Progress Visit Team Report

for

Kauai 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 evaluation team that visited
Kauai Community College on

November 14, 2005

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Introduction

At its June 2005 meeting, the Accrediting Commission acted to remove Kauai Community College from warning with the requirement that the college complete a progress report by October 15, 2005 on the University of Hawaii Community College System (UHCC) recommendations on program review and assessment, system organization, and Board of Regents governance. The progress report was to be followed by a college visit at the same time that all of the community colleges within the UHCC were visited by teams. The progress report visit was conducted by Dr. Sherrill L. Amador and Lurelean B. Gaines on November 14, 2005. The purpose of the visit was to evaluate the progress report and the evidence provided to determine if sufficient progress had been made at Kauai College since the April 2005 visit.

The team received the Kauai College Progress Report by e-mail in time for the visit which consisted only of the UHCC System report written by system staff in response to the Commission’s recommendations. The college was prepared for the visit. College staff arranged the requested interviews for the team members with staff, faculty, and administrators, and the System staff arranged interviews with Board of Regents members and administrators. Documentation appropriate to the recommendations was available to the team.

A separate team report on the June 2005 Commission recommendations for the UHCC system follows this Kauai Community College report and is titled, “University of Hawaii Community College System, Progress Visit Team Report.”

Summary of Findings

The team met with the Chancellor, administrators, faculty and staff participants in program review, faculty senate and classified staff representatives, the Accreditation Liaison Officer, and members of the Program Review Committee.

The college continued to demonstrate steady progress on using program review results to inform college planning and budgeting. The college had completed in spring 2005 its first cycle of budget-setting priorities using the results of the completed program reviews and agreed upon criteria for ranking action plans. The team found evidence of the program reviews on the college website. The faculty who had completed the program review cycle indicated that change had occurred in their programs based on their findings, such as personnel decisions, curriculum revision, and scheduling of classes. The college had been using a five-year cycle program review and assessment process since 2004; and is currently in the process of realigning their assessment process with the
UHCC system-wide program review process. The staff reported that the system realignment was a positive step, however, the detail work of gathering data for all the elements in the annual and the five-year system cycles was not completed as yet. The new UHCC data system (Banner) does not currently produce all the needed data elements planned for the system-wide program review templates. Also, some of the old data elements that were useful for program are not available to the colleges, so the UHCC system technical staff needs to make this conversion a priority in support of the community colleges. The team found strong commitment by the college staff to use the available elements to complete cycles in the spring.

The function of institutional research is currently being shared by the Dean of Student Services and the ALO because the college has not been able to fill an institutional researcher position. The level of expertise required and the salary classification make it difficult to find someone given the cost of living on the island. The team suggests a review of the salary classification given the increased research emphasis on program review and the assessment of student learning outcomes. The college had a Handbook for Preparing Course and Program Action Forms, which included student leaving outcomes.

The team found the college had clearly demonstrated its ability to maintain the momentum that was started months ago, and it was reflected in the use of program review and assessment to fine-tune the class schedule, and inform planning and budgeting processes and decisions.

The team found that faculty and administration viewed the new UHCC system governance structure, with the new Vice President for Community Colleges position, positively, although because implementation had just begun there still appeared to be a “wait and see” attitude. It was reported that the structure has the potential to be more effective, streamlined, and provide a common voice for the community colleges. The faculty was optimistic that better articulation between the four-year and two-year systems was a potential outcome as well.

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.

Conclusion

The team determined that the college was being positively affected by the system changes and that the momentum started earlier on their own program review processes and assessment, planning and budgeting had continued to produce positive changes for the college and its students.