

**University of Hawai'i at Hilo**  
**Report on the Preparatory Review**  
**2001-2003**

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This report, appendices, and the institutional web portfolio can be found at  
<http://www.uhh.hawaii.edu/~accred>

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## Introduction

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### The Institution

The University of Hawai‘i at Hilo is a comprehensive university located in the city of Hilo and on the island of Hawai‘i, the southernmost and largest island in the Hawaiian archipelago. Organized in 1970 as part of the University of Hawai‘i’s ten-campus system of public higher education, UH Hilo is one of three public, baccalaureate-degree-granting institutions in the state. It is the only accredited, four-year educational institution on the island of Hawai‘i.

Our primary mission is to “offer high quality undergraduate liberal arts and professional programs.” In addition, the university aspires to

- A vibrant, enriched campus life
- Leadership in studies of Hawaiian, East Asian, Pacific, and indigenous cultures
- Leadership in studies of the tropical environment
- Active learning in research, internships, and community service
- Scholarship in theoretical and applied areas
- Commitment to community development

UH Hilo is located in the state’s most rural county and the one with the highest concentrations of intact ecosystems and of Native Hawaiians. Our commitment to the concept of *aloha* is evident in the treatment of this land and its people as well as in our outreach to the world. Our unique strengths in respectful use of the island as a research laboratory and in the study and preservation of cultures are evident in programs across the university.

UH Hilo is comprised of three 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 Continuing Education and Community Service (CCECS). In addition to bachelor’s degrees in 29 programs, we offer two master’s programs, with two more approved. Ka Haka ‘Ula O Ke‘elikōlani College of Hawaiian Language offers the nation’s first BA and first graduate program in an indigenous language.

### Changes in Context since the October 2001 Proposal

In the past year, UH Hilo has seen some important changes. In Summer 2001 UH system President Evan Dobbelle initiated a process whereby all campuses act more collaboratively in ensuring effective and equitable allocation and use of resources. To this end, all campuses, including UH Hilo, have revised their strategic plans and have contributed to a new system strategic plan. Accreditation review is also becoming a system matter: UH Hilo and the other two baccalaureate campuses of the system have been conducting institutional reviews on the same 2001-2004 accreditation schedule.

We have also continued to grow in human resources. Our Fall 2002 FTE faculty count is 188, up from 177 in Fall 2001. Headcount enrollment continues a five-year upward trend, rising from 2,639 in Fall 1997 to 3,065 in Fall 2002.

UH Hilo's [October 2001 proposal](#) to WASC listed primary outcomes for the 2001-2004 institutional review which were based on the results and recommendations of the campus's 2000-2001 self study. By December 2001, when the proposal was approved, the institution had already begun moving toward these goals, and by December 2002, it had made substantial progress in all areas, particularly with respect to institutional capacity. [Appendix D](#) summarizes the status of the proposed outcomes.

The most important advances in institutional capacity since 2001 are these:

- The UH Hilo Strategic Plan has undergone revision by the UH Hilo Faculty Congress Strategic Plan Review Committee and has been approved by the Congress and the Board of Regents. The process provides a model for future strategic plan reviews in terms of breadth and level of participation, communication with the campus and larger community, and strong focus on the educational mission of the university. The goals, objectives, and strategies of the revised [2002-2010 plan](#) show the influence of the findings and recommendations of the 2000-2001 self study and are strongly focused on ensuring that UH Hilo fulfills its primary mission of delivering “high-quality undergraduate education in liberal arts and professional programs.”
- The university has invested additional responsibility for academic policy and planning and academic assessment in the faculty [Congress](#), along with the task of working with the administration to make university-level budgeting and planning more transparent and systematic and to increase faculty participation.
- The university has a revised [academic program review policy](#) and a new campus [academic assessment plan](#) in place. The revised policy puts student learning assessment and continuous improvement at the heart of the review process, establishes feedback loops, describes an external review process in detail, and integrates the results of review in institutional planning processes.
- Our newly appointed [institutional researcher](#) has compiled and analyzed much student data and made it available to the university community, and is beginning to train faculty to use data effectively.

At the same time, we have been directly addressing our goals for educational effectiveness. Before we undertook the institutional review, few academic departments were assessing student learning outcomes. To encourage departments to begin assessment planning, the Self Study Assessment Committee and the office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs began funding assessment projects in Fall 2000. Assessment is now a line item in the campus budget. A number of assessment workshops have been held for faculty and staff, including a March 2002 series by Peter Ewell of NCHEMS. More are scheduled. The UH Hilo Faculty Congress has established new standing committees on [Assessment Support](#), [Budget](#), and [General Education](#).

## The Preparatory Review Report and the Institutional Portfolio.

This report has been prepared by the [Accreditation Steering Committee](#), building on the work of the larger committees that conducted the 2000-2001 self study.<sup>1</sup> The report and has been reviewed by many in the campus community. A reflective essay responds to each of the four 2001 WASC standards, and the concluding essay reviews compliance with the standards and assesses UH Hilo's readiness for the educational effectiveness review. We refer to the WASC Criteria for Review throughout the report, citing the relevant criterion by "CFR" followed by its number. [Appendix A](#) summaries our compliance with the criteria; [Appendix B](#), the numerous recommendations that have emerged in the course of the preparatory review; [Appendix C](#), our responses to previous WASC recommendations. Other appendices report the status of our proposed outcomes and provide the required data tables and links to stipulated policies.

The [institutional portfolio](#) is posted at <http://www.uhh.hawaii.edu/~accred>. It is a work in progress, meant to serve the university community over the long term as well as to document the assertions of the preparatory review report and, later, the report on educational effectiveness. This report cites many documents and policies on the UH Hilo and UH system websites. Materials available only in hardcopy will be on file in the site team work room in March 2003 and March 2004.

For the purposes of this report, the primary sources in the institutional portfolio are:

- The [2000-2001 Self Study Report](#). The report provides detailed descriptions of many academic programs, including those supporting student research, field work, and internships; co-curricular and support programs; physical and fiscal resources; the Library; and academic technology/distance learning facilities.
- The [2002-2010 Strategic Plan](#). The plan sets six goals for the university, together with objectives, strategies, and performance indicators. Many of the recommendations emerging from the preparatory review coincide with the objectives and strategies developed for the Plan.
- [Data tables](#) and a complete set of [stipulated policies](#), as required by WASC.
- Data and survey reports posted on the website of the UH Hilo [Office of Institutional Research](#). These include the results of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), graduating senior surveys, entering student Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) surveys, the Spring 2002 student preference survey, the 2001-2002 faculty Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) survey, and compilations of data of use in planning and program review.

The web portfolio also contains copies of [correspondence between UH Hilo and WASC](#), and many documents and reports prepared by the various units of the university.

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<sup>1</sup> [Appendix H](#) lists the members of the current and past accreditation committees.

## **Standard One: Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives**

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In the past two years, the university has revised its strategic plan while reaffirming and clarifying its mission. We are developing more participatory and transparent procedures that will be sustainable regardless of turnovers in administration. At the same time, we remain constantly on the alert for ways in which we might align our planning and activities more closely with our mission, and more vigorously safeguard the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of our students, faculty and staff.

These improvements grow out of a foundation of policies, procedures, and institutional structures that comply with the expectations of the Commission with respect to institutional purpose and institutional integrity. Documents upon which we base our evaluation can be accessed at the [Standard One](#) page of our web portfolio.

### **1.1. General Compliance**

**1.1.1. Institutional Purposes.** The UH Hilo mission statement is properly the foundation of all university planning and central to discussions of university direction. The primary mission of the university—“to offer high quality undergraduate liberal arts and professional programs”—has been reaffirmed, after careful scrutiny, in the current review of the campus Strategic Plan. It is our practice to require that all new programs and program changes be linked to the university’s mission. The mission statement is given in full and is in a prominent position in the university catalog (p. 11) and other university publications. While there is some disagreement about priorities within the mission, it can be said that campus activities, financial resources, and physical space are, in general, managed in the service of the University mission (CFR 1.1).

The goals of the revised UH Hilo [Strategic Plan](#) are focused strongly on fulfilling our primary mission, and the plan includes performance indicators to measure our success in meeting these goals (CFR 1.2).

The university’s commitment to focus its resources on its mission ensures that sufficient resources are provided to meet the academic and support needs of students. During periods of declining allocations from the state to the university, highest priority has been given to preserving our academic programs, in particular by making sure that we support faculty. Thus, the [FY 03 UH Hilo budget](#) shows a 14% decrease since the previous budget in the combined budgets of the offices of the Chancellor and three Vice Chancellors and a 1% increase in the combined budgets of the three colleges and the library.

**1.1.2. Integrity.** UH Hilo conducts its affairs in accordance with standard principles of academic freedom, integrity in pursuit of truth, integrity with respect to persons, and integrity in institutional relations and operations. It complies with the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act. Research is conducted in accordance with nationally established standards and is overseen by the UH system [Office of Research Services](#). The University of Hawai‘i System also

has an Environmental Health and Safety Office that must approve projects involving the use of potentially hazardous materials. The institutional portfolio includes all stipulated policies relating to institutional integrity in its many manifestations, including academic freedom, professional ethics, student rights and responsibilities, and grievance procedures (CFR 1.4, 1.8).

Like all state universities, UH Hilo has experienced some legislative and community pressures over the years with regard to “substantive decisions of educational functions by political, religious, corporate, or other external bodies outside the institution’s own governance arrangements,” but the issue has been addressed by the recent granting of autonomy to the university system (CFR 1.6).

Accurate and current information is available to students and the public that clearly describes the academic programs and all aspects of student life (CFR 1.7, 2.12). The [college catalog](#), revised annually, published every July, and available in print and on the web, provides students with all essential information about academic requirements and policies, co-curricular services and activities, and the academic programs of each department and college. In response to past WASC recommendations, the catalog includes the current university mission statement and reports on our damp tropical climate and our diverse student population.

In Fall 2002, the Division of Student Affairs revised the Code of Conduct, the policy and philosophical basis for the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo student judicial system (CFR 1.7). The new policy reflects contemporary perspectives on student rights and responsibilities for students as participating members of the campus community.

The numerous policies and procedures affecting students are made available through handbooks published by various campus units and organizations. The newly revised *UH Hilo Student Handbook* and *Student Athlete Handbook* were distributed in Fall 2002, and the current *Student Directory* facilitates interaction. Specialized brochures provide information to students and faculty on such matters as sexual harassment and Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action policies. Copies are maintained in the institutional portfolio. Some handbooks are also available on the [UH Hilo website](#), along with much other information. The university website also expedites such processes as application, registration, and library use.

The university also communicates to the public through its ongoing advertising and [publications program](#). Because UH Hilo is just beginning to collect and analyze information systematically on student placement and achievements after graduation, we do not advertise success or failure in these areas; rather, our marketing material focuses on the satisfaction of individual graduates and on the cost effectiveness of attending UH Hilo. Copies of such material are available for review in the WASC site team room.

Diversity is welcomed in all aspects of university life (CFR1.5). The university can rightfully assert that it is developing “an environment that supports the aspirations of all persons.” UH Hilo has a student population that is unusually diverse in ethnicity, age, socioeconomic background, and preparedness for college-level academic work. Data tables [1.3](#), [1.4](#), [2.2](#) and [2.3](#) presents the ethnic make-up and gender distribution of UH Hilo’s student population. Table 1.2 presents the preparation/selectivity levels of entering students. Aspects of the socioeconomic

diversity of our students are discussed below, in section [2.2.3](#) and in section [2.2.5](#) of this report. Grants that allow the university to provide additional academic support for students from underrepresented groups are described below, section [2.1.3](#). The 2001-2002 [Self Study Report](#), section 2.10.3, describes the numerous co-curricular programs that support students of diverse backgrounds and needs; section 2.4.5 describes the integration of diversity issues into the curriculum.

The ethnic composition of the faculty reflects mainland proportions rather than those of Hawai‘i. Caucasians comprise 20.5 % of the state’s population and Hawaiians and part-Hawaiians, 22.1%. [Table 4.1](#) shows that from Fall 1997 through Fall 2001, the number of Caucasian full time faculty at UH Hilo rose from 97 to 114 (68.8% to 70.8%), while the number of Hawaiian and part-Hawaiian faculty rose from 7 to 10, and that of Asian faculty declined from 33 to 31. Gender ratios continue to favor males, ranging from 67.4% male in Fall 1997 to 64.6% in Fall 2001. As [Table 4.3](#) indicates, the ethnic composition of university staff reflects the state’s distribution more closely: In Fall 2001, 24.4% were Caucasian, 15.8% were Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian, and 54.8% were Asian.

Student surveys document that campus life promotes the understanding and acceptance of diversity. For example, on the [NSSE 2001 and 2002](#), UH Hilo freshmen and seniors alike scored significantly above the national norm on incidence of serious conversations with students of a race or ethnicity different from their own and on increased understanding of people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds. Seniors rated UH Hilo above the national norm on the extent to which it encourages contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds. Results from the [annual Graduating Senior Report](#) and the [College Student Experience Questionnaire \(CSEQ\)](#) confirm these results.

[Ka Haka ‘Ula O Ke‘elikōlani](#) operates as the state’s mandated Hawaiian language college, providing statewide support for those choosing K-20 education through the medium of Hawaiian, an official language of the state. The college has begun to make Hawaiian language instruction available worldwide through distributed learning technology.

Since Summer 2001, the [English Language Institute](#) has served students for whom English is not a native language and whose performance in the ELI’s English Proficiency Test and the English Department’s Writing Placement Examination indicate that additional training in English is necessary for these students to succeed in college-level work in an English-speaking environment (CFR 1.5, 2.10). In Fall 2002, the ELI is offering 14 courses at three levels.

[Relations with the Commission](#) have been open and honest (CFR 1.9). UH Hilo has been a full partner in the [accreditation process](#) and has made sincere efforts to ensure that this extended self study produces an accurate institutional portrayal that will provide the basis for continuous self-assessment and improvement over the coming years. The [current catalog](#) states that “The University of Hawai‘i at Hilo is accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges” and provides accurate contact information (p. 11). UH Hilo brochures also note the University’s accreditation status. Documents relating to UH Hilo’s accreditation are available at the University’s Library.

UH Hilo acknowledges the necessity to notify the Commission prior to instituting substantive changes. Four substantive change proposals have been forwarded to the Commission in the last six years, and all have been approved: the MA in Hawaiian Language and Literature, the Master's degree in Education, the MA in China-US Relations, and the MA in Counseling Psychology. WASC has informed UH Hilo that its provision of distance education courses complies with WASC substantive change policy.

## 1.2. Recent Progress

**1.2.1. Planning Strategically, Openly, and Inclusively.** The year-long review and revision of the strategic plan represents the changes that are going on in the institution with respect to planning, decision-making, and ensuring the centrality of institutional purposes. Those involved in the process have demonstrated openness and inclusiveness, a commitment to ensuring congruence between mission and priorities, a willingness to adopt new ways of addressing old issues, and the ability of different interests to work together productively (CFR 1.1, 1.8, 3.8) .

Review of the [1997-2007 Strategic Plan](#) was one of the outcomes proposed to WASC by the institution for the 2001-2004 review. The new system president gave the project additional impetus by announcing that all campuses in the system should revisit their strategic plans as part of a system-wide effort. The [UH Hilo Faculty Congress Strategic Plan Review Committee](#) began its deliberations in October 2001. Its 15 members included representatives from all major campus units, a student representative, and a community member. The committee canvassed the campus community, alumni, and Big Island community in two surveys and three open forums, and a Hilo meeting and a Kona meeting were sponsored by the system-wide strategic plan review committee. The campus community was invited to make additional comments and suggestions on a draft posted on the Congress website.

On May 8, 2002, the Congress approved the major goals, objectives, and strategies of the revised UH Hilo *Strategic Plan* —the mission continuing to be delivery of “high quality undergraduate liberal arts and programs”—and approved the full plan on October 25, 2002. The Board of Regents followed suit on November 22, 2002.

In late May, the vice chancellor for academic affairs invited the campus community to submit proposals for strategic initiatives that would implement the strategic goals. Department chairs, division chairs, deans, and other unit directors, faculty governance chairs, and administrators were invited to submit proposals, which were reviewed in two open meetings spread over two days. [Nineteen strategic initiatives](#) were produced, ranging from additional undergraduate majors and new graduate programs to a UH Hilo-UH Mānoa Center for Cross-Cultural and Diversity Studies. The initiatives were posted on the university website throughout the summer, and remain there for ongoing review and discussion.

When the Strategic Plan Review Committee reconvened in the Fall, it concluded that the next step was for the university to “develop and maintain campus wide processes for sifting, prioritizing, and balancing program initiatives to ensure that UH Hilo ultimately brings to the Board of Regents the best programs to fulfill our mission and strategic goals.” While the system's Executive Policy E5.201 lays out a program approval process, it has not been

rigorously implemented. The committee urged that the approval process at UH Hilo include more explicit requirements for hard data and for prioritizing. The Congress has charged its Academic Policy Committee with devising such a process.

**1.2. Ensuring Sustainability.** After some years in which key positions were held by interim appointments, UH Hilo has filled all senior positions with permanent and qualified individuals. These include three vice chancellors, in [academic affairs](#), [student affairs](#), and [administrative affairs](#), respectively; deans of the College of Arts and Sciences; the College of Agricultural, Forestry, and Natural Resource Management; and the College of Continuing Education and Community Service; and a faculty director of the Ka Haka ‘Ula O Ke‘elikōlani College of Hawaiian Language. Each of these positions has clearly defined responsibilities with a performance evaluation mechanism addressing accountability. However, in practice, there have been continuing conflicts between the incumbents—whoever these have been—of the offices of vice chancellor of academic affairs and the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Presently, the dean of CAS is evaluated with input from CAS faculty. It would be appropriate to develop procedures for systematic evaluation of administrators by faculty, staff, and other administrators (CF 1.3).

During the extended period of administrative instability, the campus suffered from a lack of written campus procedures and stable lines of communication. For example, until the 2000-2001 self study, the program review process languished. Departments had little motivation to conduct meaningful self studies, for there was no requirement that administrators respond to review reports, and none did. There was no requirement that programs document the quality of student learning or use resources creatively, and so the notion took hold that the number of majors, rather than the quality of the program, would be rewarded. During the self study, the campus Assessment Committee revised the program review policy and guidelines, which were approved by the Congress in spring 2002 and immediately thereafter implemented by the administration for the next round of reviews, that of the Natural Sciences division and the CAFNRM.(CFR 2.7, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7).

The 2000-2001 self study awakened the campus to the need to set up sustainable procedures which were transparent, inclusive and subject to continuous improvement and by which the campus could sustain itself regardless of changes in administration (3.8). As has become apparent in the Strategic Plan review, the [evolving budget process](#), and the implementation of the new [academic program review policy](#) and [academic assessment plan](#), administrators and faculty through their Congress are working hard together to develop appropriate and workable guidelines and practices. Much work remains to be done.

## **Standard Two**

### **Achieving Educational Objectives through Core Functions**

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The University of Hawai‘i at Hilo meets those criteria of Standard Two that address scholarship and support for student learning, and those aspects of teaching and learning having to do with organization, standards, nomenclature and content of major programs and general education; and appropriateness of program content and curriculum structure. Research activity is increasing,

and infrastructure is improving. Support for student learning is well-developed and strongly based on demonstrated student needs.

Since the appointment of the institutional researcher in February 2001, much information has become available to faculty and administration concerning student engagement, preferences, and satisfaction, and about faculty attitudes and expectations. To comply fully with the intent of Standard Two, we must involve many more faculty and programs in systematic assessment, planning, and program improvement and provide solid and authentic evidence of student learning. Standing committees, policies and procedures are now in place to promote and sustain the full engagement of faculty. Most of the documents upon which we base our evaluation are accessible from the [Standard Two](#) page of our web portfolio; the rest will be in the site team work room.

## **2.1. General Compliance**

**2.1.1. Teaching and Learning.** UH Hilo’s academic programs adhere to national norms with respect to content, curricular structure, and qualifications of faculty (CFR 2.1). ([Table 3.1](#) lists the degrees granted for the past five years.) [Table 6.1](#) shows that the FTE student/FTE faculty ratio has ranged between 12.94 and 13.23 over the past five years, and that most classes have 20 or fewer students. These figures indicate that there are sufficient faculty to deliver the courses leading to each certificate and degree. The improved program review process will provide more information of the faculty needs of specific departments.

The institution ensures program currency and effectiveness through a well-articulated process which begins with departmental initiatives, proceeds through the faculty governance bodies to the dean, and then, in the case of new programs, to the vice chancellor for academic affairs, the chancellor, the UH System Academic Affairs Council, and the Board of Regents. New graduate programs have been reviewed by the UH System Graduate Council. A description of processes for seeking approval for new courses, course modifications, new programs, and program modifications is found in the College of Arts and Sciences [Faculty Handbook](#) (CFR 2.1). As is pointed out in section [1.2.1](#), a more rigorous campus process is required for prioritization as well as approval of new programs.

UH Hilo’s expectations for learning and student attainment are consistent with those of other baccalaureate and master’s institutions across the nation (CFR 2.3). Broad expectations including admissions requirements, transfer policies, General Education, certificate, major, and graduation requirements are described in the college catalog, on the campus website, and in departmental and university brochures. [Tables 1.1](#) and [1.2](#) show, respectively, acceptance rates and level of preparation of new freshmen.

Hands-on learning and student-faculty collaboration in research are emphasized in a number of our programs with special focus on “the remarkable geographic and sociocultural features of Hawai‘i as an island-learning laboratory” (CFR 2.5). The Minority Biomedical Research Support (MBRS) program, the Minority Agriculture Research Student Support (MARSS) program, the Hale Kuamo‘o Hawaiian Language Center, the Marine Option Program, and many other such

programs are described in the 2000-2001 [Self Study Report](#), section 2.3, as are internships, community-based projects, and field work opportunities.

**2.1.2. Scholarship and creative activity.** At UH Hilo, research and scholarship are actively promoted, not only through official expectations for tenure and promotion, but also through recent structural changes that ensure greater autonomy for the management of grants and disbursement of funds (CFR 2.8). As of May 2000 the chancellor of UH Hilo was given signing authority over grants and contracts. She appointed a faculty research council and established a faculty coordinator of research, to serve under the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

The Hilo office of the Research Corporation of the University of Hawai‘I (RCUH) administers grants and provides faculty with information about grant opportunities. Approximately 86% of the “indirect costs” money generated by extramural grants is returned to UH Hilo to be used to support research activities at the Hilo campus. The monies are allocated into four major areas: UH Hilo administration; programs of the principal investigators who generated the indirect costs money; management fees; and UH Hilo Research Council grant programs. The Research Council’s intramural grants cover travel awards, seed money grants, and grants for scholarly activity in academic fields that usually have little chance for extramural funding. The Council funds scholarship and research, whether or not they involve active collaboration between faculty and students, in order to enrich teaching and inspire student learning. Grants are awarded for scholarly and/or creative activities as well as training grants to enhance instructional capabilities.

The presence of an on-site RCUH satellite office appears to be fostering greater research activity. Growth in extramural grants is shown in [Table 5.3](#) and management of funds is described below, in section [3.1.3](#). In 2000, UH Hilo initiated the designation of Hawai‘i as an EPSCoR state (Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research, funded by the National Science Foundation). The program funds projects that will develop a strong science and technology infrastructure in the state of Hawai‘i.

The UH system’s [University Research Council](#) supports faculty research through intramural grants and support for travel to professional meetings; allocates funds from external agencies, and advises the university administration on all aspects of research in the system. It also recognizes outstanding faculty research through annual Excellence in Research awards to individual faculty.

**2.1.3. Support for Student Learning** from external grants has increased recently. The highly successful Minority Biomedical Research Support program has, since 1973, brought together faculty from several disciplines with students from underrepresented minority groups and produced numerous research projects, many culminating in presentations and articles. In addition, a number of new student-centered grants are being administered at UH Hilo, most directly addressing the needs of students of underrepresented groups (CFR 1.5). These are:

- A \$1.5 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”
- A \$600,000 [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.

- A \$2.4 million STEM grant, 2002-2007, through the NSF Tribal Colleges and Universities Program, to increase Native Hawaiian student participation in science and math disciplines by enculturating 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.
- Annual \$150,000 grants (2001-2002, 2002-2003, renewable) to the College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Natural Resource Management from the USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service to enhance undergraduate agriculture education for students from under-represented ethnic groups.
- A \$200,000 NSF CSEMS grant to the Computer Science department, beginning Fall 2003, which provides 15 four-year scholarships to majors.

Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani College of Hawaiian Language has been active in this area. Recent major grants include:

- Multiple grants totaling \$918,000, 1999-2006, with 'Aha Pūnana Leo, Inc. to develop curricula, teacher development, and indigenous outreach.
- An annual \$397,788 Title III grant under the Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students, 2002-2007 in support of the Kahuawaiola Teacher Education Program.
- A \$305,640 grant from the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, 2000-2003, to support the Master's program in Hawaiian Language and Literature.
- A \$1,234,840 Native Hawaiian and Curriculum Development grant, 1998-2001, to support the Kahuawaiola program.

The [Division of Student Affairs](#) works with students of diverse backgrounds and special needs, and also provides all students with academic support through the Advising Center and Career Center; and co-curricular support through Student Life, Intramural Athletics, and student organizations (CFR 1.5, 2.13). Discussion of the support provided to students by the [Library](#) and the Office of Technology and Distance Learning is found in section 3.2 and in the 2000-2001 *Self Study Report*, section 2.9 (CFR 2.13). The university keeps students informed of academic matters, policies, and procedures through numerous publications and the university website; these are described in more detail above in section 1.2. and in the 2000-2001 *Self Study Report*, section 3.15.4.

The university addresses the diverse needs of its student population through a variety of enrichment programs and services ranging from the Hawaiian Leadership Development Program through International Student Affairs and the Women's Center (CFR 1.5, 2.13). A complete list of these programs is found in the 2000-2001 *Self Study Report*, section 2.10.

The university has an academic advising system for all students, whether or not they have declared majors, and a comprehensive orientation program for new and transfer students (CFR 2.12). These are described in the 2000-2001 *Self Study Report*, section 2.10. Both advising and

orientation programs involve faculty as well as Student Affairs staff and peer counselors. The quality of advising depends upon the commitment of individual faculty, and it varies from poor to excellent. The university recognizes the need to improve the overall quality of academic advising. The General Advising Center regularly posts announcements and reminders to faculty and provides advising handbooks and other materials. The chancellor has recently established an award recognizing outstanding faculty advisors. In Fall 2002, a campuswide committee was formed by the vice chancellor for academic affairs to identify ways in which academic advising can be made more vital and effective.

Transfer students participate in summer advising and in fall and spring orientation programs, and they are subject to the same placement requirements as other students (CFR 2.14). Transfer students join other new students who have not yet taken English 100, or the equivalent, in taking the UH Hilo Writing Placement Exam; similarly, they are expected to complete the Math Placement Exam before taking any Math courses. Transfer students who are not native speakers of English must also complete the English Proficiency Test administered by the UH Hilo English Language Institute (ELI); students are then placed in appropriate ELI or UH Hilo English courses. An indication of the university's success in working with transfer students is that in Fall 2002, UH Hilo had the second highest number of National Student Exchange participants of any university in the nation.

However, we can do better. Transfer student transcripts are not formally evaluated before they enroll for the first time at UH Hilo. This has caused confusion and delay for students, especially when they attempt to register for courses for which there are prerequisites. The university should complete evaluation of transfer credits soon after students apply for admission so that students can make informed decisions about whether or not to come to the university.

The university offers the standard array of facilities and services for students, including residence halls and apartments near campus, PC labs, health services and counseling, a Women's Center, a Career Center, intramural sports, a student fitness center and other sports facilities. The Campus Center is headquarters for the UH Hilo Student Association and numerous student organizations as well as the campus newspaper *Ke Kalaheea* and literary magazine *Kanilehua*. Students can join faculty and members of the community in the numerous activities of the UH Hilo Theater, a major performing arts educational and cultural center on Hawai'i Island. Details on co-curricular programs are found in the 2000-2001 [Self Study Report](#), section 3.7.

## **2.2. Recent Progress**

**2.2.1. Making General Education Work.** Our General Education goals are listed in the college [catalog](#) (p. 45) and on the UH Hilo [website](#). The [GE basic and area requirements](#) include 40 credits of lower-division courses divided among written communication (3 credits), quantitative skills (3 credits), World Cultures (6 credits), Humanities (9 credits), Social Sciences (9 credits), and Natural Sciences (10 credits). To graduate, students must also complete three Writing Intensive (WI) courses, of which at least one must be at the upper division, and at least one course which focuses on Hawai'i, Asia, or the Pacific (HAP). The HAP course may also count towards the GE core requirements, as can up to two of the WI courses. Students can therefore

graduate with as few as 40 GE credits and 3 upper-division WI credits, below the WASC GE guideline of 45 credits (CFR 2.2, 4.6, 4.7).

The core program is also flawed in that there is no requirement that a particular course must contribute significantly to any of the General Education goals. The area requirements can be met by any lower-division course in the College of Arts and Sciences, and any lower-division course in the College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Natural Resource Management that has been approved for GE by the Congress. There is presently no requirement that syllabi for these should indicate which GE goals are being pursued in the course nor how student learning outcomes will be assessed.

With respect to WASC's guideline that GE include upper-division courses, UH Hilo takes the position that in practice GE skills and knowledge are promoted throughout the curriculum and that certain of these are emphasized as students move through their major. This claim is currently based on three sources. The first source is the Self Study Educational Programs Committee's Fall 2000 survey of 29 UH Hilo academic units concerning course requirements and program expectations. Included were questions about communication and mathematical skills, but not critical thinking skills. The second source is the Graduating Senior Surveys conducted in 1999 and 2000. The third source is a preliminary survey of syllabi of upper-division courses, conducted by the Self Study Assessment Committee in Spring 2001. A thorough syllabus survey cannot be done until the university regularly collects course syllabi and requires that syllabi should specify GE goals, program goals, and course objectives. In any case, the findings of the three surveys concur that in upper-division courses at CAS, skills in writing, oral communication, library research, and critical thinking are fostered widely, but that mathematical skills are developed in very few.

It is clear that our General Education program demands thorough investigation and much more comprehensive data, and that revision is in order.

- The Congress [General Education Committee](#) is charged with reviewing the GE program, including the matter of upper-division requirements, and with designing a plan for assessing the effectiveness of GE courses, beginning with the basic requirements in writing, quantitative reasoning, and world cultures.
- The Congress [Assessment Support Committee](#) is looking into means of developing a more comprehensive collection of syllabi, from which it can be determined how well our major programs continue to develop GE skills and knowledge.
- The Writing Intensive Committee has completed a preliminary review of the WI program and is following up on the recommendations of its [May 2001 report](#).

**2.2.2. Engaging Departments in Student Learning Assessment.** [Table 3.2](#) shows that cohort graduation at six years has ranged between 24.7% (for the Fall 1991 cohort) and 30.8% (for the Fall 1994 cohort). There is little evidence that programs other than those undergoing self studies for special accreditation or for program review attend to such data nor that they are seeking other kinds of performance data (CFR 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.6, 4.7).

From Fall 2000 through Spring 2002, the Self Study Assessment Committee promoted program assessment through workshops and campus newsletter articles. With funding from the office of the vice chancellor for academic affairs, the committee administered grants for both new and ongoing assessment projects. In 2000-2001, grants went to eleven departments or programs and totaled \$44,497; the following year, with less money available, nine grants were awarded, totaling \$13,795. In Fall 2000 and Fall 2001, the committee assembled inventories of program assessment attitudes and practices. By October 2002, virtually all academic units had developed statements of mission and broad learning goals; these statements are posted at the [university website](#). However, the statements are of uneven quality, and some are five years old. During the program review cycle, all mission and goal statements are being updated and recast into appropriate form.

The Fall 2002 inventory of departmental assessment showed that 19 departments have capstone courses, senior seminars, or similar culminating experiences, although not all of them require these for majors. [Table 7.1](#) lists standardized or campus-wide testing by departments, and [Table 7.2](#) summarizes all current student learning assessment activities in all departments. Several departments require or offer a standardized test to seniors. Student portfolios are required in five programs. Senior presentations or performances are required in eight programs. Biology, Marine Science, and CAFRNM maintain collections of published articles in which students have served as co-authors. The Art Department maintains a collection of student art in the form of slides, and the director of the Liberal Arts-Drama program keeps videotapes of senior performances. The English Department has a complete collection of all student essays completed for the Writing Placement Examination, but has not attempted to analyze them. Departments are not presently expected to maintain collections of authentic student work from year to year.

The challenge of helping departments to formulate meaningful mission statements and goals and to translate these into assessable student learning outcomes and assessment plans has been assigned to the standing Assessment Support Committee of the Congress. In the meantime, four departments can serve as models to other departments. The [Departments of Computer Science](#), Baccalaureate Nursing, Education, and the [School of Business and Economics](#) (SOBE) have detailed learning objectives and assessment plans, and several more departments are at work on developing objectives and plans. Majors in the Computer Science Department, and the School of Business and Economics take the Educational Testing Service's Major Field Test in their field, and results have been used by these departments over the years to identify areas where improvement is needed. Students applying for admission to the Teacher Education Program (TEP) must complete the ETS Praxis tests in reading, writing, and math at levels set by the Hawai'i State Department of Education. Beginning in 2002-2003, students planning to become secondary school teachers must pass the Praxis content exam in their proposed area of teaching before they can be admitted to the TEP. Students in the Kahuawaiola Teacher Education Program must pass a language proficiency test in Hawaiian based on the standards of the Association of College Teachers of Foreign Language.

Revised academic program review policy and guidelines, approved by the UH Hilo Faculty Congress in January 2002, require departments to show how they translate their mission into assessable student learning objectives, and how their students are performing in terms of these

program objectives (CFR 2.7). The [IRO website](#) provides current statistical information required for the program review. Faculty attitudes toward assessment are discussed below in section [4.2.5](#).

**2.2.3. Listening to What Student Surveys Are Telling Us.** We are just beginning to attend to the information available to us in student surveys (CFR 2.10, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.6). UH Hilo has administered a graduating senior survey and an entering student survey for some years. In 1999 the system Institutional Research Office published a report on the Spring 1999 UH Hilo Graduating Senior Survey. Since Spring 2001, such data have been converted into usable form, findings are beginning to be reported, and additional surveys are being conducted. The IRO's Spring 2002 [student preferences survey](#) and the [NSSE](#), administered in Spring 2001 and Spring 2002, are providing us with information that can help us to become a more learning-centered institution.

Fostering good teaching and active learning. UH Hilo students took part in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) for the first time in 2001 and again in 2002. Results indicate that UH Hilo has some serious deficits in good educational practices when compared to its peers (other public and private baccalaureate-liberal arts participants) and the national average. Some of these areas include academic rigor (defined by the nature of assignments), the amount of time students spend preparing for class, faculty-student interaction (particularly for freshmen), development of critical thinking skills, and information competency, defined in part by frequency in use of email and the Internet as educational tools.

According to the [survey](#), UH Hilo freshmen and seniors report encountering a number of specific good practices significantly less often or to a lesser degree than students in our peer institutions. Among those practices are the following:

- Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources
- Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships
- Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work
- Discussed grades or an assignment with an instructor
- Received prompt feedback from instructors on academic performance (written or oral)
- Quality of relationships with faculty members

On the other hand, our students face greater demands in their personal lives than other students. As a group they reported spending significantly more time than students from other universities on providing care for dependents, working for pay off campus, and commuting to class.

The faculty Congress has announced the results of the 2001 and 2002 NSSE to faculty, urging them to review the reports, which are posted on the university IRO website. In January 2003, a work session will engage faculty leaders and representatives in devising ways of involving faculty in addressing these deficiencies, and of inspiring individual faculty to reflect on their own teaching practices. The NSSE will be administered again in Spring 2003, and periodically thereafter. Our performance in 2001-2002 will, we expect, serve as the baseline against which faculty and students can measure future improvement.

Increasing Opportunities for Hands-On Learning and Internships. The [NSSE 2002](#) and the [Graduating Student Survey](#) of Spring 2002 indicated that, by the time they are seniors, half of UH Hilo graduating students have participated in an internship and/or service learning projects. According to the 2002 NSSE, this percentage (50%) is significantly above the mean percentage for other baccalaureate liberal-arts universities (42.6%) and the entire national sample (40%). Still, UH Hilo students want more service learning and internship opportunities: 93.5% of the respondents to the student preferences survey (“What Students Want”) said they wanted more internship and service learning opportunities; 70% were willing to see resources diverted from other areas to such opportunities.

According to the NSSE 2002, one-third of UH Hilo seniors said they had worked on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements. This percentage was the norm for baccalaureate-liberal arts institutions (33.6%) and significantly above the norm (24.5%) for the national sample. However, UH Hilo students want still more opportunities to participate in faculty research projects: 80.4% of the respondents of the student preferences survey indicated they wanted improvement in this area, and 54.4% were willing to see resources diverted to increase student opportunities to participate in faculty research.

Surveying Graduating Seniors and Alumni. Surveys also indicate that UH Hilo provides a good education to its students, but could do better. [Alumni](#) looking back on their UH Hilo educations gave UH Hilo very high marks overall, and of those who pursued further study in graduate or professional school, 36% said that 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 Spring 2002 [Graduating Student Report](#), a quarter (25%) of our graduating students said their primary objective in enrolling at UH Hilo was to get academic training for graduate or professional school, and 65.8% said (whatever their primary objective for enrolling was) that they planned to attend graduate or professional school (28.9% had already applied and been accepted).

Attending to the Good News. Because the purpose of institutional assessment is to improve continually the extent to which we accomplish our core mission—quality undergraduate education—we often miss the good news we are getting from our assessment instruments. In the [Summer 2001 Alumni Survey](#), nine out of ten respondents gave their overall undergraduate experience at UH Hilo either an excellent or good rating and nearly all (96%) were satisfied or very satisfied with the academic preparation they received at UH Hilo. In the alumni survey, respondents were encouraged to respond to several questions, one of which was, “In retrospect, what campus factors/conditions/programs/etc., do you think contributed most to your educational gains while at Hilo?” Most often cited were small classes, close interaction with faculty, and excellent teaching.

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 Hawai‘I Island. Of the Spring 2002 graduating class, almost half (47%) were low-income (according to the definition used by federal TRIO programs), 57% were first-generation college students, and 72% 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 5 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 Alumni Survey, 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. 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, must encourage faculty to interact with freshmen as much as they do with upper-division students, and must assign its best teachers to work with freshman students.

**2.2.4. Recruiting More Hawai‘i Students.** UH Hilo has not been as successful as it would like to be in reaching its primary service group: students from the state of Hawai‘i (CFR 2.10, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3). In Fall 2000 (figures are not yet available for 2001), only 1.8 percent of all Hawai‘i high school graduates that year enrolled at UH Hilo, down from 2.1 percent in 1997. On Hawai‘i Island itself, 8.5% of public high school graduates came to UH Hilo in 2000, versus 10.4 percent in 1997. Moreover, the number of public high school seniors throughout the state will decline somewhat between now and 2003 and then increase only modestly through 2008. The UH system Institutional Research Office predicts that the number of high school seniors entering UH Hilo directly after graduating will remain unchanged.

Over the past two years, UH Hilo has increased efforts to persuade Hawai‘i students who have been admitted to actually enroll. In Summer 2002 there were six “early-bird” orientation and registration sessions designed to attract students from the state of Hawai‘i, in particular Hawai‘i Island. In July 2002, the program attracted over 300 new students and allowed them to be advised and to register in mid-summer, thus increasing enrollment numbers and student satisfaction. The university now offers four-year Chancellor’s scholarships to Hawai‘i students who have demonstrated outstanding potential in their high school careers.

**2.2.5. Beginning to Analyze Persistence.** [Table 3.2](#) displays graduation and retention rates for Fall 1991 through Fall 1995 cohorts (CFR 2.10, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3). The graduation rate has ranged from 24.7% for the Fall 1991 cohort to 30.8% for the Fall 1994 cohort, while the percentage of students who took, or have taken, more than six years to graduate has ranged from 11.5% for the Fall 1992 cohort and 14.1% for the Fall 1991 cohort.

The diversity of UH Hilo’s student body adds to the challenge of understanding student attrition and creating successful student retention strategies (CFR 1.5). About four out of ten (40.8%) of our new students for Fall 2002 are first-time freshmen students, and six out of ten (59.2%) are transfer students. About seven out of ten (66.2%) students are residents of the state of Hawai‘i, and about 33.8 % are from the mainland U.S. or another country. The population of new

students from Hawai'i is very ethnically diverse (only 26.5% are Caucasian), about half of them are first generation college students and many have family household incomes that fall within the federal definition of low income. Verbal SAT scores for incoming resident students range from 260 to 790, averaging 493; Math SATs range from 240 to 800, averaging 509. SAT scores of non-resident students are similar: Verbal SATs range from 230 to 750, with a mean of 497; Math SATs range from 220 to 770, with a mean of 505. [Tables 1.3](#) and [1.4](#) displays admissions by gender and ethnicity, respectively, for Fall 1997 to Fall 2001. [Table 1.2](#) summarizes preparation and selectivity levels of entering students for the same period.

The demographics of non-resident students, however, are different from resident students. More than half (52.8%) are Caucasian, compared to only 26.5% of Hawai'i resident students. According to the Fall 2001 [CIRP Entering Freshman Survey](#), 45.1% of non-resident students have high school GPAs of at least A-compared to only 34.1% of Hawai'i resident students; about four out of ten (38.6%) are first generation college students, compared to 48.8% of Hawai'i resident students; and about six out of ten (59.4%) report parental incomes of at least \$50,000, compared to only 34.8% of Hawai'i resident students.

Both the CIRP Entering Freshman Survey and the [College Student Experience Questionnaire](#) (CSEQ) were administered during academic year 2001-2002. Information from these two surveys, the NSSE, and data in the UH Hilo Student Information System (SIS) are being used to study attrition patterns at UH Hilo. Presently various data mining techniques are being applied to identify psychographic as well as demographic variables which might be used to predict an entering freshman's likelihood of remaining in school. Variables addressing the same issues were added to the UH Hilo Entering Student Survey, which was administered to entering students Fall of 2002.

By Fall 2003, the institutional research director will have developed a reliable process to identify students at high risk of attrition as soon as they complete the entering student survey. This information will be shared with Student Affairs, the Colleges, and the Congress, so that early interventions can be made to help those students settle comfortably into the UH Hilo community with the services to help them succeed academically and socially. Information from the CSEQ will identify variables which can help predict students at risk at the rising sophomore and rising junior stages. Repeating the national surveys at three- to five-year intervals will help to preserve the currency and effectiveness of the predictive models.

**2.2.6. Using Data on Student Demographics and Persistence to Improve Programs.** Student Affairs and departmental efforts to improve student retention are described in more detail in the 2000-2001 [Self Study Report](#), section 3.4.1.2 and section 2.6. That these efforts are beginning to take effect is suggested by the fact that in Fall 2002, for the first time in several years, the freshman-to-sophomore retention level increased—by 6.1%, as of September 20, 2002. In Fall 2002, a campus-wide retention committee was formed by the vice chancellor for academic affairs. Among its charges is to find ways to involve more faculty more actively in the complex project of encouraging students to continue through graduation.

The university has been gathering information about, and from, students from many sources and from the surveys described above. ([Tables 1.1, 1.2, 1.3](#), and [1.4](#) supply demographic data; Table

[3.2](#), retention data.) Data from admissions applications and registration are compiled each semester and made available to faculty and administration for such processes as course scheduling and enrollment management and for program review (CFR 1.5, 2.10, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3). Data describe ethnicity, gender, age, residency as well as majors, grades, and high school background of first time students, transfer patterns, graduation and persistence rates, and degrees and certificates earned. Campus data are submitted to the UH system's Office of Planning and Policy, which compiles, organizes, and presents reports in both hard-copy and electronic formats.

The Division of Student Affairs uses the findings of these surveys and other studies to address many of the conditions which are known to make student life more successful academically and personally (CFR 2.10). Since summer 2000, Student Affairs has been acting on the recommendations made by various committees. Among the changes being implemented in 2002-2003 are phone and internet connections in the residence halls and modifications to the campus tuition waiver policy. Recent initiatives include:

- The Student Life Program, implemented in Fall 2000, which operates the greatly expanded new and transfer student orientation, now held each fall and spring. In addition, it coordinates service learning projects and student leadership development programs.
- In the summer of 2001, a director of student development was hired to coordinate retention efforts across Student Affairs.
- The Office of Academic Advising, created by the CAS Dean's office to improve advising for new and transfer students, is now housed in Student Affairs. The full-time professional staff member coordinates advising publications and materials for students, arranges general advising sessions, communicates regularly with faculty via the campus email on all advising matters, and presents advising workshops.
- The Office of University Disability Services was created in 2000, and is staffed by a full-time professional. This office works with disabled students to provide special accommodations needed to assure them academic and personal success.
- In Fall 2000, changes were made in financial aid policies to better help enrolled students to receive adequate aid.
- Improved on-campus housing will aid retention. Plans are underway to build new housing during the next five years. Until additional dormitory space becomes available, agreements are being made for accommodations in off-campus apartment complexes.
- A new Career Center has been created to assist students in career advising, internships, career exploration, and job placement.
- Student Affairs staff is now calling freshmen and sophomores who have not pre-registered for the Fall semester to encourage persistence.

Faculty initiatives to improve student retention include these:

- Individual departments are adapting their curriculum to new research emphases and new career fields. For example, CAFNRM has added a specialization in Agroecology and Environmental Quality, as well as supporting students from underrepresented groups through their USDA CSREES grant. English now offers majors a Writing track as well as a Literature track; and Biology now has two B.A. options, the Cell and Molecular track and the Ecology, Evolution, and Conservation track.

- The School of Business is actively seeking to become the second institution of higher learning in Hawai‘i to receive accreditation by the AACSB (American Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business-The International Association for Management Education).
- Sociology is continuing its successful Career Opportunities Seminar for Sociology majors.
- History is strengthening its History Club to allow students to interact with faculty outside of a formal classroom.
- Math has installed instructional and testing software in the Math Learning Laboratory and has instituted tutoring to assist students having problems with Mathematics.

## **Standard Three: Developing and Applying Resources and Organizational Structures to Ensure Sustainability**

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Over the years, the university has managed to grow modestly in enrollment, number of faculty, and support for student learning. Our operations and human, physical, fiscal, and information resources meet WASC expectations as set forth in Standard Three. Two new classroom and office buildings have been completed in the past year, and more are in the early planning stages. Student, faculty, and classroom access to computers, email, and the web have increased notably over the past three years, and five bachelor’s degree programs are now being delivered to sites across the state of Hawai‘i. Over the past several years, administrative staffing has increased, and it is now time to turn attention to increasing instructional and support staffing. The [Standard Three](#) webpage provides links to supporting documents.

Since 2000, much campus energy has been directed toward improving communication across the campus and establishing workable procedures and guidelines. Overall, governance participation has become more widespread throughout the University. Communication among governance organizations, faculty, and administration has improved. These improvements must now be followed by a more meaningful faculty governance role in decision-making, as well as much broader, more representative, and more active faculty participation in governance.

### **3.1. General Compliance**

**3.1.1. University Organization.** In the current organizational structure, UH Hilo’s chief executive officer is the chancellor, who presently serves as a senior vice president of the University of Hawai‘i system. As is apparent from the current organizational chart (Appendix G), the chancellor is assisted by a [vice chancellor for academic affairs](#), a [vice chancellor for administrative affairs](#), and a [vice chancellor for student affairs](#), as well as a fully developed structure of colleges and support units. A reorganization of the system is now being considered; if approved, it will centralize many functions in the system offices in Honolulu. The UH system is overseen by the Board of Regents, appointed by the Governor of the state of Hawai‘i, and invested with appropriate oversight and authority (CFR 3.8, 3.9, 2.10).

**3.1.2. Faculty and Staff.** A number of units, including the library and departments undergoing academic program review, are examining the question of whether staffing levels are adequate to

meet the university's objective of quality education. Campus figures suggest an overall level of adequacy, but specific lacks must be addressed (CFR 3.1).

In Fall 2001, the campus student-faculty ratio in lower-division courses was 16.49, in upper-division courses 9.65, and in graduate courses 9.43. In that semester, average class size was 24 in the lower division, 17 in the upper division, and 12 in graduate programs. [Table 6.1](#) gives overall ratios for the campus for Fall 1997-Fall 2001.

In Fall 2002, the university has 188.48 FTE teaching faculty, divided between 166 full-time faculty and 62 lecturers. ([Tables 4](#) and [4.1](#) give figures for Fall 1997-Fall 2001.) The doctorate is required of all new tenure-track hires, except those in certain fields, such as Art, where the terminal degree is a master's degree. Of fulltime, tenure-track faculty, 90.6 percent have doctorates (CFR 3.2).

The university presently has no campus-wide instructional staffing plan, a situation which should be rectified as the program review process becomes fully implemented. At present, each college makes its own plans, which are then passed on to the administration. In the College of Arts and Sciences, new position requests and position reallocations are made by the dean, after consultation with the assistants to the dean, the division chairs and the director of the School of Business and Economics, each of whom conveys departmental plans to the Dean's council. Requests are passed on to the administration.

Currently, the Office for Student Affairs has 29 professional staff under the leadership of a vice chancellor. The directors within the division possess the appropriate educational backgrounds and have an average of 13 years of work experience in student affairs. The comprehensive planning process outlined in the division's strategic plan will help staff align the mission of student affairs more closely to the UH Hilo Strategic Plan. The university library's professional staff consists of eight librarians with faculty status, all of whom hold masters' degrees from accredited programs, and the Director, who holds a doctorate. In addition, there are 11 classified staff positions and over 40 (10 FTE) student assistants. Under the supervision of the new director, the Library is currently analyzing usage and services data and comparing funding and staffing levels to national standards such as the 1995 Association of College and Research Libraries Standards for College Libraries and the Government Depository Council Guidelines, as well as to levels at peer and benchmark institutions. The analysis will inform the Library's strategic planning process.

The university now employs a full-time officer who ensures that the university's personnel procedures are consistent with EEO/AA regulations (CFR 3.3). The university seeks diversity in the hiring of faculty, administrators, and staff, but it is apparent that greater effort is needed to align faculty ethnic composition more closely with that of the larger community. In Fall 2001, the faculty was 6.2 % Hawaiian or Part Hawaiian, 19.3% East Asian, and 70.8% Caucasian ([Table 4.1](#)). Other groups represented include Filipino, Hispanic, and African American. In the state of Hawai'i, Hawaiians and Part Hawaiians comprise 22.1 % of the population, Caucasians 20.5%. Improvements can also be made in gender distribution: of full time faculty, 66.0% were male and 34.5 % female. In the recent UH system Faculty Worklife Survey, responses were delineated by ethnicity and gender; as an employer, the University wishes to know if these

factors impinge on the quality of faculty worklife. Administrators and staff are similarly diverse, though distributions differ somewhat.

Full time faculty are active in governance bodies and campus committees which establish and review university policies and in developing, maintaining, and evaluating academic programs (CFR 3.3). Faculty position descriptions and job announcements make it clear that faculty responsibilities include such university service as well as teaching, advising, and scholarship. All position descriptions and announcements are developed by departments and reviewed for completeness and consistency with university guidelines by division chairs, deans, the UH Hilo EEO/AA Officer, and the Human Resources Office.

The university maintains procedures for annual contract renewal (each of the first four years), application for tenure and promotion to the rank of associate professor (in the fifth year), application for promotion to the rank of full professor (five or more years after the previous promotion), and post-tenure review (every five years). Requirements are outlined for all UH faculty in the Agreement between the University of Hawai‘i Professional Assembly and the Board of Regents, and for UH Hilo faculty in UH Hilo’s [\*How to Complete the Application for Tenure and/or Promotion\*](#) and in the CAS [\*Faculty Handbook\*](#), available in hardcopy and online. At CAFNRM instructions are available to faculty on CD ROM (CFR 3.3).

To receive promotion and tenure, CAS and CHL faculty are expected to demonstrate excellence in teaching and in either research or service, and competence in the third area (CFR 2.9). The weighting of these areas varies from division to division within CAS. At CAFNRM, the three areas are given equal importance. In all three colleges, these reviews are undertaken by the appropriate faculty personnel committee and the unit chair within each faculty member’s appropriate unit and by the dean or director of the college before transmittal to the UH Hilo administration.

What counts as excellence in teaching? At CAFNRM, involving students in field and laboratory work and productive faculty-student collaboration on research are important indicators. In addition, the CAFNRM course evaluation form asks students to assess their professors on a range of specific good teaching practices. At CAS, expectations vary from division to division, though all division personnel committees consider the standardized CAS course evaluations useful. The evaluations are vaguely worded, however, and can identify only unusually weak or unusually strong teachers. They should be revised to provide more specific feedback to teachers that will help them to become better teachers. In the Humanities Division, faculty also document teaching excellence with reports from colleagues, syllabi, sample assignments, and examples of student work. In the School of Business and the Divisions of Social Sciences and Natural Sciences, considerable emphasis is placed on collaborative research projects between faculty and students, and in some programs, performance in standardized national examinations.

Teaching excellence is recognized through [annual teaching awards](#) announced at the May Commencement ceremony (CFR 3.4). These are the Board of Regents Award for Excellence in Teaching to a tenured or tenurable faculty and the UH Hilo Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Teaching to an instructor or lecturer. The Francis Davis Award for Excellence in Teaching is awarded in alternative years to a junior member of the tenure-track faculty; it is awarded at UH

Hilo in alternating years. Recently the university established an annual award recognizing excellence in academic advising. Faculty are nominated by colleagues and students and are judged on the basis of portfolios solicited by a committee of faculty who have previously received teaching awards.

**3.1.3. Fiscal Resources.** Since its inception in 1970 and despite recurring straitened economic conditions in the state, UH Hilo has managed to sustain itself on the limited resources it has received (CFR 3.5). Since 1998, modest programmatic expansion and growth in student numbers have been met with modest resource growth overall. In terms of both capital and operating budget resources, UH Hilo expects to be prepared for continued modest growth during the next few years. The only form of short- or long-term indebtedness we have at the present time is in our campus dormitory accounts. Under University policy, adequate reserves have been maintained to support these debt service requirements. We have sufficient funding allocated in current funds and reserves to provide adequate support and to maintain the educational quality of the institution through the end of fiscal year 2003 and to support carefully-planned growth in enrollment and programming thereafter. [Tables 5.3 through 5.7](#) summarize major aspects of the fiscal condition and processes of the university.

State Funding. State general funds and tuition/fees are UH Hilo's major revenue sources, with most of UH Hilo's operational funding coming from state general funds allocated by the legislature. Between 1999-2001, UH Hilo received major increases in our campus annual general fund budget to support the growth and development of new and expanded academic programming. Additional faculty positions and funding were earmarked for new academic equipment, maintenance contracts, and repairs. Tuition funds, which can be carried over from year to year, have supplemented general funding substantially and permitted some flexibility in planning. The [FY 2003 budget](#), while modestly higher than the previous one, must be stretched to cover a substantially larger salary budget and to allow for possible cutbacks from the legislature or the system. The university has responded with more careful planning at all levels, beginning with cuts in most administrative offices and other services, and is now seeking to raise its lower-division tuition rate to the upper-division tuition rate.

External Funding. Given the state's constrained fiscal situation, the university community must shoulder more of the responsibility for resource development, and faculty members have expanded their role as entrepreneurs, grant writers and fund raisers. We have been successful in developing resources on a number of fronts, including supplemental appropriations from the legislature for expansion of services and academic programs. Instrumental have been the university development officer, in place since February 1999, and the Hilo office of the Research Corporation of the University of Hawai'i (RCUH), established in April 2000. [Table 5.3](#) displays sources of revenue FYE June 30, 1997 to FYE June 30, 2001, and [Table 5.7](#), endowment values and performance for the same period.

Improved research infrastructure appears to have promoted an increase in funded research activity at UH Hilo as well as major advances in attracting new funding through federal, state and local grants. According to the chair of the UH Hilo Research Council, in 2000-2001, \$ 429,544 of returned overhead funds were expended to support research at the university in a variety of ways; in 2001-2002, the figure was \$526,410; in 2002-2003, \$ 688,911.

Of increasing importance to UH Hilo in obtaining federal funding has been our eligibility with tribal colleges for programs for Native Americans, due to our significant Native Hawaiian enrollment. Section [2.1.3](#) summarizes grants gained by this means by Ka Haka ‘Ula O Ke‘elikōlani, as well as other substantial grants from other sources that are maintained by faculty in CAS and CAFNRM.

Departments can become more enterprising and seek grants to support teaching enhancement and curricular innovation. The recent success of the Computer Science Department and the CAFNRM in gaining student-centered grants from the National Science Foundation and the US Department of Agriculture should inspire other programs to seek similar external grants. The University should also seek external funding for such much-needed campus programs as a Freshman Year Experience.

**3.1.4. Physical Resources.** UH Hilo’s campus is on 115 acres, with an adjoining 480-acre University Science and Technology Park, and a 110-acre farm in the Pana‘ewa Agricultural Park. Facilities include classroom buildings, library, faculty offices, administration building, student affairs building, theatre, campus center for student activities, an athletic complex, and dormitories. The term “campus” includes the Manono Street site of Hawai‘i Community College, the maintenance and utility costs of which are covered by UH Hilo. [Table 5.2](#) presents data on assignable areas and the university’s [Office of Facilities Planning](#) webpage keeps the campus community apprised of all current and planned projects (CFR 3.5).

UH Hilo now has a major capital improvement program under way, guided by the Facilities Long-Range Development Plan (LRDP) approved by the BOR in 1996. Programmatic growth has been followed by CIP funding. A major classroom and office building was completed and occupied in August 2002 (85,840 square feet; \$19 million); and the new Marine Sciences Building (10,309 square feet, \$3 million) was completed and occupied in Fall 2001. Faculty have been involved in the planning of these projects and in the allocation of the new and renovated space.

In addition, we have an extensive program of facilities repairs, renovations, and upgrades in process. Capital improvement projects worth more than \$80 million are currently in process or scheduled for the next few years, including new construction to improve health and safety and to provide improved access for the physically disabled. Much of the campus has been retrofitted to conform to ADA requirements. For the 2003-2005 Biennium, the current UH system budget proposal to the legislature includes over \$100,000,000 of UH Hilo CIP requests, including funds for a new Science and Technology Building, additions to the Student Affairs building and to the Student Life and Event Center, as well as planning funds for buildings to house Ka Haka ‘Ula O Ke‘elikōlani; the College of Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resource Management; and the School of Business and Economics; as well as a Pre-Veterinary Teaching Laboratory and Hospital.

**3.1.5. Informational Resources.** [Table 5.1](#) provides data on both the library and computing and electronic resources through Fall 2001 (CFR 3.6, 3.7). The [Mo‘okini Library](#) supports the academic programs of both UH Hilo and Hawai‘i Community College (HawCC). Library

collections are marginally sufficient for the current undergraduate programs and the graduate program in Hawaiian Language presently offered at UH Hilo. In the past, library support for new academic programs has been redirected from other funds. While the library budget has decreased, increases in serial subscriptions have averaged about 10% per year, with increases in monographs averaging 5%. Therefore, what might be perceived as a flat budget in reality has been ten years of budget decreases. With the development of additional undergraduate programs, graduate programs and the extension of distance learning offerings, the Library resources and staffing will require additional funding and administrative support.

Since 1994, UH Hilo has made significant and systematic improvement in providing student and faculty with access to computers, the Internet and software, through a combination of administrative and faculty leadership, legislative support, and the rapid growth of computer competence and use among students and faculty. In 1999 the Office of Technology and Distance Learning (OTDL) was formed to consolidate all technology related units. The director reports directly to the chancellor and oversees academic computing, media, the UH Hilo Hawai'i Interactive Television Service operation, the administrative computing center, campus network, and the UH Hilo webmaster. In Fall 2001, the UH Hilo Faculty Congress formed a [Technology Plan Committee](#) to update the current educational technology strategic plan and to advise the director of OTDL.

Major upgrades to the campus data infrastructure and off-campus bandwidth expansion from two T1 and from one OC-3 to two were completed as of the summer of 2002. Every full-time faculty and staff member has a functioning computer with current software and fast access to the Internet, to email, and to the campus ethernet (for access to the campus student information system). As of Fall 2002 students have access to 23 computer labs and electronic classrooms equipped with 747 PC's. We have 28 classrooms with full multi-media capability, and another 134 computers scattered throughout the campus for general access. Almost all campus computers have Internet access through the campus ethernet and the UH UNIX system. Normal upgrades and maintenance are also provided, with most labs on a three-year upgrade schedule. The university is currently in the process of installing phone, Internet, and cable connections in residence hall rooms. A technology help desk is available to the university community.

University practices regarding computer security and privacy as well as protection of faculty materials developed for web-enriched courses are thoroughly addressed by UH Executive Policy 2.210, "Use and Management of Information Technology Resources."

**3.1.6. Distance Learning.** In the university system, all distance learning programs are governed by UH Executive Policy [E5.204, "Distance Learning Planning, Policies, and Procedures"](#) (May 1998), which incorporates the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education's Principles of Good Practices for Electronically Offered Academic Degree and Certificate Programs (CFR 3.6, 3.7). Working within this larger framework, the UH Hilo Distance Learning Committee is now developing campus-specific policies for distributed learning programs and courses.

As a member of the University of Hawai'i distance learning system, which has university centers on all of the major islands and satellite centers on the smaller islands, UH Hilo is using a combination of interactive TV system (Hawai'i Interactive Television System or HITS) and the Internet to bring degree programs to University Centers within the state. Currently, we are

offering a B.S. in Computer Science to Maui, Kauai, and Leeward CC; a B.A. in Marine Science to Maui; a B.A. in Hawaiian Studies to Maui and Molokai; the post-baccalaureate Kahuawaiola Certificate in Hawaiian Medium Teacher Education to Oahu; first-year Hawaiian language classes to students on the continental United States; a B.A. in English with emphasis in writing; and a B.A. in Psychology. The first cohort in Computer Science graduated in Spring 2002; the second cohort will graduate in Spring 2004, and the third, Spring 2006. The first Marine Science and Hawaiian Studies cohorts will graduate in Spring 2003; the first English cohort in Spring 2004; the first Psychology cohort in Spring 2005. UH Hilo distance-delivered programs are coordinated by the [Office of Technology and Distance Learning](#).

UH Hilo also receives programs originating elsewhere in the UH system. Among the programs offered via HITS in Fall 2000 have been master's degrees in Library Science, Educational Administration, Business Administration, and Nursing.

Training in WebCT, the commercially available web course management system used by the University of Hawai'i, is offered to faculty by the system both in the summer, in TALENT, an intensive summer session in Honolulu; and during the academic year, through interactive television sessions.

**3.1.7. Organizational Structures and Decision-Making Processes.** Changes in procedures and decision-making processes as well as administrative issues are discussed elsewhere in this report, in sections [1.2.1](#), [3.2.1](#), and [4.2.1](#) (CFR 3.8, 3.10, 3.11). Here we focus on faculty governance bodies and their relations with administration.

According to [BOR Policy 1-10](#), faculty governance organizations serve in an advisory capacity to administration on academic policy and are authorized to speak for the faculty on curriculum content, subject matter, and methods of instruction and research. Program design and planning, and curricular review and change are initiated by faculty and processed through the academic departments, the faculty senate, and dean of the originating college. The College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani College of Hawaiian Language (CHL), and the College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Natural Resource Management (CAFNRM) have their own faculty senates. The CAS [Senate](#) is made up of elected faculty representatives. All faculty members in CAFNRM and CHL are members of their college senate. The extent to which the administration consults with faculty through the various governance bodies tends to depend upon the parties involved. The university needs to institutionalize practices which clarify and, as appropriate, strengthen the role of faculty in the processes of the university.

The [UH Hilo Faculty Congress](#) was formed in the Fall of 1998 in order to meet a recommendation repeatedly made by WASC for a University-wide faculty governance body which includes limited professional staff and student representation. The membership has been made more inclusive by adding as non-voting members the Director of Athletics and the Dean of the College of Continuing Education and Community Service. The Congress, with the active collaboration of the UH Hilo administration, is evolving into a more effective university-wide governance body. Faculty and professional staff representation to the Congress is still, in practice, voluntary rather than elective, there rarely being more than one person standing for any Congress slot. However, as the Congress continues to establish itself as an effective, rational and responsible body, both credibility and participation will certainly increase. The Congress

receives a budget from the vice chancellor for academic affairs. The Chair meets formally with administration as a member of the Chancellor's Executive Council, and the vice chancellor for academic affairs attends all Congress meetings. Informally, the vice chancellor for academic affairs hosts monthly breakfast meetings with faculty governance leaders from the senates and the Congress.

The Congress regularly informs the 'ohana (campus community) of its actions through email and its [website](#), which also contains the charter, by-laws, committees, and minutes of meetings. Further links make information from Congress committees available to the university community. Committee membership is solicited through campus email. Attempts are made to involve both experienced and novice faculty members and to seek representatives from all units.

Student representatives are involved in faculty governance organizations as voting members of the CAS Faculty Senate and its standing committees and have four representatives who share one vote on the Congress. A student representative serves as a nonvoting member of the CAFNRM faculty senate and as a full participant in the CHL governance organization, 'Aha Kenekoa Koleke Piha (Senate of the Whole). At the UH system level, the Board of Regents has one student member. Two students from UH Hilo serve as representatives on a system-wide student caucus.

The chairs of the congress and the college senates are also members of the system-wide All Campus Council of Faculty Senate Chairs and meet monthly with the President of the University and system administrators to discuss issues of system-wide concern to faculty and to make recommendations to the President.

## **3.2. Recent Progress**

**3.2.1. Helping the Teacher in the Classroom.** Whatever the institutional infrastructure, students will not learn unless the individual classroom teacher is engaged, informed, and committed (CFR 3.4). The president of the university system allocates funds annually to each campus to improve instructional resources through the President's Educational Improvement Fund. Individual faculty or departments submit proposals to the chief academic officer of each campus for a variety of projects ranging from equipment for geography field trips through slides for art history lectures and training in classroom assessment. In 2001-2002, UH Hilo faculty were awarded \$21,000 in EIF support; in 2002-2003, \$19,000.

A number of modest initiatives are proceeding on campus that will eventually be coordinated through a Center for Teaching Excellence. In August 2002 the CAS Dean's office included a session on teaching in its annual New Faculty Orientation, an innovation that will be incorporated into future orientation programs. The standing Academic Policy Committee of the UH Hilo Faculty Congress has the responsibility of improving the quality and consistency of course syllabi across all departments, while the Assessment Support Committee will address the task of compiling course syllabi for the use of students, faculty, and institutional review. A [teaching resources webpage](#) is posted and regularly updated with contributions from faculty. The 2002 CAS [Faculty Handbook](#) includes new or more detailed information on teaching awards, on the syllabus, on distance learning resources, and other teaching resources.

Among other simple, low-cost actions being discussed is a revision of the faculty productivity form, which omits teaching and curricular innovation and design and adoption of a university-wide course evaluation form based on good teaching practices. The vice chancellor for academic affairs and the Congress will be working with academic units on this and similar initiatives.

The educational effectiveness review affords the university an opportunity to focus on enhancing and rewarding teaching excellence.

**3.2.2. More Transparent Budget Process.** The administration and the UH Hilo Congress have been jointly developing procedures and policies that will ensure increased transparency and faculty input in campus budgeting. While transparency has been increased, additional efforts are needed to create a process to allow for meaningful faculty governance involvement in the campus budgeting process (CFR 3.5, 3.11, 4.1, 4.2).

**3.2.3. Greater Scope of Responsibility for Faculty through the Congress.** The scope of Congress activities has been more clearly defined in its revised [Charter and By-Laws](#). A new committee structure consists of the General Education Committee charged with reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of the GE program; the Assessment Support Committee established to assist departments and programs as they implement the Program Review Guidelines; the Budget and Planning Committee responsible for assuring an open, transparent budget allocation process and assuring faculty participation; and the Academic Policy Committee charged with reviewing and proposing new university-wide policies. The new Congress charter calls for released time for the Chairs of these committees. This has opened the issue of reassigned time for faculty in general; see section [4.2.3](#) for more discussion of that issue.

In the development of the new system Strategic Plan, the Congress Chair serves on the President's Advisory Committee and has been able to take an active role as an advocate of UH Hilo.

## **Standard Four: Creating an Organization Committed to Learning and Improvement**

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Since 1994, and most noticeably since Fall 2000, the university has taken significant steps to improve planning processes and make institutional research an essential part of university processes. [Standard Four](#) documents are posted on the accreditation website.

The establishment of the UH Hilo Institutional Research Office and the appointment of a full-time professional institutional researcher in Spring 2001 can be credited with much of the university's advances in the gathering, analysis, and dissemination of useable data. To be fully compliant with Standard Four expectations, we must persuade and train faculty and administrators to use data strategically and routinely.

Over the years there has been discussion about re-establishing closer relations with Hawai'i Community College, which continues to share facilities and resources with us; and about reorganizing the College of Arts and Sciences into smaller, more homogeneous units with more

direct communication with the administration. These discussions are ongoing and their outcome is uncertain. Regardless of the outcome of these conversations and deliberations, their conduct reflects the collaborative way in which things are done and decisions are made at UH Hilo.

#### **4.1. General Compliance**

Implementation reports on the [1997-2007 Strategic Plan](#) were published regularly by the administration. The development of the current [Strategic Plan 2002-2010](#) from the 1997-2007 plan is described in detail above, in section [1.2.1](#). We expect that there will be annual reports on our progress towards our strategic goals. As we implement the strategies recommended in our new plan, we anticipate that strategic thinking and planning will increasingly infuse all levels of the campus culture (CFR 4.1, 4.2, 4.3).

Strategic thinking and planning are already practiced at the unit level. [Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani College of Hawaiian Language](#) constantly reviews and updates its informal academic development plan. The CAFNRM has developed a ten-year academic development plan. The three major academic support units have conducted or are conducting self studies and fashioning strategic plans informed by the results of institutional inquiry and data collection. The Division of Student Affairs is in the second year of its [Strategic Plan 2001-2006](#). The Library has embarked on a self study which will lead to a Strategic Plan by the end of the current academic year; and the Office of Technology and Distance Learning will work with the Technology Committee of the Congress to revise and update the Academic Technology Plan 1997-2001.

Our Institutional Research Office, in place since February 2001, has placed the university on a solid footing with respect to the gathering, analysis, and dissemination of information. As [Table 7.1](#) and [Table 7.2](#) indicate, the university has been conducting student satisfaction surveys of various kinds, but is just beginning to assess student learning.

#### **4.2. Recent Progress**

**4.2.1. Making Processes More Inclusive and Sustainable.** Since 2000-2001, planning and decision-making processes at UH Hilo have become more inclusive and focused on improvement (CFR 4.1, 4.2). Structures are in place to continue to progress in this direction. There has been a distinct shift in the past two years, with the administration sharing important strategic planning and academic policy responsibilities with the UH Hilo Faculty Congress. The role of Congress in the strategic planning process exemplifies the shift.

In Spring 2002, the Congress approved a campus [academic assessment plan](#) which incorporates assessment into university decision-making, planning, and evaluation at all levels and which assigns the Congress campus leadership in assessment activities. Also in Spring 2002, the Congress established a standing [Committee on the Budget](#) to work closely with administration to assure that the budget is transparent and understandable. The committee is engaged in developing a process that will allow faculty to become an integral part of budget decision-making including determining new initiatives. In Spring 2002, the Committee solicited and posted on its webpage the current UH Hilo budget and descriptions of budget processes at the

three colleges and all CAS division, as well as the university administration. This was a signal step forward for the university, demonstrating broad commitment to transparency and cooperation on budgetary matters.

While the faculty, staff and administration have begun the process of structural change to better facilitate learning and continuous program improvement, more changes are needed to align personnel, fiscal and technical resources with UH Hilo's strategic goals.

**4.2.2. Rethinking the Organizational Structure of UH Hilo.** Planning efforts may be hampered by an organizational structure that might not be appropriate for an institution of the size of UH Hilo and of the diverse nature and sizes of its constituents. Currently, there are three colleges at UH Hilo, one of which, CAS, consists of 80% of the faculty and 84% of students. In addition to the Congress, there are faculty senates in both CAS and CAFNRM. Faculty in CAS are separated from the administration by an extra administrative layer to which faculty in other units are not subject. The four CAS divisions (including the School of Business and Economics) are disparate in important ways, ranging from facilities needs to expectations for research productivity and standards of excellence in teaching. In the history of the college, no dean has ever succeeded in bringing faculty together to develop a unified vision for the college, nor a coherent long-range academic plan. The lack of a sense of unity within the College is reflected in efforts of units to dissociate themselves. The School of Business and Economics has submitted a plan for its own reorganization, and the Division of Natural Sciences has petitioned to separate from CAS.

The Committee on the Future of Higher Education on the Big Island was constituted by the UH Hilo Chancellor and the UH Hilo Congress in the Fall of 2001 to consider such issues as a possible merger with, or incorporation of, Hawai'i Community College. In Spring 2002 the committee returned its report, proposing a reorganization of UH Hilo that included division of CAS into smaller, more coherent units.

In August 2002, the VCAA invited the faculty and staff of UH Hilo to consider alternatives to the present organization of the College of Arts and Sciences. A survey has been posted by the Accreditation Steering Committee and the Institutional Research Office, and the CAS Faculty Senate has held open forums on the issue. In October 2002, the faculties of the Social Sciences Division and the Humanities Division voted against separation. Whatever the result of these discussions and petitions, faculty have been motivated to look seriously at the current structure in an effort to identify the structure which will best serve our mission.

**4.2.3. Developing New Policies for New Programs.** As an institution expands and changes, it looks for ways to manage transformation rationally, to remain true to its essential mission while making the most of new possibilities (CFR 4.1, 4.2, 4.3). As research grants and research activities increase and new programs, including graduate programs, are added, the need to set priorities and to develop policies and procedures consistent with the university's mission and goals becomes more and more apparent. Strategic Plan objectives reiterate the need for meaningful processes and guidelines in many of the university's operations.

There is some concern that we might be diffusing institutional energies and resources as we build connections in University Park and with external agencies. Another area of concern is the lack of policies regarding [released or reassigned](#) time from teaching for other activities. Such guidelines will need to recognize the primacy of teaching responsibilities for faculty. Care must be taken to avoid drawing many highly qualified faculty away from teaching while replacing them with lecturers, or allowing certain courses to go untaught. The UH Hilo Research Council, comprised of senior faculty, has developed reassigned-time guidelines for faculty requiring additional research time. The university should also develop guidelines and accountability requirements for released time from teaching for university service on committees, in governance bodies, and for performance of administrative tasks.

Goal I of the [Strategic Plan 2002-2010](#) calls for the university to “establish a stronger process for approval of new programs, with clear requirements for demand analysis, budget plans, and relevance to the university mission and strategic plan goals, but flexible enough to allow UH Hilo to take advantage of opportunities as they arise” (Strategy I.B.1). Thus, certain aspects of the development of new graduate programs at CAS are monitored by the Faculty Senate, the Dean, the VCAA, and then by the UH system Graduate Council. However, responsibility is not assigned for gauging the fiscal impact of a new program on existing programs, and consequently such programs, once approved, find themselves scrambling for resources (CFR 4.4).

**4.2.4. Making Data Usable and Available.** The efforts of the new institutional researcher can be credited with much of the university’s progress towards becoming a true “culture of evidence.” Over the years, occasional institutional research efforts had been made by faculty, and on-going management and planning data are regularly made available by the [UH System Institutional Research Office](#) (IRO) in Honolulu. The system office draws from its Student Information Management System (SIMS) data warehouse, which is updated three times per semester through data uploads from the UH Hilo transactional database. A student tracking database, which follows entering student cohorts (beginning in 1992) for eighteen semesters, had been maintained for several years by the UH Hilo Computing Center, though analysis did not begin until the institutional researcher joined the university.

The major focus of the director in the past eighteen months has been to determine what data are needed, to analyze existing data, and to develop a broad informational base that can be utilized to inform institutional decision-making (CFR 4.4, 4.5). Findings to date about our students are discussed above, in sections [2.2.3](#), [2.2.4](#), [2.2.5](#), and [2.2.6](#). The Institutional Research Office maintains a [web site](#) where studies are posted and available to UH Hilo faculty, administration, and staff. Other efforts include the following:

- Development of data tools for program review that make UH system IRO Management and Planning System data more accessible to UH Hilo faculty
- Design of continually updated reports and “tables on demand” for posting on the website
- Announcements on the UH Hilo email ‘ohana (campus community) when new information has been added to the IRO web site and provision of direct links to the new information
- Development of special-purpose surveys, such as expansion of the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) 2001-2002 Faculty Survey to include questions on the extent

of “assessment consciousness” at UH Hilo; and a survey for continuing students in the summer of 2002 (“What Students Want”) directed at gathering student opinion on UH Hilo spending priorities.

- Direct emails to groups and individuals (i.e., the Enrollment Management Committee or Program Directors) to inform them of useful and relevant information.
- Presentations to various groups on request and when she thinks the information she has will contribute to institutional effectiveness.
- Development of a data portal at UH Hilo, where end users will be able to directly and easily access data warehouse, transactional database and survey information so as to incorporate it more regularly into day-to-day operational decisions.

**4.2.5. Using the Data for Planning and Continuous Improvement.** The major challenge for the institution with regard to Standard Four is to train faculty and administrators at every level to seek data actively and to use available data—that is, to routinely seek and provide evidence for all claims, to use data to prioritize, to plan, and to make changes (CFR 4.6, 4.7). Above, in section [2.2.3](#), we discuss data from student and faculty surveys which suggest steps that can be taken by faculty as classroom teachers, by departments in support of their own faculty and students, and by the institution as it strives to become more student- and learning-centered.

The 2001-2002 HERI Survey of UH Hilo faculty suggests that faculty are favorably disposed toward assessment, and that many would be willing to participate in the assessment of student learning. Of 75 respondents, 74.3 % agreed that “the assessment of student learning outcomes contributes (or could contribute) to improved teaching in my department,” and 73.1% that it could lead to improved curriculum.

As we enter the second phase of our institutional review, we are renewing efforts to engage faculty in particular in clarifying program missions, articulating assessable learning outcomes, documenting and assessing student learning, and using evidence as we strive for continuous program improvement.

## **Conclusion: Reflections on Compliance and Readiness for the Educational Effectiveness Review**

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Our preparatory review, begun in the summer of 2001, has revealed a campus community that shares a common primary mission—the delivery of “quality undergraduate liberal arts and professional programs.” The long-term decline in the state’s economy has meant steady, year-to-year diminishment in allocations for administrative and support services, but the university has managed to raise faculty salaries and to sustain instructional operations and student services. Faculty are more active in seeking external funding to support faculty development and student learning as well as research. We also find that changes are underway with respect to faculty governance; that long-standing lacks in assessment and institutional research have been or are being addressed; and that the various campus constituencies are learning to work together to achieve that mission.

We venture to predict that by 2010, the end of our fourth decade and the target date of our current strategic plan, UH Hilo will have become a significantly more creative and productive institution and will have ample documentation of its educational effectiveness.

We find that UH Hilo and the University of Hawai'i system are in compliance with Standard One. Our institutional portfolio and the system portfolio document that UH Hilo, like all other UH campuses, adheres to policies and procedures consistent with WASC expectations with respect to institutional purposes, institutional integrity, and educational objectives. The system and the university have just completed strategic plans, and implementation of a number of the low-cost or no-cost strategies is already underway. At the same time, we have confirmed the findings of previous WASC reviewers and our own 2000-2001 self study, that in a number of areas, guidelines and procedures are needed, or require clarification or implementation, or need to be made more transparent or more participatory.

The process of transforming our previous strategic plan into our *Strategic Plan 2002-2010* was open and inclusive, with participants strongly focused on ensuring congruence between our mission and the goals and objectives of the plan. The campus plan includes performance indicators, and we will issue annual reports that measure our progress against those indicators. The strategic initiatives requested by the system administration have dramatized the need for broader understanding and campus-specific applications of the university's policy E5.201 Approval of New Programs.

The revised program review process is turning out to be a model of how sustainable processes can develop and become embedded in the campus culture. Our 2000-2001 self study found that academic program review was in disrepute among faculty, who correctly considered the old process meaningless. Revised program review guidelines and procedures that require student learning assessment, external review, feedback from administration, and integration into institutional planning are being implemented in 2002-2003. The new process is being coordinated by the Congress Assessment Support Committee and supported by assessment funds. As the process runs its course, the faculty chair and faculty participants are identifying specific ways in which it can be made more effective. Meanwhile, faculty in the next group of programs are being prepared to conduct their own reviews in 2003-2004. There is a growing realization among participating faculty that program review is a dynamic, responsive process, one that is good for student learning and--equally important for the effectiveness and sustainability of program review--good for programs.

With respect to Standard Two, the preparatory review has found that UH Hilo complies with those criteria for review that address curricular structure, research and creativity, and educational requirements. Faculty research activity, as measured by extramural grants and publications, has been increasing significantly. In addition to adhering to national norms with respect to content, curricular structure, and faculty qualifications, UH Hilo has established a strong record of hands-on learning and student-faculty collaboration in research, in particular in its programs in the natural sciences, anthropology, psychology, and geography. Building on strengths in the community, we have established an international reputation for indigenous language and culture revitalization.

In the past two years, faculty have won major grants in support of student learning, including a Title III grant, a USDA grant, and three NSF grants with a focus on students of Hawaiian background. Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani and cooperating groups administer close to \$3 million in teaching-related grants. We must also more actively address the needs of other under-represented minorities, such as Filipino and Micronesian students.

The Division of Student Affairs has taken the leadership in with numerous specific activities to meet the needs of all students and to promote student retention, and it is time for faculty to become more active in these enterprises.

The 2000-2001 self study and the preparatory review have found that Hilo must improve its performance with respect to the crucial areas of General Education and student learning assessment. In 2002-2003 the faculty Congress GE committee is working with departments and the Writing Intensive Committee to establish an assessment plan for the basic requirements of written communication, quantitative reasoning, and world cultures. The committee is also considering the broader questions of upper-division course requirements and the permeation of GE skills and knowledge throughout the curriculum. In 2003-2004 the committee will continue with these broad issues and will also seek to develop a plan for assessing whether and how well current GE courses promote our GE goals.

Departmental assessment of student learning is discussed in the Standard Two chapter and in the Standard Four chapter. The establishment of the Institutional Research Office and the hiring of a professional institutional researcher in February 2001 have made it possible for UH Hilo to lay the foundation for a "culture of evidence" which documents and reviews student academic achievement and which responds to student needs, student preferences, and student aspirations. As of summer 2002, only a handful of academic programs were carrying out systematic student learning assessment and actively seeking continuous program improvement. On the other hand, a recent faculty survey suggests that faculty are, in general, willing to do and to use assessment as a means of improving teaching and learning. The Assessment Support Committee and the institutional researcher are gaining faculty acceptance of assessment by proceeding one division and one college at a time: they are training programs currently undergoing program review how to develop mission statements and assessable learning goals and how to assess and document student learning. When the whole cycle of program reviews is completed, in 2006, all programs should be involved in continuous improvement processes.

UH Hilo performs well with respect to Standard Three. By national standards, we have good faculty-student ratios, and the program review process will determine more precisely the faculty needs of individual departments. UH Hilo's situation vis-à-vis capital improvement is very good, with a new Marine Science building completed in summer 2001, a new multi-department office and classroom building completed in summer 2002, and additional faculty and classroom buildings in early planning stages. The library is engaged in a self study comparing staffing and other resources with such national standards as those of the 1995 Association of College and Resource Libraries. Educational technology is in good shape: students have access to hundreds of computers and to the web in classrooms, PC labs, and the library, and technological tools are integrated into the curriculum of programs as diverse as Geography, Art, English, and Business.

Within the framework of the system's distributed learning infrastructure, policies and strategic plan, five UH Hilo departments are offering bachelor's degrees statewide via DL technology.

A major venue for faculty service is the faculty Congress, formed in 1998-1999 in response to WASC's recommendation that a governance body be formed to address issues of concern to all three baccalaureate-granting colleges. Its growing importance is apparent in the essays for Standard Three and Standard Four. The Congress is striving to become a truly representative body, establishing its credibility among faculty as well as in the university community and including many non-Congress faculty and staff in its committees. The Congress has taken responsibility for major tasks and is also raising questions of import which will certainly be examined as it evolves and matures.

Since February 2001, as our essays for Standard Two and Standard Four show, our institutional researcher has moved forward in the enormous task of organizing and analyzing previous surveys. Faculty, staff, and administrators must now be persuaded and trained to seek and to use documentation, including data, in program review and improvement, and in planning and resource allocation.

An excellent starting place would be the findings of the NSSE, the Graduating Student Surveys, and other more specialized student surveys that have identified specific ways in which our faculty can make courses more challenging and relevant. Such evidence can be used to re-focus faculty attention on quality teaching and on setting high expectations for students, to motivate long-needed improvements in syllabus format and course evaluation forms, to foster continuous curriculum review and revision, and to encourage faculty to seek grants that support student learning and faculty development in teaching.

In short, UH Hilo is in compliance with many of WASC's criteria for review, and we recognize what we need to do to come into full compliance. [Appendix B](#) lists the many recommendations that have emerged in the course of the preparatory review, each one intended to make us a more effective institution of higher learning. In terms of our Fall 2001 proposal to WASC, we are on schedule with respect to institutional capacity and have already made significant progress towards achieving the outcomes we visualized for the educational effectiveness review.

In the next phase of our review, we will focus campus energies on improving teaching, on learning how to document and assess student learning, and on establishing practices and structures that we can sustain and build on through our fourth decade.