Appendix C:
Response to the Issues Raised in the March 2010 WASC Letter and January 2010 Visiting Team Report
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RESPONSE TO THE ISSUES RAISED IN THE MARCH 2010 WASC LETTER
AND JANUARY 2010 VISITING TEAM REPORT

The WASC Visiting Team conducted a Capacity and Preparatory Review visit on December 7-10, 2009. The January 6, 2010 Report of the Visiting Team noted significant progress in virtually all the initiatives identified in Mānoa’s Institutional Proposal. The March 5, 2010 WASC Commission letter highlighted three (3) areas for further attention: strategic planning, student success, and educational effectiveness. This appendix summarizes additional progress made in all three areas since December 2009, and highlights ongoing efforts discussed in more detail in our Educational Effectiveness Review (EER) Report.

Strategic Planning

Essay 1 details the extensive effort we are making to further develop and better articulate the meaning and measurable attributes of the “Mānoa Experience.” This term has been in common use for several years on our campus but as the WASC Visiting Team correctly noted, as a campus community we have not clearly defined, or given weight, to the myriad interpretations of the term. In Spring 2010 the Mānoa Experience Workgroup was formed and charged with engaging stakeholders—students, alumni, faculty, staff and community members—in discussions and events aimed at developing a shared definition of “Mānoa Experience” and linking that definition to measurable outcomes. In July 2010, a survey was sent to Mānoa alumni who were members of the University of Hawai‘i Alumni Association. The results of that survey form the backdrop for evening focus group discussion events that began in November 2010 and will continue through Spring 2011. The timing of this effort dovetails with our Fall 2010 update of the Mānoa Strategic Plan.

The Mānoa Experience Workgroup will continue its efforts to generate broad campus discussion of what stakeholders want the Mānoa Experience to mean, and will develop ways of manifesting the campus as a truly Hawaiian Place of Learning. An overarching goal of the Mānoa Experience Workgroup is to enhance the teaching, learning, and living environment of the campus, ultimately affecting retention and graduation rates among our students. We are already seeing the impact of our multilevel efforts to influence graduation and retention (Essay 2) and expect the positive trends already noted to continue and escalate.

As discussed in Essay 5, Mānoa began the process of revising Defining Our Destiny 2002-2010 in Spring 2010 with the formation of the Strategic Plan Working Group (SPWG). This group of four faculty, two administrators, and two students recommended to the Chancellor and the Senate Executive Committee a Fall 2010 strategic plan update process, a detailed timeline, and prepared an instrument designed to collect input from stakeholders. The SPWG recommended process incorporated successful aspects of prior planning efforts that produced both the 2002-2010 strategic plan and the 2006 Institutional Proposal. The SPWG continued their work by serving as the coordinating body for the Fall 2010 planning process. The online survey was open from August 23-Sept 13. It was sent to stakeholders on and off campus; 1,306 completed surveys were submitted. Seven focus groups (five face-to-face and two online) that included 90 stakeholders from various groups met during the first two weeks of October; the results of those sessions informed the efforts of writing groups tasked with developing an initial draft of the 2011-2015 strategic plan for the campus organized around the themes of 1) teaching and learning, 2) research and scholarship, 3) service and outreach, and 4) institutional effectiveness. Each thematic writing team integrated the five cross-cutting issues that emerged from the survey and focus groups phases of the planning process: 1) Hawaiian place of learning, 2) local...
to global, 3) sustainability, 4) technology, and 5) community and diversity. A town hall meeting to present and discuss the 2011-2015 draft strategic plan is scheduled for December 3, 2010. Current strategic planning documents, including survey data, participant comments, and scheduled events, are available on the strategic planning website.

The WASC Visiting Team noted a need for the campus to review University processes that cause delays and burden decision-making. In many respects, efficiency at Mānoa has been stymied over the years by “siloed” decision making that failed to fully integrate full stakeholder participation resulting in periodic conflicts over the meaning and application of principles of shared governance. Increased efforts have been made to expand modes and content of communication from administration to the campus (see Essay 1) and to broaden committee membership in critical areas to include representation from affected stakeholders. This increase in transparency, combined with concerted efforts by the Faculty Senate and administration to carve out effective procedures for consultation and review on academic matters, has resulted in more cohesive and collaborative decision-making. In some instances committees charged with addressing issues relating to teaching and learning, enrollment and retention, and academic and fiscal planning (such as the Committee on Enrollment Planning and the Budget Prioritization Workgroup) are large and at first blush may appear cumbersome. However, the result is an increase in investment among faculty, staff, and student stakeholder groups in these and other efforts initiated by administration and more efficient and effective decision-making processes—especially in the areas of academic planning and student success.

**Student Success**

Full descriptions of assessment of student success initiatives and links to reports are provided in Essay 2. Of note is Mānoa’s evolution toward becoming a fully integrated evidence based learning environment. This effort has been led by the VCAA and operationalized through the collaborative efforts of the Assessment Office, the Mānoa Institutional Research Office, General Education Office, and Faculty Senate Committees.

The Committee on Enrollment Planning (CEP), which was described in Essay 5, is the coordinating body for alignment of new initiatives aimed at recruitment, retention and student success across campus. Each subcommittee has been tasked with developing suggestions for meeting the newly adopted enrollment management goals. Subcommittee chairs meet monthly with the entire CEP team to review and evaluate committee suggestions, make recommendations for approval, and set specific targets and timelines for improvement. Proposals from many of the subcommittees are surfacing ideas which may lead to changes in academic policies and procedures which will increase student success.

In addition to the efforts summarized in Essay 5, the enrollment goals align with several of the initiatives developed in our Institutional Proposal, including expansion and renovation of student housing and enhancements to academic residential life on campus (Goal #1), the creation of Hawai‘inu‘eakoa School of Hawaiian Knowledge and expanded degree offerings in Hawaiian and Pacific Studies fields (Goal #2), automatic admission and reverse credit transfer (Goal #3), and many of the student success initiatives discussed in Essay 2 (Goal #4). This coordinated effort has generated excitement among faculty and has become a highly effective means of collaboration between academic faculty, student services faculty and staff, and administrators in key positions around campus. With members of the Faculty Senate on each subcommittee and two SEC representatives on the CEP, communication outward to academic units has been timely.
We continue to be challenged in efforts to effectively communicate a coordinated and comprehensive message to students regarding student success initiatives. Students have historically become aware of new and revised resources as they need them so we have worked to expand the venues through which communication about these many new and expanded resources occurs. During Summer 2010, the Chancellor received an extensive list of initiatives, which were described in Essays 1 and 2, pertaining to Native Hawaiian programs, new student success initiatives, residential learning programs, and various student advising initiatives. The Chancellor has been working with the Advancement Team to generate more detailed media exposure of some of Mānoa’s recent efforts and has highlighted student success initiatives during events sponsored for high school counselors, community college advisors, and in meetings with donors and other campus stakeholders.

Educational Effectiveness

Mānoa has made significant progress in expanding program assessment efforts and revitalizing the program review process (see Introduction). Since 2002, efforts have been directed toward deepening faculty engagement with all aspects of student learning by promoting and facilitating efforts to increase faculty sophistication in utilizing assessment and program review results. Faculty Senate ownership and involvement in Assessment Office activities have produced a significant shift in attitude among many faculty; participation in learning outcome studies, such as the Spring 2010 Ethical Issues rubric study, increased and efforts are underway to further expand those activities (Essay 2). Graduate programs have always been included in program assessment and department and college program reviews but within the past year discussions between the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education and the Senate Executive Committee have resulted in an effort to revisit graduate program outcome measures (discussed in more detail below).

In Fall 2010, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee charged standing committees with studying a wide range of issues intended to increase student success and overall educational effectiveness in both undergraduate and graduate programs. These issues included: possible consolidation of the general education, assessment, and faculty development offices; regularizing credit requirements for degree programs; repeated course grading options; expanding undergraduate research; and policies to support high achievement motivated students seeking dual or multiple degrees. Some of these issues come from discussions of the Committee on Enrollment Planning.

In Summer 2010 the Senate Executive Committee established a working group on graduate education (WGGE) to address a number of issues that have emerged around graduate education, including enhancement of outcome metrics for assessing Ph.D. program success, variability in graduate student support across disciplines, mentorship and advising issues, and degree completion. Part of the WGGE’s charge is to consolidate data from across campus to help faculty and administration better understand the overall picture of graduate education at Mānoa. In late Fall 2010 the Faculty Senate is expected to vote on a proposal by the WGGE to form a new Standing Committee on Graduate Education. If approved by the Senate, this committee will be charged with ensuring that the full range of initiatives incorporated at the undergraduate level extend to graduate education. In the meantime, the Faculty Senate, though the WGGE, has initiated a series of meetings with chairs of all graduate programs at Mānoa to identify and discuss both common and unique challenges in graduate education on our campus, begin discussing data consolidated by the WGGE, and identify priority issues to enhance the quality and experience of graduate education at Mānoa.
Our continued commitment to faculty development activities are described in Essays 2 and 6. Faculty ownership of general education at Mānoa provides an important backdrop for the development of faculty expertise and experience with assessment of general education and department specific program outcomes. Renewed attention to shared governance structures and processes has reinvigorated faculty engagement with the many student success and enrollment management efforts underway, providing expanded opportunities for faculty to broaden their range and scope of expertise as educators.

**Conclusion**

The March 2010 WASC Commission Letter noted significant progress in creating sustainable capacity to achieve the outcomes identified in our Institutional Proposal. This appendix summarizes our continued progress in three areas highlighted by WASC for further attention: strategic planning, student success, and educational effectiveness. The essays in our EER report in much greater detail our efforts and success in these and all other areas identified as thematic priorities for this WASC review cycle.