Progress Visit Team Report
for
Honolulu Community College

A Confidential Report Prepared for
The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

This report represents the findings of the progress report team that visited Honolulu Community College on

November 15, 2005

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Introduction

At its June 2005 meeting, the Accrediting Commission reviewed the Honolulu Community College Progress Report (March 2005) and Visiting Team Report, and acted to require the College to submit an additional progress report by October 15, 2005, to be followed by a visit. The Commission also acted to retain the College on warning during this period. The college was requested to address the college-specific recommendation on a systematic and integrated educational and financial review of all programs and services and the University of Hawaii Community College (UHCC) system-specific recommendations on program review and assessment, system organization, and Board of Regents governance.

The progress report visit was conducted by Dr. Sherrill L. Amador and Ms. Lurelean B. Gaines on November 15, 2005. The purpose of the visit was to evaluate the college’s progress report and the evidence provided to determine if sufficient progress had been made by Honolulu Community College and the UHCC system on the Commission recommendations since the April 2005 Progress Report. The Commission expected the college and the system to have made significant progress on the recommendations since the last visit.

The team received the Honolulu Community College Progress Report by e-mail in time for the visit and the college was prepared for the visit. The college’s progress report outlined its program review and planning progress and actions since the April 2005 visit with supporting documentation. Also included was a section entitled “Report on the Substantive Change Request Related to the System Reorganization and Other Commission Recommendations” which was written by the system staff.

Staff at the college and system arranged the requested interviews for team members with faculty, administrators, and staff. The team members met with the Chancellor; members of the Planning Council and Governance Committee; members of the Assessment Committee, faculty and staff who participated in program reviews; members of faculty and staff senates; student officers; the co-Accreditation Liaison Officers; and vice chancellors, deans, and directors for instruction, student services, and business services.

The team found that the college and the UHCC system had made considerable progress on the Commission recommendations since the last visit. Honolulu Community College had taken the Commission’s recommendations on program review and integrated planning very seriously. The team found significant institutional work had been done with commitment by all constituent groups to make the internal changes necessary for the implementation of an integrated system of assessment, planning, and budgeting. Program reviews had been completed, the second cycle of reviews were in progress and staff was
engaged in activities to align with the new system program review processes; and most importantly, a Planning Committee had been formally formed and was in structure and organizational stage of integrated planning.

**College Response to the Commission Recommendation**

The following is the June 2005 Commission recommendation (and the continuing Commission recommendation from January 2001) and the team’s assessment of progress at Honolulu Community College.

3. **The team recommendations that the college engage in systematic and integrated educational and financial review of all programs and services.** *(Standards 3.B.3, 5.10, 6.7, 7.C.2, 8.5)*

The team found that the college had completed its first complete cycle of program reviews for spring 2005 (Library, Fire, Sheet Metal, Financial Aid, and Automotive). Four more programs had their reviews due December 1; four were scheduled for spring 2006. Those staff with completed reviews indicated changes in curriculum had occurred based on the findings. The college used a template for the reviews. Financial data was a component of the reviews. The Assessment Committee was charged with assisting those staff completing reviews as well as those who had completed revisions of the college review process, which was approved in October.

The college was working on aligning the system five-year program review cycle with their own; and had increased the rigor and scope of the exiting annual program data generated for instructional programs (Program Health Indicators). The college will use the annual system template for its annual assessment. All of the college instructional programs will be required to provide an annual assessment report beginning in spring 2006. It was reported that the annual assessments will be used in the five-year reviews to demonstrate trends, identify areas of continued or emerging concerns, and validate strategies and program efforts. The minutes of the Assessment Committee reflected a commitment to monitor and review the effectiveness of the program review reporting processes for both instructional and support programs for both the annual assessment and five-year cycle reviews and to provide the needed training. Institutional research staff working with system staff is gathering and standardizing the data for the defined system data elements recognizing that all of that work would not be accomplished for the first annual assessment in the spring.

The college is making considerable progress on student learning outcomes (SLO) with the goal to incorporate them in the program reviews and assessments once all SLOs are identified. Fifteen programs have completed specific course SLOs for all courses offered. The rest of the college’s programs SLOs are due December 1. A first draft of a Curriculum Reference Manual was being circulated which is to include policies, procedures, and forms related to developing new curriculum or modifying existing programs and courses. The curriculum processes will incorporate SLOs and create the direct link between course and program SLOs and curriculum actions and decisions.
Since the last team visit, the college has created the appropriate governance structure for integrated planning. Campus discussion lead by the Chancellor and the Accreditation Liaison Officer at the August College Planning Retreat initiated the activities to form the Planning Council. The Planning Council is constituent-based and its products and processes are designed to be the integrated planning and budgeting model for the college. The Council coordinates the annual review of the College Strategic Plan using program reviews and annual assessments; reviews the mission and goals statement; and makes recommendations to the Chancellor on proposed planning initiatives, and budget and resources allocations in relation to the system planning needs and institutional assessment processes.

At the time of the visit, the Planning Council had met twice. The document, *Operating Guidelines for Meetings*, dated October 28, formalizes meeting and decision making processes. *A Program Review Flow Chart*, dated November 7, was reviewed by the Council and the Assessment Committee, but not yet finalized. This chart is an initial effort to detail the relationship of planning to college committees, staff, internal functions, major changes and actions, the strategic plan and long-term budgets. The team suggests that more clarity is still needed, based on review of the chart and interviews conducted, on how the Campus Leadership Team’s function of operational changes will impact Planning Council recommendations and yearly and end-of-the year budget decisions. The college does state in its progress report that “there will be direct linkage between annual assessment reports and budgeting-and planning prioritization decisions made regarding end-of-the-year monies.”

**Conclusion**

It was apparent to the team that college staff had taken seriously the Commission’s recommendation. The new Planning Council, its identified structure, operating guidelines, and charted decision-making processes have defined how the college will use its data-driven program review and annual assessments in the newly structured integrated planning processes. The team determined that the real test for successfully executing the recommendation by the college will come in the spring when all of the institutional work results in actual changes to budgeting and operational decision making. Clearly, there is optimism that these newly defined processes will work, but a “wait and see” attitude still exists. Therefore, spring actions and implementation of planning decisions will determine if the integrated planning structure and organization is successful. The team found that the college has met the intent of the recommendation.

The team found that the college staff viewed the new system organizational structure positively. Those interviewed indicated the organization now has a defined reporting structure, clear lines of authority, standards, and locus of decision making.

The Board of Regents Community College Committee held the first of its planned quarterly meetings. Both administration and faculty indicated that the meeting was very productive and resulted in a better understanding of the community colleges by the
regents. The members of the Committee reported that they were looking forward to the next meeting.

The team determined that the college was being positively affected by the system changes and that the college’s progress on their integrating planning, by design, would align its work with system plans and budgets. The college is to be commended for all the institutional work achieved since the last visit.

A separate team report on the UH CC System follows this Honolulu Community College report and is titled, “University of Hawaii Community College System, Progress Visit Team Report.”