January 31, 2012

MEMORANDUM

To: Eric Martinson, Chairperson, Board of Regents
Via: M.R.C. Greenwood, President
Via: John Morton, Vice President for Community Colleges
From: Douglas Dykstra, Chancellor, Windward Community College
Subject: WCC Program Proposal, Associate of Science in Veterinary Technology

ACTION REQUESTED:

Windward Community College requests Board of Regents approval to establish the Associate of Science degree program in Veterinary Technology.

ADDITIONAL COST:

Annual costs to implement the program are estimated at $165,429, including salary for two faculty members (one FTE veterinarian at $70,000, and 1 FTE veterinary technician at $55,000), two lecturers each year ($12,800), and supplies, equipment, service contracts, liability insurance, accreditation fees etc. ($21,827). First year revenues from student tuition ($101/SSH) and professional fees ($100/semester for first-year students and $300/yr. for second-year students) is estimated at $84,770. In subsequent years, and assuming a persistence rate of 70%, revenue from tuition and professional fees should be about $203,830/yr.

It should be noted that the two faculty positions identified for this programs are existing, funded positions that are being transferred from a canceled program.

RECOMMENDED EFFECTIVE DATE:

Fall 2012

PURPOSE:

The AS in Veterinary Technology will prepare veterinary paraprofessionals to perform essential tasks in the veterinary hospital and lab animal facilities (e.g., administer anesthesia, take and develop radiographs, assist with surgical procedures, dispense medications, perform vital lab tests, and provide client education). Further, the program will allow students to obtain industry-recognized credentials that will enable them to obtain employment at veterinary hospitals, lab animal facilities, and research laboratories throughout the United States. Finally, it will meet the current and anticipated workforce
needs in the veterinary field in Hawai‘i; the state does not offer training opportunities for veterinary technicians.

BACKGROUND

In accordance with Board of Regents policy governing Academic Affairs, Section 5-1a, and Executive Policy E5.201, Approval of New Academic Programs and Review of Provisional Academic Programs, as well as Board of Regents Policy Section 6-1, Authority to Set Tuition and Fees, Windward Community College requests the Board’s approval to establish the Associate of Science degree program in Veterinary Technology, along with the proposed student fees explained hereafter.

Windward Community College has been offering a Certificate of Achievement in Veterinary Assisting since 2009; that program was moved from provisional to established status by the Board of Regents in Spring 2011, and currently enrolls 37 students. The proposed program builds on the one year CA to provide more technical training for students whose goal is to move beyond assisting in veterinary facilities to performing essential tasks in labs and operating theaters.

The CA in Veterinary Assisting continues to serve a purpose in preparing students for the animal help workforce, but the College’s Veterinary Assistant Advisory Board and several leading industry practitioners have urged the College to move to the next step in paraprofessional training, the AS in Veterinary Technology. Over 20 O‘ahu veterinary clinics, shelters, and lab animal facilities have signed up to serve as preceptor locations for student interns. A recent survey of O‘ahu veterinary clinics (n=21 respondents) indicates that on average, each clinic plans to hire 3.4 assistants or technicians a year. Given that there are almost 100 clinics in the state of Hawai‘i (62 on O‘ahu alone) the veterinary community would be expected to hire several hundred assistants and technicians each year; the clinics should be easily able to place the 16-25 estimated annual AS graduates. In addition to work in veterinary hospitals, technicians can find employment in agriculture, animal quarantine facilities, lab animal facilities, veterinary pharmaceutical sales, military service, and teaching. Demand for the program is further supported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics report that nationally, “excellent job opportunities will stem from the need to replace veterinary technologists and technicians who leave the occupation and from the limited output of qualified veterinary technicians from 2-year programs, which are not expected to meet the demand over the 2008-18 period. Employment is expected to grow much faster than average” (http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos183.htm). Veterinary technology is among the top five fastest-growing occupations nationwide, with employment in the field expected to grow 36% in the next nine years.

Most states require Veterinary Technicians to pass a credentialing exam in order to gain licensure or certification; this program will prepare graduates to pass such an exam. In addition, many states require that certain tasks (e.g. the administration of anesthesia) be performed only by credentialed technicians or veterinarians.

There are currently 191 American Veterinary Medicine Association accredited Veterinary Technology Programs in the United States. Hawai‘i is one of only four states that lack an AVMA accredited Vet Tech program. As a result, students wishing to obtain an AVMA accredited degree are forced to attend out-
of-state schools, and veterinary professionals in Hawai‘i wishing to hire an accredited technician must recruit on the mainland.

WCC plans to offer the AS program statewide through online classes and flexible clinic and lab experiences made available as appropriate either on neighbor islands or on weekends in Kane‘ohe.

**Rationale for Institution of Professional Fees:**

The AS In Veterinary Technology is a technology-intensive STEM Program. In order to become accredited by the AVMA, the program must train students in several areas including radiology, nursing, lab techniques, surgical assisting, lab animal nursing, and livestock animal nursing. Many of these classes have large supplies- and equipment maintenance costs. In addition, the program will incur several unique program costs including accreditation and facilities inspection fees. (Appendix 12). As these costs cannot be sustained on the “normal” supplies funds typically allotted to natural science disciplines, (typically $3,000/yr), we propose to recover the majority of these costs by instituting professional fees for students in the program ($100/semester for vet assisting students & $300/semester for veterinary technology students). These fees are comparable to other health sciences programs in the UH system including Radiologic Technology ($300/semester) and Nursing ($500) semester. The remainder of program costs will be covered internally or by grant funding.

WCC, its industry partners, and a variety of granting agencies have shown support for the program by allocating resources for curriculum development, including online development; new faculty positions; equipment, including x-ray and other clinical equipment; supplies; and facilities, including $1.4 million for the renovation of Hale Imiloa (WCC’s science building) to include a veterinary clinic, office space, and animal boarding. Support has come from a Rural Development Grant, Perkins funding, the Department of Labor, a number of veterinarians and veterinary facilities, and the State of Hawai‘i.

**ACTION RECOMMENDED:**

It is recommended that the Board of Regents approve the establishment of a New Associate of Science degree in Veterinary Technology at Windward Community College, as well as the proposed student fees for the degree program to be effective Fall 2012.

Attachment
New Program Proposal dated February 2012

C: Executive Administrator and Secretary of the Board