REFLECTIVE ESSAY

Enrollment Management at Mānoa: Noel-Levitz Summary Report
Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs
December 2002

UH Mānoa’s student enrollment steady decline between 1995 and 2000 was attributed to several factors, including tuition increases, the state economy, UH image related to state budget decreases, aggressive competition with other institutions, and others.

In July 1999, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities expressed concern for Mānoa’s enrollment decline in a letter to then President Kenneth Mortimer and recommended that the University manage its recruitment and enrollment processes more actively. The Commission recommended that a consultant in enrollment management be hired.

In response to the recommendations, then Senior Vice President/Executive Vice Chancellor Dean Smith formed a task force to address the issue of enrollment management. In July 2000, Noel-Levitz consultant Gary Fretwell was retained for a one-day enrollment analysis, which led to a 12-month/18-visit consultation contract with the University of Hawai`i at Mānoa. Noel-Levitz Vice President for Educational Services Roger Swanson was assigned as lead consultant for the Noel-Levitz group, and Vice President for Student Affairs Doris Ching was named project leader for UH Mānoa.

From December 2000 through February 2002, “The Recruitment Group” of representatives of School and College Services, Admissions and Records, Financial Aid, Student Housing Services, and Student Equity Excellence and Diversity worked intensively in developing and implementing immediate strategies to increase enrollment, while simultaneously writing UH Mānoa’s five-year recruitment plan. The process also involved four academic units—Arts & Humanities, Engineering, Ocean Earth Science & Technology, Tropical Agriculture & Human Resources. After the recruitment plan draft was submitted to then Interim Chancellor Deane Neubauer in December 2001 for his review and response; it was finalized in February 2002.

The initial intent was to implement the enrollment management plan in Fall 2001. However, inasmuch as the recruitment cycle for Fall 2001 was well on its way when Dr. Swanson arrived in December 2000, the plan was modified for implementation in Fall 2002. The results have been rewarding. In Fall 2001, Mānoa’s headcount enrollment increased 1.9% from 17,263 in Fall 2000 to 17,532 in Fall 2001, ending a six-year period of enrollment decline and representing the first increase in both headcount and Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) enrollment since 1993.

Other trends of note for Fall 2001 were:

- 45.1% increase in number of Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) students, from 512 in Fall 2000 to 743 in Fall 2001.
- 20% growth of transfer enrollment from Fall 2000, primarily from non-UH campuses particularly from the U.S. Mainland.
- 2.7% increase of first-time freshmen.
In Fall 2002, the headcount enrollment increased from 17,532 to 18,696, an increase of 6.6% over Fall 2001. This was the second consecutive year of increased enrollment and a growth that was “the most robust in more than 30 years.”

The Fall 2002 Enrollment Report reported other trends, as compared with Fall 2001 (unless otherwise noted):

- 5.5% increase of entering undergraduate enrollment, the highest level in more than ten years. For first-time freshmen, there was an unprecedented 13.8% gain.
- A steady rate of transfer enrollment, and a significant increase in out-of-state transfers with undergraduate transfers from Non-UH campuses increased from 711 in Fall 1998 to over 1,200 in Fall 2002. This growth has been concentrated among students from the U.S. mainland.
- 31.4% of Western Undergraduate Exchange students from 743 in Fall 2001 to 976 in Fall 2002.
- 8.3% increase in foreign student enrollment (as measured by Visa Status) to 1,729.
- 6.5% enrollment increase in the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, with the largest gain (12.4%) in Arts and Humanities, which participated in the Noel-Levitz process.
- 9.1% enrollment increase in the College of Engineering, which participated in the Noel-Levitz process.

As the trends and results indicate, our recruitment efforts have begun to bear fruit. The sizeable increase in WUE students appears to be a direct result of our increased and aggressive recruitment efforts in California, Oregon, and Washington. Enrollment increases in the College of Arts and Humanities and College of Engineering are attributed to improved recruitment efforts and involvement in the Noel-Levitz consultation.

The focused and collaborative efforts by everyone involved in recruitment in conjunction with the Noel-Levitz consultation have moved us closer to our enrollment goals. Further work is needed on retention, for which Academic Affairs is taking the lead, for UH Mānoa to realize our enrollment goals. The College of Engineering has begun work on a Retention Plan, working with Noel-Levitz consultant Dr. Teresa Farnum.

The following are some of our successful recruitment activities.

- Student Telecounseling unit
- Daily (Monday – Friday) regular campus tour schedule
- Coordinated *look* in our recruitment materials
- New recruitment materials
  1. Posters
  2. Video
  3. CDs
  4. Pre-Junior Flyer
  5. Junior Flyer
  6. WUE Brochure
  7. Accept packet with new Admit Certificate
8. Transfer Brochure  
9. Athletic Card  
10. Bookmark  
11. Visit Brochure  
12. Outcome Brochure

- Updated Admissions and Records website
- Expanded recruitment *territory* among the following states
  1. Alaska  
  2. Colorado  
  3. New York  
  4. Pennsylvania  
  5. Texas  
  6. Utah (was attached to the NACAC conference)  
  7. Prospective additions in 2003: Florida, Illinois, Maryland, New Jersey

- Power Point presentations
- Increased number of contacts with prospective students via mailings, e-mails, and personal telephone calls
- Parent mailings