Part 1. Frequently Asked Questions, with Answers

1. Why are we doing what we are doing today?

In matters relating to students’ transfer across campuses of the UH System, we must fulfill clear commitments. For example, when we change academic policies and requirements, we must hold students harmless. We must make transfer as simple and predictable as possible. And we must provide students with needed information. We are bound by Board of Regents (BOR) policy to these commitments.

2. What has changed that requires this effort?

UHM and UHH have, with the Regents’ approval, changed their General Education (Gen Ed) requirements. Transferring students and all UH campuses need to know how courses transferring to UHM from other UH campuses will apply to UHM’s new Gen Ed requirements. The issue is not transfer of credits, which is covered by existing articulation policies. Rather, the issue involves whether a particular course can be used by a student to meet a specific component of the UHM Gen Ed requirements. (You can find UHM’s Gen Ed requirements at http://www.hawaii.edu/gened/ or at www.catalog.hawaii.edu.)

Students in the pipeline need accurate information about which courses will meet UHM’s requirements. We aim to provide it for Fall 03 classes.

3. What has not changed?

a. Credits that transferred before transfer now.

b. The “receiving campus” has always determined how transfer credits apply to requirements. At UHM, that decision is affected by the transfer student’s major, since majors and the colleges that sponsor them, as well as UHM’s Gen Ed Program, all have requirements.

c. Articulation Agreements help students and help the “receiving campus” by making certain transfers automatic. As we’ve noted, we already have articulation of credits. We need to work out new Articulation Agreements if we want certain courses automatically to satisfy UHM’s Gen Ed requirements.

4. Why are we reviewing courses that have articulated for 20-30 years?

To satisfy a new UHM Gen Ed requirement, a course has to possess certain characteristics referred to as hallmarks. In the past, this way of satisfying requirements was associated only with Writing-Intensive (WI) classes; all other courses were reviewed only in terms of content. Now we need to look at all UH courses in terms of the UHM Gen Ed hallmarks if we want some of them to articulate to UHM’s Gen Ed requirements.

5. Why is this so Mānoa-centric? Why isn’t Mānoa submitting its courses?

a. UHM departments went through this procedure last spring. Many UHM courses had to be modified in order to exhibit Gen Ed hallmarks. The UHM review process was rigorous. 46% of proposed courses were not approved for Foundations status.
b. So far, UHM is the only campus to request articulation of System courses to its new Gen Ed Program. Nearly all other campuses have different Gen Ed requirements, and prior Articulation Agreements may apply to those requirements.

6. Why does the Fast Track process involve only Foundations courses?

a. Last year, the UHM Faculty Gen Ed Committee reviewed more than 1000 UH System courses and found a great many of them to possess the hallmarks of UHM’s three Diversification areas. So we already have a new Articulation Agreement that covers the largest component of the UHM Gen Ed Program.

b. We now want to cover the second largest component of the UHM Gen Ed Program. That is the three Foundations areas. If we can arrive at a new Articulation Agreement with this component, we will be articulating System courses to most of UHM’s Gen Ed requirements.

c. Many of the hallmarks for Foundations courses involve matters of course content. Within the System, we have a long tradition in which decisions relating to content-based articulation involve the faculty who teach those courses. Our hope that by basing the Fast Track procedures on that tradition, we can arrive at sound but quick decisions regarding F03 classes.

d. Other components of Mānoa’s Gen Ed Program will be dealt with after we finish the Fast Track process.

7. What will happen to campus courses that aren’t covered by new Articulation Agreements?

Articulation really means “automatic.” The transfer of courses which are not “articulated” is handled by the receiving campus on a case-by-case basis that involves review of course descriptions and syllabi. So if a particular UH course is not covered by an Articulation Agreement, it will be reviewed in the same way that UHM reviews courses from mainland campuses. The case-by-case process can be rather slow but it is fair. Nonetheless, Articulation Agreements are the best way for our UH campuses to comply with BOR policy on student transfers.

8. Isn’t this Fast Track process a waste of faculty members’ time?

a. That’s for the faculty to judge. Some are proud that Gen Ed at UHM is fully faculty governed. Faculty governance takes a lot of work; work takes time. If the faculty finds this work inappropriate, then the faculty will need to accept and invite a larger role for the administration in the implementation of Gen Ed requirements.

b. Collaboration across campuses can lead us all, faculty and administrators alike, to better understand local and shared concerns. This collaboration will benefit students who transfer across our UH campuses.

Message from Interim Vice President Deane Neubauer

I apologize for the short deadlines. Perhaps I gave too much time to consulting on this process. But I can’t apologize for wanting to get accurate information to all System students before they register for Fall 03 classes.

Articulation work has never been easy. Many of us have long memories. I hope that, through collegial work during our discussions today, we can abandon baggage from the past and move toward a way of operating that puts our students and the general health of all of UH in the forefront of our concerns.