PREPARATORY REVIEW TEAM ROSTER

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I. Institutional Context

The University of Hawai‘i at Hilo (UH Hilo) is a public comprehensive university located in the city of Hilo on the island of Hawai‘i. Organized in 1970 as part of the ten-campus system of the University of Hawai‘i, UH Hilo is one of three public baccalaureate degree granting institutions in the state. It is the only accredited four-year institution on the island of Hawai‘i.

UH Hilo’s 29 bachelor's degree programs and its four master's degree programs are organized into three colleges: Arts and Sciences; Agriculture, Forestry, and Natural Resources Management; and Hawaiian Language. The College of Arts and Sciences is by far the largest of the three with 85% of the faculty and 80% of the students. The University also has a College of Continuing Education and Community Service.

The University is experiencing a period of slow but steady growth, reporting student headcount increases from 2,639 in Fall 1997 to 3,065 in Fall 2002, an overall increase of 16%.

The Hilo Campus of the University of Hawaii was granted candidacy for accreditation in 1970 as Hilo College. It was accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges in 1973 and has maintained its accreditation since that time.

In 1992, the Substantive Change Committee of WASC reviewed the separation of Hawaii Community College from UH Hilo, a separation which, it was noted, should have been subject to prior review by the Substantive Change Committee. In 1998, the Committee referred a proposal for a Master’s Degree in Hawaiian Language and Culture to the WASC Comprehensive Visit Team that was scheduled to visit the campus in spring 1998. The WASC Senior Commission expressed concern that the University had again taken an action that required WASC prior approval before securing that approval.

In 1998, the Commission approved the MA in Hawaiian Language and Literature and required prior approval for any additional master's level programs.

In 1999, the Substantive Change Committee acted to defer a proposed MA in China-US Studies and to approve the MA in Education.

In 2000, the Substantive Change Committee deferred a decision on a proposed MA in Counseling.

In 2002, the Substantive Change Committee approved the MA in Counseling Psychology and the MA in China-US Studies, noting that the required site visits for these master's programs would, if possible, occur during the 2003-04 campus visits for the preparatory and educational effectiveness reviews required by WASC under the 2001 Handbook.

II. Alignment of the Institutional Presentation with the Proposal

The University of Hawaii at Hilo (UH Hilo) prepared for its Preparatory Review by following a circuitous path. Following the 1997 Special Visit, the campus was instructed to prepare for a comprehensive visit in Fall 2001. The campus prepared for that visit by completing a self-study under the provisions of the 1988 handbook. As the 2001 handbook neared completion, a major reorganization at the University of Hawaii System Office led to a request that the Hilo visit be
pushed forward. It was agreed at that time that the next reaccreditation review would take place under the 2001 handbook with its dual visit methodology.

The Preparatory Review Proposal and the Institutional Presentation for the Preparatory Review are based in large part on the results and recommendations of the 2000-2001 Self Study. The report has been reviewed widely and with much commentary on the campus and in the local community. Reflective essays that make appropriate use of evidence stored in the institutional portfolio and that are cross-referenced to the four WASC standards, Criteria for Review, and Guidelines were prepared, as well as a concluding essay that addresses compliance with the WASC standards as they relate to institutional effectiveness and the University's readiness for the educational effectiveness review.

The team agrees that the Institutional Presentation is well aligned with the Institutional Proposal and that the data referenced in the presentation is rich. In preparing for the first team meeting, team members read and reviewed the "Preparatory Review Proposal" and the Preparatory Review Report. Using the CD version of the Report, team members followed links to the institutional data portfolio. During the first meeting (February 10 teleconference), the team, using the worksheets provided, discussed their findings regarding the alignment of the institutional presentation with the proposal.

III. Evaluation of the Institutional Presentation

The institutional portfolio, posted at the UH Hilo website: www.uhh.hawaii.edu/~accred, is described as a work in progress. Even so, it provides a very rich source data, including the 2000-2001 Self Study Report, the 2002-2010 Strategic Plan, data tables and WASC stipulated policies, and data and survey reports from the UH Hilo Office of Institutional Research, including results of the National Survey of Student Engagement, the graduating senior survey, the CIRP, the spring 2002 student preference survey, the 2001-2001 faculty HERI survey, and compilations of data of use in planning and program review.

The reflective essays and the concluding essay are crafted to refer appropriately to the Criteria for Review and to refer the reader to supporting documentation in the institutional portfolio. The essays are honest in that they acknowledge issues and areas in which additional work is needed to bring the campus into full compliance with the intent of the four standards. The essays make good use of national and local survey data, WASC required data tables, and campus and system-wide documents and publications.

In responding to Standard 1, the authors of the Preparatory Review Report relied appropriately and effectively on the following data and exhibits:

- UHH Mission Statement
- UHH Strategic Plan 2002-2010
- Strategic initiative proposals and discussions of them on the website
- UHH budgets FY 02 and 03
- UHH catalog
- UHH Organization Chart
- Stipulated policies and data tables displayed in the institutional portfolio
- Handbooks and brochures regarding a range of policies and procedures displayed in the institutional portfolio
• Work products from advertising and publications program in team room
• College Student Experience Questionnaire and National Survey of Student Engagement results
• Revised Program Review Policy and Sample Program Review documents
• Academic Assessment Plan
• Legislation granting autonomy to the UH system
• WASC Correspondence

Based on its review of the data and exhibits, the team agreed that the University has provided sufficient evidence of institutional capacity by appropriately defining institutional purpose and ensuring educational objectives.

In responding to Standard 2, the authors relied effectively and appropriately on the following data and exhibits:

• UH System Planning and Policy Reports
• UHH Catalog
• UHH Strategic Plan 2002-2010
• UHH 2000-2001 Self Study Report
• College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Handbook
• Student Affairs Organization Table
• Stipulated Data Tables
• Research Corporation of University Hawaii satellite office work products
• Description of Library and Technology Support, Advising and Orientation Programs (Self Study)
• Inventory of Enrichment and Programs and Services, Co-curricular Programs, and (Self Study)
• Inventory of Departmental Assessment Activities and Grants & Contracts related to student learning support
• Co-curricular Programs and Examples of Departmental Collections of Authentic Student Work
• National Student Exchange participation numbers
• Hawaii high school graduate higher education participation rates
• Revised Program Review Policy
• Revised Financial Aid Policies and Procedures
• Alumni Survey and Graduating Seniors Survey results
• Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP), College Student Experience Questionnaire (CSEQ), and National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) results
• Faculty Research Council charge and work products
• Charge and progress of the Faculty Congress, and its Assessment Support, General Education, and Writing Intensive Committees
• Committee on improving advising charge and progress
• Self Study Assessment Committee and Educational Programs Committee work products
• Establishment of Faculty Coordinator of Research and Director of Student Development positions
• Establishment of Office of University Disability Services and a Career Center
• Reorganization of Academic Advising programs
• Establishment of new and revised academic programs
• Establishment of Excellence in Advising Award
• Establishment of Chancellor's Scholarships
• Planning for on-campus housing

Based on its review of the data and exhibits referenced in the reflective essay, the team concludes the University has provided sufficient evidence of its institutional capacity to achieve educational objectives through core functions.

In responding to Standard 3, the authors refer to and rely effectively on the following data and exhibits:

• Stipulated data tables
• UHH Catalog
  ◦ Faculty with titles and degrees
  ◦ Staff with titles and degrees
• UHH Applying for Promotion and Tenure
• College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Handbook
• UHH Annual Reports
• UHH Organization Chart
• UHH Revenue and Expenditure Plan Summaries 1997-2001
  ◦ General Fund
  ◦ RCUH
  ◦ Endowment
• UH System Collective Bargaining Agreements
• UH System Office of Research Services Reports
• UH System Budget Policy
• UH System Distance Learning Policy
• UH System Strategic Plan for Academic Technology
• UH System Executive Policy 2.210 on "Use and Management of Information Technology Resources"
• UHH Inventory of grants and contracts
• UHH Space Inventory
• UHH Facilities Long-Range Development Plan
• UHH Capital Improvements Plans
• UHH Library Holdings (summary)
• UHH Computer Access (summary)
• Faculty Congress Charter and By-laws
• Charge and progress of Faculty Congress Budget and Technology Plan Committees
• Chancellor's Excellence in Teaching Awards
• UH System Excellence in Teaching Awards
• Chancellor's Excellence in Advising Awards
• Descriptions of Faculty Development Programs Related to Teaching Effectiveness

Based on its review of the data and exhibits referenced in the reflective essay, the team concluded that the University has provided sufficient evidence of its institutional capacity by appropriately developing and applying resources and organizational structures to ensure sustainability.

In responding to Standard 4, the authors refer to and effectively rely on the following data and exhibits:

• UHH Strategic Plan 2002-2010
Based on its review of the data and exhibits referenced in the reflective essay, the team concludes that the University has provided sufficient evidence that it is committed to learning and improvement.

IV. Visit Strategy and Validating Evidence

The visiting team, having reviewed the materials provided by the campus and having completed the Preparatory Review Worksheet, met via telephone conference call to discuss the Institutional Presentation and any additional team informational needs. The consensus was that the Presentation was rich in data. The CD portfolio with its links to the Hilo portfolio website was found to be particularly effective.

The team agreed that the campus's self review seemed to be quite honest, pointing out weaknesses in some areas and programs (e.g., general education goals, the use of data to plan and make decisions). The assessment plan and the strategic plan identify appropriate goals and performance indicators.

Based on its conference call discussion of the Preparatory Review Worksheet, the team identified five key areas for the review. They are:

1. Assessment (Including General Education)/ Program Review (Including MA Programs)
2. Faculty Development/ Faculty Diversity
3. Retention and Graduation/Institutional Research/Student Diversity
4. Planning/Resources/ Infrastructure/ Institutional Research
5. Governance/Policy/Organization

Team members were assigned to each topic on the basis of professional background, work experience and interest.

Special attention was given to the extent to which the campus is making use of data to improve the student experience, the campus success in creating ongoing systems of quality assurance, and
the extent to which university-wide policy and planning has been institutionalized. These are the issues related to institutional capacity that derive from the proposal and the Institutional Presentation.

The team's strategy for reviewing and validating evidence was to work in teams of two or more to conduct interviews and review materials, both printed and electronic.

V. Response to Previous Commission Issues

1. Alignment of Planning Objectives and Fiscal Constraints

UH Hilo has updated its 1997 strategic plan; the process was broad-based and inclusive. There is a consensus that UH Hilo is no longer a pure liberal arts college, but is evolving toward a comprehensive university in order to be more responsive to Big Island needs.

UH Hilo has designed and put into place procedures that are intended to ensure that expansion does not effect the quality of existing programs. The Congress Committee on Budget and Planning is one group monitoring this concern, and the campus is aware of the necessity of vigilance on the issue. Team key issue #4 follows up on this priority.

2. Institutional Effectiveness

The campus has developed a comprehensive assessment plan (spring 2002) and is in the process of implementing it. The University budget now includes a line item for assessment of student learning. Continuing concerns are how the data being gathered is used to impact the student experience and the degree to which faculty and staffs across the colleges and student affairs have embraced the concept.

Team key issues #s 1 and 3 follow up on this item.

3. The MA in Hawaiian Language and Literature

The University has identified and allocated resources for library materials to support this advanced degree program. The solution enhanced rather than reduced the resources available to the undergraduate majors in the College of Hawaiian Language. Team key issue #1 follows up on this item.

4. Legislative Involvement in Setting Planning Priorities

Legislation was passed and the state constitution was amended to grant autonomy to the University of Hawaii system. Follow-up on the effect of this change on UH Hilo is a part of key issue # 5 for the team.

5. Institution-wide Governance and Policy Making

The UH Hilo Faculty Congress, comprising faculty from all three academic colleges, the Library, and Student Affairs, was formed in 1998. It has taken leadership in the campus-wide movements
toward more transparent and inclusive processes, student learning assessment, and mission-based planning. Follow up on these issues is a part of team key issues #1 (consistency across colleges), #2 (consistency across colleges), and #5 (the roles and inter-relationships of the Faculty Congress and the College Senates in the governance process).

VI. Review of Institutional Capacity Under the Standards

The model selected by the institution is the four standards.

Standard I-Institutional Purposes/Integrity

The campus response to Standard I is complete and thoughtful, addressing all Criteria for Review. The strategic plan and the mission statement are clear and in alignment. Issues for confirmation are: 1) the extent to which the faculty and staff are agreed about the shift from a liberal arts mission to a comprehensive mission; 2) the progress in implementing the assessment plan; 3) the extent to which the micro-management of the institution by the legislature has been stopped; and 4) the extent to which campus leadership has been stabilized and demonstrates consistent competence and accountability.

The evidence supports the conclusion that, under Standard I, the institution has the capacity to be effective.

Standard II-Achieving Educational Objectives through Core Functions

The institutional response to Standard II is complete and thorough. As regards those criteria for review that apply to Institutional Effectiveness, the response and the adduced evidence clearly show the campus to be at or above threshold levels for reaccreditation.

University of Hawaii at Hilo exceeds the threshold expectations in capacity to support and sustain the curricular structure. Programs are accurately described, appropriate to the degree levels, and adequately staffed. Graduates of the programs prosper and understand that they have learned and achieved well. Program review policies and practices are in place to support continuous program improvement.

In the area of Scholarship and Creative Activity, the data reveal that faculty success in attracting external funding and publication is increasing. In accord with the strategic plan, faculty inclusion of students in research and creative activity is also increasing.

Support for Student Learning is also receiving the benefits of campus attention. The University's retention initiatives, supported by a robust pattern of information gathering and analysis, include improved academic and career advising, improved on-campus housing, and revisions in financial aid practices.

Under Standard II, the evidence supports the conclusion that the University has the institutional capacity to be effective.

Standard III-Developing and Applying Resources and Organizational Structures to Ensure Sustainability
In the area of Faculty and Staff, the University has a very good faculty/student ratio. There is a plan in place to use the program review process to determine more precisely the level of faculty resources needed by each department.

As regards Fiscal, Physical and Information Resources, although the campus has been required to contribute to system-wide initiatives, it has managed to sustain adequate funding for teaching and learning. Instructional facilities are being expanded as is the availability of information technology for students, faculty, and staff.

Regarding Organization Structures and Decision-Making Processes, the creation and institutionalization of the Faculty Congress as well as the success of the Strategic Plan update demonstrates that the University has the capacity to support effective decision-making with appropriate faculty participation.

In regard to Standard III, the evidence supports the conclusion that the University is at or above the threshold level for reaccreditation.

Standard IV-Creating an Organization Committed to Learning and Improvement

The University of Hawaii at Hilo appears to have made good progress in the areas of Strategic Thinking and Planning. The administrative structure has been stabilized and the strategic plan has been reviewed and updated through a process that included broad participation. Methods of participation included the use of surveys and focus groups, and included both internal and external constituencies.

The Faculty Congress, formed in 1998 to address the need for a campus-wide policy-making body, promises to make substantial contributions to the campus's capacity to sustain institution-wide strategic thinking and planning.

Like many other WASC institutions, the University is young in deeds in using tools and processes that demonstrate Commitment to Learning and Improvement. Structures, and processes exist to assure quality at each level of institutional functioning (e.g., curriculum approval, program review, ongoing evaluation, and data collection), but broader participation and commitment to using the structures and processes is needed.

The same is true of the campus's activities around issues of educational effectiveness, especially assessment of student learning, General Education program review, and retention initiatives. Faculty and students have been involved, but room for improvement exists.

At this time, the evidence supports the conclusion that the institution is at threshold levels in institutional capacity for effectiveness under Standard IV.

VII. Constructing the Team Findings and Analysis

As indicated earlier in Sec. IV, the team has identified five key issues to be addressed. The team’s findings and analysis of each of these issues will be described next.

Issue 1—Assessment and Program Review
Evidence Reviewed:

Evidence was reviewed regarding the University’s Program Assessment and Program Review processes and the relationship of the University’s commitment to learning and improvement (Standard 4) to the achievement of educational objectives (Standard 2). Interviews were conducted with representatives from the Faculty Research Council, the Institutional Research Department, Assessment Support Committee, Deans and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Faculty Congress leadership, representatives of the Faculty Senates of the schools, program directors for the master’s programs, leaders of the library and of Institutional Research, General Education Committee and WASC Self-Study Committee, the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and selected faculty.

Several sets of materials were reviewed and analyzed. The primary sources included: personnel policies, tenure and promotion policies, teaching evaluations, descriptions of faculty development programs, program review policy and the first set of program reviews completed using this new policy, the Academic Assessment Plan, the Academic Program Seven-Year Review 2002-2010, the UH Hilo Strategic Plan, the UH Hilo Strategic Initiatives 2002-2010, budget allocation documents and memoranda, sample syllabi, MA program proposals, WASC and UH Hilo communication regarding distance-delivered degree programs, curricula and evaluations.

Findings and Analysis:

The 1997 visiting team was concerned that the campus may have lacked a collective understanding and appreciation of the value and potential of program review and especially the key benefits of external reviewers. That team was also concerned that the campus did not place effective program review high on the priority list of the University. Since 1997, the faculty and administration have invested significant time, energy and resources to advance their understanding of assessment and their institutionalized practice of it. The campus is evolving steadily and measurably toward a learning-centered approach.

At the time of the last WASC visit in 1997, the campus had not yet met the 1994 recommendation to develop a standing committee on assessment as well as have established methods to measure the educational effectiveness of programs. The visiting team was also concerned that there was the absence of centralized data collection and analysis, which impeded the campus’ ability to plan effectively. Formal recommendations of the 1997 team cited problems from retention to planning to assessment that would not be meaningfully addressed without dedicated human resources assigned to collect and analyze the data. The 1997 team was critical of the lack of priority given to establishing a full-time institutional research position to provide the infrastructure support to collect and disseminate necessary data for educational effectiveness and for retention considerations.

UH Hilo has made significant progress in pursuing these 1997 WASC recommendations. Appropriate policies and procedures for assessment and program review, including external evaluators, have vastly improved and are being used. A full time director for Institutional Research has been hired and is extremely productive. Systems for data collection and dissemination have been capably created even though additional resources
will be needed as the culture of evidence expands to reach more members of the University community. The first set of program reviews have been conducted and are being evaluated this spring 2003 by the Assessment Support Committee. This core set of faculty leaders have successfully led the launching of the campus’ academic assessment effort. There is a growing, but as yet incomplete, realization among faculty that assessment and program review will improve programs and student learning.

UH Hilo has very recently been granted the authority by the UH system to have a Graduate Council which will oversee its master’s degree programs. A Program Review policy for graduate programs has not yet been developed.

Effectiveness in teaching, scholarship and service are clearly identified as central to faculty reappointment, tenure and promotion in the relevant documents. UH Hilo actively values and promotes scholarship and instructional innovation. However, as the University’s assessment initiative progresses and ongoing refinements are made, the policy definitions of quality teaching, scholarship and service should become more measurable and explicit in support of promoting linkages among these three areas.

The General Education program has an appropriate faculty oversight body in the Faculty Congress. That body is actively engaged in carrying out its charge. They demonstrate the commitment, interest and fortitude to develop the measurable student learning outcomes needed for each GE category and to identify and implement ways to gather evidence that will help determine the GE program’s effectiveness in achieving its learning goals. The GE Committee’s first task is to ensure that there is a system to collect and analyze course syllabi.

The University has made considerable progress in its assessment efforts since the 1998 special visit. The significant achievements in assessment will serve as a foundation for UH Hilo’s continued and evolving efforts to move from data collection to the analysis and utilization of this evidence for improving programs to achieve the University’s educational effectiveness goals. The WASC team would like to commend UH Hilo for the following considerable progress in its assessment efforts since the last visit:

- The University has expanded the Institutional Research Director position to a full-time position as recommended by the 1997 WASC team.
- The Faculty Congress has ratified and actively implemented the Assessment Support Committee, which evaluates academic programs reviews along with Deans and the VCAA.
- Academic program review policy and procedures for undergraduate programs have been developed and a 7-year cycle established with wide faculty participation.
- As suggested by WASC’s special visit team, the new policy requires external reviewers who are funded from the VCAA budget.
- Faculty development assessment workshops and coaching and consulting services are offered by the Institutional Research Director in partnership with the Assessment Support Committee.
- The first round of program reviews has been submitted and is being reviewed this spring by the Assessment Support Committee, the Dean and the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.
- Dedicated members of the General Education Committee have embarked on their commitment to begin a process for GE Assessment.
The 1997 WASC team praised the University for developing learning objectives for most programs and creating and adopting an assessment mechanism. They encouraged the remaining degree programs to pursue similar efforts. However, the team also challenged campus leaders responsible for the academic assessment effort to develop effective measures of learning outcomes. In examining the first round of program reviews, the 2003 WASC team found that most of the academic program objectives are framed mostly in terms of what information will be covered in a major and in courses rather than what students will demonstrate from the learning experiences. The WASC team encourages the Assessment Support Committee and the VCAA to provide additional faculty development opportunities to assist in further refining the programs’ student learning outcomes.

The University has made great strides in moving toward the vision of becoming a learning organization. However, the team offers the following observations related to the current assessment and program review processes:

- There is a lack of consistency across and within some academic departments in framing student learning objectives in measurable terms. Course descriptions often state what information will be imparted rather than what knowledge, skills and attitudes students will demonstrate as a consequence.
- Departments that have completed their program reviews report that the process was self-reflective, engaging and worthwhile. The addition of external reviewers to the program review process has been valuable to understanding program strengths and weaknesses, as well as exploring uncharted ideas for improvement.
- Various kinds of data were offered in the program review reports. For example, some departments have tracked alumni to determine their current professional positions, but do not analyze the impact of their educational programs. Also, some program reviews included a Learning Objective Matrix for knowledge, skills, values and attitudes as required in the University’s Program Review Policy.
- Some program reviews conducted an in-depth analysis of student evaluations of teaching effectiveness using the results of student questionnaire, but did not provide additional evidence of student learning achievement.
- The GE Committee faces a number of challenges as it commences with its work. While there are broad goals for General Education, they are not framed in measurable terms. Also, GE categories lack student learning outcomes. The energy and interest of the GE committee is robust, but the dual structure of the School Senates and the Faculty Congress complicates the significant task of authentically assessing the GE program.
- Development of model syllabi or a policy indicating minimum standard requirements for syllabi are critical to taking next steps in the University’s assessment initiative. Just as important is the need to implement a procedure that collects and posts the approved course syllabi for courses in the official University Catalog.
- The UH system, UH Hilo faculty and administration may not be fully utilizing the results of program reviews in the planning and decision-making processes, including the allocation of resources.
- Library and information resources are critical components to the curriculum and to achieving educational effectiveness. The library has conducted an evaluation of its resources using the ACRL standards. A policy entitled Library Impact Statement for New Programs has been drafted by the library faculty and is to be considered by the
Faculty Congress in the next few months. The team wishes to commend the faculty for including library and information resources considerations in the new program development process. However, the faculty should also consider assessing how library and information resources affect students’ achievement of learning outcomes.

- Collaborative partnerships have developed among the Assessment Support Committee, chairs of departments that have undergone program review, the director of Institutional Research, and the director of the Library in their joint effort to advance assessment systems and practices.
- The UH Hilo campus seems to perceive assessment as a function of only Academic Affairs, rather than a campus-wide inquiry that can be useful in improving student and administrative support systems as well.

Assessment of Distance-Delivered Degree Programs

The UH Hilo Academic Assessment Plan does not offer specific guidelines for integrating assessment into the GE program. It also lacks such guidelines for assessment of distance-delivered degree programs. UH Hilo offers courses on-line in computer science, English, Hawaiian Studies, Marine Science and Psychology. These programs offer over one third of the on-line degrees. As they approach the 50% requirement, it is critical that the faculty and administration have a plan for assessing programs offered on-line.

Short-Term (Prior to the Educational Effectiveness Review) Recommendations:

1. Implement a procedure that will ensure the University maintains a current set of approved syllabi for the approved courses in the official University Catalog. (CRF 2.3 and 2.6)
2. Ensure that all degree programs have a set of measurable student learning outcomes for both the programs and the courses within the programs that express what students will demonstrate as a consequence of completing the academic major.
3. Develop measurable learning objectives for each of the General Education categories.

Long-Term Recommendations:

1. Take steps to develop and implement program review policies and procedures to evaluate graduate and credential programs, develop annual program review assessments to be included in the annual reports submitted by academic departments, and move from reporting information to gathering and analyzing evidence of student learning.
2. Continue to increase the priority of program assessments and reviews by considering a dedicated budget allocation to ensure incremental program improvements that lead to effective student learning, and utilize program review analyses to align planning objectives with fiscal constraints by reallocating resources when programs are not sustainable.

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Based on its findings, the visiting team will offer a number of recommendations. Most of these will be Short-Term Recommendations, which may be implemented within the next 6-8 months prior to the WASC Educational Effectiveness Review that will take place a year from now. The team also wishes to forward Long-Term Recommendations, which may require more than a year, perhaps several years, to implement, and are for the purpose of assisting the institution prepare for the next Comprehensive Review.
3. Develop a faculty development plan that will facilitate understanding and utilization of assessment strategies and provide training opportunities on a more consistent and regular basis.

4. Promote the University’s goal toward academic excellence and institutional effectiveness by going beyond academic program review and developing and implementing policies and procedures for program review of other administrative units to improve all university operations.

5. Add to the Academic Assessment Plan a specific evaluation plan for programs that are delivered on-line.

Looking Toward the Future:

The continuing challenge for the campus will be to develop outcome indicators to measure not only the effectiveness of student learning, but also that of administrative units outside Academic Affairs to arrive at a comprehensive assessment of the institution’s educational effectiveness. Through the process of meeting this challenge, UH Hilo will become organized for learning and evolve into an effective learning organization. Such systematic efforts should contribute significantly in helping UH Hilo achieve its vision of becoming an excellent, primarily baccalaureate institution offering outstanding liberal arts and professional programs that serve the multi-ethnic students and communities of Hawai‘i.

**Issue 2—Faculty Development and Diversity**

**Evidence Reviewed:**

Several documents were reviewed to assess the budgetary support for faculty development as well as the impact of the various activities in this area. These documents included Budget Allocations for Faculty Development, Budget Allocations to Support Faculty Research, UH Hilo Research Coordinator Report of Dec. 2002, Current List of Extramural Grants UH Hilo and the UH System Research Council Homepage, descriptions of Faculty Development Activities, Case Studies from Grants Obtained. To assess the actual application by faculty of what they learned from the development activities, we looked at syllabi from several departments submitted as part of their program reviews. We also looked at the evaluations submitted to granting agencies for the curriculum enhancement of academic programs. We interviewed administrators responsible for faculty development and faculty who had taken advantage of these development opportunities. We studied lists of UH Hilo and UH System Teaching Awards and Awardees, read the description of the New Faculty Orientation (Aug. 2002), and explored the web pages for Teaching Resources for faculty.

In order to assess the ways campus diversity issues are being supported at the faculty level, we reviewed the following documentation: Personnel and Other Relevant Policies, the diversity section of the UH System Strategic Plan, Results of Recent Faculty Recruitment Cycles. We spoke with administrators and faculty responsible for hiring decisions from a number of different academic units. We read hiring and promotion documents: Positions Filled and Advertised Fall 2003, Process for Applying for Rank and Tenure.

**Findings and Analysis:**
At UH Hilo, Faculty development is recognized as important, and resources are committed to it. Examination of the UH Hilo budget identified the actual dollar amounts allocated for this purpose. Funds totaling $119,000 annually are spent for faculty development ($19,000 from the UH system funds and the remainder from UH Hilo budget). Faculty proposals are solicited once a year for funding. The UH grants are limited to $2000 each. Twenty-seven were funded in 2002-3. Many of these grants significantly improved instructional capacity. On-campus funding is dispersed by the UH Hilo Research Council. Faculty may apply for Seed Money Grants which “provide support for the initiation of research or innovative scholarship activities that have the potential of generating extramural funding, or an equivalent measure of scholarly achievement in fields where extramural funding is scarce.” These awards are limited to $15,000 typically. Smaller grants are more the norm. Proposals that seek matching funds are given priority. Grants may be renewed once if there is strong evidence that additional work will assist extramural funding. Funds do not support dissertation research, manuscript preparation, salaries, summer stipends or book acquisition. Travel grant funds are also available from the administration to support faculty presenting papers or other scholarly work at professional meetings. These awards are limited to $2000. For all funds there are guidelines, application forms and evaluation procedures in place.

There are three areas designated in the strategic plan for allocating such funds for which faculty apply to UH and UH Hilo, respectively:

1. Increase informal/creative ways of communicating across disciplines.
2. Increase support for faculty research: to increase the support for ongoing as well as for new research grants.
3. Train faculty in student learning assessment strategies and continuing program improvement.

Faculty were queried as to which of the above areas have been impacted by these programs in the past year. The responses were clear that activities in all three areas have increased greatly.

To support their response in the first area, they described case studies (also found in the documentation in the team room) of the ways increased faculty collaboration across disciplinary units has been achieved through grants obtained. For example a STEM grant links the sciences, Hawaiian values and technology. Another grant joins the College of Hawaiian Languages and the Department of Education to support a project to increase the teacher certification of native Hawaiians. The end result of these collaborative grants has been intensive cross-disciplinary work impacting faculty development. Faculty have received training to become more effective teachers by engaging them in understanding issues of cultural sensitivity. There has been an increase in curriculum reforms (resulting in a change from traditionally discipline-centered to Ethno-centric foci), and in community outreach (increasing indigenous Hawaiian participation in majors and study in traditionally unattractive or improbable choices for them such as science, mathematics, education).

With regard to research grants, UH Hilo faculty are increasingly engaged in funded research activity and are including students in their activities as outlined in the strategic plan. In fact, approximately $14.7 million was awarded in total grant activities in 2001
alone (information provided by the administration). Faculty also report that they have more than doubled the UH Hilo grant money obtained for research support in the last few years. This funding has enabled faculty to be released from teaching (lecturers and/or instructors are hired using grant funds for course coverage) and students have been hired as research assistants providing them with funds and valuable educational experiences. Additional funds (limited though they may be) are added to the Academic Operating Budget thanks to overhead dollars.

Promotion of teaching strategies for student learning has occurred in a variety of ways this year. In January of 2003 faculty attended a student panel during which students commented on their needs/understandings upon reflecting on the “Seven Principles of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education.” Faculty met in small groups following the student panel to discuss what they might implement in classes and curriculum to respond to what they had heard. A follow-up meeting is on the calendar for April 2003 to evaluate their success. Several additional presentations on teaching and learning were held in Spring 2003 funded by the office for Student Affairs:

- A conversation with Arthur Chickering to discuss the above mentioned “Seven Principles” coined by him
- “Making Colleges Work Better for Diverse Students” a conversation with Paul Thayer
- “Promoting Student Learning” with Vince Tinto.

Two presentations have yet to take place, but will occur in Spring, 2003:

- “Fostering Success for Pacific Island Students” with Francis X. Hezel, SJ
- “Native Hawaiian Students: Promoting Success within the University,” a panel discussion.

UH Hilo, at both administration and faculty levels, understands the need to provide faculty with assistance in improving both scholarship and teaching/learning style strategies in order to move forward with assessment and to qualify new faculty for promotion and tenure. Funding of faculty development appears robust and in place as a matter of course. The UH Hilo Faculty Research Council disperses funds for travel to meetings, research activities and professional development. The grants obtained by faculty are significant in that they do help fund the UH Hilo faculty development line items. Approximately 50% of those requesting funding this year have received approvals (19 of 37 proposals funded). The response of the faculty has been very positive to the outlay of these funds, and they have significantly improved the level of research and scholarship at the campus.

One new concept to assist in the faculty development of new hires has just begun. A new mode of orienting new faculty to the campus was instituted by the College of Arts and Sciences in Fall 2002. Rather than spreading the orientation over an entire semester, two days at the beginning of the fall term were devoted to workshops and input from various campus leaders to assist newcomers to the unique make-up of the student body and their learning styles. Additional time was devoted to understanding administrative requirements and available academic support services. The assistant dean for CAS has been responsible for seeing that all new faculty are assigned a mentor. The current philosophy is to use faculty outside the new hire’s discipline who is a good match to
increase interdisciplinary discourse and cooperation. This mentoring program has been in place for one year, so it is too early to assess its impact.

The University is to be commended for its wise establishment of an autonomous office at UH Hilo to seek external funding support (via federal grants and other private sources). As a result of the establishment of this position, external funding for the campus’ faculty development and research activity has more than doubled in three years.

The faculty should justly be proud of their accomplishments in obtaining external funding for research that supports the needs of the island community and that develops “a community of learning and scholarship” in line with the mission of the campus. The Hilo campus has seen creative action, and growth in outreach to the local community as a result of these faculty development activities. Student involvement as research assistants is both educationally and financially significant.

Much funding has been obtained to increase multi-disciplinary approaches to learning which is culturally sensitive and has altered modes of course delivery to meet the needs of students who are the first-time college goers in their families. The faculty collaboration and initiative in this regard is impressive and worthy of special commendation. Concern about how ready the faculty are to move from writing syllabi that describe content covered to including student learning outcomes still exists on the part of the team. Faculty we queried were found to be at differing places with regard to this ability. Some have already written syllabi with measurable learning outcomes while others are still unsure of what this means. It is an area that is critical for moving to increased focus on student centered learning in development opportunities for faculty.

**Diversity issues:**

Viewing the statistical data for the diversity present on the Hilo campus, the team did find UH Hilo faculty are disproportionately Caucasian and male. There is a desire on the part of the University to improve the overall diversity of the campus for both staff (less of a need) and faculty. The latter will take some time, as tenured positions must first be vacated and suitable candidates found to fill the niche created by the retirement of senior faculty members. The opportunity lies before the University to increase faculty diversity across the board. While there is not yet a formal, commonly understood plan in place for hiring more diverse faculty at this campus, the UH system does have the UH Strategic Plan for Diversity 2002-2010: A Commitment to Action in place. The UH Hilo’s part of this plan has yet to be completed according to the system publication. UH Hilo faculty groups surveyed could not recall formulation of a plan in this regard; nevertheless, they verbally reported that faculty in their areas did not seem averse to seeking more women and diversity in their departments. And, in fact, new hires made recently have de facto increased the diversity of the respective units. The administration reports there is a plan to increase diversity but it has not yet been formally disseminated. The EEO/AA Director has been using aspects of the plan to move forward with hiring and recruiting for both faculty and staff positions. There appears to be energy behind these actions to increase diversity. It will take time and should be done with a careful match of planning and resources.

UH Hilo is to be commended for its on-going sensitivity to and curriculum reforms for increasing diversity perspectives. While it may not be readily apparent on the face of the
University, the actual reality is, in effect, quite diverse in spirit and understanding. The team saw the cultural tone of Hawaii embedded in the faculty, staff and thinking of the University.

**Short-Term Recommendations:**

1. The faculty and administrative leadership should develop a plan for ON-GOING funding of faculty development to improve student-centered teaching activities; i.e., funding should be specifically designated for such activities and not combined with funds for research or cross-disciplinary opportunities.

2. The academic leadership should review the campus’ needs and allot funds in a systematic way to establish measurable student learning outcomes for both General Education and the undergraduate majors at the Hilo campus. The faculty development needs in this area are critical to achieving Educational Effectiveness. Outside assistance and coaching may well be required for this plan to be well conceived and effective.

3. The plan to increase the diversity of the campus staff should be widely disseminated and implemented through more communication as well as coordinated planning and funding.

**Long-Term Recommendation:**

1. Follow-up activities from the faculty development forums of spring 2003 should continue to address teaching, learning and curriculum changes required to match student learning styles/needs with the delivery of academic content. Assessment of changes instituted should be designed and then conducted in an on-going manner.

2. The University should consider bringing in some outside assistance for the faculty who are still unsure of either the necessity or the way to develop student learning outcomes. Use of some development funds could assist the institution better assess the effectiveness of General Education and courses in the majors in the long run if faculty have this understanding and need clearly in their minds.

**Looking toward the Future:**

By developing and implementing a plan to assess the impact of all three areas of faculty development activities (communicating across disciplines, faculty training in student learning assessment strategies, and program improvement) with special emphasis on the impact of these activities on student learning, the University should be able to develop a cadre of faculty with outstanding teaching skills.

**Issue 3-Retention and Graduation/Institutional Research/Student Diversity**

**Evidence Reviewed:**

The documents reviewed by the visiting team included work products of the Office of Institutional Research including studies of Retention and Graduation Rates for First Time Freshmen; Admission and Enrollment Rates for First Time Freshmen and Transfer Students; data on Participation of High School Graduates by Ethnicity; Retention and Graduation Rates by Ethnicity and Gender; Retention and Graduation Rates for Student Athletes; results and analyses of the CIRP, CSEQ, and NSSE; and results and analyses
of local surveys such as the Graduating Senior Survey and Alumni Surveys. The team also reviewed student handbooks, including the student athlete handbook, and a variety of outreach materials, brochures, and descriptions of activities.

In addition, interviews were conducted with administrators, faculty, staff, and students regarding policies, processes and documents pertaining to transfer students, articulation agreements and practices, advanced standing evaluations and timelines, and plans for future improvements.

Findings and Analysis:

UH Hilo has taken positive steps toward identifying barriers to student success and developing and implementing programs, processes, and activities that enhance retention, graduation, and student satisfaction with the climate of this very diverse campus. In doing so, administrators, faculty and staff have begun to make appropriate use of the data and analysis provided by the Office of Institutional Research.

The UH Hilo Strategic Plan (2002-2010), identifies six major goals, four of which, admirably, address student learning and student success directly:

1) Maintain a well-rounded mix of liberal arts and professional programs, while distinguishing ourselves by taking full advantage of the extraordinary natural environment and cultural diversity afforded by our island setting;
2) Continue to refine and strengthen efforts to fulfill our primary mission to offer high quality undergraduate liberal arts and professional programs;
3) Build a learning environment that facilitates student development and success; and
4) Obtain sufficient resources to support enrollment growth, high quality programs, and enhanced services.

In general, the campus knows a great deal about its students, how they experience the campus environment, and their attitudes toward the University, its programs and its services. The UH system and the UH Hilo Institutional Research office maintain basic demographic information and information on participation, retention, and graduation. The campus makes good use of common student surveys such as the CIRP, CSEQ, and NSSE and local surveys such as the Graduating Senior Survey and Alumni Surveys to gather information about student attitudes, expectations, experiences, and satisfaction. Some progress has been made in using survey information to inform or reform campus practices; these efforts are most developed in the areas of student affairs and student services. The campus is struggling to discover or design a process by which the faculty as a whole can be engaged in analyzing the data and using it to improve student learning, retention, and graduation.

According to its Strategic Plan, UH Hilo wishes to grow in order to serve more of the traditionally underserved residents of the State of Hawaii, thereby fulfilling its mission as an economic engine for the state and the big island. The challenge lies in the context. Historically, residents of Hawaii who could afford to do so have sent their children to the mainland for college. As a large, visible Research I university, UH Manoa has attracted the largest portion of the remaining high school graduates who are best prepared for
university study. The high school graduates who are less well prepared are likely to choose their local community colleges if they begin post secondary education at all.

UH Hilo has an active program of recruitment, including outreach to high schools and community colleges within the state and in the western states of the mainland. There is also an articulated recruitment plan for international students. Outreach programs are also being designed and implemented for community colleges on Hawaii, Maui, and Kauai.

The UH Hilo campus is recognized as a community resource, not only by the residents of the city of Hilo, but also by the residents of the Big Island in general. It is the site of many community and private events, such as Future Farmers conventions, high school proms, and weddings. This is a practice that is a very positive force in community relations and in the recruitment of local students.

UH Hilo students are articulate and thoughtful about what would improve their satisfaction with their educational experience. In Fall 2003, during a consideration of a tuition increase for upper-division students, the University surveyed the student body to determine its priorities (“What Our Students Want”). Overwhelmingly, the student priorities were for experiences and services directly related to the instructional programs and to their preparation for the world of work. It will be important for the University of Hawaii system to understand that the UH Hilo desire to grow by increasing academic programs and to evolve toward an identity as a comprehensive university is, to a great extent, based on student needs and priorities.

For UH Hilo students, there are many barriers to successful completion of a baccalaureate degree. The University, under the leadership of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, has wisely decided to improve retention and graduation rates by attending to the “40 little things” that are under its control (e.g., internet connectivity, outdated financial aid procedures) to increase student satisfaction. UH Hilo is beginning to see improvements in first time freshman retention rates. The Student Affairs officers and staff have been extremely creative and innovative in identifying ways to move the retention agenda forward even during this long period of budget constraints and reductions.

Limited on-campus housing exacerbates the retention problem, especially for first-time freshmen. The proposed US-China Center, which will nearly double the number of beds available, should help improve retention for this group. The campus is also considering a policy that would give first time freshmen preference for the on-campus housing; such a policy would also help.

According to the Office of Admission and Records, nearly 60% of the first time freshmen, who do not return for the second year, leave with grade point averages above 3.0 (“Retention and Attrition Data”). This data means that the retention issue is not a symptom of lack of academic success—first time freshman students are leaving voluntarily, which means that the issue revolves around student satisfaction.

Transfer students comprise a significant and successful portion of the UH Hilo undergraduate population. Since its last WASC visit, the Admission Office has developed a process that allows them to provide excellent information to transfer students regarding transferability of previous work as soon as the student indicates intent to enroll
by paying a deposit. The current method is labor-intensive but nonetheless effective (students, senior administrator). The campus has high hopes that the new records system (SCT Banner) will improve the efficiency of the process.

UH Hilo student athletes are not only very good athletes, they are also very good students and complete their degrees at a very high rate (“Retention Rates for Student Athletes,” senior administrator). The campus has recently adopted a priority registration program for student athletes; that practice has been helpful in allowing athletes to plan courses around travel and practice schedules. The Athletics program also offers a Fifth Year Degree Completion program for athletes who have exhausted their eligibility. An internship program that supports student athletes who need a little more time to complete their degrees is a creative program to improve the graduation rate of student athletes.

An important challenge for the Athletics program is to meet the requirements of Title 9; it is currently not in compliance with this law. The UH Hilo student body is 60% female. At this point, the Athletics program is about forty female positions short of Title 9 compliance. The program has developed a five-year plan to come into compliance by adding women’s sports. Until recently, the Athletics program was partially supported by a revenue stream that derived from stadium revenues from a facility on Oahu. That revenue stream has dried up, so the Athletics program is working on creative approaches to leveraging their scholarship program and is actively and successfully involved in supplementing the budgets through development and outreach activities.

UH Hilo has either the most diverse or one of the most diverse student bodies in the United States. The students with whom the team interacted (who reflected the diversity of the campus) expressed a high degree of satisfaction with their campus. They especially appreciate the personal relationships that characterize their experience on the campus, the fact that the curriculum reflects their diversity, and, in general, the commitment and accomplishment of the faculty, staff, administration and other students. They understand that in a predominately undergraduate institution, they have opportunities (e.g., involvement as research assistants, teaching assistants, etc.) that would not be as readily available to them in an institution with a large graduate program.

The campus has undertaken a serious self-reflective activity by participating in the College Student Experience Questionnaire and the National Survey of Student Engagement. Results of those assessments reveal that UH Hilo students are less engaged than their national counterparts and believe their assignments, especially at higher cognitive levels, are less demanding than those assigned to their counterparts at other institutions. Increased opportunities to engage in active learning and to use the island as a learning laboratory is a part of the Strategic Plan that could help form the response to this finding.

UH Hilo faculty and staff have mounted a serious initiative to increase grants and contracts in order to bring additional resources to the University. They have chosen to do so by, in many cases, developing proposals that include opportunities for students to participate in research and teaching. In other cases, the grants and contracts provide direct services to students. The University’s achievement in this area in the three years since the satellite RCUH office was created is commendable.
The students to whom the team talked identified two areas in which they thought the institution could improve the student experience. One had to do with the generally cumbersome nature of bureaucracies—e.g., the difficulty of establishing and administering trust funds or income reimbursable funds to allow the development of self-support activities and the two month lead time required for the approval of student travel. The team understands that these issues are system, not campus, issues, but if UH Hilo could improve student satisfaction in these areas as much as it has improved faculty success in gaining external funding by having more delegated authority (as in the satellite RCUH example), great benefits could accrue to the campus and the system as well.

Second, the students we interviewed expressed their concern that issues of faculty governance and the lack of clear divisions of responsibility in the shared governance system were allowing faculty attention to be diverted away from student life and student learning in ways that were fractious and detrimental to the campus’s good health. They feared that faculty might spend so much time in the multi-layered governance systems that they no longer had time to be involved with students.

**Short Term Recommendations:**

1. Continue and expand efforts to improve the University’s retention and graduation rates by analyzing and better understanding data gathered from various surveys and by the recently established Office of Institutional Research.
2. Begin planning for additional student housing immediately to accommodate the projected increase in student enrollment.

**Long-Term Recommendations:**

1. Find a way to bring the Athletics Program into compliance with Title IX rather than eliminating it; e.g., by developing its ability to supplement its budget through development activities with the assistance of staff.
2. The faculty should be encouraged and supported to continue their efforts to increase grants and contracts that include opportunities for students to participate with them as research assistants or teaching assistants.

**Looking Toward the Future:**

UH Hilo is positioned to make substantial progress in improving retention and graduation rates. Administrators and staff across the campus are engaged in initiatives small and large that will improve student services and satisfaction, provide more opportunities for student engagement, and realize the vision of UH Hilo as a university for which the Big Island is a learning laboratory. The enrollment growth that will support the growth of academic offerings must be supported by predictable increases in the base budget if the UH Hilo Strategic Plan, as it relates to students, is to be realized.

**Issue 4—Planning/Resources/Infrastructure/Institutional Research**

**Evidence Reviewed:**

The documents reviewed by the visiting team included the UH Hilo Strategic Plan, Quality Performance Indicators for UH Hilo, the UH Hilo Preparatory Review Report,

Interviews were conducted with administrators, faculty, staff, students, and community leaders representing a number of different offices, departments, disciplines and fields.

Findings and Analysis:

UH Hilo has taken positive steps towards developing and implementing some of the planning and infrastructure resources needed to serve students well. A strategic plan with quality performance indicators has been developed with broad input from the faculty, staff, students and the Hilo community. The Faculty Congress approved the major goals, objectives and strategies of the revision of the 1997-2004 UH Hilo Strategic Plan on May 8, 2002. The full plan was approved by the Faculty Congress on October 25, 2002 and in turn the UH Board of Regents approved the plan on November 22, 2002. The Strategic Plan identified six major goals:

1) Maintain a well-rounded mix of liberal arts and professional programs, while distinguishing ourselves by taking full advantage of the extraordinary natural environment and cultural diversity afforded by our island setting;
2) Continue to refine and strengthen efforts to fulfill our primary mission to offer high quality undergraduate liberal arts and professional programs;
3) Build a learning environment that facilitates student development and success;
4) Obtain sufficient resources to support enrollment growth, high quality programs, and enhanced services;
5) Embrace opportunities for dynamic community involvement; and
6) Establish a more effective organization and invest in human capital.

This plan included key performance indicators to measure success and delineated a process to update how the institution is progressing in implementing these goals.

An administrative structure is now in place with all senior positions filled by permanent individuals prepared to address the challenges confronting UH Hilo. A very positive step is the establishment of an Institutional Research office to collect and disseminate data to the campus fulfilling a need identified by the 1997 WASC team. While the Institutional Research Office is producing much needed data and survey analyses, it is not clear how these data are being incorporated into the planning processes of the University. The data collection and dissemination process should not be the drivers in the planning process but rather aid in the decision-making process and assessment of various desired initiatives or programs. The data being collected and analyzed should not only assist the campus in measuring progress in implementing the strategic plan, but also in program review and potentially student learning and outcomes assessment.
Impact of system budgeting on institutional planning. The budget process for the UH system does not follow a clearly defined process for allocating resources based upon a prescribed set of formulas or principles that lend themselves to a predictable budget planning process for the UH Hilo campus. In many higher education systems, allocations are augmented for clearly defined purposes such as enrollment growth, deferred maintenance, instructional equipment, information technology, library acquisitions, negotiated compensation increases, etc. While the State of Hawaii has experienced economic challenges in recent years, the UH system budget process has received no or very limited support for these targeted purposes to augment the UH Hilo base budget in a planned and predictable pattern.

UH Hilo has operated on a relatively fixed budget for a number of years. They have received some incremental increases in funding the past few years but have received very little additional funding for enrollment growth or for maintenance of additional new space. From 1999-2001, the University received some one-time funding for specific programmatic development, equipment acquisitions and technology. However, the lack of additional funding for enrollment growth as well as no additional resources for new space or to cover the full cost of compensation increases have eroded the real and actual dollars that UH Hilo has to meet its obligations for salaries and operating expenses.

When the full cost of negotiated compensation increases are not appropriated to UH Hilo, the additional funds required necessitate a reduction in the operating budget if no reductions in personnel costs are instituted. Further, UH Hilo has been assessed its “share” of the cost to increase staffing at the UH President’s office when new positions are created. It appears that few people at UH Hilo fully understand that this near “zero-sum game” has necessitated reductions in operating budgets in some areas to increase positions or support in another. Also, given that no funding has been provided for enrollment increases or enrollment related activity, the students associated with this growth have been accommodated by increased workloads of staff and faculty.

Without a clearly defined and predictable process, UH Hilo cannot continue to accommodate enrollment growth without jeopardizing its base infrastructure both in personnel, normal operating expenses and in maintenance of its facilities and grounds. Negotiated compensation increases need to be fully funded and maintenance costs for new physical space needs to be provided to prevent diverting much-needed, and perhaps inadequate, resources in one area to facilities maintenance, or not providing additional resources at all. Funding facilities maintenance appropriately is a sound financial investment that hopefully will curtail the growth of deferred maintenance costs that are increasing at UH Hilo and at many higher education institutions throughout the country.

The core budget of UH Hilo has been eroded due to a lack of support for enrollment growth, compensation increases and new space. To continue to do so in the future will put the university in jeopardy of being able to provide a full array of instructional and student support services as well as to adequately maintain the existing physical plant. Without adequate funding, providing access and meeting its planned goal of increasing enrollment to 5,000 FTES will be an unfulfilled promise at UH Hilo. An additional budgetary problem for UH Hilo is its ongoing relationship with Hawaiʻi Community College. UH Hilo continues to spend $1 million per year to support HCC’s physical plant, its maintenance, the library and utility needs. If a complete physical and fiscal
separation of the two institutions does not occur, as costs in this area continue to escalate, UH Hilo needs to receive commensurate funds for these increased expenditures.

Given the current economic climate, UH Hilo may sustain a reduction in its current year budget and is very likely to be confronted with a further reduction of 3-5% in next fiscal year’s operating budget due to a State budget shortfall. This could mean a reduction of around one million dollars on a base operating budget of $27M.

The unpredictability of the UH system budget process makes planning a very difficult process. Implementing UH Hilo’s strategic plan will necessitate an infusion of significant resources. However, given the uncertainty of future funding for the initiatives to implement the plan, the campus is placed in a quandary about moving forward with the plan, retrenching or pausing in the process.

A request from the President’s Office for strategic initiatives in May 2002 may have also affected the potential success of the recently approved Strategic Plan. In May 2002, after approval by the Faculty Congress of the major goals, objectives, and strategies of the draft revised Strategic Plan, the UH President sought strategic initiatives from the campus as part of the budget process. Although these strategic initiatives were linked to the revised Strategic Plan, due to a short timeline for their submission, they were not reviewed nor approved by the Faculty Congress prior to their submission to the UH President. While these initiatives reflected the goals of the Strategic Plan and were recognized as such by the President, no funding for any of the initiatives was forthcoming. Further, these initiatives have not been totally accepted by the campus community as emanating from the strategic planning process that the campus had followed the previous academic year. This reaction to the initiatives along with the economic difficulties confronting the State of Hawaii have stymied the planning process at UH Hilo and prioritization or full vetting of these initiatives. In April 2003, the Congress completed a draft plan for approval of new programs, including those put forward in the strategic initiatives.

When the President’s request for strategic initiatives was responded to by UH Hilo and no additional funding was provided for any of them, this was not only discouraging to everyone who participated in developing these initiatives, but also for all of those involved in the strategic planning process over the past year. The last-minute call for initiatives and the ensuing response disrupted the all-campus planning process. This has led to a belief by some elements of the institution that the strategic initiatives are not related to the strategic plan since they were not fully vetted and were responded to so quickly, ultimately when the academic year ended and faculty were gone for the summer.

UH Hilo has successfully completed some major capital outlay projects that have added an 85,000+ square foot classroom and office building and a 10,000+ square foot Marine Sciences Building in the past two years. The University also has a number of other projects that are being proposed/scheduled in the next few years to provide additional new space as well as to repair, renovate and upgrade current space. A list of deferred maintenance projects totaling over $29 million have been identified and prioritized and addressed with annual capital support of over two million dollars.

UH Hilo has recently signed a public/private partnership agreement for building additional student housing and retail stores on University property. This partnership will
provide highly-valued student housing and shops for students built by private developers. After thirty years, the property and the facilities will revert to UH Hilo. It appears to be a win/win situation for the University and the developers that will greatly benefit the students and the University.

**Short-Term Recommendations:**

1. Initiate an inclusive budget planning process so that all constituents are aware of the budgetary problems that confront the institution, including the fact that UH Hilo has been operating on a relatively fixed budget which has not accounted for cost of living increases in operating expenses, fully funded compensation and benefit increases, adequately funded enrollment increases, etc.
2. Involve the faculty in evaluating the strategic initiatives, modifying/ adding/deleting as deemed appropriate, and prioritizing them. Where possible, consider implementing initiatives not requiring additional resources, or requiring redirection of existing resources without harming other programs.
3. Examine and utilize the Strategic Plan to institute budget cuts, if necessary, in the near term. Utilize the Plan to keep UH Hilo positioned to implement some of its goals even during the pending budget crisis and definitely when the economy recovers and funding is restored/enhanced.
4. More fully utilize the Office of Institutional Research’s capabilities in data collection, analysis and dissemination in strategic planning, program review, developing retention strategies and student learning programs, and evaluating the success or failure of these and other activities.

**Long-Term Recommendations:**

1. Reevaluate and reengineer the UH system’s budgeting process to move away from a historically incremental budget approach to one in which allocations are provided for enrollment growth or decline and funding for initiatives, compensation increases and new space are adequately and predictably funded.
2. Partly link the budget allocation process to progress in achieving the goals of the UH system’s Strategic Plan as determined by the measurement of performance indicators.
3. Decentralize some of the fiscal controls currently in place to provide greater autonomy and opportunities for creative activities that would be more user-friendly and student-centered as well as meet the needs of the institution that are not well-served by centralized controls.

**Looking toward the Future:**

UH Hilo is poised to take the next steps in its evolution as a university. The Strategic Plan approved by the institution and the UH Board of Regents outlines a clear direction that identifies its role in the higher education system in Hawai‘i. Clearly delineating this role within the UH system will give the institution a unique identity and mission distinct from other institutions in the State.

**Issue 5—Governance/Policy/Organization**
Evidence Reviewed: The visiting team reviewed several documents related to this area, including the Faculty Congress Charter and By-Laws, the Faculty Senate Charters and By-Laws, the Report on the Preparatory Review, Documentation Related to Proposed Reorganization, the Reorganizational Proposal of the University of Hawai‘i System Administration, and articles, publications, resolutions and legislation regarding the changing relationship between the UH system and UH Hilo. The team also conducted on-site interviews with a broad range of constituents, including key administrators, faculty, staff, students, and community leaders. The chair of the team also participated in the review of the UH system (which occurred just prior to the UH Hilo visit) and reviewed documents provided for that review and interviewed system-level administrators, members of the All Campus Council of Faculty Senate Chairs, and the President of the University of Hawai‘i Student Caucus.

Findings and Analysis: Based on its review and interviews described above, the visiting team has arrived at the following findings:

• UH Hilo has succeeded in establishing a campus-wide governance body, the Faculty Congress. The current Chair of the Faculty Congress also serves as Co-Convener of the All Campus Council of Faculty Senate Chairs at the system level. The Faculty Congress played a significant role in the development of UH Hilo’s Strategic Plan and its Report on the Preparatory Review. A number of important standing committees have been established by the Faculty Congress, including the Academic Policy Committee, the Assessment Support Committee, the General Education Committee, and the Committee on the Budget. Faculty on these committees were selected by the Faculty Congress, rather than hand-picked by the Administration as in the past. A policy recommendation from the Faculty Congress on making this a regular practice is currently being reviewed by the Administration. Another policy recommendation from the Faculty Congress to involve faculty in determining release time is also being reviewed by the Administration.

• While the Faculty Congress is on its way to establishing itself as a governance body that engages important issues for the campus, the visiting team believes that further changes are needed in the campus governance structure to make it more rational and effective. Currently, in addition to the Faculty Congress, a separate faculty senate exists for the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) with 140 faculty, a second for the College of Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Management (CAFNRM) with 14 faculty, and a third for the College of Hawai‘ian Language with 5.5 faculty. If an action by one of these senates is judged not to have an impact beyond its own college, it is apparently not forwarded to the Faculty Congress for further review. However, without such a review, there is the possibility that an action by the senate of one college may inadvertently have an impact on another college. Moreover, the existence of these senates adds a bureaucratic layer which does not exist in most other institutions of UH Hilo’s size and seems unnecessarily cumbersome.

• The respective roles of the Faculty Congress and the college senates also do not appear to be well-defined, leading to some confusion. For example, when the College of Hawai‘ian Language submitted a proposal to establish an immersion program in teacher education, the Faculty Congress apparently did not know how to review it because it did not connect with any issues they were familiar with. Moreover, the roles of these senates in policy development, budget planning, and other matters which impact faculty do not appear to be clearly delineated and need to be clarified.
• A similar situation exists at the system level. The President of the UH system has created the All Faculty Council of Faculty Senate Chairs, which is constituted of faculty from all ten campuses of the University of Hawai‘i system. However, here again questions have been raised about the roles of the governance bodies on the campuses and that of the Council in academic policy development. If the Council begins to play a significant role in policy development at the system level, it is likely to lead to greater concern over better defining the roles of the governance bodies on the campuses and their relationship to the Council at the system level.

• At both the campus and system levels, the visiting team had the impression that the faculty’s view of their role in governance, especially in policy development, was more limited than that of most institutions.

• Some of the problems associated with the campus’ current governance structure appear to be related to the organizational structure of Academic Affairs. Currently, the CAS is organized into four subunits: the Natural Sciences Division, the Social Sciences Division, the Humanities Division, and the School of Business Administration and Economics. There apparently have been discussions within the CAS going back almost a decade over whether or not to break down the college into smaller, more manageable units, each headed by a dean. Such a reorganization has been favored by some of the subunits but not by others, resulting in an impasse. It seems to the visiting team that the breakdown of the CAS into smaller, more manageable units of faculty in similar disciplines would be worth exploring further because it would enable the deans of these units to exercise more decisive and focused leadership and to become stronger advocates for their colleges. Such a reorganization may make even more sense if the university continues to grow and achieves its goal of doubling in size.

• The CAS is clearly the dominant unit in Academic Affairs, constituting over 85 percent of all faculty. Because of the CAS’s size, the Dean of the CAS has almost the same span of responsibility as the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. According to faculty leaders who spoke to the visiting team, this has led to conflicts between the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and the Dean of CAS. They attribute the high turnover of administrators in both positions to this structural factor. The breakdown of the CAS into smaller units would ameliorate this problem and allow the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs to provide more balanced leadership and management to the colleges. It should also enable each college to function more efficiently, improve communications and collaboration within the college, lead to greater empowerment at all levels, and develop a greater sense of identity and community among the faculty in each college.

• At the system level, the Board of Regents made the decision to create a system-level office by separating the position of the UH system presidency from the position of the UHM chancellorship. The new President has moved decisively during the past year to create the system office by hiring several vice presidents and other high-level administrators. Under the new organizational plan, the Provosts of the community colleges would become Chancellors reporting directly to the President, and the Vice President and Chancellor for Community Colleges will become the Vice President for International Education. The system administration believes this change will have a number of benefits, such as enhancing the role of the community colleges and improving transfer rates, but it has been somewhat controversial and needs to be resolved as quickly as possible. However, the new organizational plan cannot be fully implemented until it has been reviewed and approved by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC), which views the
reorganization of the University of Hawai‘i community colleges as a substantive change.

- It is too soon for the visiting team to assess the impact of this reorganization on the UH Hilo campus. The new President has indicated that he expects all the campuses to develop unique missions, but that he also wants to create “one university with many portals;” i.e., to have all the campuses identify as a single university even as they develop their individual identities. The new vice presidents have also indicated that they expect to work with all of the campuses and not to concentrate most of their efforts on the Manoa campus. A Council of Chancellors has been established to improve communications and collaboration between the system and the campuses and among the campuses. Preliminary feedback indicates that communication between the system office and the UH Hilo campus has improved.

- However, there is concern on the UH Hilo campus that the new system organization will tend to centralize the system to a greater degree and reduce campus autonomy rather than increase it. Legislation has been passed and the State Constitution amended to grant greater autonomy to the UH system. The visiting team found no evidence that the Legislature acts in defiance of law and the constitution. It remains to be seen if this granting of greater autonomy will, in turn, be extended to the campuses.

**Short-Term Recommendations:**

1. Take steps toward abolishing the college faculty senates and having the Faculty Congress assume most of their functions (as is commonly the case at other institutions of comparable size), while ensuring equitable representation.
2. Better define the role of the Faculty Congress and expand it to encompass a wider range of issues that significantly impact faculty and academic programs in areas such as curriculum and academic policy that should be the primary responsibility of the faculty.

**Long-Term Recommendations:**

1. The administration and the College of Arts and Science should strive to develop and agree on a more efficient and effective organizational structure and settle this matter once and for all. Particular consideration should be given to breaking down the college into smaller and more manageable units, which should result in many benefits, including greater efficiency and effectiveness, empowerment, and sense of identity and community.
2. The university should work with the UH system to form a system-wide Faculty Senate that fairly and equitably represents faculty from all campuses and plays a more significant role in the development of System policies and in promoting greater collaboration among the campuses.
3. The university should work with the UH system and the UH Board of Regents to increase its operational autonomy, to gain support for its unique mission, and to ensure the system office provides equitable support to the campus.

**Looking Toward the Future.** UH Hilo has begun restructuring its organizational structure and is on its way to developing an institutional infrastructure that should make their operations and governance processes more responsive, efficient and effective. As this
VIII. Preparation for the Educational Effectiveness Review

The authors of the Preparatory Report write, "In short, UH Hilo is in compliance with many of WASC's Criteria for Review, and we recognize what we must do to come into full compliance. In terms of our Fall 2001 proposal to WASC, we are on schedule with respect to institutional capacity and have already made significant progress toward achieving the outcomes we visualized for the educational effectiveness review."

The team agrees. UH Hilo is properly and effectively engaged in preparations for the educational effectiveness review. The campus clearly has the resources and infrastructure to support educational effectiveness. The next step, which the campus has begun to take, is the illumination of how the resources and infrastructure, the institutional capacity to be effective, has played out in individual academic programs, in general education, and in student support programs.

The authors write, "In the next phase of our review, we will focus campus energies on improving teaching, on learning how to document and assess student learning, and on establishing practices and structures that we can sustain and build on through our fourth decade." This team's opinion is that, in the educational effectiveness review, UH Hilo will have many successes to report for they are well positioned to be successful.

IX. Summary of Findings and Major Recommendations

Compared to what the visiting teams found in 1994 and 1997, we found an empowered university, full of activity and people excited about what they were accomplishing. Students, faculty, staff and administrators are all engaged in improving the student experience at UH Hilo, implementing the Strategic Plan 2002-2010, institutionalizing the newly formed Faculty Congress, and moving forward with an invigorated grants and contracts program.

UH Hilo is not without its challenges, of course, and we have addressed some of those challenges above in the light of their relationship to issues of institutional effectiveness. Based on its findings, the visiting team wishes to delineate and summarize the particular recommendations which it believes should be implemented or addressed within the next 6-8 months prior to the WASC educational effectiveness review that will take place a year from now:

1. Ensure that all degree programs have a set of measurable learning outcomes for both the programs and the courses within the programs that express what students will demonstrate as a consequence of completing the academic major; and, in addition, develop measurable learning outcomes for each of the General Education categories.
2. Implement a procedure that will ensure the University maintains a current set of approved syllabi for the approved courses in the official University Catalog.
3. Initiate an inclusive budget planning process so that all constituents are aware of the budgetary problems that confront the institution, and involve faculty in evaluating the
4. Examine and utilize the Strategic Plan to institute budget cuts, if necessary, in the near term, fully utilizing the Office of Institutional Research’s capabilities in data collection, analysis and dissemination and keeping UH Hilo positioned to implement some of its goals even during the pending budget crisis and definitely when the economy recovers and funding is restored/enhanced.

5. Continue and expand efforts to improve the University’s retention and graduation rates by analyzing and better understanding data gathered from various surveys and by the Office of Institutional Research.

6. Take steps toward abolishing the college faculty senates and having the Faculty Congress assume most of their functions (as is commonly the case at other institutions of comparable size), while ensuring equitable representation and better defining the role of the Faculty Congress and expanding it to encompass a wider range of issues that significantly impact faculty and academic programs in areas such as curriculum and academic policy that should be the primary responsibility of the faculty.

7. The administration and the College of Arts and Science should take initial steps to develop and agree on a more efficient and effective organizational structure and settle this matter once and for all. Particular consideration should be given to breaking down the college into smaller and more manageable units, which should result in many benefits, including greater efficiency and effectiveness, empowerment, and sense of identity and community.

Although the last recommendation falls into the category of long-term recommendations, it is included here because the team believes the University should at least begin to address the issue as soon as possible inasmuch as it is related to the previous recommendation (#6) regarding the reorganization of the faculty governance structure. The team believes that if these recommendations are addressed over the next 6-8 months, UH Hilo will be well prepared for the educational effectiveness review.