Progress Visit Team Report

for

Kapi`olani Community College

A 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 visit team
that visited Kapi`olani Community College

November 15, 2005

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Progress Visit Team Report

Introduction

Kapi`olani Community College was included in a Commission action taken in January, 2005, to place some of the Hawai‘i Community Colleges on warning until they were able to demonstrate individually and collectively that they had addressed the need to develop and implement a comprehensive assessment, planning and improvement process, and that the results of assessment and improvement be reported to and supported by the governance structure of the UH CC System. The College submitted a Progress Report in April 2005. This report, as well as a report by the UH CC System, was considered by the Commission at its June 2005 meeting. The Commission acted to remove Kapi`olani Community College from Warning, but to require that the College and System submit progress reports by October 15, 2005, on the three recommendations given to the system, with particular emphasis on Recommendation 2 at the College level:

Recommendation 2. The team recommends that the University of Hawaii Community Colleges develop policies and procedures to ensure

- That the community colleges engage in regular assessment of institutional effectiveness, including program review;
- That the community college system as well as each college set priorities for implementing plans for improvement that are based in analysis of research data;
- That the colleges and the UH CC System incorporate these priorities into resource distribution processes and decisions;
- That the colleges and the UH CC System develop and employ a methodology for assessing overall institutional effectiveness and progress toward meeting goals expressed through plans for improvement; and
- That the colleges and the UH CC System report regularly to internal constituencies and the Board on this progress (Standards I.B, II.A.1 and 2, II.B.3, II.B.4, II.C.1.e, II.C.2, III.A.6, III.C.1, III.C.2, III.D.1.a, IV.B.2.b, and the Preamble to the Standards).

This report represents the findings of the team that visited Kapi`olani Community College on November 15. The report of the team that visited the UH CC System is appended to this report. The team prepared for the progress visit by reading the reports submitted by the College and the UH CC System, as well as reading the previous College and Team reports submitted to the Commission on the same matters. The College submitted a report on further progress made on institution-specific assessment practices, as well as its participation in system-wide efforts to address the three recommendations.

The College was well prepared for the visit. The team met with the Interim Chancellor, members of the administration and faculty from Holomua (Developmental Studies),
Nursing and Business Education that discussed their tactical planning process and resource allocation related to ongoing program assessments, and administrators and faculty representing International Education and the Culinary Program to discuss the College’s work identifying and assessing student learning outcomes. The team also met with the institution’s Institutional Research staff, and with the Policy, Planning and Assessment Council as well as members of the Accreditation Steering Committee. The team room provided appropriate supporting documentation. The team wishes to thank the College staff for their helpfulness during the team visit.

The program activities discussed with the team during its brief visit obviously represent some of the best practices, and the wide variety of assessment practices, at the College. These exemplars should be a stimulus to other college programs, where the more routine assessment practices need to be institutionalized.

Findings

Since its last progress report, Kapiˈolani College has continued progress in establishing a three-year assessment, planning and improvement process. The College has established assessment criteria for its Academic Programs and its Administrative and Educational Support (AES) units. The institution has begun to post planning and assessment documents and results on its web page for wider college access. The college has participated with the other UH colleges in defining a core of data elements and a format that will be used for program review, as well as a core of data elements that will be used for annual assessments of program quality. These provide a foundation for the College’s commitment to assessment, and will now be used across all programs of the College. (See the appended UH CC System Progress Visit Report.)

At the time of the last team visit, the College reported that it sometimes used internal, reallocated funds, as well as grant funds, to support needed improvements identified through program review and assessment activities, but that it had not established a resource allocation process that could systematically support improvements. In July 2005, the Chancellor established a Budget Execution Task Force to, among other things, propose new approaches to the college budgeting process in order to prioritize program improvement activities. The comprehensive team scheduled to visit the College in fall 2006 should be able to see the results of the new College budgeting process.

Kapiˈolani College also has a number of other ongoing research and evaluation activities that are customized to specific departments. The Team’s meetings with programmatic faculty, noted above, allowed the team to see a rich variety of assessment strategies and research concerns that contribute to the excellent quality of the College. Kapiˈolani has sought and obtained several sources of outside funding which contribute to its institutional commitment to assessment and improvement. These include Title III funds to develop a Center for Excellence in Learning, Teaching and Technology (CELT) that will support ongoing work in learning outcomes assessment, the use of e-Portfolios for teaching, learning and assessment of learning, and faculty development activities. The College also participates in an American Council on Education/FIPSE-funded project to
develop learning outcomes, e-Portfolios, instructions for students, assessment rubrics and rater training handbooks for their International Education program. The products of this work will be used to inform assessment strategies in other areas of College curriculum and be disseminated nationally. The College is also continuing important work on the value of prerequisites in improving student success in Math and English.

Conclusions

The team found that Kapi`olani Community College is actively engaged in a variety of assessment activities and has an evolving culture and practice of assessment and improvement. The decision to implement system-wide program review criteria should contribute to the already rich culture and practice of assessment and improvement at Kapi`olani Community College. The system-wide program review process has been established, a system-wide strategy for funding institutional improvements has been initiated in a budget request to the Legislature, and the College has plans to now extend program review to all academic, administrative and educational support areas of the College. This recommendation is well on the way to being addressed in an exemplary manner.

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