Memorandum

To: Vice Chancellors for Academic Affairs
Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
Deans of Instruction
Deans of Student Services
Cheryl Chappell-Long, Director, Academic Policy, Assessment & Planning

Subject: Fall 2006 Recommendations on COMPASS Placement Testing Procedures

The systemwide COMPASS Placement Testing Working Group, whose membership reflects the various stakeholders met on October 5, 2006 and forwarded the following recommendations to the Deans of Instruction/Vice Chancellors for Academic Affairs for their consideration:

Retesting
Consensus was reached on the need to change the 120-day wait time for retesting, a legacy of the Aldrich system. Sixty days was suggested as a reasonable wait time, taking into account the need for students to move forward in their program of study without an unnecessary delay and the need to consider workload at the testing centers.

Recommendation: Students wishing to retake the COMPASS placement test be required to wait sixty days. Immediate retesting may be allowed when mechanical or other testing malfunctions occur.

Use of SAT for Community College Placement
ACT/SAT scores are currently being entered at UHM into SOATEST; some campuses are building the necessary tables to use the ACT/SAT scores for entry into their college-level English and Math courses. Since we have agreed to honor UHM placement, regardless of the placement instrument, it would seem logical for the UHCCs to also accept SAT/ACT scores directly.

Recommendation: The UHCCs adopt the UHM cut-offs for placement into ENG 100 via SAT (550 or higher on Critical Reading section and 550 or higher on the Writing section) or ACT (24 or higher on the English/Writing section and 24 or higher on the Reading section).
Uniform instructions for Math test selection
Now that the systemwide deans have approved the testing procedures for the math COMPASS test, it would be best to have all the campuses distribute the same information to assist students in choosing which math level to begin the placement test.

Recommendation: The testing coordinators develop standard written instructions to help students select the starting level for the math COMPASS test.

EFFECTIVE DATE for these three recommendations: Testing for Fall 2007

In addition to the above recommendations, the Working Group discussed at length the proposal to allow testing on demand rather than after a wait period. Maui CC and Kapi‘olani CC have volunteered to pilot an alternative approach: retesting on demand, with a $25 proctoring fee for each retest. The fee would be waived for students who are determined to be eligible for Pell Grants (Financial Aid Office would assist in determining the eligibility). Students would be counseled on available avenues to improve their testing performance in the retest. A survey will be required of students who retest, asking them why they are requesting a retest so that testing centers can monitor operations and track students’ success in subsequent courses. The two campuses would work with Cheryl and Guy to develop the survey instrument and the design for this pilot study, determine the measures of success, etc.

Recommendation: During Spring 2007, Maui CC and Kapi‘olani CC begin a pilot study of retesting on demand under the conditions outlined above.

At their meeting on February 8, 2007, the deans and vice chancellors approved these recommendations, effective as of the Fall 2007 testing period.

Please let the relevant personnel in your areas know of these changes in policies and procedures.

Louise Pagotto
Acting Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Kapi‘olani Community College
For the COMPASS Advisory Working Group

c: COMPASS Advisory Working Group