REPORT OF THE WSCUC TEAM
For Reaffirmation of Accreditation

University of Hawaiʻi West Oʻahu

March 1 – 4, 2022

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Section I – Overview and Context

The University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu (UHWO) is the newest branch of the 10-campus University of Hawaiʻi system. Beginning in 1976 as West Oʻahu College in leased office space for upper-division transfer students, the campus relocated in 2012 to 500 acres in Kapolei. Currently, campus buildings occupy 40 of those 500 acres. Two hundred acres are set aside for private development. In fall 2007, the institution enrolled its first group of first-time freshmen. The campus has experienced significant growth since its inception, rising from a few hundred students to just over 3,000 currently. Several high schools, including the largest in the state are in the immediate area. The campus offers 11 certificates, and 9 degree programs at the bachelor's level and does not currently enroll students in graduate programs. UHWO also provides a number of programs at the upper division by distance learning (DL) modality. This includes concentrations in business administration, creative media, humanities, social sciences, public administration and education plus 7 certificate programs.

The mission, as stated on the website, encompasses students of all backgrounds but with a strong connection to Native Hawaiian culture and traditions.

> *UH West Oʻahu offers a distinct and accessible student-centered education that focuses on the 21st Century learner. The University embraces Native Hawaiian culture and traditions, while promoting student success in an environment where students of all backgrounds are supported. Our campus fosters excellence in teaching, learning, and service to the community.*

This mission supports the nature of the student body which, while 91% are Hawai'i residents, 88.8% are students of color including 29% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islanders. UHWO thereby qualifies as both a Minority-Serving Institution (MSI) and a Native Hawaiian-Serving Institution (NHSI). Thirty-six percent of students receive Pell Grants and 26% are first generation.

Accreditation History

UHWO earned its initial accreditation in 1981. The last reaffirmation review occurred in February 2015 for seven years. An interim report was submitted and accepted in March 2019. Since that last reaffirmation, the institution has established new degrees in Natural Science (BS), Cybersecurity (BS), and Creative Media (BA). The Education (BEd) and Humanities (BA) degrees were approved for distance education delivery. None required a substantive change review.

Team process

The team conducted the Offsite Review (OSR) on September 9, 2021. To prepare, the team reviewed the institutional report and accompanying appendices and documents. The resulting OSR summary document highlighted a number of commendations as well as eight lines of inquiry with subcategories. Lines of inquiry are as follows:

- Organization and Leadership
- Response to COVID
- Assessment
- Program Review
- Distance Education
- Student Success
- Student Support
- Financial Sustainability

Following the submission of the additional documents by UHWO, the team utilized the accreditation visit worksheet to further refine and identify areas of concern. The ALO worked with the team to clarify and revise the visit schedule.

The accreditation visit went extremely well, despite having to adjust for COVID constraints around large group gatherings which were held online. The team met with all the requested participants. Confidential emails were reviewed before the visit and daily once the visit began. The team would like to express its sincere appreciation for all the coordination and communication done by the ALO and his colleagues in advance which made the actual visit go very smoothly.

Institutional Accreditation Report and Update: Quality and Rigor of the Report and Supporting Evidence

The institutional report was well written and organized around the required elements. The institution has chosen to include as part of the report an optional essay on the macroeconomy of the Leeward coast. Evidence supporting the narrative was provided in numerous appendices. The report clearly described the institution, its environment and culture. The dedication of the campus to student success was clear. The institution indicated a robust effort to obtain feedback on the report including faculty, students and staff through numerous feedback sessions. While the COVID pandemic accounted for an additional challenge, the institution utilized virtual meetings successfully to obtain inputs.

Despite the amount of data and other documents provided, the team noted a general tendency towards description rather than analysis. The team also noted an unevenness in identifying clear action steps for areas needing improvement with some areas more developed than others.

Section II – Evaluation of Institutional Essays

Component 1: Response to Previous Commission Actions

As part of the last reaffirmation review in 2015, the Commission requested an interim report due in fall 2018 to address several areas of concern. The institutional report notes the various ways in which these issues have all been addressed. Upon review of the report and associated documents, the team has noted some recent and continuing concerns in most of these areas.

Stability of Senior Leadership. As indicated in the report, UHWO made important improvements in the stability of leadership over the circumstances as presented at the last reaffirmation review. The current chancellor has been in place since 2017. However, recent vacancies in the vice chancellor for student affairs and vice chancellor for administration raise this concern again.

Sufficient general funding to support growth. At the time the report was written, the institution had seen a significant increase in general fund allocation. However, recent budget constraints may not provide for that continued growth, particularly in hiring.

Alignment of faculty capacity to support program development. The report provided data on faculty hires between 2012 and 2020 showing a nearly 100 FTE increase in faculty over that time. However, recent budget constraints resulted in all vacant positions being frozen since 2020 which again raises the issue of sufficient faculty capacity.

Decision-making structures reflecting clear lines of authority. The institutional report points to and provides evidence of a strategic plan as well as a reorganization of Academic Affairs. At the time of the Off Site Review (OSR), the team noted the strength of the plan along

with a detailed set of tactics and timelines. However, there is still an ongoing reorganization of Student Affairs which has yet to be formalized.

Assessment process update demonstrating use of data. Progress has been made in the assessment area since 2015. However, the team raised concerns over the elimination of the Director of Assessment position in addition to an emphasis on descriptive data rather than analysis. The visit produced additional concerns about the state of assessment related to the consistency of both process and completions of curricular review, program review and closing the loop activities.

Distance learning strategic plan. In the area of distance learning, UHWO created a new Office of Distance Learning, crafted a six-year DL Tactical Plan as well as a comprehensive DL Faculty Guidebook. However, interview evidence from the visit raised questions about the long-term planning for DL including strategic program development.

Component 2: Compliance: Review under WSCUC Standards and compliance with federal requirements; Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators

Standard 1: Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives

Standard 1 encompasses issues related to institutional mission and the capacity to achieve that mission with integrity and transparency, including clear statements of mission and goals, policies on academic freedom, public transparency, and operational integrity. The institutional report and the appendix on WSCUC Standards and Federal Requirements Worksheet and Forms addresses each of these elements providing linkages to data appendices, policies, reports and documents (CFR 1.1, 1.2, 1.6). The institution's policies, procedures and outcomes are all developed with widespread input and shared widely and openly predominantly via the university's website (CFR

1.3, 1.7). However, evidence from several interviews during the visit revealed inconsistent application of procedures in assessment, program review and other areas. Development of standard operating procedures would assist in guiding staff in implementation of these policies.

 UHWO is an indigenous-serving public institution with a clear and distinctive mission for baccalaureate education embracing Native Hawaiian culture and traditions (CFR 1.4). The emphasis on student-centered success is clearly communicated and supported by the availability of information about student achievement. The institution clearly and transparently communicates its academic programs, services and costs (CFRs 1.6, 1.7). Grievance and complaint processes are readily accessible and clearly articulated so that students are treated fairly and equitably (CFR 1.6). Operational integrity and transparency are embedded in policy and exhibited via annual financial audits (CFRs 1.5, 17).

The team's finding, which is subject to Commission review, is that the institution has provided sufficient evidence to determine compliance with Standard 1.

Standard 2: Achieving Educational Objectives through Core Functions

UHWO offers educational programs that are appropriate in content, scope, and rigor for the degree level awarded.   Academic expectations and learning outcomes are published in the university's general catalog as well as on the university assessment website. Individual program and concentration websites also document expectations and outcomes (CFR 2.1-2.5, 2:13, 2.14). The university has articulated an annual assessment process and results are distributed campus-wide via the assessment website. UHWO has an established program review process with a planned review cycle of seven years. The results of the reviews are posted on the program review website. The university has a program review handbook to aid departments and units

with the review process. However, as described in the institutional report and again during the visit, some programs have not completed their review according to schedule. Additionally, inclusion of distance learning modalities in program assessment is inconsistent suggesting further work is needed in this area (CFR 2.6, 2.7, 2.10). The Team also noted that the extent to which faculty are engaged with and assume responsibility for assessment and student learning outcomes seem variable across the institution (CFR 2.3, 2.4).

The university has made progress in integrating the five core competencies into the general education requirements. UHWO has implemented a multi-year assessment plan but there are indications that more work is needed in curricular assessment and closing the loop. The university would be well served in delineating exactly how the PLOs (Program Learning Outcomes) are tied to the ILOs (Institutional Learning Outcomes) and how those are assessed (CFRs 4.1, 4.2). There were indications during the visit that the co-curricular areas have been evaluated primarily through satisfaction surveys so more work is needed on direct assessment of these functions related to student success.

UHWO is committed to the success of all the students that it serves. Student learning support is intentionally interwoven into the university's core mission (CFR 2.13). This commitment is evidenced by the results of the work towards closing equity gaps and the expectations of the Hawaiian Graduation Initiative Scorecard and in the most recent reporting year, UHWO met all but one of the nine target goals.

Student support services have also been augmented. For example, there are intentional dedicated spaces for student fellowship which include the Naulu Center for Student Engagement and Well-Being and the VETS (Veterans Empowered Through STEM). New positions in Student Affairs include a Coordinator each for ADA, intramural sports, and student life. It is hoped that these positions are not impacted by the current hiring freeze. All these efforts have supported students' sense of belonging and improved retention (CFRs 1.2, 2.2). The university has worked to enhance graduation and retention rates. These efforts are supported by a newly instituted student success dashboard which provides access to aggregated and disaggregated data by stakeholders. However, the team found indications throughout the visit that these data are not utilized as strongly by decision makers to make improvements. Also, there does not appear to be good, solid communication between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs personnel regarding student success.

The team's finding, which is subject to Commission review, is that the institution has provided sufficient evidence to determine compliance with Standard 2.

Standard 3: Developing and Applying Resources and Organizational Structures to Ensure Quality and Sustainability

Standard 3 seeks to ensure the institution maintains operations in such a way as to provide a quality learning environment which is sufficiently sustainable into the future. UHWO currently has sufficient stability in all resource areas to conduct bachelor's level degree programs (CFR 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 3.10).

However, there are a number of areas of concern which should be addressed going forward for the overall health of the institution. The university is financially stable but highly dependent on two primary sources of revenue, general fund allocations from the state of Hawai'i and tuition and fees from students tied to enrollments. Both of these sources of funding have experienced declines in recent years requiring the institution to implement cost reductions.

The COVID pandemic negatively affected the state budget which resulted in general fund budget cuts and reduction of 21 positions fully supported via these funds. These actions reduced the lack of capacity for both instruction and student support services. However, one-third of these positions have been restored and more than two-thirds of the budget cuts have been restored (CFR 3.4).

Student enrollments have dropped somewhat from their high in 2020. The current chancellor, upon her arrival, did establish a strategic planning process. With the hoped-for recovery from the budget-constrained COVID years, the institution should return to that initiative to move from planning to implementation. The institution has a number of strengths on which to draw moving forward – well-developed distance learning programs, strong technology support, a robust budget reserve and sufficient land on which to expand its own facilities or and/or develop revenue-generating ones.

Fundraising is in a nascent stage and needs to be more fully developed to support special programs and capacity-building projects. The addition of a position to support the chancellor's fundraising efforts and initiatives will be an integral part in these efforts.

The team's finding, which is subject to Commission review, is that the institution has provided sufficient evidence to determine compliance with Standard 3.

Standard 4: Creating an Organization Committed to Quality Assurance, Institutional Learning, and Improvement.

As noted earlier, UHWO completed a strong *Strategic Action Plan, 2018-2028* that had widespread campus input. This was an important guide for decision-making and actions during the years of the coronavirus pandemic. However, there was no mention of the plan during team meetings except with executive leadership. The university should continue to focus on the plan with the campus community in charting the next steps forward and setting priorities for the future.

In recent years, UHWO has cultivated assessment and program review mechanisms with participation from faculty and staff (CFR 4.1). In November of 2020, however, the Director of Assessment, Evaluation, and Accreditation position was vacated and has remained vacant since. It is apparent from visit interviews that faculty and staff are eager for that role or a similar one to be filled once more so that the institution can perform assessment and program review under the leadership of one administrator who can bring coherence to the purposes and importance of

assessment. At this time, there is a lack of consensus on who leads the assessment process and how the work of those involved are interrelated.

The Office of Institutional Research appears to be strong, gathering and disaggregating substantial amounts of data (CFR 4.2). Reporting of this data is easily found on the institution's website. The faculty have demonstrated a long-held interest in institutional reflection and quality assurance. However, assessment activities have not resulted in any notable changes or refinement of programs. There appears to be a void in leadership at multiple levels about utilizing assessment findings for continuous improvement. Executive leadership may want to become more actively involved in the processes and directly commit to actions resulting from assessment findings and to track the actions and their efficacy (CFR 4.3). It appears the institution is not fully utilizing the reporting from the IR office and the Assessment Committee to better effect through more actionable analysis with follow-up tracking and monitoring of resultant actions taken.

GE assessment should continue to be developed and dovetailed with discipline-based learning outcomes. Finally, as the institution moves forward, it will need to conduct comparative analysis of its delivery of remote courses versus on-ground courses.

The team's finding, which is subject to Commission review, is that the institution has provided sufficient evidence to demonstrate compliance with Standard 4.

Component 3: Degree Programs: Meaning, Quality and Integrity of Degrees

The meaning of a UHWO degree is deeply connected to the university's roots and communities. The team noted positively that UHWO has framed the Meaning, Quality, Integrity of Degrees

(MQID) within the cultural context and the geographical location of UHWO. The curricular and co-curricular processes are constructed with the guiding principles of Hawaiian culture in mind. MQID is derived from the university's pahuhopu (values and principles) which privileges a learner-centered approach (CFRs 1.2, 2.2). The institutional report outlined the meaning of the degree by degree level. At the baccalaureate level, the meaning of the degree is anchored by the University of Hawai'i System General Education Requirements which have been used to establish ILOs. These align with the WSCUC Core Competencies (CFR 1.2, 2.2). There are additional ILOs that are derived from Hawaiian culture that reflect the institutional values (pahuhopu) and respectful community (kaiaulu). The two ILOs are cultural awareness and community engagement.

The meaning of the degree is also viewed from an individual program lens. Each discipline has articulated Degree Learning Outcomes (DLOs). The program faculty are responsible for setting learning outcomes and assessing student learning and demonstrating achievement standards. The team was pleased to note the intentional connection of co-curricular learning to the meaning of the degree. Faculty specialists in partnership with career counselors offer student development courses that support students in their transition to UHWO and to develop a sense of belonging at the campus (CFR 2.10).

The quality and integrity of the UHWO degree is maintained through the curriculum and new program approval processes (CFR 2.2). Additionally, quality is stewarded through the alignment with the UH Systems Process for the approval of new programs and the university's course approval program (CFRs 2.1, 2.2). Program review and assessment are utilized as critical pillars

for educational quality. The Faculty Senate Program Review Committee oversees program review to ensure quality and integrity. This approach adds to the value that the university places on connecting the curriculum with the co-curriculum in order to consider the student experience as a whole (CFRs 2.6, 2.7). The institutional report presents a well-developed system of program review that entails both internal and external reviews. Each of UHWO's programs are required to perform reviews at least once every seven years but both the institutional report and interview evidence indicated this is not consistent across all programs. UHWO has made much improvement in distilling MQID. However, a holistic picture of the UHWO degree is still evolving. In many places in the report, MQID is expressed as a series of degree or course requirements. The team recommends further work in this area. Further, while review of distance learning modality is considered part of the degree program review, information provided during the visit shows a process which is inconsistent. The need for clearly defined structures and processes with appropriate accountability, perhaps through a set of standardized operating procedures, was expressed during the site visit (CFR 4.2).

Component 4: Educational Quality: Student learning, core competencies, and standards of performance at graduation

UHWO has five clearly defined ILOs and seven GELOs (General Education Learning Outcomes). These are used to guide student learning, core competencies, and performance and graduation. Evidence provided in the institutional report shows an assessment web page that includes an assessment toolkit and sample reports (CFR 2.4, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4). Course level outcomes are mapped, and program level assessment is outlined. UHWO also utilizes the AAC&U (American Association of Colleges and Universities) Value rubrics. Learning

outcomes for each program have been determined and shared on each program's website (CFR 2.3). A process for evaluating student learning and core competencies is in place. A Faculty Senate General Education Committee oversees general education requirements and policies to ensure quality at the course level (CFR 2.2, 3.10, 4.1).

The GE committee has subcommittees whose responsibility is to oversee quality for focus areas that include quantitative reasoning, oral communication, and written communications. The subcommittees determine professional development and support curriculum redesign and innovation (CFRs 2.4, 3.3, 4.4). Educational quality is supported through program review and individual program specialty accreditation.

The team noted positively the Program Review Handbook that details review steps and concludes with a process that is designed to guide closing the loop. However, as noted earlier, the process is inconsistent and unevenly followed suggesting more clarity is needed. The handbook calls for a two-year review cycle of improvement plans. The division chair along with the Faculty Senate Program Review Committee reviews the progress of programs based on annual updates submitted by the given division. It is not clear, however, how the assessment of program learning outcomes, a key component of program review, is integrated into that process(CFR2.7).

UHWO also uses NSSE (National Survey of Student Engagement) surveys to inform student support and engagement. The university has made great strides in incorporating High Impact Practices (HIPs) into the student experience. The 2020 NSSE High Impact Practices Report

shows that 66% of first year students at UH West O'ahu participated in at least one HIP, compared to 48% of students at peer institutions (CFR 2.1, 2.5).

The institutional report states that UHWO's ILOs, GELOs, DLOs (Degree Learning Outcomes), and CLOs are closely aligned with WSUC core competencies. The report outlines dedicated efforts to date on how each of the core competencies are operationalized and monitored. Many programs have capstone courses, but it appears the use of a capstone course for assessment is still evolving (CFR 2.5).

The institutional report indicates that some of the educational quality initiatives, especially the assessment components, are nascent. This is partly due to disruptions from the pandemic and associated staff changes. Institutional commitment to ongoing improvement is demonstrated by enhanced structures and programs since the last commission action. However, while some examples of assessment reports and closing the loop are presented, it is not clear whether this is representative for all programs. Evidence received during the visit suggested there are inconsistencies in both the completion and process of curricular assessment. The institutional report demonstrates critical and candid reflection by the institution on some of the limitations of the assessment work and outlines measures for continuous improvement. The team commends UHWO for this candid reflection and recommends that UHWO continues to work to streamline and systematize the assessment process and to ensure that it is ongoing in all programs (CFR 2.6, 4.3). This might include a more systematized set of standard operating procedures for regular processes such as assessment. In addition to student learning and core competencies, Component 4 encompasses core competency performance at graduation. This element was not

directly addressed either in the Institutional Report or during the visit interviews. The Team found that beyond surveys, with the exception of discipline specific accreditation like Business Administration, UHWO is still at the beginning stages of assessment of student learning.

Faculty indicated a lack of assessment training. The institution would be well served to affirm the importance of assessment and to re-invest in leadership focused solely on assessment work. The director of assessment, evaluation & accreditation left the role and currently a faculty member is coordinating the work on a quarter-time basis. The team notes that coordination of an institution wide assessment is a critical role and the university would be well served by having qualified dedicated leadership for this function.

Component 5 – Student Success, Learning, Retention and Graduation

The establishment of the current strategic plan clearly and publicly demonstrates the commitment of the administration, faculty and staff of UHWO for student success (CFR 4.6). There are numerous support services aimed at student success – starting with orientation for both first time freshmen and transfers through advising and a variety of early intervention, tutoring, career development and other programs. The institution also provides numerous ways for students to engage with the campus community through employment opportunities. However, during the visit, it was clear that Student Affairs has undergone re-assignment of employees, referred to as a "swirl" which is not yet formalized. Professional development and training may be helpful for staff to take on new assignments with more knowledge and confidence potentially leading to a greater likelihood of success. There is difficulty getting students to appropriate services and co-curricular assessment relies primarily on satisfaction surveys and not on

quantitative data. The institution should act to increase assessment of student services directly on student success (CFR 4.3). Communication between student affairs and academic affairs personnel appears to be wanting around student success initiatives.

Of additional concern are the limited services available for distance learning students not on the island of Oʻahu. While student centers exist on Maui, Kauaʻi and Hawaiʻi, these primarily act to refer students to virtual communication with the West Oʻahu campus (CFR 2.11, 2.13, 2.14). The team was concerned about the multiple methods of communication being employed to contact students. Numerous technology platforms or software are used to reach out to students from various departments. Each unit believes it is reaching students effectively but utilizing fewer avenues of outreach to students may be less confusing to students and improve outreach and communication. Coordination and communication among and between these various support services is critical to effective operations.

UHWO has seen some notable and consistent increases in retention rates for first time freshmen since 2012. Breakouts by ethnic groups indicate Filipino students have consistently higher retention rates than the total and Native Hawaiian students are closing the gap. Graduation rates over time are more volatile but are partly the result of small numbers of graduates, particularly in the earlier years. The impact of the recent COVID pandemic on enrollments, retention and graduation rates for both the short and long term is still an open question. UHWO is certainly moving toward the goal set by the UH system graduation initiative (6-year rate of 40% for first-time freshmen).

One area noted by the team in the institutional report was an emphasis on descriptive data over analysis. The NSSE data presented in the report give some indications for areas of further study

by UHWO to determine more precisely the factors impacting retention and graduation. The Office of Institutional Research provides dashboards on its website but there were few indications of use of this data to drive student learning and graduation rate improvement (CFR 2.10). Assessment of various student success programs, including high impact practices could also yield information. One campus group noted that no curricular assessment had occurred over the past three years. There was also no indication that Academic and Student Affairs works consistently in partnership to further student success (CFR 2.11). These are possible areas for further exploration by the campus, particularly in the area of determining and standardizing assessment processes for all programs, including DL.

Component 6: Quality Assurance and Improvement: Program review, assessment, use of data and evidence

The campus Assessment Committee was first formed in 2014, with coordinators assigned in each division to evaluate general education learning outcomes as well as division and concentration learning outcomes based on each concentration's assessment plan. Assessment coordinators, who were afforded course release time to execute their duties, were tasked with generating annual reports that featured direct and indirect evidence. Through the leadership of the designated assessment coordinator, divisions typically generated a comprehensive assessment report each academic year, focusing on a particular degree learning outcome, aligned to a specific institutional and/or general education learning outcome.

In November of 2020, however, the Director of Assessment, Evaluation, and Accreditation position was vacated and has remained vacant since. It is apparent that faculty and staff are

eager for that role or a similar one to be filled once more so that the institution can perform assessment under the leadership of one administrator who can bring together all those involved in the process (CFR 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6). Information obtained during the visit pointed to a lack of support for assessment from senior leadership which is critical for an effective assessment program.

The full cycle of the assessment process, including consistently applied measures taken to close the loop (in the form of agreements between administration and departments) is not entirely evident from the assessment reports. Ensuring that administration reinforces the importance of assessment, exhibits strong leadership and acts on findings and recommendations contained in assessment reports will benefit the institution. Such actions should be memorialized not only in agreements but in follow-up reports as well (CFR 4.6). There should also be clear policy to establish processes and procedures together with easily accessible standard operating procedures guidelines or manual to ensure consistency across all programs.

The assessment website offers information to students, faculty, staff, and the general public. The site stores publicly available assessment reports from the academic divisions, as well as curricular maps and learning outcomes. The site also provides assessment information and tools for faculty and staff to incorporate into their courses and departments. This commitment to transparency is commendable. Interviews with faculty suggest, however, that a full-time assessment head is needed to increase regular professional development opportunities for faculty in best practices of conducting assessment and incorporating findings into curricular and non-academic offerings.

The institution employs a faculty-led curricular approval process. The curriculum development process, however, could benefit tremendously from working in tandem with assessment activities to ensure curricular decisions are informed by assessment evidence (CFR 4.1).

Through an active and sophisticated IR office, UHWO appears to disaggregate its data effectively in order to find trends and create predictive analytics among and across various populations. Ensuring that these data are deliberately incorporated into assessment and program review will be vital to the success of those processes CFR 4.1, 4.2, 4.3). Consistent use of available data was not apparent during the visit.

UHWO appears to survey its students regularly, and participates in the UH system's Course Evaluation System (CES), as well as the NSSE survey. It appears the institution could benefit from professional development for both faculty and staff in methods of using indirect data to supplement, not supplant, direct evidence when assessing learning outcomes. Conversely, it appears the response rate of student course evaluations could be increased to offer more usable insight.

Component 7: Sustainability: Financial viability, preparing for the changing higher education environment

Budget and Finances

General fund allocations from the state of Hawai'i and tuition and fees from students constitute approximately 98.0% of UHWO's revenue for its annual operations, with each source representing about 50% of total revenue. As the result of enrollment growth and the physical

development of the campus, the institution experienced growth in both revenue sources during

the period of FY 2013 through FY 2018. Starting in FY 2019, annual tuition and fee revenue

went from $17.9 million in FY 2019 to $18.3 million in FY 2021, an increase of approximately

$400,000. Tuition and fees are projected to be approximately $17.5 million in FY 2022. The

general fund rose slightly from $ 18.0 million in FY 2020 to $19.2 million in FY 2021. When

combined, general fund allocations ($18.3 million) and tuition and fee revenue ($17.5 million)

are expected to be approximately $35.8 million in FY 2022.

UHWO is reliant on the state of Hawai'i and the University of Hawai'i System for a significant

portion of its funding. Beyond general fund support the state and the UH System provide

additional financial support in the form of other authorizations. The state is not only responsible

for authorizing general fund allocations, but within the GF support it authorizes all permanent

faculty and staff positions at the institutions. The board of regents of the UH System is

responsible for approving increases to annual tuition rate for the institution. In this regard,

annual tuition rates have been increased by 2.0% during the past five years or so with the last

increase being in FY 2020, at a modest 1.0% percent. The team was advised during its visit that

the UH System appears committed to maintaining tuition rates at current levels. As a result, the

institution does not anticipate a tuition rate increase any time in the near term.

UHWO is resource-constrained due to three primary factors: (1) reduction in annual general fund

allocations from the state; (2) a decline in annual tuition and fee revenues tied to enrollments, as

well as fixed tuition rates; and (3) a lack of available funding for certain personnel positions due

to the positions being essentially "frozen" at the system level. All these factors were influenced

by the COVID pandemic, particularly a funding shortfall in the state budget.

In 2020, UHWO received a total reduction in the general fund allocation of approximately $2.7

million, of which the state has restored $1.62 million leaving an ongoing cut in funding of $1.08

million. The UH System has made a request to the state legislature to restore these funds. If the

funding allocation is not restored by the state, then the institution is projecting that it will likely

experience an operating deficit. The institution is currently anticipating that it will be able to

balance its operating budget for the current fiscal year, FY 2022, but could find itself in a

deficient position in FY 2023 if the cuts in general fund allocations are not restored. It should be

noted that the $1.62 million that has been restored is subject to being cut again in FY 2024 if the

legislature does not take action to make the restoration permanent (CFR 3.4).

Personnel positions at the institution were essentially "frozen" by the UH System as part of its

strategy to manage the budget funding shortfall. The UH System reduced 21 vacant permanent

positions being funded using general fund resources (salary and benefits) at UHWO. Of that

total, seven positions have been "restored", leaving fourteen still on hold. It was unclear at the

time of the team visit when and if the other positions would be released from the restriction,

although the leadership of the institution is hopeful that some or all of the positions will be

restored.

The institution is projecting sufficient cash reserves at the end of the current fiscal year in part to

meet a board of regents policy requiring that the university maintain reserves sufficient to

provide for continued operations for a minimum of two months, calculated at 16% of the average general operation expenditures over the previous three fiscal years. For UHWO, this specific reserve requirement would constitute approximately $5.4 million.

UHWO, like other colleges and universities across the nation, received funding support from the federal government during the pandemic. This included approximately $15.0 million in Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) and Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) grants during the pandemic, including Minority Serving Institution (MSI) designated HEERF funds. Of the total, approximately $10.4 million was directed to the institution with the remainder provided directly to students in the form of grants. The HEERF and CRF funds have assisted the institution in various ways during this period of reduced state funding and reduced tuition and fee revenue. The institution has received from the U.S. Department of Education an extension of the use of approximately $4.4 million of HEERF funds through June 30, 2023.

The university recognizes its high reliance on state allocations presents financial constraints that seriously limit the institution's financial flexibility. The cash reserves built by the institution provide support in the near-term for addressing a potential revenue shortfall, but the reserves do not represent a long-term solution. Although the university is exploring new business models and revenue streams for the future and has indicated its determination to carve out a pathway forward with less dependency on state support, for now, the institution's financial health and sustainability remains highly dependent on the state restoring reductions in the general fund allocation, as well as authorizing the filling of the "frozen" (unfunded) positions. The institution's financial sustainability is also dependent on its rebuilding student enrollments in

order to generate tuition and fee revenue (CFR 3.4, 4.7). Another source of revenue generation

the university is taking nascent steps toward is fundraising. Currently fundraising efforts are

fully under the purview of the chancellor alone. A position is currently being filled to assist in

this that could be a good first step but more emphasis in this area could be beneficial.

The university recently restructured the management of its budget and fiscal affairs by

consolidating the leadership of the two functions under one overall lead, the fiscal manager. The

fiscal manager currently serves as the institution's Chief Financial Officer until a new Vice

Chancellor for Administration is hired. The fiscal manager role includes overseeing the budget

planning process, as well as budget performance and projections.

The university established a University Budget Advisory Council with membership including

representatives from various campus constituencies, including faculty, staff, and students. The

council meets monthly and provides regular counsel to the chancellor regarding budget planning

and priorities, particularly budget matters associated with the institution's strategic plan. The

council was consulted in the process of establishing institution-wide budget priorities in response

to the pandemic, including recommendations on the use of the HEERF grants. Representatives

of the council provide regular reports to the constituency groups they represent. The council is

provided budget information and other support by the fiscal manager.

Enrollment

As indicated, a significant source of funding for the institution is tuition and fees which is directly tied to student enrollment. Total student enrollment (headcount) at the institution has hovered around the 3,000 level for the past five years. Despite the impacts of the pandemic, student enrollment reached an all-time high in FY 2020 with a total of 3,168 students. However, total enrollment declined in FY 2021 to 3,008, a year-to-year decline of approximately 5.0%, with first-time freshmen and transfer students both declining by about 8.0%. UHWO is projecting that its enrollment will grow modestly over the next five years from 3,021 in FY 2022 to 3,098 in FY 2026 which was similar to an enrollment projection report prepared by the UH System's Institutional Research Analysis and Planning Office (IRAPO) in November 2021 (CFR 3.4).

The COVID pandemic has made the recruitment of new university students challenging as recruitment was restricted primarily to mixed media and online venues. Given the nature of the core students served by the institution, leadership believes that visibility to prospective students is an essential element of the institution's overall recruitment process. The institution's recruitment representatives are looking forward to a return to in-person recruitment strategies with prospective freshmen and transfers once such opportunities are again possible.

The university recruitment team currently consists of three full-time employees. Although the recruitment team is highly committed and motivated and supported by faculty and other staff in a collective institutional effort, it is likely that if the institution is to be successful in the recruitment of students in an increasingly competitive environment, it will need to expand the size of the staff supporting recruitment and admissions operations. Institutional leadership has

acknowledged that additional resources are necessary to fund staff as well as other elements of its recruitment operations if the university is to sustain and enhance its recruitment efforts (CFR 3.4).

In 2020, UHWO engaged the consulting firm, EAB, which provides higher education clients with enrollment marketing, research, and analysis services, as well as financial aid optimization services. UHWO sought EAB's assistance to increase its visibility and marketability with high school populations, both within Hawai'i and the U.S. continent. The institution's engagement with EAB, which is valued at approximately $1.0 million, concludes at the end of the current fiscal year. The institution will need to determine the value and impact of the research and marketing services being provided by EAB and if these kinds of services and capabilities should be continued. The institution has determined that a more targeted marketing campaign, including a mix of digital media, advertising (television, radio, print), social media and print collateral, will be required going forward. The employment of these marketing approaches may be particularly important relative to the institution's strategic plan goal of expanding into new markets, such as adult learners and students from neighbor islands and the U.S. continent.

UHWO in recent years formally established the Office of Distance Learning and has expanded its distance learning capabilities, both in the form of personnel and technology. Although DL programs provide the opportunity for the institution to serve non-traditional, other island and out-of-state students, the university has not yet completed a feasibility analysis nor developed a comprehensive strategy for deploying distant education programs to these student markets. The current situation, as described during the visit, is that each division determines the programs

taught in the DL format. Moving forward, and to ensure enrollment growth, a more cohesive, deliberative approach to academic planning and addition of new programs should be employed.

Enrollment management needs to be considered a major priority for the university's future. Current leadership needs to be assessed and re-energized. Development of a strategic enrollment plan including on-site and distance learning students will be essential as the university seeks to increase its enrollment. This should include consideration of establishing targets informed by historical and predictive data reflecting the capabilities of the university's resources and facilities. Staffing levels in student recruitment and admissions should be evaluated along with use of research and marketing tools. Additionally, the university should more effectively utilize data and analyses generated by institutional research for student recruitment, as well as for enrollment management and retention (CFR 3.4, 3.8, 4.2).

Facilities

The current 40-acre university campus contains a total of 297,000 gross square feet of space in seven buildings. Most recent construction includes the Administration and Health Sciences Building (43,000 sq. ft.) which opened in 2018 and the Academy of Creative Media Building (33,000 sq. ft.) which opened in November 2020.

UHWO leadership believes that the current campus facilities are adequate to meet the needs of a student body of approximately 3,200 to 3,300 students. However, given that a significant number of university students are taking a combination of online and in-classroom courses, a trend that is expected to continue past the pandemic, it may be possible for the campus to

accommodate more than this projection. The university should consider conducting an occupancy analysis to better understand the capacity of the existing space and infrastructure.

One facility requirement that the university has identified is the need to construct student residential spaces on the campus. Currently the university does not provide a housing program for students. University leadership believes that the lack of student residential halls adversely impacts the ability to attract and retain students, particularly those from outside the local region, as well as students from neighboring islands and the U.S. continent. The university would like to secure funding from the state to construct residential hall spaces to accommodate 200 to 300 students in the next three to five years.

The university envisions developing the 200 acres designated for private development into a university village with other transit-oriented activities. The Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation (HART) rail line has constructed two rail transit stations situated near the campus which are scheduled to open in the near future. The university and the UH System have prepared high-level land use and master planning documents for the build-out of the university district. The university sees the development of the lands not only as an opportunity to create a vibrant atmosphere for students, but as a source for generating future revenue. Although the development of the university district provides an exciting long-term opportunity for the university, it does not appear at this time that the planning and resources commitment necessary to significantly advance this endeavor have been established. However, the UH System requested the inclusion in the Governor's budget funding of $10.0 million for development of infrastructure to support future development of the land. There are also early discussions

underway regarding a film/media center in the university district and construction of a photovoltaic power station on a nearby 990-acre property owned by the UH system. It should be noted that any revenues generated from the development of the university district would be shared with the UH System, so it is difficult at this time to determine the value of any future revenue stream to the institution.

Component 8: Micro-Economy of the Leeward Coast

UHWO's mission, codified in its Strategic Action Plan, 2018-2028, is for faculty, staff and students to "embrace Native Hawaiian culture and traditions" while emphasizing "service to the community". The three strategies outlined in the strategic plan all address student success and learning through building linkages with the community through partnerships and collaborative efforts. These efforts seek to enrich the university's role in preparing students to engage in the local community and to meet the workforce needs of the region.

UHWO is situated in Leeward Oʻahu, the fastest-growing region in the state of Hawaiʻi . The university's service area is very diverse and has larger percentages of Native Hawaiian, Asian, Latinx, foreign-born, and non-English-speaking residents than does the entire state of Hawaiʻi . The university reflects this as noted by the *Chronicle of Higher Education 2019 Almanac* as being the fourth most ethnically and racially diverse four-year public higher education institution in the country. Also, the federal government has recognized the university as a Native Hawaiian-Serving institution (NHSI).

However, the residents in this area are among the state's poorest. According to the 2010 census, 11.2% of residents live in poverty. A more recent study by Aloha United Way found that across

the state 9% of the population lives below the poverty line but an additional 33% could not afford basic household necessities.

The communities in the Leeward area are historically under-represented in access to higher education opportunities, only 23.4% have bachelor's degrees compared to 32.5% in the state. UHWO is located in close proximity to the state's largest public high school with over 3,000 students and other very diverse and large public high schools. The eight public high schools in their service region, which supply two-thirds of the university's first year students, provide the opportunity for intensified outreach to attract and educate first-generation students and their families about the value and importance of a college education. While meetings have occurred with university leadership and school district and school leaders, there needs to be increased contact with students and their families about the university and how it affords access to an affordable college education and degree.

The COVID pandemic affected student enrollment in part due to the curtailment/elimination of face-to-face outreach efforts with students and parents and significantly reduced enrollment and student engagement in the local high schools. Other factors affecting lower enrollment numbers at UHWO in AY 2021-22 have not been fully reviewed and analyzed. Discussion and analyses of all available data needs to occur with strategic action plans to address enrollment growth and management (CFR 4.1, 4.6, 4.7). Increasing admissions and enrollment yield rates need to be a high priority as well as focusing on increasing retention rates both for the students' sake as well as to keep tuition revenues stabilized and then increasing. Plans are underway to begin face-to-face outreach and communication efforts again, but other strategies also need to be considered and implemented to have a more robust enrollment management plan. Key to this effort will be

a development of an academic plan aligned with the institutional strategic plan and specifically addressing the role of DL going forward.

The university has partnered with Kamehameha Schools (the largest landowner in the state) and the U.S. Department of Education to develop programs that support Native Hawaiian student success. Title III Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian (ANNH) grants have aided in enhancing access, affordability and academic success for these students. In 2019, the university received four new multi-year awards that provide the potential to enhance collaborative work with some community colleges and support state workforce needs. One supports transfers from Leeward Community College into STEM majors while another partners with Kaua'i Community College to improve Native Hawaiian students there to access the university's distance learning programs. The others focus on educating K-12 teachers/leaders with a Hawaiian culture-based teacher preparation program and on providing more flexible learning environments in campus facilities. When funding for these programs ends, UHWO is going to have to assess the success of these programs and determine if funds can be identified to continue them or modify them.

The Kamehameha Schools fund grant programs at the university that seek to strengthen the surrounding community via education. These include funding of a faculty and staff position supporting an academic concentration in sustainable community food systems, early college and summer residential programs, and a peer mentoring program and support for senior practicum students. Such programs are significant to both the university and the community in expanding opportunities for Native Hawaiians to receive more education and be better prepared for the workforce. Continuation of funding for these grant programs is very important and should be highly encouraged.

UHWO's core commitment to community engagement is exemplified by their intentional focus on applied and experiential learning. Working towards meeting some of the workforce demands of the regional service various programs are offered such as creative media, cybersecurity, accounting, facilities management, healthcare administration and health information management. This has been aided by faculty, administrators and students utilizing the UH system's Hawai'i Career Explorer tool, an interactive dashboard offering real-time data on salary, educational requirements and job openings in a number of career fields. Using this the university has worked to align academic plans with state workforce needs and students have explored job interests to plan their careers. Internship opportunities for students have been developed by the Career Services Office with various employers and agencies. Further, the senior capstone requirement in every degree requires either a research project or a practicum/internship experience.

Working with key industry partners such as the Office of Naval Research (ONR) has resulted in a cyber security coordination center affording a living-learning laboratory for students who are seeking a degree in a baccalaureate in a new cybersecurity major or in applied science with a concentration in information and security assurance. The institution is proud of its formal designation as a National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense Education. Twice university teams have won the National Cyber League championship and in 2020 were ranked 12th in the nation. Through an ONR grant, the university established a VETS (Veterans Empowered Through STEM) Center and when the pandemic hit in 2020 student veterans worked here creating personal protective equipment with 3D printers for local hospitals.

Within the local community the university partners with the Kapolei Chamber of Commerce on an annual "Hire Leeward" job fair. Chancellor Benham is actively involved with the Chamber

and leads their education committee. Also partnering with the Chamber of Commerce, Kamehameha Schools and Hawai'i Department of Education, the university developed and hosts a student career expo where students are educated about various career pathways via connections with local employers. Other partnerships bring employers from local industry to special events for students interested in accounting, health careers, creative media, risk management and insurance. Such activities provide students with an opportunity to explore available career operations and to expand their horizons about the possibilities they have by majoring in various disciplines.

The university strategic plan emphasizing "service to the community" has led to a greater focus on service learning at a number of levels. The faculty senate established a service learning subcommittee with the general education committee and created a course designation in service learning. Students who reach a benchmark number of service learning hours receive a red stole at their commencement ceremony. In the 2020 NSSE, 71% of first year students reported having completed a service learning project which is significantly higher than respondents at peer institutions and similarly classified public institutions.

UHWO has worked towards building relationships with the regional community through partnerships with educational institutions, local organizations and regional employers in the first few years of implementing its strategic plan. The COVID pandemic has hindered some of the progress that they had hoped to realize by now, but they have laid a solid foundation to continue progress forward.

Component 9 Conclusion: Reflection and Plans for Improvement

UHWO's faculty, staff and students established a clear path forward with its *Strategic Action Plan, 2018-2028*. This plan has aided the institution greatly in setting priorities and direction as the coronavirus pandemic engulfed the nation and the university in early 2020. However, during the visit outside of meetings with executive leadership, no mention was made of the plan. Despite the turbulent times, an all-time enrollment peak was realized in Fall 2020 along with the largest graduating class in AY 2019/2020. Also, in fall 2020 the university had the most graduates in its history for a fall term. However, in fall 2021 enrollment declined by nearly 200 students in part they believe due to the pandemic but the reasons for this need to be carefully analyzed and addressed to stabilize enrollment. Continued focus on the multiple elements of the plan need to be reinforced as decision-making and planning continue into the future.

As noted earlier, the university has opened two new buildings – the Administration and Health Science Building in 2018 and the Academy for Creative Media Building in 2020. These new state-of-the-art facilities have brought pride to the students, faculty and staff as the campus is developed. Also recently established are a BA in Creative Media and a BS in Cybersecurity which are already growing quickly. The university had been growing and expanding its distance learning capabilities prior to the onset of the pandemic with about 45 percent of their enrollment online. Hence, it was well-positioned to meet some of the challenges presented when all instruction needed to move to 100 percent virtual instruction.

Some of the challenges confronting the university are clearly articulated:

The need to develop a new business model as state budget reductions have occurred and are planned for the next few years although the FY 2022 budget is being handled well with a surplus currently anticipated;

Ways to institutionalize additional funding for computer equipment, information technology services and professional development essential to support and expand hybrid and develop delivery as originally planned;

To meet enrollment goals with a shrinking pool of students, efforts to recruit FTF from local high schools need to be intensified and plans enhanced to recruit nontraditional students such as working adults with some college but no degree. Other strategies mentioned include delivering distance learning programs to more students on other islands and out-of-state students and developing digital badging and/or micro-credentialing programs. Strong leadership in enrollment management is an important element to achieve success in stabilizing and increasing enrollment. Also, a strategic enrollment management plan linked to an academic plan needs to be developed using data and analyses establishing targets with recruitment and retention strategies to meet them;

The need for strong leadership that directs and focuses on supporting the organization, refinement and consistency of its assessment policies, practices and structures and brings stability to the staffing in this area. Faculty and staff need to be engaged to work collaboratively to examine and interpret evidence and make recommendations for program improvement. Professional development opportunities are key to increasing effective assessment practices;

Look to redirect the university's limited resources to invest in opportunities including the availability of significant land as a new business model is developed. Work needs to be done

with the University of Hawaiʻi system and the Hawaiʻi Legislature so that the UHWO receives its appropriate share of the funds generated by the land use agreements consummated.

These challenges along with others, including development of an academic plan incorporating the role of distance learning, ongoing COVID impacts, restoration of budget cuts and reduced positions, immediate hiring issues in critical need areas, and reaching a staffing level that is sufficient for services/programs essential to operations need to be addressed soon. Appropriate committees or structures need to be developed and implemented to meet these challenges.

Section III – Findings, Commendations, and Recommendations from the Team Review

Commendations

The team commends UH West Oʻahu in particular for the following:

1.   Demonstrating a deeply held shared passion for the mission of the university, its students, and the region it serves.

2.   Intentionally centering Hawaiian culture and concepts into the Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of Degrees within the context of the needs of the community served.

3.   Developing clear institutional learning outcomes, program learning outcomes, and course learning outcomes.

4.   Maintaining an operating surplus in light of system-wide budget cuts and tuition losses resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

5.   Creating a university budget advisory council with wide-spread representation.

6.   Having a highly developed Institutional Research Office led by staff with notable experience in data collection, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination.

Recommendations

The team recommends that UH West Oʻahu respond to the following issues:

1.   Establish and implement assessment structures and processes with leadership dedicated at all levels to the improvement of student learning. Engage faculty and staff to collaboratively examine and interpret evidence, and make recommendations for program

2.   Utilize data and analyses generated by Institutional Research to inform decision-making across the university, particularly for recruitment, enrollment, and retention (CFR 4.1, 4.3).

3.   Develop an academic plan for current and future majors, concentrations and programs; ensure the plan clarifies the role of distance education (CFR 3.7, 4.6).

4.   Develop a strategic enrollment management plan that will grow enrollment by establishing targets informed by historical and predictive data and reflecting the capacity of the university's resources and facilities (CFR 3.5, 3.7, 4.3, 4.6).

5.   Engage with the University of Hawaiʻi System and the Legislature to:

    a. restore the $1.08 million funding reduction in order to avoid a potential operations deficit starting FY 2023 (CFR 3.4)

    b. advance the planning and development of the University District and student housing as proposed in the UHWO Campus Master Plan (CFR 1.7, 3.4)

    c.   restore the positions taken during the COVID pandemic (CFR 3.1).

6.   Develop strategies and capacity to increase fundraising to support the university (CFR 3.4).

7.   Coordinate communications with current students to help enhance consistent messaging (CFR 2.12, 2,13, 2.14).

8.   Develop and formalize standard operating procedures across all functional areas of the university to enhance internal coordination and effectiveness (CFR 2.4, 2.10, 2.11, 3.7).

9.   Increase professional development for new and continuing employees that includes employee input as stakeholders in campus success (CFR 3.3).

FEDERAL COMPLIANCE FORMS

OVERVIEW

There are four forms that WSCUC uses to address institutional compliance with some of the federal regulations affecting institutions and accrediting agencies:

       1 – Credit Hour and Program Length Review Form
       2 – Marketing and Recruitment Review Form
       3 – Student Complaints Form
       4 – Transfer Credit Policy Form

During the visit, teams complete these four forms and add them as an appendix to the Team Report. Teams are not required to include a narrative about any of these matters in the team report but may include recommendations, as appropriate, in the Findings, Commendations, and Recommendations section of the team report.

1 - CREDIT HOUR AND PROGRAM LENGTH REVIEW FORM

Under federal regulations, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's credit hour policy and processes as well as the lengths of its programs.

Credit Hour - §602.24(f)

The accrediting agency, as part of its review of an institution for renewal of accreditation, must conduct an effective review and evaluation of the reliability and accuracy of the institution's assignment of credit hours.

(1) The accrediting agency meets this requirement if-
    (i) It reviews the institution's-
        (A) Policies and procedures for determining the credit hours, as defined in 34 CFR 600.2, that the institution awards for courses and programs; and
        (B) The application of the institution's policies and procedures to its programs and coursework;
    and
    (ii) Makes a reasonable determination of whether the institution's assignment of credit hours conforms to commonly accepted practice in higher education.

(2) In reviewing and evaluating an institution's policies and procedures for determining credit hour assignments, an accrediting agency may use sampling or other methods in the evaluation.

Credit hour is defined by the Department of Education as follows:
A credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than—

(1) One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or

(2) At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

See also WASC Senior College and University Commission's Credit Hour Policy.

Program Length - §602.16(a)(1)(viii)
Program length may be seen as one of several measures of quality and as a proxy measure for scope of the objectives of degrees or credentials offered. Traditionally offered degree programs are generally approximately 120 semester credit hours for a bachelor's degree, and 30 semester credit hours for a master's degree; there is greater variation at the doctoral level depending on the type of program. For programs offered in non-traditional formats, for which program length is not a relevant and/or reliable quality measure, reviewers should ensure that available information clearly defines desired program outcomes and graduation requirements, that institutions are ensuring that program outcomes are achieved, and that there is a reasonable correlation between the scope of these outcomes and requirements and those typically found in traditionally offered degrees or programs tied to program length.

Rev 03/2015

1 - CREDIT HOUR AND PROGRAM LENGTH REVIEW FORM

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections as appropriate.)
Policy on credit hour	Is this policy easily accessible? X YES ❏ NO
	If so, where is the policy located?https://westoahu.hawaii.edu/wp-content/uploads/docs/UHWO_Credit_Hour_Policy.pdf
	Comments:
Process(es)/ periodic review of credit hour	Does the institution have a procedure for periodic review of credit hour assignments to ensure that they are accurate and reliable (for example, through program review, new course approval process, periodic audits)? X YES ❏ NO Periodic compliance review of UH West Oʻahu's credit hour policy assures accurate, consistent, and reliable credit hour assignment in all courses and programs. The review process includes: • The Academic Program Review cycle includes an audit of syllabi for courses within the program through a representative sampling of course syllabi, reviewing the syllabi to ascertain the credit hour policy is addressed in the syllabi and courses meet the credit hour requirements. • Curriculum Committee procedures include an approval process in Kuali Student Curriculum Management (KSCM) to demonstrate why and how the course satisfies the credit hour assignment (e.g., including learning outcomes, type of course, class and out-of-class assignments, etc). • Distance Education Committee procedures, including new DE designations and renewal of DE designations, require the proposer to indicate the amount of time and frequency of course activities to meet the contact hour requirement for the assigned number of credits. • One-time sampling audit of syllabi in which student expectations are recorded. The one-time sampling of syllabi is designed to 1) get all faculty on the same page with respect to including a credit hour statement and 2) measure what percentage of syllabi reflect the credit hour language. The results of this project are discussed in UH West Oʻahu's Credit Hour Audit Report.
	If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure? X YES ❏ NO

	Comments: The institution has made significant progress in formalizing procedures to ensure compliance. The review process has recently been updated and integrated into curriculum and program review.
Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet	Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours? X YES ❑ NO
	Comments: Class Availability (i.e. the Schedule of Classes) is publicly available here: https://www.sis.hawaii.edu/uhdad/avail.classes?i=WOA
Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses *Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.*	How many syllabi were reviewed? 7
	What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)?
	What degree level(s)? ❑ AA/AS X BA/BS ❑ MA ❑ Doctoral
	What discipline(s)? Communications, English, Math, Psychology, Social Science • CM 353: Making a Short Film • ENG 272: Introduction to Literature- Culture and Literature • ICS 101: Digital Tools for the Information World • ISA 340: Introduction to Digital Forensics • MATH 140X: Accelerated Pre-Calculus • PSY 402: History and Systems of Psychology • SSCI 210: Statistical Analysis I
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? X YES ❑ NO
	Comments:
Sample syllabi or equivalent for other kinds of courses that do not meet for the prescribed hours (e.g., internships, labs, clinical, independent study, accelerated) *Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.*	How many syllabi were reviewed? 3
	What kinds of courses?
	What degree level(s)? ❑ AA/AS X BA/BS ❑ MA ❑ Doctoral
	What discipline(s)?Biology, Education BIOL 171L: Introductory to Biology I Laboratory • EDEE/EDSE 490: Student Teaching • PUBA 490D: DPEM Administrative Practicum
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? X YES ❑ NO
	Comments:
Sample program information (catalog, website, or other program materials)	How many programs were reviewed? 3 Link to the UH West Oʻahu 2021-22 General Catalog. Program listings, descriptions, outcomes, and requirements run from pages 70 - 165.
	What kinds of programs were reviewed?
	What degree level(s)? ❑ AA/AS X BA/BS ❑ MA ❑ Doctoral
	What discipline(s)?Psychology, English, Math

	Does this material show that the programs offered at the institution are of a generally acceptable length? X YES ❏ NO
	Comments:

Review Completed By: Mary Oling-Sisay
Date: March 1, 2022

2 - MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT REVIEW FORM
Under federal regulation*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's recruiting and admissions practices.

Material Reviewed	Questions and Comments: Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this table as appropriate.
**Federal regulations	Does the institution follow federal regulations on recruiting students? X YES ❏ NO
	Comments:
Degree completion and cost	Does the institution provide information about the typical length of time to degree? X YES ❏ NO This data is tracked and published on the Student Right-to-Know website.
	Does the institution provide information about the overall cost of the degree? X YES ❏ NO
	Comments:A tuition schedule within the General Catalog (pages 26-27) and on UH West Oʻahu's website: https://westoahu.hawaii.edu/financial-aid/tuition-and-fees/ Cost of attendance is a new US DOE requirement. UH West Oʻahu provides a net price calculator at the following website: https://westoahu.hawaii.edu/financial-aid/net-price-calculator/
Careers and employment	Does the institution provide information about the kinds of jobs for which its graduates are qualified, as applicable? X YES ❏ NO The UH West Oʻahu Career Services Office offers resources and counseling in the area of career planning. The Institutional Research Office develops data visualization tools, such as the Employment Status Dashboard, to track employment pathways of UH West Oʻahu graduates. The Hawaii Career Explorer tool provides a 360-degree view of real-time industry demands and the current spread of occupations.
	Does the institution provide information about the employment of its graduates, as applicable? X YES ❏ NO
	Comments: N/A

*§602.16(a)(1)(vii)

**Section 487 (a)(20) of the Higher Education Act (HEA) prohibits Title IV eligible institutions from providing incentive compensation to employees or third party entities for their success in securing student enrollments. Incentive compensation includes commissions, bonus payments, merit salary adjustments, and promotion decisions based solely on success in enrolling students. These regulations do not apply to the recruitment of international students residing in foreign countries who are not eligible to receive Federal financial aid.

Review Completed By: Phillip L. Doolittle
Date: 3/29/2022

3 - STUDENT COMPLAINTS REVIEW FORM
Under federal regulation*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's student complaints policies, procedures, and records.

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)
Policy on student complaints	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for student complaints? x YES ❏ NO
	If so, is the policy or procedure easily accessible? Is so, where? UH West Oʻahu maintains a Student Academic Grievance Procedure. The institution maintains a separate Student Disability Grievance Process. The UH System also provides a mechanism for student complaints related to discrimination: UH System Administrative Procedure 9.920: Discrimination Complaint Process for Students, Employees, and Applicants for Admission or Employment.
	Comments: Verified accessible from the website
Process(es)/ procedure	Does the institution have a procedure for addressing student complaints? x YES ❏ NO If so, please describe briefly: The procedures for addressing academic-based complaints are covered in the abovementioned Student Academic Grievance Procedure: https://westoahu.hawaii.edu/wp-content/uploads/docs/student_affairs/Student_Academic_Grievance_Procedure.pdf As a member of NC-SARA, the institution maintains a Distance Learning/NC-SARA Student Complaint Process: https://westoahu.hawaii.edu/distancelearning/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/NCSARA_ComplaintProcess.pdf. Complaints may be submitted through the DE Student Concern Form (note: UH login required). The Title IX Office assists students with complaints related to sex/gender based discrimination and/or sexual harassment and provides this Sexual Harassment (Title IX) Report Form. The Office of the Registrar oversees the Registration and Records Student Appeals Process.

	The Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy contains a procedure for student appeals of financial aid eligibility in Section H.A. ("Appeal Process"). There are additional procedures for non-academic complaints
	If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure? x YES ❏ NO
	Comments:
Records	Does the institution maintain records of student complaints? x YES ❏ NO If so, where?
	Does the institution have an effective way of tracking and monitoring student complaints over time? x YES ❏ NO If so, please describe briefly: Complaints are filed and maintained in the office of record: Office of Compliance (Title IX) Disability Services Office of Distance Learning (DE/NC-SARA) Office of the Registrar (registration and records appeals) Financial Aid Office (academic progress) Note: for academic grievances, the Academic Grievance Committee chair maintains records housed in the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.
	Comments:

*§602-16(1)(1)(ix)
See also WASC Senior College and University Commission's Complaints and Third Party Comment Policy.

Review Completed By: Fran Horvath
Date: 3/27/2022

4 – TRANSFER CREDIT POLICY REVIEW FORM

Under federal regulations*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's recruiting and admissions practices accordingly.

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)
Transfer Credit Policy(s)	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for receiving transfer credit? X YES ❏ NO
	If so, is the policy publically available? X YES ❏ NO If so, where? Transfer credit policy is covered in UH West Oʻahu Policy 7.101: Admissions Criteria (see Article III.D). UH Executive Policy 5.209: University of Hawaiʻi System Student Transfer and Inter-Campus Articulation facilitates student transfer across the 10-campus system. A more student-friendly overview of UH West Oʻahu transfer policies and practices is available here: https://westoahu.hawaii.edu/policies/transfer-credit-policy-and-information/

	The Admissions Office also maintains a website to assist transfer student matriculation: https://westoahu.hawaii.edu/admissions/transfer-students/
	Does the policy(s) include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education? X YES ☐ NO
	Comments:

*§602.24(e): Transfer of credit policies. The accrediting agency must confirm, as part of its review for renewal of accreditation, that the institution has transfer of credit policies that--

    (1) Are publicly disclosed in accordance with 668.43(a)(11); and

    (2) Include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education.

See also WASC Senior College and University Commission's Transfer of Credit Policy.

Review Completed By: Sonny Calderon
Date: Mar 3, 2022

Appendix B: Distance Education Review

Distance Education Review-Team Report Appendix

Institution: University of Hawaii West Oahu
Type of Visit: Reaffirmation
Name of reviewer/s: Fran Horvath
Date/s of review: 3/1-4/2022

A completed copy of this form should be appended to the team report for all comprehensive visits to institutions that offer distance education programs and for other visits as applicable. Teams can use the institutional report to begin their investigation, then, use the visit to confirm claims and further surface possible concerns. Teams are not required to include a narrative about this in the team report but may include recommendations, as appropriate, in the Findings and Recommendations section of the team report. (If the institution offers only online courses, the team may use this form for reference but need not submit it as the team report is expected to cover distance education in depth in the body of the report.)

1. Programs and courses reviewed (please list)

   The current list of programs includes concentrations in business administration, creative media, humanities, social sciences, public administration and education plus 7 certificate programs. Courses reviewed included:
   Creative Media 316 User Experience
   English 367e Film Genres and Directors
   Public Admin 318 Managed Care
   Management 310 Principles of Management

2. Background Information (number of programs offered by distance education; degree levels; FTE enrollment in distance education courses/programs; history of offering distance education; percentage growth in distance education offerings and enrollment; platform, formats, and/or delivery method)

   UHWO has been conducting WSCUC-sanctioned distance learning since 198. The institution started as a transfer institution with the intent of providing the second two years of a baccalaureate degree to those students in neighboring islands attending one of the community colleges there. This pattern remains presently with concentrations in the upper division only being offered in the programs listed above.

   Numbers of students in the DL programs is somewhat unclear due to the reporting formats of the institution as well as the fact that distance courses are open to on-campus students. Historical data indicate purely DL students went from roughly 20-30% of total enrollment between 2010 and 2015 and then grew to roughly 40% just before the pandemic.

   An Office of Distance Learning was recently established (2018) with the hiring of a director. Three additional DL support staff hires in 2020 brings the total dedicated to this area to four FTE. This additional support has resulted in the creation of a tactical plan and a faculty handbook. UHWO recently joined the National Council for State Authorized Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA). It is also embarking on an effort to upgrade all campus classrooms to hybrid learning spaces.

3. Nature of the review (material examined and persons/committees interviewed)

   Documents and data provided by the institution were reviewed including the Distance Learning Tactical Plan, the Distance Learning Faculty Handbook, enrollment projections by modality and type.

During the visit, the Directors of Distance Learning, Admissions, Communications and Enrollment Management were all interviewed with questions directed as to the enrollment strategies, planning, support services, etc.

Observations and Findings

Lines of Inquiry (refer to relevant CFRs to assure comprehensive consideration)	Observations and Findings	Follow-up Required (identify the issues)
Fit with Mission. How does the institution conceive of distance learning relative to its mission, operations, and administrative structure? How are distance education offerings planned, funded, and operationalized?	DL is a strong fit based on institutional start as a transfer university	
Connection to the Institution. How are distance education students integrated into the life and culture of the institution?	Depends on the type of DL student since some are completely DL and are on other islands while others are on-campus students	
Quality of the DE Infrastructure. Are the learning platform and academic infrastructure of the site conducive to learning and interaction between faculty and students and among students? Is the technology adequately supported? Are there back-ups?	Technology is adequate and being upgraded	
Student Support Services: What is the institution's capacity for providing advising, counseling, library, computing services, academic support and other services appropriate to distance modality? What does data show about the effectiveness of the services?	Most support services are online to accommodate DL students. There are centers on the islands of Maui, Kauaʻi and Hawaiʻi which provide referral to appropriate on-campus offices.	Ensure students off-island are adequately supported, particularly if DL programs are expanded. (CFR 2.11, 2.13, 2.14)
Faculty. Who teaches the courses, e.g., full-time, part-time, adjunct? Do they teach only online courses? In what ways does the institution ensure that distance learning faculty are oriented, supported, and integrated appropriately into the academic life of the institution? How are faculty involved in curriculum development and assessment of student learning? How are faculty trained and supported to teach in this modality?	Faculty are a mix of full-time and part-time based on available budget. A faculty handbook as well as an instructional designer and other support staff are available for faculty training.	

Curriculum and Delivery. Who designs the distance education programs and courses? How are they approved and evaluated? Are the programs and courses comparable in content, outcomes and quality to on-ground offerings? (Submit credit hour report.)	Programs are designed by the department/division faculty. Approval is at the division level	Interviews indicated a lack of cohesive planning and approval for new DL programs. A comprehensive academic plan including DL is recommended tied to the overall strategic plan. (CFR 3.7, 4.6)
Retention and Graduation. What data on retention and graduation are collected on students taking online courses and programs? What do these data show? What disparities are evident? Are rates comparable to on-ground programs and to other institutions' online offerings? If any concerns exist, how are these being addressed?	The DL Tactical Plan mentions that graduation rates for DL students are lower than those of on-campus students	Institution should more clearly delineate DL students (transfers in the degree completion programs) from other students in their data reports in order to call attention to this issue. (CFR 4.1, 4.3)
Student Learning. How does the institution assess student learning for online programs and courses? Is this process comparable to that used in on-ground courses? What are the results of student learning assessment? How do these compare with learning results of on-ground students, if applicable, or with other online offerings?		Institution should ensure DL programs are consistently and regularly assessed and compared to the on-ground versions. (CFR 2.4, 2.7, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.4)
Contracts with Vendors. Are there any arrangements with outside vendors concerning the infrastructure, delivery, development, or instruction of courses? If so, do these comport with the policy on *Contracts with Unaccredited Organizations?*	No outside vendors are used for construction of courses or delivery.	
Quality Assurance Processes: How are the institution's quality assurance processes designed or modified to cover distance education? What evidence is provided that distance education programs and courses are educationally effective?	DL programs can be covered as part of a degree program's review process. However, interview evidence during the visit indicated this was not consistently carried out	Institution needs to ensure that DL programs are consistently part of the program review process. (CFR 2.4, 2.7, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.4)

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