TEAM ROSTER AND TITLE PAGE
Maui Community College
310 Kaahumanu Avenue
Kahului, HI 76732
(808) 984-3238

Date of Visit: March 15-17, 2005

Chief Executive Officer:
Clyde Sakamoto, Chancellor

Type of Visit:
Initial Accreditation

Accreditation Liaison Officer:
Diane M. Meyer, Professor, Business

WASC Staff:
Elizabeth Griego, Associate Director

WASC ACSCU Chair:
Eduardo M. Ochoa
Provost
Sonoma State University
1801 E. Cotati Ave.
Rohnert Park, CA 94928
(707) 664-2028
FAX: (707) 664-4060
Cell: (707) 479-2945
e-mail: eduardo.ochoa@sonoma.edu

WASC Member from ACSCU:
Bro. Bernard J. Ploeger, S.M.
Executive Vice President and Provost
Chaminade University of Honolulu
3140 Waialae Ave.
Honolulu, HI 96816-1578
(808) 739-8383
FAX: (808) 739-8355
e-mail: bploeger@chaminade.edu

Over
WASC Member from ACCJC:

Donald Berz
Associate Superintendent
Vice President of Instruction, ret.
Chaffey College

Mailing Address
98272 Golden Street
Alta Loma, CA 91737
(909) 945-5611
No FAX:
e-mail: dberz@verizon.net
Maui Community College

WASC ACSCU Initial Accreditation/Candidacy Visit Team Report

May 8, 2005

Institutional and Visit Context

Maui Community College (MCC) is one of the seven community colleges in the University of Hawaii System. It serves the three islands of Maui County (Molokai, Lanai, and Maui) and serves about 3,000 students. It has operated under this name as an AA and AS degree granting institution since 1966, having originated as a vocational school in 1931. MCC was initially accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) in 1970. MCC is seeking joint accreditation by ACCJC and the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities (ACSCU) for a single baccalaureate program in Applied Business and Information Technology (ABIT). Preceding this proposal, MCC was approved for a Substantive Change for the ABIT program by the ACCJC in January 2004 and for Eligibility for Initial Accreditation or Candidacy by ACSCU in July 2004. This visit is pursuant to MCC’s request for Initial Accreditation/Candidacy by ACSCU.

In addition to a general review of the institution’s compliance with ACSCU’s Accreditation Standards, this visit focused on issues identified in the ACSCU Eligibility Review Committee letter dated July 28, 2004, to wit:

1. Refinement and assessment of learning outcomes of ABIT curriculum;
2. Support services for baccalaureate students;
3. Clarification of the scope of general education courses;
4. Sustained financial viability of the ABIT program;
5. Process of program review.
Institutional Report and Supporting Evidence

MCC submitted a very thorough and well-documented Eligibility Report to ACSCU’s Eligibility Review Committee. The Committee’s reviewing panel found that MCC met all 21 criteria for Eligibility.\(^1\) In preparation for MCC’s Initial Accreditation visit, the panel requested that MCC prepare an addendum to their Eligibility Report of no more than 35 pages to address:

- critical areas of concern identified in the July 28 letter and in the ACCJC letter dated June 2004;
- the four accreditation standards of the Senior Commission.

However, subsequent to this letter, MCC received instructions from ACSCU staff\(^2\) that modified these instructions. MCC was instructed to submit an addendum of no more than 15 pages covering the following:

a. Update of any issues and data from Eligibility Report;
b. Response to the July 28 letter;
c. Description of progress on plans for the ABIT program.

Specifically, MCC was not asked in the revised instructions to explicitly address the four ACSCU Accreditation Standards. MCC’s report followed the revised guidelines, with main sections on Program Update (a), Progress on Plans for the Program (c); and Response to Eligibility Panel’s Review (b). The report did not include a Comprehensive Review of the institution vis-à-vis the four ACSCU Standards, which is normally done when an institution is considered for Initial Accreditation. However, the addendum was thorough in responding to its charge, and allowed the visiting team to evaluate the areas it addressed.


\(^2\) E-mail message dated September 23, 2004, ibid.
Team Review Process

The visiting team arrived on campus the afternoon of Tuesday, March 15, 2005, and departed late afternoon on Thursday, March 17. The team organized itself primarily around the ACSCU Standards. Bernard Ploeger was responsible for Standards 1 and 3; Donald Berz covered Standard 2 and the General Education Curriculum; Eduardo Ochoa addressed Standard 4 and the ABIT curriculum, faculty, assessment, and learning outcomes.

Team Findings, Analysis, and Recommendations

Standard 1

Given the nature of this visit – the review of the addition of a single four-year degree in Applied Business and Information Technology (ABIT) - the focus of inquiry under Standard 1 was Criteria 1.2, consistency of offering this program with the mission of Maui Community College (MCC). That MCC continues as an institution accredited by the Junior Commission of WASC and seeing no evidence to the contrary, it is appropriate to judge MCC in compliance with the other criteria of Standard 1.

Although the issue at present is the initiation of a single four-year degree, it is clear in discussion with the leadership of MCC that the intent is to propose to the UH System leadership and the UH Board of Regents additional four-year programs at some indefinite future time. To make such programs economically viable both in themselves and a source of support for other campus purposes, there is intent to recruit a significant proportion of students from the US mainland and from foreign counties. Clearly, any expansion in the degrees to be offered and the intentional recruitment of off-island and out-of-state students would be beyond the traditional mission of a community college.
The evolution of the mission of MCC is clearly understood and is a conscious part of the strategic plan of MCC. It is based on the judgment that service to the residents of Maui County requires the addition of selected four-year degrees and is linked to sustaining Maui County’s rapid economic growth. In speaking with the University of Hawaii President and members of the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii, it is clear that they are supportive of the addition of this program and, while not as yet having authorized anything beyond ABIT, open to the approval of the offering of other four-year degrees at MCC in the future, in the context of overall System-wide decisions about priorities for program expansion at each of the System’s 10 campuses.

The University leadership believes the priority given to the support of the three additional faculty members for the ABIT program assures funding in the next State’s budget. Offering further evidence of public support for the evolution of MCC’s character was the announcement by the Maui Mayor’s Office (during the course of the Team’s visit) of its proposed budget for the coming year. Part of the press release read: “We are proposing that the county invest $1 million in MCC to encourage the creation of a four-year college program on Maui. This investment would show companies that are considering moving here that we are serious about growing our workforce. And the college could use these funds to leverage outside private investment.” However, this support proposal by the Maui Mayor has not yet been endorsed by the Maui County Council.

Consistent with the community support of the program, an external advisory board has been formed to advise on the program’s curricula and structures and community needs.

Within the campus community there was evidence of strong support for the planned evolution of mission. Although there were some concerns expressed about
whether MCC’s commitment to its non-degree and associate level students would be
lessened, there were also comments indicating an appreciation for the fact that MCC would
continue to be open in admission allowing any students to pursue the prerequisites of the
ABIT program, with admission to ABIT being upon the completion of the first two years
of work. Other internal concerns about the initiation of the ABIT program related to
adequate staffing and related logistical matters, not to the evolution in mission the program
represents.

In summary, MCC’s leadership is to be commended for leading the constituencies
of MCC in a reflection on its mission and developing a widely shared and supported vision
of the future. Such an evolution has the possibility for creating significant controversy, but
in this case the Chancellor and MCC’s leadership team have effectively managed to avoid
divisive processes.

It may be noted that within the materials provided to the visiting team and prepared
by MCC during the fall of 2004, there were some variations in the use of the terms
“mission” and “goals” for the ABIT program and the elements included (compare
Appendix D: A Preliminary Marketing Research and Implementation Proposal,
unnumbered page 2 and Appendix: G Maui Community College Annual Assessment 2003-
2004: ABIT 9/15/04, pages 1-2). These discrepancies, however, have been corrected in the
marketing proposal subsequent to receipt of the visiting team’s materials.

**Recommendation**

That the statement of mission of the ABIT program be finalized and used
consistently in all official communications.
Standard 2

Achieving Educational Objectives through Core Functions

General Education

The General Education component of the ABIT Program is clearly identified based on a philosophy and rationale that emphasizes that general education should expand a student’s basic skills, values, and general knowledge to encourage a broad based appreciation and understanding of the world and value of life-long learning. At the lower division level the general education curriculum pattern introduces content and methodology of the major areas of knowledge. The program provided a list of approved courses that may be used to fulfill general education requirements in the areas of English Communication, Humanities, Natural Science and Social Sciences. The skill standards in the areas of Critical Thinking, Information Retrieval and Technology, Oral Communication, Quantitative Reasoning, and Written Communication represent minimum learning outcomes for students who will have completed their general education experiences. These learning outcomes/competencies are made explicit in the general education course syllabi. (CFR 2.6)

As designed, students in the ABIT Program must complete a solid foundation of lower division courses distributed across the liberal arts and introductions to the major components of the program. The general education program includes five courses at the upper division level. They consist of an orientation course to the ABIT Program and courses in research and writing, conflict resolution/management, professional ethics, and intercultural communication. The upper division core courses, while delivering discipline/specific skills and knowledge, are also designed to continue to develop broad critical thinking and communication skills, an understanding of diversity, and the ethical
awareness essential to good citizenship and life-long learning as well as being successful in business. Of the total 127 credits required for graduation, 52 credits (41%) represent general education requirements—39 at the lower division level and 13 at the upper division level.

Based on a review of the individual catalogs of the University of Hawaii campuses at Manoa, Hilo, and West Oahu, the ABIT general education courses do follow a similar pattern. In particular, it shall be noted that the ABIT upper division general education courses appear to follow a comparable/compatible pattern with the upper division general education requirements at the University of Hawaii senior campuses.

Since the initial ABIT program submission, the college has continued to reflect on its general education requirements and to engage in clarifying the scope of select general education courses. This observation is based on discussions with members of the campus Curriculum Committee and Academic Senate, a review of its draft document on the general education component, and the report from the General Education Revision Committee. This has been in response to questions raised about the extent to which courses such as “Bus 130/Com 130: Business Communication - Oral” could be regarded as humanities courses.

As part of the college’s Baccalaureate Curriculum development team (BCDT), a special general education committee was designated to look at the general education curriculum. The committee consisted of MCC faculty educated both within and outside of the UH system to provide a wider range of expertise. Members of the committee researched general education curricula within the UH system as well as other colleges to determine courses that would benefit the students in the ABIT program. Additional input on general education needs was provided during focus groups with community leaders as
well as by program advisory committees. The results of these efforts were discussed at length in each of the educational units of the college, the campus Curriculum Committee, and finally approved by the Academic Senate. (CFR 2.4) The faculty expressed confidence that the general education options provide adequate opportunities for students to become a broadly educated person, with knowledge and skills for continuing life-long learning.

Of particular note is the fact that when faculty members submit courses for general education consideration they must address how the course meets the specific general education area criteria. The course outline is measured against the general education component criteria—which were developed by the Curriculum Committee—and approved by the Academic Senate prior to being added to the general education list. The lower division requirements are spelled out carefully in the college’s catalog, on the website, and in advising materials. However, for the ABIT program upper-division general education requirements await similar communication (CFR 2.12). A review of the course syllabi confirms that college level standards are explicit (CFR 2.6).

The above notwithstanding—and since the overall character of the general education portion of the ABIT program is to focus primarily on supporting the major—the college is encouraged to continue to reflect on its philosophy of general education and its role in preparing the baccalaureate student for life-long learning. Furthermore, the college is encouraged to include a statement of general education philosophy and purpose in future catalog publications. (CFR 2.12)

In summary, the ABIT Program provides students the opportunity to adequately meet the general education requirements. The competencies in oral and written communications, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis/logical thinking,
information technology, social attitudes, and appreciation for diversity are generally well provided.

Although students completing the general education requirements will have the opportunity to demonstrate their competencies as they move through the ABIT program, it is noted that this area presents an additional opportunity for revisiting and refining student learning outcomes and evaluation as an indicator of student success.

Based on a review of the general education course syllabi, meetings and discussions with select Curriculum Committee and Academic Senate faculty members, a review of the college’s initial Annual Assessment Review of the ABIT Program, and a review of the individual catalogs of the University of Hawaii campuses at UH Hilo, Manoa, and West Oahu, the General Education component of the ABIT program has been addressed in accord with the standard (CFR 2.2).

**Scholarship and Creative Activity**

The college is advised to pay particular attention to the increased expectations of the ACSCU for faculty scholarship and creative activity (CFR 2.8, CFR 2.9)

**Program Review/Evaluation/Assessment of Student Learning**

As evidenced by the college’s required Progress Report on Program Review and Evaluation submitted to the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, the Western Association of Schools and College, Maui Community College has developed and implemented a comprehensive program review and evaluation process for its educational program (CFR 2.7). In response to the requirement WASC formerly acknowledged “the efforts that the college has made to develop and implement a program review process that is meaningful for the college, employs data analysis, and results in institutional plans for improvement that appear to be acted upon.” (January 31, 2005 letter
from the Executive Director to Maui Community College Chancellor). Furthermore, the college has put in place a program review that is designed to compare student learning objectives (what students are expected to learn) to student learning outcomes (what is actually learned) at both the course and program level as students progress through the program. For the ABIT Program the college has conducted a preliminary program review (CFR 2.7). The college’s program review calls for an annual review with a comprehensive review of a program every five years. Since ABIT program’s implementation is in its early stages and since the program has only experienced a preliminary annual review it is recommended that the ABIT program undergo a comprehensive review as part of its next accreditation.

Furthermore, a process is underway to link general education course student learning outcomes to five pre-determined assessment standards developed for all the community colleges of the University of Hawaii system. The process is being designed to provide a seamless set of student learning outcomes embedded at the system, program, and course level. The objective is to provide a tool to determine if the goals of the program are being met with the current curriculum as well as pointing out areas where improvement is needed (CFR 2.7).

The program learning assessment component will call for it to be a continuous process with a focus on student learning at the course level. Defining and measuring learner outcomes, and insuring that the course learner outcomes translate to those defined for the ABIT Program will be an ongoing agenda. A review of the course (syllabi) as evidenced by the learning assessment evaluation process will support this effort. The team was impressed by how, as provided, course syllabi systematically mapped course contents to program learning outcomes and laid them out clearly and in standard form.
However, while the structures are very good the college could benefit from a critical review of the specific outcomes: in a number of cases the number of learning outcomes specified appears to be overly ambitious. The college may wish to consider grouping the current student learning outcomes into broader categories so that courses will run more smoothly and students can better grasp the scope of what is expected of them.

Based on other Maui College program reviews, the college has and continues to develop assessment using a variety of instruments and methods which entail direct as well as indirect indicators of learning.

**Support for Student Learning**

Based on meetings with library and academic support staff, the ABIT faculty as well as a review of the current and proposed future ABIT budgets, the library and support services appear to minimally be able to support the upper division of the ABIT degree program (CFR 2.13). At the time of the special visit the development and implementation of the program was primarily dependent on “soft” money. Library staff expressed concern that if the program were to grow beyond its currently anticipated minimal level, additional funding for increased library databases, books, and materials would be necessary.

In support of the ABIT program, a library assistant position has recently been authorized and a half-time computing support services specialist position has been filled. A response to a job offer for a full-time ABIT counselor is pending.

During the course of the Team visit, members met with the newly hired part-time support personnel in financial aid and counseling. Their hire seems fully proportionate to the initially anticipated size of the ABIT student enrollments and perhaps of benefit to other students at MCC. Members of the academic support staff generally are aware of the possible challenges related to the intentional recruitment of additional international and US
mainland students. Some co-curricular dimensions of the ABIT program are still to be
determined (e.g., will MCC offer non-need based aid to out-of-state students? Will MCC
directly support student life activities in the privately developed housing?). It is advised
that the College anticipate and plan for these additional services likely to be required for a
different student population.

Beyond ongoing grants, stable and continuing financial support from the University
of Hawaii system for the program needs to be solidified (CFR 2.13). Through its
governance and budgeting prioritization processes the college has established the ABIT
program as its number one priority in the forthcoming budget cycle.

In a meeting with the team Chair, the University of Hawaii Regents and the
University’s Interim President expressed strong support for the program. During our visit,
the Mayor of Maui County announced that his proposed county budget—not yet approved
by the City Council—includes $1 million in support of the four-year degree ABIT program
(to be matched by the college) over a multi-year period.

Recommendations

- That the Committee charged with the review of General Education requirements
  note that the general education courses in baccalaureate degrees should be more
  broadly reflective of the liberal arts tradition, and not specifically tied to the major.
  (CFR2.2)

- That the college’s statement of general education philosophy and purpose be
  included in the college catalog and other appropriate communications. (CFR 2.12)

- That the college undertake a critical review of those course syllabi that have a
  number of specified learning outcomes which appear to be overly ambitious. The
  college may wish to consider placing the student learning outcomes in categories so
  that the courses will run smoother, and the students will be able to grasp better the
  scope of what is expected of them. (CFR 2.6, CFR 2.7)
- That the college pay particular attention to the increased expectations of the ACSCU for faculty scholarship and creative activity (CFR 2.8, CFR 2.9).
- That the ABIT program undergo a comprehensive program review as part of its next accreditation. (CFR 2.7)

Standard 3

Developing and Applying Resources and Organizational Structures to Ensure Sustainability

In anticipation of the initiation of the ABIT program, two new members of the faculty have been hired to provide leadership in the business and computer science portions of the program, respectively. Both have significant university-level experience and hold earned doctorates in fields appropriate to their areas of instruction and have been heavily involved in the design of the ABIT program in collaboration with current members of the MCC faculty. Projections are for the hiring of a third faculty member in AY 06-07. Given the very limited number of students at present the current number of full-time faculty is judged appropriate. A concern raised and acknowledged – specifically in the information technology portion of the curriculum – is that if the currently identified faculty were to teach all of the ABIT major courses (16 in business and 11 in information technology) a student would be required to take a large number of courses from a single instructor. The provision for additional adjunct faculty in the ABIT projected budget (Appendix F) may address this concern.

MCC acknowledges that the addition of faculty with responsibility for a four-year program will require that new arrangements for their terms and conditions of service be made:

*MCC seeks an equitable framework, both actual and perceived, so as to ensure sustained collaboration and a sense of ownership among all MCC faculty*
members. At the same time, it is recognized that policies established for the ABIT faculty must accommodate upper division and applied research responsibilities that may be unique from other faculty. The campus, with the leadership of the UHPA union, is currently reviewing the responsibilities and assignments for the ABIT faculty, and it is presently anticipated that the existing collective bargaining agreement will guide faculty performance at the upper division level. Other external reviewers with upper division expertise and experience may be invited to participate in such reviews. (May 2004 submission, pg. 9).

To date, MCC has taken an ad hoc approach to the appointment of the ABIT faculty, an approach supported in interviews with the campus leadership of the bargaining unit and the executive committee of MCC’s Academic Senate. Committees have been constituted (e.g., the Baccalaureate Committee) to explore the consequences of offering four-year degrees and hiring faculty with different workload expectations and will be bringing forward recommendations. This gradual approach to the resolution of questions raised is understandable and prudent. On the other hand, questions of expectations of faculty as a basis of tenure and promotion decisions are very significant and too much delay in formalizing the new appointments could cause difficulties.

As reported in Standard 1, MCC possesses fully adequate, even generous start-up funds for the initiation of the ABIT program. In addition to the general program development support, two Maui-based companies have provided a total of about $50,000 of scholarship support for local students. Of course, the long-run viability of the ABIT and other four-year degree programs will depend in large measure, on the success MCC has in attracting a core of students from Maui, complemented by a significant number of US mainland and international students. An evaluation of this prospect is beyond the scope of the visit, but start-up resources are at a sufficient level to allow the building of enrollments over multiple years.
As indicated in MCC’s self-study, they have acquired significant funding for new facilities in the past ten years. These facilities are well-equipped with computer laboratories and instructional technologies. Support staffing is less generous in number but reported to be competent and service-oriented. The leadership of MCC is keenly aware of the need to be able to sustain and support these assets once in place and one-time funding is ended. As explained in Standard 1, the acquisition of non-resident tuition associated with ABIT is a key to the plan for the sustainability of MCC overall. In particular, the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii is considering the approval of a system-wide technology fee. It was indicated that if approved, this fee would result in approximately $390,000 of additional income to MCC. At least in the foreseeable future, the leadership has made the on-going maintenance of the resources that support the ABIT program a high priority and have in place a credible plan for securing the necessary financial resources.

The Criteria for Review related to “Organizational Structures and Decision-Making Processes” (3.8 to 3.11) are primarily associated with MCC as an educational institution taken as a whole and accreditation by the Junior Commission is presumably evidence of compliance. MCC’s processes of planning, consultation and decision-making seem to have been used to good effect in the evolution in mission that the support of the ABIT proposal represents.

**Recommendations**

- That MCC work to structure ABIT curricular offerings and to employ adjunct faculty to insure that a student may complete the degree without having to take an excessive number of required courses from the same instructor (e.g., not more than four) and that instructors have a moderate number of distinct course preparations each semester (Standard 3.2).
• That MCC formalize the terms, conditions and expectations for faculty hired to support the offering of a four-year degree in a timely manner—e.g., prior to additional new hires and/or incumbents becoming eligible for tenure and promotion (Standard 3.3).

Standard 4 – Creating an Organization Committed to Learning and Improvement

4.1-4.3 Strategic Thinking and Planning

MCC has an active and effective strategic planning process, which is linked to the setting of priorities and resource allocation. Its current strategic plan includes development of appropriate sustainable baccalaureate degrees as an action strategy to achieve the objective of supporting the county and state economy. Its current proposal for the ABIT program is thus an implementation initiative consistent with MCC’s strategic plan.

The process of program review and assessment of program effectiveness is also represented as capable of leading to shifting resources to maximize educational effectiveness in support of MCC’s strategic priorities.

The institution has established learning outcomes for its programs and through its program review has a process for assessing how well they are being achieved.

In keeping with the best traditions of community colleges, MCC is very sensitive and responsive to community needs. Its leadership has a clear vision of the possible futures for its community and economy, and is moving in a proactive fashion to help the community achieve the best-case scenarios of economic diversification and avoid extreme polarization of income and wealth. Moreover, the vision and strategies to implement it appear to be widely shared by the campus community. MCC is commended for its accomplishments in this area.
4.4-4.8 Commitment to Learning and Improvement

As documented in the Eligibility Report and confirmed in meetings with faculty and administrators of MCC, the College is fully engaged and committed to assessment of student learning outcomes, in gauging them relative to explicitly articulated learning goals and objectives for its programs, and in modifying and improving its programs informed by the results of that inquiry process.

Of particular note is the responsiveness of MCC to its stakeholders in the surrounding community, a distinct tradition of community colleges strongly present in MCC. That responsiveness is at the heart of the decision to expand into the baccalaureate ABIT program. The institution’s faculty and administrators are aware that this expansion, while building on this element of their tradition, will take the institution into new territory. They understand that faculty roles and responsibilities, for example, will be different in baccalaureate programs than in technical and Associates programs. It is clear, however, that those conversations have only just begun.

In particular, the role of research and scholarship in the work of faculty members in support of this program and any future baccalaureates will have to be defined. Expectations of performance and appropriate reward structures will have to be articulated. Policies and procedures embodying these understandings will have to be crafted and implemented. As currently configured, MCC’s retention, tenure, and promotion policies do not reflect this new emergent reality for the institution, and do not match the norms of a baccalaureate-granting institution.

Recommendation:

That MCC engage in institution-wide reflection and inquiry into the kind of academic culture (including faculty roles and rewards and how scholarship supports the
teaching mission in a baccalaureate-granting institution) that it will need to develop as it prepares to expand its scope of programs to include a four year program.

That the College develop subsequent explicit policy and procedures embodying the shared understanding of faculty roles and rewards in the new academic environment that includes a four-year program.

**Institutional Readiness for Accreditation**

In ascertaining MCC’s readiness for AACSU accreditation, this report will consider first the five areas identified in the July 28, 2004 letter from ACSCU and then present additional areas deserving of attention in relation to the four Accreditation Standards of ACSCU.

**ABIT Learning Outcomes**

MCC is commended for developing a complete set of expanded course outlines for the ABIT program of unusual comprehensiveness, including course objectives, student learning outcomes, text and materials, recommended course requirements and evaluation, and methods of instruction. The consistent and thorough structure of these outlines is reflective of current best practices in higher education.

However, the team is concerned that the sheer number of learning outcomes in most courses is too detailed and will prove difficult to assess how effectively they are being achieved.

**Support Services for Baccalaureate Students**

MCC has moved to initially address this area by adding staff in financial and counseling. The existing student services infrastructure should also provide additional support in the near and medium term.
General Education

The lower division general education program at MCC is consistent with senior institutions in the University of Hawaii system and allows MCC students to transfer with full credit to those campuses. MCC has been responsive in continuing its review of the Business Communication - Oral course to insure its content meet the expectations of a Humanities course.

The College should take additional steps to publicize and raise awareness of its GE philosophy statement among faculty and students, and continue to reflect on the appropriateness of its GE program for its ABIT program and any subsequent baccalaureate programs that may be developed.

ABIT Financial Viability

The UH system and MCC in particular is not currently funded on an enrollment basis by the State. In recent years, funding for UH has been flat, even though enrollment has increased. This has meant in effect that MCC’s funding has been cut on a per-student basis. Additional growth would aggravate this situation. However, this is a problem that affects MCC institution-wide and is not unique to the ABIT program. Moreover, MCC has a strategic planning and program review process that gives the institution the ability to redirect resources from low- to high-priority programs effectively. Thus, even on a flat budget scenario, this program would most likely be funded given its high priority to MCC and the external community.

In addition, the UH budget request includes funding for three new faculty lines for the ABIT program. Taking this factor into account—in addition to MCC’s demonstrated prowess in securing US Department of Labor funding for workforce development—the team concluded that this is not an area of concern for this program.
Program Review

MCC and all the other community colleges in the University of Hawaii are currently under Warning by the ACCJC for deficiencies in their program review processes. However, these Warnings were issued by ACCJC with the clear intent to have the UH system address their concerns at a system-wide level. In fact, the Warning letter to MCC includes a remarkable paragraph singling out MCC for praise for its campus-based program review protocol. The process includes streamlined annual reviews of all programs and in-depth reviews every five years.

In particular, ABIT went through an annual review, even though it had not yet officially started. At the structural level, the team had no concerns with MCC’s program review protocol, although an in-depth review would be advisable in short order to assess progress in the areas of concern identified elsewhere in this report.

Major Recommendations and Summary of Findings

In summary, we found MCC to be a dynamic institution with effective leadership, committed faculty and staff, and a strongly engaged external community. The ABIT development team has made great progress in developing a program responsive to community needs and consistent with the essence of MCC’s mission, even as it takes the institution to an expansion of its scope of activities. A great deal of good work has gone into the program’s development, and the results reflect this. The common thread of our remaining concerns and the recommendations below is the landmark changes in institutional culture and organization associated with any eventual transition to being a four-year institution.
Our major recommendations are that MCC should:

1. Continue to study the appropriateness of its general education curriculum for the learning objectives of baccalaureate degrees and consider revising it to a stronger liberal-arts orientation in support of ABIT and any subsequent four-year programs

2. Streamline the learning outcomes of its ABIT courses to facilitate assessment of educational effectiveness

3. Engage in institutional reflection on the changed roles of faculty as it transitions to a four-year institution, particularly the role of scholarship in faculty work and in the learning process; formalize the terms, conditions and expectations for faculty hired to support the offering of the ABIT program and any subsequent four-year degree programs in a timely manner—e.g., prior to additional new hires and/or incumbents becoming eligible for tenure and promotion

4. Work to structure ABIT curricular offerings and to employ sufficient adjunct faculty to limit the number of required courses from the same instructor and the number of preparations per instructor

5. Conduct a comprehensive program review of ABIT as soon as practicable, but no later than prior to the next institutional accreditation visit.