MEMORANDUM

TO: General Education Committee
    Senate Executive Committee

FROM: Ned Bertz
    Chair, Contemporary Ethical Issues Focus Board

SUBJECT: Annual Report 2009-10

AY 2009-2010
Submitted by Ned Bertz

The Board members included Helen Baroni, Ned Bertz (Chair), Spencer Leineweber, Ilan Noy (sabbatical spring 2010), and Jonathan Okamura. Lynne Higa served as GEC liaison. We received excellent support from Jo-Anne Nakamoto and everyone in the GEC office and Assessment Office.

1. Policies and Hallmarks
   a) The most important policy decision made this year was to create an electronic, form-fillable proposal application. In so doing, the wording of the application was slightly altered. We hope this will encourage more applications and reduce the percentage of proposals that require negotiation.
   b) No Hallmark revisions were made.
   c) The largest source of confusion in applications continued to be the lack of inclusion of a framework of ethical decision making—an approach, methodology, process, or set of tools—which students will learn. We hope that the new application form will reduce this occasional source of confusion. The second area of concern on the Board rests with Staff-based applications, which seem to be too slight in the information required. This creates problems when the instructor is chosen as time for negotiation is then too short. We recommend that next year’s board consider revising the Staff-based application.

2. Proposal Review
   a) We received 62 proposals for the academic year. Eventually all the proposals were approved, with the exception of two which are currently outstanding as we approach our deadline next week to communicate final decisions to the GEO.
b) Roughly a third of the proposals were returned for additional information.
c) We conducted most of our business via Laulima, and would recommend for future boards to do so as well. We used a consensus model of voting, shared negotiating duties, and only voted by majority rule when necessary.
d) The proposal forms were modified slightly and put in electronic form (as described above).

3. Current Status of Offerings
*The General Education Office has this information.

4. Faculty Development
*Faculty development mainly occurred during the one-on-one negotiations which took place between Board members and E-focus course instructors. We worked hard this semester to be accessible and considerate in our personal contacts with faculty who submit proposals that need the inclusion of some additional information in order to meet the hallmarks or satisfy other application requirements. Ultimately, we are most concerned that ample quality E-focus courses are available for students to take, and this shapes our decisions and negotiations.

5. Assessment
a) A slightly revised assessment form was made available for instructors who chose to have students fill them out. The GEO has this form.
b) Most notably, the Assessment Office has designed a full evaluation of the Contemporary Ethical Issues focus program, the first of the focus requirements to be assessed during this period of renewed attention to assessment at UHM. A faculty-led group created a rubric for scoring assignments last semester, which was made available for all instructors of E-focus courses this academic year. This semester, a random sample of student work from E-focus courses was solicited and is currently being collected for review this summer by the Assessment Office and a to-be-constituted faculty team.

6. Current Issues and Goals
*We would like to increase the number and quality of E-focus courses being offered, or at least keep the current availability stable. In particular, there are several majors which neglect E-focus courses entirely. Efforts to reach out to these departments should be made by next year’s board.

7. Future Issues and Goals
*This will come most clear when the Board receives a report from the Assessment Office in conclusion of their assessment project this summer. No doubt we can then discuss our future issues and goals more clearly in the fall.