of its faculty and its students. The process has been reasonably smooth and well integrated. The findings and recommendations of the preliminary self study of 2000-2001 became the basis for the goals of the proposal for institutional review, listed in Appendix A. They are also echoed in the goals, objectives, and strategies of the 2002-2010 Strategic Plan. The 2002-2003 preparatory review showed that the university was moving vigorously towards those goals, developing practices and procedures which we have continued to refine and add to and which we believe are sustainable and well adapted to campus realities.

Achievements. As of December 2003, as this report has shown, we have met most of our goals for institutional review. The revision of the Strategic Plan was the first; its integration into the accreditation process adds to the achievement.

Program review is now rooted in the culture. The academic program review process now includes evidence of student learning and external reviewers, and the administration is responding actively to the first cohort of reviews (sec. 2.2.1). The new academic program review process is now moving into the second cohort of programs, under the leadership of the VCAA and the Congress Assessment Support Committee (sec. 2.2.1). The Mookini Library has joined the Office for Student Affairs (OSA) in having established a program review system (sec. 2.2.2, 2.2.3). The Office of Technology and Distance Learning reviews resources and reports annually to the chancellor (sec. 2.2.4). Emerging from the program review process is an administrative policy of using performance indicators in determining allocation of resources, being implemented in CAS and CAFNRM as of December 2003 and expected to be in place in all units by Summer 2004 (sec. 2.4).

The Congress General Education Committee has developed a set of hallmarks, a combination of course features and learning outcomes, for all GE categories, as well as a review process by which individual courses can be approved (sec. 4.2.). The proposal also brings UH Hilo's GE program into compliance with WASC expectations with respect to number of credits, inclusion of upper-division courses, and assessable learning goals. In Spring 2004, the hallmarks and review process will go to the faculty for review and, following some revision, eventual approval and implementation.

The university's website has become more student-friendly, with well-developed Student Affairs and Academic sections and more academic departments adding attractive and informative websites. Students can readily access complete university-related information at the website, download forms, and register online (sec. 2.3.6). The chancellor and all three vice chancellors maintain webpages. On the VCAA webpage can be found links to current university documents and procedures of interest to the academic community. Other web resources for the university community include the institutional web portfolio and the teaching resources website. Workshops on developing and maintaining departmental webpages in Fall 2003 have attracted many participants and will be repeated in Spring 2004 (sec. 3.1).

The UH Hilo Institutional Researcher has analyzed, reported, and posted the results of previous surveys and current surveys and is actively involved in making data available to administrators and to a range of campus committees. The results of the Graduating Student Survey (GSS), the Incoming Student Survey (ISS), and the National Survey of Student Engagement have been widely disseminated, and the GSS and ISS in particular are enabling us to focus on specific student issues. The NSSE has been offered three times since Spring 2001, so that solid benchmarks are now established against which we can measure our progress is student engagement. Although much information is available on the IRO website, faculty, staff, and administration need to be educated about the usefulness of such data in improving both educational and institutional effectiveness. Chapter 3 and section 4.4 discuss campus use of data.

In Fall 2003, the VCAA's committee on faculty development and teaching sponsored four workshops on instructional technology and developed a pilot plan to encourage departments to involve qualified senior majors as teaching assistants. The committee has a set of realistic and low-cost goals for Spring 2004 and thereafter (sec.3.6).

Challenges. Major challenges persist, however, which may jeopardize the institution's ability to fulfill its mission with distinction. First among these is the persistent and growing gap between our aspirations for educational quality and the means by which to realize them. This fiscal year, the university was again able to preserve the budgets of the academic units, but at a cost to the other units greater than in previous years, a cost that cannot be sustained and that will soon damage the entire institution.

As section 2.4 shows, we are trying to address this challenge in a number of ways—better planning, data- and outcomes-based budgeting and allocation, increasing tuition, considering user fees, and working for formula-based allocations from the UH system. We understand that greater ingenuity and energy are needed, especially because the state itself is just emerging from a decade-long recession with many areas besides higher education competing for state resources.

Faculty and administration will need to tap external sources. While a number of UH Hilo programs have succeeded in getting federal grants that promote college education in the sciences for under-represented groups (sec. 3.2), many more will need to become entrepreneurial on behalf of students of all backgrounds and educational aspirations.

A second challenge continues to be engaging and training faculty in practices of student learning assessment and continuous improvement. UH Hilo faculty demonstrate their commitment to students and to quality teaching in many ways, but there has been resistance to adopting "externally imposed" practices. Virtually all departments will need to reformulate their program goals into assessable student learning outcomes, and most need to develop student assessment strategies (Appendix F.1). More faculty need to be persuaded to include these learning goals in course syllabi (sec. 4.1).

There are, however, signs of a gradual transformation. A number of programs are already using assessment results for continuous improvement (sec. 4.4). In highlighting these programs in this report and in rewarding their gains in student learning and in student majors, the university encourages other programs to adopt similar strategies. As the university moves toward performance indicators and other documentation of program effectiveness (sec. 2.4), faculty will gradually learn to think in terms of accountability and student performance. The university will also need to invest some of its already strained resources in educating faculty to think of assessment as a first step in strengthening programs, attracting and retaining students, and producing more capable and successful graduates.

The problems acknowledged in this report are real just as are the progress made and remedies proposed. We cannot claim to have solved all the difficulties, but we have recognized our major deficiencies and have set in progress the mechanisms to address them.

UH Hilo is becoming an institution in which all processes, all units, all faculty, staff, and administrators are centered on students and student learning. This change will entail greater emphasis on assessment as well as a shift in focus from what the institution or the faculty want to what is good for the student. Such a cultural change cannot be brought about quickly. Consistent and persistent emphasis over the coming decade is needed to bring about these changes.

5.2. Next Steps for 2004-2010

Here we list priority recommendations for institutional actions to be taken as we enter the period 2004-2010, a period that coincides with that of our Strategic Plan. The objectives combine some of our own recommendations from our preparatory review and those of WASC with actions needed to manage the recent changes in the context described in the present report.

Organizing to provide and support student learning
1. The university should continue to increase efforts to increase extramural funding and endowment funding, and fee-based certificate and training programs to support teaching and learning as well as faculty research (PrepReview Rec. 3.g), and should consider bringing user fees and tuitions into closer alignment with costs.
2. The university should foster careful management of resources, including long-range planning and prioritizing at the department level, using program review guidelines and performance indicators.

3. The university should continue to refine the process for the approval of new programs, non-academic as well as academic, including university-level review of new directions in light of our mission and goals (PrepReview Rec. 4.a)
4. When the annual budget is posted, it should be accompanied by a statement from the administration outlining the fiscal constraints under which the budget was prepared and the rationale for the various allocations.
5. Continue to support positions to establish a user-friendly advising system for students, to maintain accurate student records, and to structure the system so that the staff of the Office for Student Affairs, faculty advisors, and administrators will have ready access to accurate and comprehensive student data.
6. The university should continue include assessment as a line item to support and expand accreditation efforts, program review, major program and General Education assessment, and training in assessment practices.
7. The campus Academic Assessment Plan must be updated periodically to include provisions for changes in the way funds are allocated, as well as provisions for the assessment of student learning in distributed learning and graduate programs.

Becoming a learning organization
8. The university should enhance support for teaching excellence, innovation, and curricular development in university publications, budgeting, and personnel review (PrepReview Rec.2.a.5).
9. The university should promote the sharing of data and other information, and all units must provide and respond to hard evidence in university processes such as budget allocation, program review and new program approval (PrepReview Rec. 4.d).
10. The university should systematically and frequently solicit input from all stakeholders (employers, community, alumni, students) regarding program quality and level of preparation of graduates of all programs (PrepReview Rec. 4g).
12. The university must continue to expand institutional research capabilities to all units to ensure that planning and budgeting at all levels will continue to be based on performance and on evidence of student performance and student needs.

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5.2.3. Striving for a collective vision of educational attainment.
13. The university should continue to monitor NSSE results to identify areas where improvement is needed: higher expectations, more demanding reading and writing assignments, closer interaction between faculty and students (PrepReview Rec. 2.a.4), and focus faculty development on those areas.
14. The faculty should adopt a General Education program that includes meaningful hallmarks for courses applied to GE categories and that encourages faculty to describe these courses in terms of assessable student learning outcomes.
15. The university should commit to providing adequate and appropriate developmental support to admitted students to help them to succeed academically.
16. Faculty should be trained in student learning assessment and continuous program improvement (PrepReview Rec. 2.d.3), drawing on campus expertise (PrepReview Rec. 2.a.2) and on external experts with demonstrated success in engaging faculty in student learning assessment and effective teaching practices.
17. All syllabi should clearly state assessable learning objectives, and colleges and divisions should maintain complete collections of current syllabi.