Appendix E: Response to Concerns Raised
In the October 2007 Report of the Special Visit team and the February 2008 WASC Letter
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The WASC Visiting Team conducted a special visit to the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (“Mānoa”) on October 29-31, 2007, focusing on four issues: planning; leadership and governance; financial management and resource allocation; and educational effectiveness and assessment of student learning. The February 28, 2008 Commission letter following that special visit noted that Mānoa had made significant progress in each area and that progress was continuing. This appendix summarizes additional progress made by Mānoa since October 2007, and ongoing efforts in each of the four areas. Many of these initiatives are also discussed in our Capacity and Preparatory Review (CPR) Report.

PLANNING

Inclusive planning has been the modus operandi at Mānoa for a number of years despite potential challenges to continuity stemming from administrative turnover. Both the broadly inclusive consultation process that produced Mānoa’s Strategic Plan Defining Our Destiny, 2002-2010, and the resulting substantive document itself, serve as backdrop for our Institutional Proposal which incorporates the initiatives articulated in Defining Our Destiny and establishes realistic timelines and indicators of success. The Commission identified foci of the Institutional Proposal as “vital elements for the future of the University” that should not be viewed simply as accreditation objectives but rather as “key areas for institutional engagement and improvement.” Dozens of initiatives were originally “brought to the table” for possible inclusion within the themes selected for our current accreditation cycle. Team analysis of data collected from stakeholders through campus-wide meetings and surveys resulted in an Institutional Proposal that comprehensively incorporates those initiatives considered by constituents and team members as most vital to full realization of a sustainable Mānoa Experience for undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, and staff.

Mānoa has now fully embraced and implemented data-driven planning and in Spring 2009 engaged in a bottom-up campus-wide prioritization process (initiated in Fall 2008) that included literally every program and activity of the campus including undergraduate and graduate education, student affairs, research, physical plant maintenance and support, athletics, and administration. Using sets of standardized rubrics developed for academic, research, and administrative units, all Mānoa programs and activities produced self-assessments that addressed their relationship to the vision and initiatives articulated in Defining Our Destiny and the Institutional Proposal. Self-assessments have been thoroughly analyzed and reviewed at a succession of levels by representative committees comprised of faculty, staff, and administrators. All levels of prioritization review have been posted on Mānoa’s web site to ensure broad campus review and ongoing engagement.

The prioritization process was originally developed in anticipation of increased tuition revenue combined with an unusually large number of retirements expected to peak in 2013. Mānoa’s intent was to develop a plan for strategically investing resources with related objectives of: 1) ensuring that the expected retirement surge would be met with an effective and coherent plan to grow that reinforces strengths in the academic and research efforts of students, faculty, and staff, and 2) developing a plan for growth that would segue to an update of the Strategic Plan. The timing of the global financial crisis dovetailed with our planning effort, enabling Mānoa to contemplate a response to pending retirements while also timely responding in an inclusive, data-driven manner to what has become an unprecedented financial challenge to campus functions with as yet unknown impact on programs and units.

Each level of the prioritization review was remarkably inclusive and transparent, with stakeholders engaging in productive and informed dialogue about academic, research, and student support priorities. The high level of transparency has also helped identify strengths (inclusivity, use of rubric model for evaluating programs, creation of review committees) and weaknesses (availability of necessary data, applicability of some rubric cells across different types of programs, variation in criteria/process for making recommendations at the dean’s level) of the prioritization process that will be integrated into future planning efforts. A Feedback and Comments section on the prioritization web page notes “[c]onstructive feedback is vital throughout this process and we encourage members of the campus community to use the above link to submit suggestions and views regarding the process and information posted.”
In Spring 2009, the Mānoa Faculty Senate, in consultation with the Vice Chancellor for Administration, Finance and Operations, proposed changes to reorganization policies and procedures at Mānoa that will help streamline and clarify program and/or unit reorganizations that flow from the prioritization process. A revised reorganization process was distributed in June 2009.

Consistent with the goal of regularizing comprehensive evidence-based planning for the entire campus, the newly revised college-by-college program review process integrates student assessment data, enrollment patterns, and fiscal efficiency; program review outcomes will be integrated into future prioritization planning efforts. It is expected that by the next full review cycle data addressing institutional level outcomes (currently being drafted by the recently constituted Institutional Outcomes Committee) will also be incorporated into program review.

We also continue to work on issues not included in the Institutional Proposal such as strengthening the libraries, improving support for graduate students, and research planning, all of which are crucial to our continuing success and status as a research university. The Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education sponsored a series of faculty-led studies of the research environment at Mānoa. Data collected through focus groups of highly-productive Mānoa faculty led to a report identifying numerous suggestions for improving the research infrastructure on campus. Increasing compensation to support graduate students and the need to streamline travel emerged as priority issues. Additional peer and benchmark studies of travel policies and the tenure and promotion process have resulted in substantial travel policy changes and a simplified dossier submission process at Mānoa.

The Mānoa libraries provide an excellent example of the type of inclusive planning being implemented across campus. Groundwork for the 2007-2009 funding cycle was laid when the new interim University Librarian instituted a strategic planning process in 2006 involving library staff and administrators. With a vision for increasing access to all library collections, Mānoa sought a $3M supplemental appropriation during the regular funding cycle. No monies for the libraries were appropriated by the Legislature so a supplemental budget request was made in 2009 for $2.5M. Through effective advocacy by library administrators, the library request was made one of three “high priority” requests and roughly $2.4 million and eight positions were appropriated. Three positions have been filled including a digital research media specialist and an interlibrary loan assistant. Consistent with the libraries strategic plan, a vacant position was transferred so that an Emerging Technologies Science Librarian could be hired for the Science and Technology Department to concentrate on outreach services to science graduate students and faculty. Efforts to reduce acquisition costs while enhancing access to vital materials through expansion of online resources are ongoing. Moreover, capital improvements program and deferred maintenance monies directed at the libraries has literally changed the face and environment of Hamilton Library to the extent that it is well on its way to becoming a campus jewel.

**LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE**

The October 2007 report of the visiting team and the February 2008 Commission letter identified several key improvements in leadership and governance that have had a positive impact on the stability and sustainability of Mānoa. The letter also identified several areas of ongoing concern including: 1) the need to make decisions regarding the structure and organization of the campus, especially arts and sciences, 2) further clarification of roles of Mānoa and the University of Hawai‘i System (“System”) in functional areas where there is overlap (including human resources, institutional research, procurement, disbursing, capital planning, and the research support), and 3) the need to fill a number of interim executive positions including that of Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and create new positions that support important campus renewal and student success objectives.

As noted previously, the broadly inclusive prioritization process which began in earnest during Fall 2008 included an examination of the organizational structure for all programs. Options for the reorganization of arts and sciences are also being discussed. The five deans of the component Arts and Sciences units have been tasked with presenting a reorganization model to the faculty in early Fall 2009 for further discussion. And while results from the prioritization process have not been finalized or implemented, it is widely viewed as providing the campus with a model opportunity for self-learning that has provided Mānoa leadership with the opportunity to clarify and implement re-energized goals and new direction for the campus.
The process of “devolution” of administrative responsibilities from the System to Mānoa has continued and significant progress toward a Mānoa campus that is self-reliant and autonomous in its core functions has been made. The Mānoa Human Resource Office was established in 2005 and a director hired in December 2005. In 2006, two additional positions were provided and filled; in 2007, three positions and funding were transferred from the System Human Resources Office to Mānoa. With the addition of a personnel officer and secretary in 2008, the human resources staffing now includes a director, six personnel officers, and a secretary.

The Mānoa Institutional Research Office was also established in 2005. Initially staffed with an interim academic affairs program officer, an administrative reassignment in Fall 2008 provided an institutional analyst to the Mānoa Institutional Research Office. In Spring 2009, a senior analyst was loaned to Mānoa from the UH System and in March 2009, Mānoa was able to hire a full-time institutional researcher.

As part of the continuing devolution, the functions of international education that had been handled by both the President’s Office and Mānoa’s Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs were transferred completely to Mānoa. After the 2007 reorganization of the Mānoa Chancellor’s Office, the dean of the School of Hawaiian, Asian and Pacific Studies also served as Interim Assistant Vice Chancellor for International and Exchange Programs; in March 2008 the former System Director of International Education Jenny Samaan was transferred to Mānoa where she now serves as interim assistant vice chancellor. We plan to conduct a national search for the permanent position in 2009–2010.

Mānoa has successfully filled a number of executive and managerial positions. Of note are several key positions with significant import for the overall stability of the campus. A permanent Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs was hired in April of 2009, a permanent John A. Burns School of Medicine dean was hired in March 2008, a permanent School of Hawaiian Knowledge dean was hired in August 2008, and a permanent dean of the College of Education was hired in August 2007. Critical new executive positions have also been created and filled: an Associate Vice Chancellor for Campus Services was hired in September 2007 and an Associate Vice Chancellor for Financial and Physical Management was hired in March 2009. Together, these permanent positions provide the campus with necessary leadership and the opportunity for long-term stability in areas where progress in meeting core functions and goals and implementing new initiatives have been frustrated by administrative turnover in recent years.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION

The University has continued to overhaul fiscal and physical resource planning and allocation systems to better support the Mānoa Experience, a sense of community among stakeholders, student learning, and constituency engagement. Initial efforts noted by WASC during the 2007 visit have continued and additional efforts since that time have contributed to considerable progress in areas of ongoing concern including: 1) deferred maintenance, 2) enrollment management (including admissions, support for students, retention, and graduation), and 3) faculty renewal planning.

Deferred maintenance was a top priority in the University’s Supplemental Budget Request for FY 2009 with a request for an additional $3 million. Unfortunately, the additional funds were not appropriated by the Legislature. But with respect to budget cuts projected for FY 2010, repair and maintenance has been identified as one of three “protected” areas consistent with the University’s commitment to sustaining and improving its physical plant. The 2009-2011 repair and maintenance request included $129 million for the first year and $78 million in the second year; for the upcoming biennium, $76 million has been allocated for each year.

As noted above, the 2008-2009 prioritization process targeted planning for redistribution of faculty resources during a surge in expected retirements in order to reconfigure the shape of academic programs. By reinforcing core strengths and shrinking areas of weakness, Mānoa will focus on increasing student success at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. And while the current economic crisis will have an as yet uncertain impact on the timing of potential retirements, their impact continues to be evaluated relative to these new efficiency goals.

To assist the administration in addressing prioritization goals and to respond to the unanticipated budget cuts flowing from the global economic crisis, the Chancellor formed a Budget Workgroup in Spring 2009 that includes broad campus representation and Faculty Senate membership. Data ranging from research overhead dollars, utility costs, space needs and allocation, “green” campus proposals, enrollment patterns, and projected retirements are all incorporated into Budget
Workgroup analyses and decision making. The Budget Workgroup has aided the administration in data-driven decision making and has ensured continued transparency in financial management, resource allocation, and aspects of enrollment planning during one of the most difficult economic periods the University has faced.

*Defining Our Destiny* established ambitious benchmarks for undergraduate and graduate enrollment increases that have since been reevaluated and now require updating. In Fall 2007, the Vice Chancellor for Students was appointed to also serve as the Interim Assistant Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management. A reorganization proposal for the Enrollment Management offices was completed. The first step in the plan was to combine the recruitment staff in the Admissions and Records and School and College Services offices to maximize our recruitment effectiveness. In addition, an online admissions application process was developed for Fall 2009 implementation; an analysis of our financial assistance award system was conducted; and web sites for newly admitted students and their parents were created. In August 2009, the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and the Vice Chancellor for Students convened a retreat on enrollment planning and draft goals from that retreat will be presented to the campus early in the Fall semester. The draft proposes that Mānoa plan on an increase in enrollment focusing on four primary goals: 1) keeping more of Hawai’i’s high school graduates, in state, attending Mānoa; 2) reducing the differential rate of educational attainment across Hawai’i’s population; 3) increasing community college transfers to Mānoa; and 4) improving retention and graduation rates. A newly-formed Committee on Enrollment Planning co-chaired by the vice chancellors will provide a forum through which plans to achieve these goals can be developed and implemented.

**Assessment of Student Learning**

Like campuses across the nation, Mānoa has committed extensive human and other resources toward increasing the sophistication of student learning assessment and embracing a culture of evidence of student success. The 2007 visiting team noted significant progress and planning for the continued build-out of an assessment infrastructure which has deepened campus understanding of the value and methods for effective assessment, and encouraged dialogue among stakeholders about ways to improve courses, teaching pedagogy, and student learning. We have paid particular attention to ramping up assessment efforts in departments that had not fully embraced it in 2007 and have made considerable progress toward incorporating meaningful assessment in all departments. Data Exhibit 7.1 summarizes the assessment efforts of Mānoa’s programs.

Among the specific developments aimed at embedding assessment throughout the curriculum is the establishment of the Mānoa Assessment Office. The creation and staffing of the Assessment Office has strengthened overall faculty engagement in assessment by increasing access to assessment guidance and advice for departments and programs at all stages of assessment planning and implementation; the additional support available through the Assessment Office is expected to reduce the variability in level of assessment efforts across Mānoa units.

In January 2009, the Faculty Senate approved the formation of a standing Mānoa Assessment Committee with a permanent structure and revolving membership analogous to that of the longstanding and highly-successful General Education Committee. Appointments to the first Mānoa Assessment Committee will be completed by August 2009 in time for the committee to begin its work at the start of the Fall 2009 semester. Membership will include faculty with assessment expertise who have been participating in the evolution of assessment on campus, as well as representatives from the various colleges. Ongoing assessment activities may be viewed on Mānoa’s Assessment web site and as mentioned earlier, an Institutional Outcomes Committee is drafting institutional level student learning outcomes to be incorporated into various levels of student learning assessment and integrated into future program reviews.

The Student Success Center, which was in its infancy during the 2007 WASC special visit, continues to show great promise. In partnership with the Mānoa library system, the Student Success Center has emerged as a critical resource for support of student learning and is contributing to a campus climate conducive to student success and overall educational effectiveness. Specific activities of the Student Success Center are discussed in some detail in Essays 2, 4, and 6 of the CPR Report. Student advising has continued to receive significant attention and is also discussed in Essay 2 of the CPR Report.

An additional initiative aimed at improving the overall Mānoa Experience for students was the December 2008 reorganization of the Office of Campus Life which created an administrative structure that is program oriented, supports
the Mānoa Experience, and encourages staff members to employ nimble and fluid approaches to the creative management of resources in response to changing student needs.

**Conclusion**

The February 2008 Commission letter noted that Mānoa had made significant progress in addressing their concerns regarding planning, leadership and governance, financial management and resource allocation, and educational effectiveness and assessment of student learning. This appendix reports on our progress in these areas since the October 2007 special visit. Further, Mānoa continues to focus our efforts on improvements in these four areas.

While student success is the overarching focus of the three themes selected for our CPR report, the concerns expressed by the Commission are not forgotten. The various essays in the CPR report discuss achievements and ongoing efforts in planning (Essays 3 and 5), leadership and governance (Essays 5 and 6), financial management and resource allocation (Essay 4 and 5), and educational effectiveness and assessment of student learning (Essays 2 and 6). The 2011 Educational Effectiveness Review will demonstrate our continuing progress and commitment to these issues.