



UNIVERSITY
of HAWAII®
WEST O'AHU

University of Hawai'i–West O'ahu

Institutional Report for Reaffirmation of WSCUC Accreditation

June 2021



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Component 1:

Introduction to the Institutional Report

Institutional History

The University of Hawai'i–West O'ahu (UH West O'ahu) is an indigenous-serving, public baccalaureate institution located on the 'Ewa Plain of O'ahu, the fastest-growing region in the State of Hawai'i. The campus provides an accessible and affordable bachelor's degree education to the historically under-resourced communities of Leeward O'ahu. UH West O'ahu remains the youngest branch of the 10-campus University of Hawai'i (UH) System but has grown rapidly in recent years to become the system's fifth-largest unit in terms of headcount enrollment by fall semester 2020. Initially established in 1976 as West O'ahu College, the institution began as a tiny upper-division campus serving UH Community College graduates.

The college's humble trappings persisted for decades. In the same year that the institution earned WSCUC accreditation (1981), West O'ahu College's location in a leased office building in the town of 'Aiea was modestly upgraded to a pair of portable wood-frame buildings on the campus of Leeward Community College in Pearl City. The institution's rebranding as the University of Hawai'i–West O'ahu in 1989 occurred at a moment in time when its student enrollment numbered just 600. However, the Campbell Estate's donation of a large tract of land in Kapolei—combined with renewed legislative resolve—sparked a turn in the college's fortunes in the first decade of the 21st century. Dozens of new faculty and staff positions were allocated and, equipped with new resources and expertise, the university introduced a general education curriculum in fall 2007, as it welcomed its inaugural class of traditional first-year students.

A landmark moment occurred in August 2012, when UH West O'ahu officially relocated to Kapolei, now boasting permanent, state-of-the-art facilities on a 500-acre parcel of land. UH West O'ahu's student enrollment exploded during this transition, increasing by 239% (from 866 to 2,939 students) in the 10-year period from 2006-2016. Indeed, *The Chronicle's Almanac of Higher Education* identified the college as the [fastest-growing public baccalaureate institution in the nation](#) three years running. While its pace of growth has since subsided, UH West O'ahu achieved its highest ever fall-to-fall retention rate of 76.4% in 2019 and hit a high-water mark for headcount enrollment with 3,168 students in fall 2020, despite the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic. Although 90.5% of its students are Hawai'i residents, UH West O'ahu is characterized by a remarkable level of student diversity, with 88.8% of its headcount enrollment consisting of students of color, [29.3% of whom identify as Native Hawaiians or Pacific Islander](#) and [22.3% more of whom have Filipino ancestry](#) (CFR 1.4). Indeed, in 2019 the *Almanac* recognized UH West O'ahu's student body as having the [fourth-highest level of ethnic and racial diversity](#) of 723 four-year public institutions measured. As of fall 2020, 35.5% of UH West O'ahu's degree-seeking students are Pell Grant recipients while 26.3% are classified as first generation.

UH West O'ahu has strategically developed its academic platform and capacity to both foster and accommodate this enrollment growth. With the addition of three new onsite degree programs in 2019 and 2020, the campus now offers nine academic majors organized into 45 concentrations. Importantly, these new degree additions feature UH West O'ahu's first two official STEM degrees – the Bachelor of Science in Natural Science and the Bachelor of Science in Cybersecurity.

Mission and Strategic Plan

Strategic planning became the institution's top priority immediately upon the installation of Chancellor Maenette K.P. Benham in January 2017, the first Native Hawaiian woman to serve as chancellor at any University of Hawai'i campus. Under Dr. Benham's direction, UH West O'ahu commenced a comprehensive 18-month strategic planning process that coalesced nearly 200 members of the campus community as well as key stakeholders across a series of more than 50 (in-person) gatherings and work sessions (CFR 4.6). The end result was the publication of the UH West O'ahu [Strategic Action Plan, 2018-2028](#) (appendix 1.1), which was commended by the WSCUC Interim Report Panel for effectively "envision(ing) a direction for the future."

The institution's 10-year plan, which strives to (a) increase student success and engagement, (b) advance dynamic and integrated learning experiences, and (c) strengthen its assets and infrastructure, provides the following value proposition, mission, and vision (CFR 1.1):

Value Proposition: The University of Hawai'i–West O'ahu prepares 21st-century leaders – career creators – through integrated, transdisciplinary programs where learners discover, innovate, and engage diverse communities to create a vibrant and just world!

Mission: UH West O'ahu 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.

Vision: UH West O'ahu is a premier, comprehensive, indigenous-serving institution dedicated to educating students to be engaged global citizens and leaders in society. UH West O'ahu fosters a dynamic learning environment where all students, faculty, and staff embody and perpetuate Pacific and global understanding rooted in Native Hawaiian values.

The Strategic Action Plan is sustained by a set of Native Hawaiian [pahuhopu \(institutional values\)](#) that continue to guide campus decisions during the arduous times of the coronavirus pandemic: waiwai (abundance/wealth), kaiāulu (community), hana lawelawe (service), mālama 'āina (environmental sustainability), and po'okela (excellence) (CFR 1.1). Likewise, the Strategic Action Plan contains a [Theory of Distinctiveness composed of three hopena \(strategic outcomes\)](#) that provide the institution with its target destinations: aloha 'āina (sustainability), innovation and transformation, and 'ōiwi leadership (place and people). As UH West O'ahu navigates its way through the third year of operationalization of the Plan's three impact strategies in the midst of the calamitous public health and financial challenges engulfing the world today, the pahuhopu and hopena articulated in UH West O'ahu's Strategic Action Plan remain more salient than ever.

Overview of Capacity, Infrastructure and Operations

Located on a geographic site that once supported a prosperous sugar plantation, UH West O'ahu is blessed with an abundance of land, state-of-the-art facilities, and a prime location positioned perfectly for long-term growth (CFR 3.5). The beneficiary of a substantial land donation from the [Estate of James Campbell](#), UH West O'ahu boasts 500 acres of makai (coastal) land, in addition to 990 acres of mauka (mountainous) land now under the stewardship of the University of Hawai'i System. The current campus footprint rests on 40 of the 300 acres of the designated makai campus lands, with 200 acres reserved as university district lands for private development. When the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation (HART) rail project opens for public use late in 2021, UH West O'ahu will be served by a [dedicated rail station](#). Nestled between the towns of Kapolei and 'Ewa Beach, UH West O'ahu is fortunate to be situated in the center of the fastest-growing region in Hawai'i. The institution's surrounding community features James Campbell High School, which is the largest high school in the state. The ongoing development of the [master-planned community of Ho'opili](#) with an eventual capacity of 11,750 homes (and five K-12 schools) also bodes well for UH West O'ahu's long-term growth trajectory.

With two major capital improvement projects completed within the past three years, UH West O‘ahu now boasts 297,000 gross square feet of space in seven buildings. The \$36 million, 43,000-square-foot Administration and Health Sciences Building opened in November 2018 and first hosted classes in January 2019. In addition to housing classrooms, science laboratories, and faculty office suites, the structure features an administrative wing capable of accommodating 45 staff members. The second project is the \$37,000,000, 33,000-square-foot Academy for Creative Media Building, which the university took possession of in November 2020 (CFR 3.5). This facility supports UH West O‘ahu’s new Bachelor of Arts in Creative Media while cementing the institution’s place as the hub for creative media education in the State of Hawai‘i as well as a catalyst for the development of Hawai‘i’s intellectual property workforce.

Until the debilitating economic effects of the coronavirus pandemic prompted the State of Hawai‘i to sweep all vacant faculty positions and compelled University of Hawai‘i President David Lassner to implement a hiring freeze across the 10-campus system in 2020, UH West O‘ahu had witnessed its faculty and staff capacities increase substantially. The institution’s Senate faculty count, for example, grew by 110%—from 59 to 124 faculty members—between fall 2012 and fall 2020. Importantly, this expansion of faculty capacity has allowed UH West O‘ahu to maintain a consistent student-to-faculty ratio (of 19:1 in fall 2018 compared to 18:1 in fall 2012, per IPEDS definitions) despite its unrivaled student enrollment growth (CFR 2.1). At the same time, the institution’s progress with faculty (and staff) capacity has created resource pressures that present continued challenges (e.g., office space). UH West O‘ahu faculty members, who are organized into an effective system-wide union (the [UH Professional Assembly](#)), currently number 124, 70 of whom (56.4%) hold tenure as of fall 2020, with 34 (27.4%) more occupying tenure-track positions. UH West O‘ahu faculty members also possess appropriate academic credentials, with 83.5% of campus instructional faculty holding doctorates or other terminal degrees (CFR 3.1). Finally, the institution should be commended for cultivating an unparalleled level of diversity, as evidenced by *The Chronicle’s 2020 Almanac of Higher Education* ranking [UH West O‘ahu #1 in Greatest Racial and Ethnic Diversity Among Faculty Members](#) (appendix 1.2) of any four-year institution—public or private—measured, with a Diversity Index score of 73.5. This demonstrates a clear and convincing commitment to increasing diversity in hiring practices in support of the institution’s mission and its unique student demographics (CFR 1.4).

Structural Changes

The institution has undertaken a series of purposeful structural and organizational initiatives, in alignment with its Strategic Action Plan, in order to accommodate its own growth while anticipating the evolving complexities of American academe (CFR 4.7). Efforts have focused on academic structures, degree pathways, and distance learning. With the notable addition of degrees in creative media (2019), natural science (2019), and cybersecurity (2020), UH West O‘ahu currently offers 13 total degree programs – nine unique onsite degree pathways, four of which are available in distance education format. Similarly, the institution offers 14 certificate programs, in the form of 10 onsite certificate programs, four of which are also delivered via distance education. In 2018 the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (OVCAA) initiated a massive reorganization effort affecting 38 positions and—following faculty, staff, and union consultation—obtained presidential approval for its [Academic Affairs Reorganization Plan](#) (appendix 1.3) in January 2019 (CFR 4.6). (This effort followed closely on the heels of a [reorganization of the Chancellor’s Office](#), appendix 1.4) The Academic Affairs reorganization featured the establishment of an [Office of Distance Learning](#) housing a newly-created distance education director position and an instructional designer (CFR 3.5). The reorganization also established two new academic units—the Division of Mathematics, Natural and Health Sciences and the Academy for Creative Media – West O‘ahu—to serve as homes for the institution’s nascent BS in Natural Science and BA in Creative Media degree programs. The creation of each of these unit/degree pairings was interlaced with the construction and opening of the aforementioned Health Sciences Building and Creative Media Building (CFR 3.5). This holistic approach to strategic planning at the campus level is evidence of UH West O‘ahu’s commitment to honoring the UH Board of Regents’ call for a more systematic integration of academic and facilities planning, as articulated in its 2017 [Integrated Academic and Facilities Plan \(IAFP\) for the University of Hawai‘i System](#) (CFR 3.9).

At the same time, UH West O‘ahu works to expand capacity at the unit level, even in the midst of pandemic-related fiscal austerity and uncertainty. With funding support from the Keleka‘a Ho‘ona‘auo (Title III collaborative) grant operating in conjunction with Kaua‘i Community College, UH West O‘ahu has doubled its Office of Distance Learn-

ing personnel capacity from 2.0 to 4.0 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions. The institution also created a director of institutional effectiveness position in 2014, which was subsequently replaced by a director of assessment, evaluation, and accreditation line in 2017. Although the vacating of this position as of November 2020 constitutes a setback, it had remained filled for 35 months prior. UH West O'ahu's [Institutional Research Office](#) (IRO), which now exists as an established organizational unit within Academic Support, has expanded its scope and achieved new levels of productivity in recent years, made possible by the allocation of a second FTE position in 2019 (CFR 4.2). In addition to continuing its historic functions of generating, benchmarking, and posting industry standard data on student achievement and success through its campus [Factbook](#) (CFR 1.1, 2.10), the IRO has assumed a broader role in the support of grant programs and enrollment management. The latter of these endeavors forms a portion of a chancellor-led effort to envision student recruitment and retention as an integrated practice stretching across all four major campus units—Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, Administration, and the Chancellor's Office—and linking enrollment to budget projections (CFR 3.4). The IRO has supported this initiative through the use of predictive analytics to forecast tuition revenue and generate corresponding [reports](#).

Response to Previous WSCUC Reviews

After taking aggressive action to resolve the issues identified in the Commission's [2012 Notice of Concern](#) (appendix 1.5), UH West O'ahu earned seven years of WSCUC accreditation in the [2015 Commission action letter](#) (appendix 1.6). Although rapid enrollment growth followed by the onset of the coronavirus pandemic have presented the institution with significant challenges of late, the areas of concern identified by the Commission eight years ago—including stability of leadership, strategic planning, and the creation of a student-centered environment—are now largely relics of the past. [Chancellor Maenette K.P. Benham](#) has served as UH West O'ahu's chief executive officer since January 2017, with similar stability in place at the vice chancellor level (CFR 3.6, 3.8). As discussed above, an extensive strategic planning process directed by Chancellor Benham in 2017-2018 resulted in the production of UH West O'ahu's [Strategic Action Plan, 2018-2028](#), with core values that continue to guide the institution through the turbulent waters of the ongoing public health and fiscal crises (CFR 4.7). In the pre-pandemic world, UH West O'ahu made ample strides invigorating student life through the maturation of its student government wing ([the Associated Students of UH West O'ahu](#)), the addition of spaces supporting student fellowship such as the [Nāulu Center for Culture, Engagement, and Well-Being](#), the [Pueo Fitness Center](#), and the [VETS \(Veterans Empowered Through STEM\) Student Lab and Lounge](#)—all of which were established through extramural funding—and the creation of new faculty and staff positions in Student Affairs (e.g., ADA coordinator, intramural sports coordinator, student life coordinator).

Similarly, UH West O'ahu has taken appropriate action to respond to the five recommendations that accompanied the Commission's 2015 action letter. Those items were addressed in detail in UH West O'ahu's [2018 Interim Report](#) (appendix 1.7) and will be discussed in the components that follow in this report. Decision-making structures, for example, have been refined not only through the development of a comprehensive [Strategic Action Plan](#) but also through the aforementioned [reorganization of Academic Affairs](#) and the [Chancellor's Office](#) in AY 2018-2019. Faculty capacity has more than doubled since the campus' 2012 relocation to Kapolei; assessment systems have been reconfigured; the state legislature increased UH West O'ahu's annual General Fund allocation by 154% from Fiscal Year 2013 to Fiscal Year 2020; and the campus' new Office of Distance Learning spearheaded the development of a six-year [Distance Learning Tactical Plan](#) and a [Distance Learning Faculty Guidebook](#) (CFR 3.2, 4.6).

Many aspects of UH West O'ahu's successful path of institutional maturation were captured in its [2018 Interim Report](#), which was accepted by the WSCUC Interim Report Panel, with the team citing campus progress in the areas of strategic planning, assessment, program review, faculty governance, and faculty development in its subsequent [action summary](#) (appendix 1.8) UH West O'ahu has taken appropriate measures to address the five recommendations conceived by the panel, including achieving unprecedented success in the stability of its senior leadership, with the chancellor and two of three vice chancellors remaining in place for periods of more than four years. The lone exception is interim Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (VCSA) Jan Javinar, who held the VCSA position at the institution several years prior, possesses more than thirty years of leadership experience in student affairs administration, and was recognized by the National Association of Student Personnel Administration in 2020 as a [Pillar of the Profession](#) (CFR 3.6, 3.8). Efforts to more closely align enrollment growth, funding allocations, and faculty capacity and devel-

opment are discussed in detail in [Component 7: Sustainability](#). The operationalization of a strategic plan for distance education is covered most explicitly in [Component 4: Educational Quality](#). Finally, the deepening of assessment practices and refinement of the program review process are topics that receive substantial attention in [Component 6: Quality Assurance](#).

Preparation for the Accreditation Review

UH West O‘ahu is seeking reaffirmation of its accreditation under WSCUC, most recently granted for a seven-year period commencing in Spring 2015. In accordance with the 2013 WSCUC Handbook of Accreditation, the Commission set fall 2021 as the date for UH West O‘ahu’s Offsite Review and selected spring 2022 for its Accreditation Visit. This report has been developed as the culminating self-study project in advance for those two crucial evaluations. The institution’s first major action in support of its reaffirmation efforts took shape in the form of the submission of the aforementioned Interim Report in November 2018. This was followed by the completion of a Mid-Cycle Review—which included an update of UH West O‘ahu’s Inventory of Institutional Effectiveness Indicators (IEEI) and the provision of graduation and retention data—in June 2019. In anticipation of the ensuing phases of the reaffirmation process, the institution took action in August 2019 to implement a twin set of surveys in which faculty and staff members were asked to self-assess the institution’s performance in regards to each of the WSCUC Standards and Criteria for Review as well as federal compliance requirements. For each item, respondents were instructed to (a) evaluate UH West O‘ahu’s effectiveness and (b) ascribe a level of importance, each on three-point scales. The survey effort generated four dozen responses across all campus constituencies, providing a valuable self-assessment tool that informed subsequent stages of the process.

Looking ahead to the reaffirmation process, in 2019 UH West O‘ahu constituted a WSCUC Steering Committee, which hosted WSCUC Vice President and Institutional Liaison Maureen Maloney for training sessions that December. Shortly thereafter followed the establishment of nine component groups in February 2020, corresponding to the nine planned components of UH West O‘ahu’s Institutional Report for Reaffirmation (IRR). Each component group featured between five and eight members, one or two of whom were designated as leads or co-leads in each instance. With access to the aforementioned 2019 survey data, each component group was tasked with interfacing respondents’ evaluation of institutional performance with their assigned Institutional Report component, and, if possible, conducting a Strength/Weakness/Opportunity/Threat (SWOT) Analysis (CFR 4.3, 4.6).

The next major facet of the reaffirmation preparation process commenced with the formation of a drafting hui (group), or core writing team, in September 2020, in order to begin generating this Institutional Report for Reaffirmation (IRR) narrative. The drafting hui, which included the Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO), held weekly working meetings through the academic year, with communication and collaboration with the Steering Committee and nine component groups facilitated through the ALO. The core writing team released a complete draft of the IRR to the campus community at large on April 1, 2021. The draft report release was accompanied by the dissemination of an [anonymous online survey](#) designed to generate feedback on each of the report’s nine components. The drafting hui also facilitated a series of eight question-and-answer Zoom sessions throughout the month of April, including an open “town hall” event as well as targeted meetings with the Associated Students of UH West O‘ahu, the Faculty Senate, student affairs staff and faculty, academic division chairs, senior management, the Nālimakui Native Hawaiian Council, and the Kapwa Filipino Council. Importantly, this timeline ensured that the drafting of the IRR was an iterative and collaborative process with wide-ranging opportunities for faculty, staff, and students to provide input and raise concerns well in advance of the July 1 submission deadline (CFR 4.6).

ways. Formal learning outcomes will continue to be published in UH West O‘ahu’s [General Catalog](#), on the institution’s [Assessment website](#), and on individual program and concentration websites (CFR 2.2a, 2.3). The collection and evaluation of direct and indirect evidence in support of assessment will be conducted during the annual assessment process and will be used to help faculty “close the loop” by evaluating assessment data critically to determine possible pedagogical revisions and paths forward (CFR 2.4, 4.1). This endeavor is now facilitated through the drafting and dissemination of campus-wide assessment reports that focus on individual institutional learning outcomes evaluated during a particular academic year. Beginning in 2021, the institution will capture process-oriented assessment information at the program level through the administration of template-based surveys to each academic division chair.

Regardless of WSCUC’s removal of the IEEI requirement, UH West O‘ahu remains committed to monitoring and chronicling the ongoing processes of learning outcome assessment and academic program review. This is particularly important given the institution’s recent history of enrollment growth coupled with the expansion of its portfolio of degree and certificate programs (CFR 4.1, 4.7). Every academic division is charged with conducting learning outcome assessment according to a campus-wide schedule on an annual basis and compiling the results in a summary report posted to the institution’s [Assessment website](#) (CFR 2.4, 4.1). A discussion of the process and results of learning outcome assessment is interwoven throughout this report, with an emphasis on quality assurance located in [Component 6](#). Program review is conducted on a periodic basis, at a minimum of once every seven years, in accordance with [University of Hawai‘i Board of Regents Policy 5.201 on Instructional Programs](#) and the campus’ [Program Review Handbook \(2019\)](#) (CFR 2.6, 2.7, 3.2, 3.9, 4.3, 4.4). The products of these efforts, including the crucial program review self-studies (aka internal reviews) are centrally located on the institution’s [Program Review website](#) (note: UH login required), which was commended by the WSCUC Interim Report Panel in 2019. A detailed overview of quality assurance through the vehicle of program review can also be found in [Component 6](#).

Institutional Strengths

Since achieving reaffirmation in 2015, UH West O‘ahu has advanced its commitment to providing its students with a high-quality, affordable, and accessible college education, in alignment with its [Strategic Action Plan, 2018-2028](#). This foundational document, produced through a comprehensive planning process that engaged voices from across a diverse range of campus stakeholders—faculty, staff, and students included—was lauded by the WSCUC Interim Report Panel in 2019 for its “high level of energy” that provided the institution with a clear “direction for the future.” At UH West O‘ahu’s core lies a unionized faculty body empowered by a strong tradition of shared governance, as inscribed in [University of Hawai‘i Board of Regents Policy 1.210 on Faculty Involvement in Academic Decision-Making and Academic Policy Development](#) (CFR 1.3, 3.9), and recognized by the *Chronicle for Higher Education’s 2020 Almanac* as the single most racially and ethnically diverse faculty of any four-year university—public or private—in the nation (CFR 1.1, 1.4, 4.5).

UH West O‘ahu is fortunate to occupy an enviable position in terms of geography and facilities, portending opportunities for continued long-term growth. First and foremost in this regard is the institution’s possession of 500 acres of campus lands, much of which have been set aside for private development in order to generate the future revenue needed to expand operations (CFR 3.5, 4.7). Having opened up a new campus location in 2012, the institution boasts a modern set of facilities largely free of maintenance issues and augmented by the recent additions of new buildings for Administration and Health Sciences (2018) and the Academy for Creative Media (2020). As discussed in [Component 1](#), UH West O‘ahu is located in the center of the state’s fastest-growing region and will soon be serviced by a dedicated HART rail station.

Codifying and Formalizing Campus Policies

The establishment of a campus-wide Policy Advisory Committee and the publication of an official [Campus Policies website](#) constitutes an example of the intentional action UH West O‘ahu has undertaken to strengthen quality assurance structures by increasing the levels of clarity and transparency surrounding decision-making processes (CFR 3.6, 3.7). Prior to this initiative, which commenced with Chancellor Benham’s formation of a Policy and Procedures Task Force in 2017, campus policies lacked a consistent format, were oftentimes difficult to locate, and typically did not

provide a mechanism or process for periodic review. The work of the Policy Advisory Committee, however, has resulted in the adoption of a standard policy template, which provides critical information such as the policy's approval date, its purpose, the responsible party or office, and the policy's scheduled date of review. The committee, which features representation from all four major campus units, does not possess the authority to approve or reject policy proposals. Instead, the Policy Advisory Committee serves as a bridge between the proposer and the chancellor's executive team, working to ensure that policies are clear, consistent in format, and appropriate in scope. All of the policies codified and approved through this new process are also aligned—both in terms of content and format—to the [University of Hawai'i Systemwide Policies and Procedures Information System](#).

Institutional Challenges

Although student addition is certainly more desirable than student attrition, UH West O'ahu's decade of unparalleled enrollment growth presented numerous challenges. The institution saw its headcount enrollment more than triple from fall semester 2007 (940 students) to fall semester 2017 (3,082), causing *The Chronicle of Higher Education* to recognize it as the fastest growing public baccalaureate in the nation for three consecutive years. However, this decade-long period of expansion created internal pressure for resources while making it difficult for state funding support to keep pace. Having existed solely as an upper-division campus for three decades, UH West O'ahu desperately lacked the infrastructure to foster student life activities when it welcomed its first class of traditional first-year college students in 2007. During this time of rapid growth, however, UH West O'ahu established and filled (permanent) critical support positions to facilitate its transition into a full-service, four-year institution. These additions included a director of student life, a testing services coordinator, a clinical psychologist, an ADA coordinator, a director of career development, a director of compliance, and an environmental health and safety specialist, among others (CFR 2.13). Such measures, along with the targeted use of extramural funding (e.g., Title III awards), have allowed UH West O'ahu to build a more vibrant and inviting campus community despite the absence of dorms and intercollegiate athletics.

The institution also grapples with community-based challenges—many of which have been worsened by the pandemic—that shape the environment in which it operates. The islands' high cost of living means that, in addition to those living below the federal poverty line, large swaths of the local population struggle to afford basic life necessities, falling into the category of Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE), as discussed in greater detail in [Component 8](#). That essay describes how the institution's surrounding region features higher poverty levels and lower college degree attainment than the state as a whole. The institution draws its students from public high schools serving socioeconomically diverse communities that are oftentimes insufficiently resourced, resulting in college entrants who are often unprepared for the rigors of higher education. In fact, the 2019 National Assessment of Educational Progress found Hawai'i's 8th graders ranked [last of all fifty states in adjusted scores for both the Math and Reading exams](#). The critical issue of student food security is another challenge that has gained the attention of campus leadership in recent years. For example, with a response rate of 37.7%, 2016 survey findings indicated a student food insecurity prevalence of 41.3% at the UH West O'ahu campus. The onset of the coronavirus pandemic has worsened the situation, as recent research indicates that college students have been particularly hard hit, with approximately 60% experiencing some form of basic needs insecurity. The University of Hawai'i has launched a [Student Basic Needs website](#) in order to connect students to critical resources and commissioned an institution-specific [Basic Needs Insecurity Report](#) (appendix 2.2) (CFR 2.13). Finally, the mass migration to online learning necessitated by pandemic conditions has exacerbated challenges of equity, with some segments of the student population suffering more adversely from factors ranging from mental health to computer and Internet access at home.

Mid-Cycle Review Factors

WSCUC's Mid-Cycle Review of UH West O'ahu, as expressed in the August 2019 letter authored by WSCUC Vice President Maureen Maloney, provided useful guidance as to areas that the institution must address to ensure it serves its student body effectively. While WSCUC noted UH West O'ahu's comparatively favorable cohort default rate and median graduate borrower debt, its Mid-Cycle Review also encouraged the institution to make meaning of its graduation rate data and provide evidence of improvement. The Mid-Cycle Review also directed the institution

to engage more deeply with the data provided on the UH System’s (campus-specific) [Hawaiian Graduation Initiative scorecard](#), which is used to track progress in the reduction of equity gaps. In the most recent reporting year, UH West O’ahu successfully met all but one of the nine target goals established in the scorecard (transfer in from UH Community Colleges), while surpassing its targets in seven categories and exceeding the baseline in the final one. It is worth mentioning that UH West O’ahu reached an historic high of [448 students transferring in from UH Community Colleges in fall 2020](#)—a 27.3% increase over fall 2019—which places the campus in a strong position to hit this lone remaining target within the next two years (CFR 2.6, 2.14). UH West O’ahu’s Institutional Research Office maintains an interactive [Student Success Dashboard](#)—with current, disaggregated data—that tracks equity gaps and allows users to filter through key performance indicators such as graduation rates, retention rates, and time to degree according to ethnicity or declared major (CFR 4.2).

A review of the data points highlighted by WSCUC in its 2019 Mid-Cycle Review demonstrates that UH West O’ahu has made progress addressing areas of weakness while maintaining its positive performance in its areas of strength. The institution’s period of rapid enrollment growth has subsided; graduate borrower debt and cohort default rates remain within WSCUC target zones; and student success, as measured in terms of 4-year and 6-year graduation rates, is trending in the right direction, as displayed in table 2.1:

Table 2.1. Update on Data Points Cited in Mid-Cycle Review (MCR)

Data Point	Source	CFR	Region Mean or Data Point	Institution Value in MCR	Current Institution Value
4-year grad rate	College Navigator	1.2	42%	10%	16% (fall 2014 cohort)
6-year grad rate	College Navigator	1.2	60%	32%	39% (fall 2014 cohort)
Enrollment changes	WSCUC Annual Report	3.4	No more than 20% increase or decrease	22.45% (2015-2016)	-2.30% (2018-2019)
Percent of students receiving Pell Grants	College Navigator	1.4	40%	34%	34%
Median graduate borrower debt	College Scorecard	1.6	\$21,455	\$14,544	\$17,500 (2018-2019)
Cohort default rate	College Navigator	1.6; 3.4	Less than 15.5%	4.70%	6.80%
Composite score	Federal Student Aid	3.4	Minimum of 1.5	n/a (public institution)	n/a (public institution)

Looking Forward

The institution will continue to critically evaluate its performance according to the WSCUC Standards and Criteria for Review. The aforementioned work of the Policy Advisory Committee, for instance, is far from complete, and the committee will continue to format and codify existing policies as well as review new policy proposals before forwarding them to the campus executive team for approval. Between 2019 and 2021 the institution conducted its first campus-wide audit of syllabi under its [Credit Hour Policy](#)—addressed in further detail in [Component 6](#)—which constituted a key step forward, although room for improvement is evident, both in terms of process and in terms of the systematic integration of the Credit Hour Policy into program review (CFR 3.2, 3.7). UH West O’ahu also acknowledges that it needs to expand its student complaints processes and refine those already in place, such as the institution’s [Academic Grievance Procedures](#), [Student Disability Grievance Process](#), and [Distance Education/NC-SARA Student Complaint Process](#) (CFR 1.7).

UH West O’ahu is proud of its recent success in improving student graduation and retention rates while narrowing equity gaps. The fall-to-fall retention rate of 76.4% for the institution’s fall 2018 cohort and the most recent four-year graduation figure of 19.2% (for the fall 2016 cohort) are both all-time highs (CFR 2.6). With expanded staffing support, the [Institutional Research Office \(IRO\)](#) has enhanced the prevalence of data-driven decision making across the campus, including the pilot launch of predictive analytic tools to support student [recruitment](#) and retention (CFR 4.2). The 2019 revision of UH West O’ahu’s [list of peer institutions](#) is part of a larger effort to conduct more accurate and meaningful benchmarking analyses. The IRO now regularly produces a wide array of interactive dashboards (using

Microsoft Power BI) that allow stakeholders to access aggregated and disaggregated data via a user-friendly interface (CFR 4.1). The aforementioned [Student Success Dashboard](#) is thus but one piece of a larger initiative to render data more accessible but one that warrants additional mention here. That dashboard captures the important success UH West O‘ahu has achieved in terms of narrowing key equity gaps. For example, the most recent first-time full-time retention rate for Native Hawaiian students (73.0%) now closely matches that of the institution’s overall figure of 74.5%. Similarly, the most current (fall 2014 cohort) six-year graduation rate for Native Hawaiian students (30.5%) improved significantly from the prior year and moved closer to the overall campus figure of 38.7%. As a Native Hawaiian-Serving Institution (NHSI), UH West O‘ahu has benefited greatly from targeted extramural funding provided by the U.S. Department of Education’s Title III grant program and the Kamehameha Schools’ Community Investing program, a topic covered in [Component 7](#) and [Component 8](#). There is still much work to be done. As UH West O‘ahu moves forward in the midst of a statewide fiscal crisis, its leaders will need to develop creative solutions for the institutionalization of the support functions currently provided through extramural funding. Campus resources will need to be allocated judiciously in ways that foster student success (CFR 1.5, 1.7).



Component 3:

Degree Programs: Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of Degrees

The Meaning of Degrees at UH West O‘ahu

The meaning of a degree from the University of Hawai‘i – West O‘ahu is seated in the university’s [mission](#) that focuses on the 21st-century learner, and embraces Native Hawaiian culture and traditions, while promoting student success in an environment where students of all backgrounds are supported (CFR 1.1). UH West O‘ahu’s [Theory of Distinctiveness](#)—as expressed in its Strategic Action Plan and elaborated upon below—drives teaching, scholarship, and community engagement at the institution. As an indigenous-serving, Native Hawaiian focused institution, curricular and co-curricular endeavors are emboldened by the UH West O‘ahu [pahuhopu](#) (institutional values) that further define the distinctiveness of the meaning of a degree from UH West O‘ahu. The institution’s value proposition states that, “UH West O‘ahu prepares 21st-century leaders—career creators—through integrated, transdisciplinary programs where learners discover, innovate, and engage diverse communities to create a vibrant and just world.” This value proposition universally shapes and informs the curriculum and instruction across UH West O‘ahu’s four classifications of baccalaureate degrees, including the BA, BAS, BEd, and BS degrees, as well as its certificate programs (CFR 1.2, 2.2). It also communicates to students and the community at large what the institution promises to deliver through its learner-centered approach.

The Meaning of the Baccalaureate Degree

According to the [General Catalog for Academic Year 2020-2021](#), UH West O‘ahu currently offers 13 degree programs consisting of five onsite BA degrees, four of which also offer the upper division portion of the degree as Distance Education degree programs, two BS degrees, one BAS degree, and one BEd degree. Each degree program includes a variety of areas of concentration, with a total of 45 concentrations across all 13 degree programs. UH West O‘ahu also offers 14 certificates. All degree and certificate programs share a common set of [institutional learning outcomes \(ILOs\)](#) that closely align with the [WSCUC core competencies](#), specifically written and oral communication, and critical thinking, which incorporates quantitative reasoning as well as information literacy (CFR 1.2, 2.2, 2.2a).

The UH West O‘ahu ILO of critical thinking includes using research, knowledge, math, data, ideas, concepts, theories, or other information to reason or solve a problem logically. Students demonstrate critical thinking skills by applying information to make well-reasoned arguments or solve a problem. Quantitative reasoning (QR) is further supported through the [general education degree requirements](#), which include QR as one of three foundational requirements.

Information literacy is supported through librarian services, consisting of invited presentations in courses to support specific research projects and ongoing workshops and resources that provide support across all degree programs. Examples of information literacy services to support the curriculum include [reading and writing workshops](#), and

discipline-specific “[LibGuides](#).” Information literacy is interconnected with both critical thinking and effective communication. Effective written and oral communication typically requires information literacy to access valid source materials. Written communication may include (but is not limited to) narrative, descriptive, expository, and persuasive prose; and is developed in the context of essays, research papers, position papers, technical writing, reflections, creative writing, lesson plans or letters. Oral communication may include (but is not limited to) narrative, descriptive, expository, and persuasive discourse; and is developed by preparing and delivering a speech, giving a class presentation, engaging in a small group discussion, lecturing or explaining a topic, or debating an issue. UH West O’ahu degree earners have demonstrated effective communication through the use of relevant information to communicate clearly and persuasively to an intended audience through written and spoken language (CFR 2.2, 2.2a).

Cultural awareness and community engagement are additional ILOs that align with learners discovering, innovating and engaging diverse communities to serve a vibrant and just world. These two ILOs integrate additional outcomes beyond the WSCUC Core Competencies identified in CFR 2.2a, including creativity, appreciation for diversity, and civic engagement. The ILO of cultural awareness reflects the institutional pahuhopu (value) of kaiāulu (respectful community). UH West O’ahu values healthy communities where everyone feels included, welcomed, and respected. Through the ILO of cultural awareness, students demonstrate knowledge of different cultures, subcultures or cultural phenomena through the study of art, music, history, literature, ideas or cross-cultural research (CFR 1.4). Cultural awareness includes demonstrated knowledge of different human activities, groups, or artifacts in contemporary, historical, indigenous, artistic, geographic, economic, political, legal, literacy, business-related, or research contexts.

The ILO of community engagement aligns with the institutional value of hana lawelawe (community service). UH West O’ahu values conscious service to the community that builds the capacity to offer one’s excellence for the benefit of others and our environment. Through this particular institutional learning outcome, students engage with campus life, the broader community, or provide service to others through the use of co-curricular resources, participation in extracurricular activities or service-learning projects (CFR 2.11). Community engagement is demonstrated by (but not limited to) the use of the [James and Abigail Campbell Library](#) or the [No’eau Center](#) for tutoring; participation in student government, academic clubs or volunteer service; attendance at campus sponsored events or enrollment in service learning-designated courses.

The Meaning of the Degree in Distance Education Programs

Access and opportunity define the meaning of UH West O’ahu’s Distance Education (DE) programs. Two of the institution’s BA degree programs—the BA in Business Administration and BA in Public Administration—were originally approved by WSCUC as DE degree programs when UH West O’ahu was initially accredited in 1981. The early commitment of the institution to offering DE programs meant that students located in rural areas and neighbor islands of the Hawaiian archipelago had equity of opportunity to pursue a baccalaureate degree within the University of Hawai’i System while residing on their home island. Prior to 2007, UH West O’ahu served exclusively as a transfer institution that received transfer students from the University of Hawai’i Community Colleges (UHCC) for the completion of the upper-division portions of a baccalaureate degree. After completing an associate’s degree from a UHCC, transfer students throughout the state of Hawai’i could pursue a bachelor’s degree at UH West O’ahu in select concentrations within the original DE degree programs and certificate programs in the business administration, public administration and, since 2001, social sciences divisions. DE programs continue to provide the upper-division portions of the degree program and primarily serve students transferring from one of the seven UHCCs.

Currently, DE programs provide equity of opportunity for many non-traditional students on the island of O’ahu as well as residents of the neighbor islands who have a preference for the geographical and chronological flexibilities that DE programs provide. As a participating institution with the [National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements \(NC-SARA\)](#) and in accordance with [UH West O’ahu Policy 5.102](#), UH West O’ahu currently extends enrollment in DE programs to students in Hawai’i and throughout the United States and U.S. Territories that are members of NC-SARA, including Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The BA in Creative Media degree program initiated in 2019 became the fourth degree program offered as a DE degree. Currently, the BA in Humanities and the BEd degree programs are in the process of developing DE pathways for select concentrations, expanding the degree options available through UH West O’ahu’s DE portfolio (CFR 4.7).

The Meaning of the Degree and General Education

The University of Hawai'i System shares a common set of general education requirements for baccalaureate degrees (CFR 2.2a). The [general education requirements](#) consist of two components: foundations and diversification requirements. Focus requirements exist as an additional set of graduation requirements incorporated into each of UH West O'ahu degree programs. Completion of the general education requirements means that earners of a degree from UH West O'ahu have achieved [general education learning outcomes](#) in the following competencies:

- ▶ Written Communication
- ▶ Oral Communication
- ▶ Quantitative Reasoning
- ▶ Hawaiian-Asian-Pacific Issues
- ▶ Global and Multicultural Perspectives
- ▶ Arts, Humanities, and Literature
- ▶ Social and Natural Science Literacy
- ▶ Contemporary Ethical Issues

To facilitate access for transfer students, UH West O'ahu serves as a grantor and acceptor of the [Interstate Passport](#), a network of public and private two- and four-year institutions providing students with a portable credential obtained through the block transfer of lower-division general education attainment based on multi-state faculty-developed learning outcomes and proficiency criteria instead of specific courses and credits (CFR 2.2a). Consequently, students experience a seamless, efficient and economical transfer process (CFRs 1.6, 2.14). The Interstate Passport is based at the [Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education \(WICHE\)](#).

The Meaning of the Degree in Individual Academic Programs

Earning a degree from UH West O'ahu also means that the degree holder demonstrates knowledge of the purview, processes, and contributions associated with an academic discipline. The ILO of disciplinary knowledge includes knowledge of methods, history, major works, applications, technologies, and/or ethical standards associated with an academic discipline or a student's declared concentration of study.

The meaning of the degree in individual academic programs is further defined through the comprehensive alignment of learning outcomes (CFR 2.2, 2.3). Each academic discipline's degree learning outcomes (DLOs) and concentration or certificate learning outcomes (CLOs) are published in the [General Catalog](#) and on the website for each concentration (e.g., [accounting](#) and [life science](#)) (CFR 1.2, 1.6). Faculty of respective degree programs and concentrations are collectively responsible for setting student learning outcomes and standards, assessing student learning, and demonstrating achievement of standards. Each program's curriculum map determines the course sequences within a concentration where students achieve mastery of CLOs, providing an at-a-glance presentation of the scaffolding and coherence of the curriculum (example – [curriculum map for business administration concentrations](#) and [curriculum map for BS in Natural Science](#)) (CFR 2.4). Programs leading to professional licensure with programmatic accreditation, such as the BEd degree, which is a Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation ([CAEP](#)) [accredited provider](#), demonstrate alignment of CLOs with professional standards through the [curriculum map for the BEd](#) program (CFR 2.7).

Individual academic programs develop curriculum maps to first establish meaning with respect to the *what* and *why* for a concentration's curriculum and sequence of courses. Additionally, advising maps are used to help guide students through the *how* of registering and sequencing courses of an academic discipline for timely completion of the degree within four years (CFR 1.6). Proactive academic advising is provided by both college success advisors and faculty advisors for each academic program (CFR 2.12). UH West O'ahu also uses STAR GPS software to assist students with navigating the advising map to facilitate efficient course sequencing and selection for their identified academic program.

The Meaning of Degree and the Co-Curriculum

The learner-centered approach expressed in UH West O‘ahu’s [Strategic Action Plan 2018-2028](#) seeks to achieve three [hopena \(strategic outcomes\)](#) through a transdisciplinary approach that produces citizens who possess (1) strong ‘ōiwi leadership skills that are grounded in the history of place and people, thereby building just, caring, and celebrative communities; (2) innovative and transformative thinking skills to generate and apply knowledge that addresses pressing challenges; and (3) a commitment to aloha ‘āina (sustainability) that acquiring the skills to care for all that nurtures our spirit, bodies, relationships, and honua (earth) (CFR 1.2). The co-curriculum supported through Student Affairs’ Student Development curriculum, [Library services](#), and the [No‘eau Center](#) are significant contributors to achieving the Theory of Distinctiveness that further defines the meaning of a UH West O‘ahu baccalaureate degree (CFR 2.11).

Student Affairs Co-Curriculum

Faculty specialists who serve as college success advisors and a career counselor offer a variety of Student Development (SD) courses to enhance and support UH West O‘ahu’s pahuhopu (institutional values), value proposition, and theory of distinctiveness (CFR 2.11). SD courses at the 100 level are designed to support first-year students in transitioning into the higher education learning environment, honing college-level study skills, planning a comprehensive and individualized college learning plan, career exploration, and providing opportunities to network and build relationships with peers, staff and faculty (CFR 2.10). Additional SD courses at the 200 and 300 levels provide students with an opportunity to develop and explore leadership skills. These upper-division SD courses support leadership development through experiential learning experiences like student employment, student government, tutoring, and peer mentoring opportunities. The SD courses are thus interwoven within the fabric of the “traditional curriculum” in a manner that allows participating students to actuate the institutional hopena that will help propel them into positions of leadership in their postgraduate lives.

Ensuring the Quality and Integrity of UH West O‘ahu Degrees

The UH System and UH West O‘ahu have a rigorous and comprehensive process for the approval of new programs, including new degrees, concentrations, and certificate programs (CFR 2.1, 2.2, 3.2, 3.7, 4.6). To ensure the quality of new programs, the cycle is initiated through a system-wide Authorization to Plan (ATP) process. For new programs requiring Board of Regents (BOR) approval before resources are committed to program planning, the ATP is submitted by the campus chancellor to the UH System [Office of the Vice President for Academic Strategy](#) (VPAS, formerly known as the Office of the Vice President for Academic Planning and Policy) for review by the [UH System Officers](#). If the campus receives notification of a positive review, the ATP is then reviewed for comment and approval by the [UH Council for Chief Academic Officers](#) (CCAO). The faculty proposer of the new program consults with the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (VCAA) prior to initiating the ATP.

Salient components of the ATP include the following items:

- ▶ **Statement of alignment** with the campus and UH System mission, strategic plan and the UH System [Integrated Academic and Facilities Plan \(IAFP\)](#)
- ▶ **Preliminary indicators of need:** employment/industry need, or evidence of how the program links to high priority initiatives of the campus and UH System
- ▶ **Preliminary indicators of demand for the program:** evidence of sufficient unmet demand including student demand, demand for services unique to the program, and/or employer demand
- ▶ **Non-duplication of programs:** analysis of programs with the same, or similar, degree level offered at other UH institutions
- ▶ **Potential risks** (e.g., insurance, vendor contracts, off-site management) associated with the program
- ▶ **Resources:** indication of what resources are needed and where it is anticipated these resources will be acquired
- ▶ **Accreditation:** statement of the impact on national and programmatic accreditation (where applicable)

As part of the institutional-level review of the ATP prior to submission to the VPAS, the VCAA invites the proposer to introduce and discuss the ATP with the Council of Division Chairs and the UH West O’ahu Executive Leadership Team.

When the campus receives notice of a positive review of the ATP by the VPAS, CCAO, and BOR, the process of approval proceeds through the UH West O’ahu Faculty Senate, via a review of its standing Curriculum Committee as part of the process of shared governance. The proposer submits a new program proposal, including the approved ATP, through the Kualii Student Curriculum Management System (KSCM). The KSCM new program proposal includes further details about program requirements, program learning outcomes, an academic map, and a program sheet (CFR 2.4). If the program is being proposed as a Distance Education (DE) program, the new program proposal includes additional details about DE course approvals, mode of delivery of all courses, and documentation of consultations with Information Technology, Library services, and the No’eau Center to ensure adequate resources are available for students completing the DE program (CFR 3.5). The Faculty Senate’s Distance Education Committee then also reviews the new program proposal and reports its findings to the Senate body along with the findings reported by the Curriculum Committee. It is customary to have the proposer of a new program include a brief presentation of the new program on the floor of the Faculty Senate when the Curriculum and Distance Education Committee reports containing the findings of the new program are presented.

Following approval by the Faculty Senate, the proposal continues through the KSCM workflow process to obtain administrative approvals and provide various levels of notification for processing of the details for implementation of the new program.

Course Approval Process

The creation of new courses is also a faculty-driven process that begins with a discussion about the new course by the proposing faculty member with other members of the academic division and/or concentration. Following the discussion with the division, the faculty member formally proposes the new course in KSCM. The KSCM course proposal form includes details about the course, a syllabus, and course student learning outcomes (SLOs) aligned with CLOs, DLOs and ILOs (CFR 2.3, 2.4). Proposed general education designations, focus designations, a sustainability designation or the DE designation are also integrated into the course proposal. When designations are included, the proposal routes to the respective Faculty Senate committee for review. Once a proposal is submitted to the KSCM workflow, the proposal first requires approval by the division chair, after which it is routed to the Faculty Senate’s Curriculum Committee and other respective committees for review of designations (CFR 2.4, 3.7). New courses are presented to the Faculty Senate via the committee reports, and subsequent approval of the Faculty Senate body. Following Faculty Senate approval, the proposal continues in the workflow for administrative review and approval, and notification to necessary departments for processing.

Modifications to courses also follow a similar proposal process through KSCM, with review by the Curriculum Committee. Approved designations receive an initial three-year approval, and can be renewed for subsequent five-year approvals.

To ensure educational quality and curricular coherence, UH West O’ahu has identified institutional learning outcomes (ILOs) and general education learning outcomes (GELOs) which all students will have achieved upon graduation from UH West O’ahu (CFR 2.2a). The ILOs and GELOs provide guidance to the degree and concentration outcomes which define the knowledge, skills and abilities of students earning a degree in a specific discipline (CFR 2.1). ILOs were adopted by the UH West O’ahu Faculty Senate in Spring 2000 and most recently revised in Spring 2013; the GELOs were adopted by the Faculty Senate in Spring 2013 and revised in Fall 2013. The institutional learning outcomes address effective communication, cultural awareness, critical thinking, disciplinary knowledge, and community engagement; the eight general education learning outcomes are discussed earlier in this component. Degree and concentration learning outcomes are listed in each division’s chapter of UH West O’ahu’s [General Catalog](#) (appendix 3.1) (CFR 2.3).

[UH Executive Policy 5.202](#) provides for the systematic review and evaluation of all established academic programs at the University of Hawai’i. This policy states that all established programs are subject to review at least a minimum of every seventh year. UH West O’ahu facilitates an evidence-based process of periodic review of all established programs by faculty, disciplinary experts and administration (CFR 2.7). The process is designed to reveal strengths and

challenges and ensure program effectiveness with respect to discipline, university policy, and national and programmatic accreditation standards (CFR 2.4).

The UH West O‘ahu Faculty Senate Program Review Committee reviews and recommends to the Senate policy relating to program review; supports and encourages faculty to thoughtfully write the self-study to assess the effectiveness of their programs; and works with the program, division chair, and VCAA to complete the program review process (CFR 3.2). Program review is conducted through a combination of self-evaluation, followed by external peer-evaluation. It is a comprehensive analysis of program quality, analyzing a wide variety of data about the division and its concentrations. The results of this evaluation process are then used to inform follow-up planning and budgeting processes at various levels in the institution—concentration, division, institution—and incorporated into UH West O‘ahu’s overall quality assurance system (CFR 4.3, 4.4). Documents related to UH West O‘ahu program review, including the Program Review Handbook are available on the [Program Review microsite](#) (note: UH login required). The topic of program review as a vehicle for quality assurance is covered in [Component 6](#).



Component 4:

Educational Quality: Student Learning, Core Competencies, and Standards of Performance at Graduation

Introduction

UH West O‘ahu’s five [institutional learning outcomes \(ILOs\)](#) flow into eight [general education learning outcomes \(GE-LOs\)](#) and a myriad of discipline-specific degree learning outcomes (DLOs) and concentration learning outcomes (CLOs) (CFR 1.2, 2.4). The institution’s learning objectives are fully aligned with the five WSCUC core competencies, that is, written communication, oral communication, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, and information literacy. Moreover, these objectives are grounded in UH West O‘ahu’s [Strategic Action Plan, 2018-2028](#) that embraces Native Hawaiian culture and tradition and promotes diversity, equity and inclusion for all learners, so as to support transdisciplinary, innovative, and community-focused work, both locally and globally (CFR 1.1, 1.2).

Component 4 builds on [Component 3](#) by showcasing how UH West O‘ahu ensures educational quality at the course and program levels. In the sections that follow, we describe how UH West O‘ahu verifies that its students meet defined standards via a robust assessment plan and assessment findings, and then discuss how assessment plays a role in strengthening teaching practices and student learning (CFR 2.4). These discussions lead to further steps for continuing to ensure educational quality at UH West O‘ahu.

Ensuring Students Meet Defined Standards

Learning outcomes for each program at UH West O‘ahu are outlined on each division’s website (CFR 2.3). These outcomes are also attuned to the set of outcomes for each course taught and/or offered as part of that division’s academic program(s) and concentrations. All outcomes are aligned with ILOs. The annual assessment and alignment of these outcomes at UH West O‘ahu has grown from a concentration- and division-level focus in 2014-2015 to a campus-wide effort of evaluating WSCUC core competencies, dating back to 2017, under the guidance of the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (OVCAA) (CFR 4.1). Student achievement of these standards is assessed annually each year, as explained in the sections that follow.

As stated on UH West O‘ahu’s [Assessment website](#), “the goal of assessment (...) is to improve student learning and program quality through an iterative process of planning, evidence, analysis, reevaluation and communication.” This goal, in turn, advances a robust assessment plan that involves rigorous approval processes for course offerings, indirect and direct assessment methods, a feedback loop between students, faculty, and staff, and professional learning opportunities (CFR 2.4, 2.6).

Assessment of Course-Level Learning Outcomes

Assessment at the course level involves three major components: curriculum maps, rigorous review of course offerings by the Faculty Senate's General Education Committee and its subcommittees, and student survey data from the University of Hawai'i's [Course Evaluation System \(CES\)](#) platform (CFR 2.4, 2.5). In 2017-2018 the Assessment Committee asked academic divisions to innovate curriculum maps with their assessment representatives as guides; curriculum mapping asks divisions to evaluate the coherence of their curriculums, how their courses in the curriculum align with concentration outcomes, as well as students' levels of mastery (introduced, reinforced, and mastered) for each course, such that rubrics and other assessment tools could be revised/innovated (CFR 2.4, 4.1). These curriculum maps led to establishing a language and culture of assessment across campus, as each division's curriculum maps were shared on the [Assessment website](#). For an example of curriculum mapping, please refer to the [Humanities Curriculum Map](#).

General Education Program

While curriculum mapping aligns current course offerings with concentration learning outcomes, the Faculty Senate General Education Committee's review of (a) applications for focus and diversification course designations each semester, (b) of general education transfer and articulation within the University of Hawai'i System, and (c) of general education requirements and policies ensures educational quality at the course level (CFR 2.2a, 3.10, 4.1). This rigorous process involves reviewing proposals, sharing reviews and suggestions with the General Education Committee chair, having applicants revise and, if necessary, resubmit applications, and discussing any issues that emerge in the interim with the committee members at each monthly meeting. This process is streamlined by the use of the online Kuali Student Curriculum Management System (KSCM) for approvals, modifications, and disapprovals by the General Education Committee. All policy and course recommendations are forwarded to the Faculty Senate body.

Focus Designation Subcommittees

The General Education Committee maintains subcommittees for focus designations—such as quantitative reasoning, oral communication, and written communication—which review and approve applications for courses each semester. Each subcommittee selects a liaison, typically the chair or co-chair, who also sits on the larger General Education Committee. In addition to ensuring that the requirements (hallmarks) of focus designations are met, these subcommittees provide in-depth feedback on proposals, hold regular professional development workshops, and collaborate with faculty and staff to innovate courses, clarify requirements, and offer general support (CFR 2.4, 3.3, 4.4). All of these steps ensure educational quality by pointing out gaps and strengths in proposals and developing professional learning workshops for faculty and staff.

Writing Committee

The Writing Committee is included here on a separate note because of its participation in UH system-wide conversations of writing instruction at the foundational writing (FW) and writing intensive (WI) levels. In this way, system-wide framing shapes local conversations about foundational writing and writing intensive courses. The members of this committee, like other subcommittees, draw on these conversations alongside national best practices, as specified by the [Council for Writing Program Administrators](#) and the [Conference on College Composition and Communication](#), when reviewing and approving first-year writing course transfer equivalencies and writing intensive course applications (CFR 4.4). Moreover, a WI certification process, created by the Writing Committee, is in place for applicants new to WI focus designations. This process takes approximately one-to-two hours, and includes a video broadcast with accompanying questions that require applicants to become familiar with the institution's writing across the curriculum approach, the writing intensive hallmarks, and how to translate these hallmarks into high stakes and low stakes assignments, in-class activities, and assessment rubrics (CFR 3.2).

In addition to these above duties, the Writing Committee compiles and shares resources on the teaching of writing; reviews and updates FW and WI requirements, hallmarks, and policies, such that they align with national and UH System standards and best practices; and regularly provides professional learning opportunities. For example, the Writing Committee has presented on best practices for assessing writing (Fall 2018) and conducting peer review (Spring 2021). The Writing Committee also works closely with the faculty writing program coordinator (the institution's

writing program administrator) to ensure educational quality for foundational writing courses, such as reviewing FW assessment reports. The [most recent FW report](#), which is also available in the [reports section of the campus Assessment website](#), includes major findings, areas in need of revisiting, and next steps for the first-year writing program at UH West O’ahu (CFR 3.10, 4.1).

Student Survey Data

In addition to curriculum mapping and general education program reviews, CES data is available to each instructor at the end of each semester. Faculty do not have access to student responses until final grading is complete (CFR 4.1). These anonymous surveys ask students to rate instructional effectiveness, learning support, and disciplinary knowledge acquired. Instructors do have the option to add their own questions, although the framing and formatting are limited by the tool. Junior faculty members are encouraged by senior faculty to include mid-term evaluations, so as to speak more comprehensively with comments and ratings from CES. In this way, a combination of structured and semi-structured assessment of teaching effectiveness can support faculty in not only strengthening their courses, but also preparing for contract renewal, tenure, and promotion (CFR 2.9, 3.2). In Fall 2020, UH West O’ahu had an overall student response rate of 49.4%. The campus-wide mean for teaching effectiveness was 4.52 out of 5, with 5 being “Superior” and 4 being “Good,” which illustrates the faculty’s commitment to learning-centeredness. The ratings for “class assignments provided an effective aid for learning the subject matter,” a question that focuses on scaffolding in class preparation, further bolster this finding on teaching effectiveness with a mean of 4.49 out of 5 (CFR 2.5). As many instructors avail themselves of the opportunity to publish their CES results, hundreds of examples are publicly available [here](#).

Paralleling these findings, the campus-wide means for disciplinary knowledge, which includes concepts and principles in the field (n=4.45) and disciplinary methods (n=4.46), showcase the impact of high teaching effectiveness and attunement of class assignments to course goals. Table 4.1 illustrates the institution-wide trends indicated in course evaluations. The ratings use a 5-point scale, and provide campus-wide means:

Table 4.1. Student Evaluation of Teaching – Mean Scores

	Fall 2018	Spring 2019	Fall 2019	Spring 2020	Fall 2020
Teaching effectiveness	4.48	4.52	4.5	4.59	4.52
Scaffolding assignments	4.40	4.46	4.45	4.52	4.49
Disciplinary knowledge	4.41	4.45	4.42	4.49	4.45
Disciplinary methods	4.43	4.45	4.45	4.52	4.46

Source: University of Hawai‘i Course Evaluation System. Ratings are based on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being the lowest.

These ratings indicate a positive increase across all criteria (left-most column) from fall 2018 to spring 2020. In fall 2020, however, we see a slight decrease, which may be attributable to the pandemic conditions and the institution’s migration to emergency remote instruction. In response, as discussed in [Component 6](#), the OVCAA has attempted to address this challenge by partnering with division chairs to encourage instructors to provide students with further opportunities to connect online outside of structured class time. Overall, this corpus of student feedback parallels ratings for academic challenge engagement indicators in the [National Survey of Student Engagement \(NSSE\)](#), which the institution administered in February and March of 2020 (as discussed below). In addition to the survey questions available on CES, students are able to provide qualitative feedback. Constructive anecdotes weigh into course revisions, along with the faculty and staff’s knowledge and expertise, to ensure educational quality at the course level (CFR 2.9, 4.2).

Assessment of Program-Level Learning Outcomes

Assessment at the program level involves three major components: the establishment of the standing Assessment Committee (operating within the purview of the OVCAA), institution-level assessment data, and annual program reviews and program accreditation. As described in [Component 6](#), the Assessment Committee guides academic divisions in curriculum mapping, alignment of concentration learning outcomes with program and institution learning outcomes, and best assessment practices. This approach has resulted in assessment cycles focused on either/both a general education outcome or a WSCUC core competency; as a result, assessment reports for ethical reasoning, written communication, and oral communication are shared via our [Assessment website](#) and on-campus presentations (CFR 2.4, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4). These reports and presentations lead to deep reflection on program learning outcomes, course offerings, the diversity of designations, and thinking through strategies in the classroom for reaching these outcomes: all of these discussions factor into the assessment cycles that follow.

To further assess program-learning outcomes, institution-wide assessment data are drawn upon to support educational quality, that is, to ensure students possess the “knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes” that they should when graduating from UH West O’ahu: learning outcomes, therefore, must be attuned to our students’ needs and our faculty and staff’s professional and academic knowledge and expertise (CFR 4.3, 4.4). Results from institution-wide surveys like NSSE validate that these learning outcomes are being met through academic challenge, learning with peers, and experiences with faculty. For instance, the level of academic challenge or rigor indicates what standards students are held to in their courses. When asked “To what extent did students’ courses challenge them to do their best work,” 51% of first-year students and 68% of seniors at UH West O’ahu indicated “high challenge,” compared to 47% and 56% for respective first-year students and seniors at peer institutions, suggesting a high level of course rigor (appendix 3.2: [NSSE Snapshot Report, see page 2](#)).

With academic rigor comes preparation for classes, and NSSE results indicate that UH West O’ahu students are encouraged by their institution to spend significant time studying and completing their academic work, with 80% of first-year and 83% of senior students characterizing this encouragement as “very much” or “quite a bit” (appendix 3.2: [see page 2](#)).

This encouragement is reflected in students’ average hours preparing for class, with 13.2 average hours a week for first-year students and 15.3 average hours a week for senior students. The rigor of class preparation is also evidenced by the number of hours students spend reading: 6.8 hours on average for first-year students, and 9.3 hours on average for seniors. Writing requirements for students—which support reading and the application of course content to authentic genres in the workplace, academia, and more—involve both developing general writing skills and strategies during the first-year writing program, as well as entering disciplinary conversations at the upper-division level through writing-intensive courses. On average, first-year students write 72 pages a year and seniors write 104.8 pages a year (CFR 2.5).

These factors also speak to our student engagement indicators, where learning strategies, effective teaching practices, and quality of interactions on campus are significantly higher in comparison to like institutions. However, mean scores for learning with peers through “collaborative learning” and “discussions with diverse others” were lower than NSSE-defined peers—particularly for seniors—as seen in table 4.2, suggesting an area requiring further attention:

Table 4.2. Learning with Peers: First-Year Students and Seniors (NSSE)

Mean Comparisons	First-year students comparison			Seniors comparison		
	UH West Oahu	UH West Oahu Peers	Effect size	UH West Oahu	UH West Oahu Peers	Effect size
	Mean	Mean		Mean	Mean	
Engagement Indicator						
Collaborative Learning	30.8	32.4	-0.12	24.2	33.9 ***	-0.63
Discussions with Diverse Others	37.6	41.2	-0.24	36.8	42.1 ***	-0.32

Notes: Results weighted by institution-reported sex and enrollment status (and institution size for comparison groups); Effect size: Mean difference divided by pooled standard deviation; Symbols on the Overview page are based on effect size and p before rounding; *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001 (2-tailed).

First-year students engage in more collaborative learning and discussions with diverse others than seniors. This gap may be attributed to the significant difference between first-year and senior student experiences. While students in their first year will take a variety of courses, become familiar with the liberal arts, and decide their career goals, students in their senior year are required to complete either a senior capstone, which features significant individual work and one-on-one time with faculty. The results of our high-impact practices (HIPs) indicate that these engagement indicators are in need of further investigation: 66% of first-year students participated in one HIP, and 54% of seniors participated in two or more HIPs (see [Component 5](#) for further discussion of HIPs). As a result, other forms of assessment are needed to indicate what, exactly, accounts for the gap related to learning with peers, as most HIPs are collaborative in nature (e.g., service learning, learning communities). These kinds of program-level assessments are to be brought to the Assessment Committee for future cycles.

Another major gap concerning student-faculty interaction is seen in table 4.3. Here student-faculty interaction is compared to NSSE-defined peer institutions for the effective teaching practices indicator, but there is a significant difference for student-faculty interaction indicators, which include discussing career plans with faculty, working with faculty outside of the classroom (e.g., student groups), discussing course ideas with faculty members, and discussing a student’s academic performance with a faculty member (e.g., office hours).

Table 4.3. Student-Faculty Interaction: First-Year Students and Seniors (NSSE)

Mean Comparisons	First-year students comparison			Seniors comparison		
	UH West Oahu	UH West Oahu Peers	Effect size	UH West Oahu	UH West Oahu Peers	Effect size
	Mean	Mean		Mean	Mean	
Engagement Indicator						
Student-Faculty Interaction	17.5	22.5 **	-0.34	20.6	27.8 ***	-0.43
Effective Teaching Practices	40.6	40.4	0.02	43.1	41.3 *	0.13

Notes: Results weighted by institution-reported sex and enrollment status (and institution size for comparison groups); Effect size: Mean difference divided by pooled standard deviation; Symbols on the Overview page are based on effect size and p before rounding; *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001 (2-tailed).

According to the institution’s 2020 NSSE results, UH West O’ahu trails its peers in terms of “student-faculty interaction” for first-year and seniors but not in the category of “effective teaching practices.” CES survey data sheds light on this apparent paradox since UH West O’ahu students have consistently rated instructors as “easy to talk with and available for consultation,” within a range of 4.46 and 4.54 since fall 2018, indicating that students “strongly agree” with that statement (CFR 2.5). Thus, when comparing NSSE to CES findings, the engagement indicator of student-faculty interaction for first-year and senior students must be further interrogated.

The gap may be attributed to the fact that UH West O’ahu students often have little time to interact with their instructors outside of their class sessions due to the need to juggle classwork with multiple jobs and family (or extended family) responsibilities. It may also be attributed to faculty office hours not aligning well with student availability because of students’ living situations or UH West O’ahu’s status as a non-residential and commuter campus. Moreover, the increase in distance education offerings in recent years—even before the pandemic—means that both

students and faculty might still be learning how to best use online platforms for effective out-of-class interactions. To that point, the [Office of Professional Development and Academic Support](#) offers workshops to introduce instructors to new technology and create conversations about online pedagogy, while bringing student concerns into the conversation as well. Moving forward, the OVCAA will be facilitating a series of focus-group discussions with faculty and students in the fall of 2021 to explore this issue more deeply. Following the 2020 administration of NSSE, UH West O‘ahu is awaiting the results from its spring 2021 [Revealing Institutional Strengths and Challenges \(RISC\)](#) student survey initiative. While the NSSE data—captured early in 2020—offers a snapshot of students’ perceptions prior to the pandemic, the forthcoming RISC data will provide insight into students’ experiences during the time of emergency remote instruction.

Program review and individual program accreditation also play a significant role in aligning the institution’s key learning outcomes with degree, concentration and course learning outcomes. Program review is “a cyclical process for evaluating and continuously enhancing the quality of programs,” and each of UH West O‘ahu’s programs undergoes program review at least once every seven years, which involves both internal and external evaluation; moreover, faculty and staff meet with reviewers to discuss next steps for their institutions (CFR 2.1, 2.7). These discussions lead to further collaboration with university stakeholders, such that gaps can be addressed through program initiatives, funding opportunities, new recruitment and promotion strategies, and more. For further information, please see [Component 6](#) and the institution’s [Program Review website](#) (note: UH login required).

For the Education and Business Administration bachelor’s degree programs, program reviews are integrated into discipline-specific national accreditation. [The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation \(CAEP\)](#) annually reviews and grants accreditation on a seven-year cycle. CAEP accreditation involves evaluating yearly reports, peer review of these reports, and onsite visits. UH West O‘ahu’s BEd teacher education program was recently granted accreditation through spring 2027 with no areas for improvement identified. The [Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs \(ACBSP\)](#) reviews and grants accreditation to business programs internationally. UH West O‘ahu’s Business Administration bachelor’s degree program was granted initial accreditation in 2017 with two conditions: (1) to provide assessment results on its program website and (2) to develop a strategic plan. The Business Administration program submitted a scheduled Quality Assurance Report to ACBSP on February 5, 2021, with information to resolve the said conditions. Reaffirmation is due in the spring of 2027.

Assessment of WSCUC Core Competencies

WSCUC core competencies closely align with UH West O‘ahu’s general education program outcomes (GELOs), institution learning outcomes (ILOs), and degree (DLOs) and concentration learning outcomes (CLOs) (CFR 2.3). While WSCUC core competencies were evaluated in earlier assessment projects, effective 2018, the OVCAA moved to focusing on one or two core competencies per year. This move ensured that each academic year covered breadth and depth of core competencies across course, program and institutional levels (CFR 2.6, 4.3).

Student Achievement of WSCUC Core Competencies

UH West O‘ahu’s ILOs, GELOs, DLOs, and CLOs are closely aligned with WSCUC core competencies; for this reason, the assessment of WSCUC core competencies has involved multiple approaches: concentration, division, and (institutional) Assessment Committee reports. Concentration reports focus on the student learning outcomes for course offerings, how those outcomes align with degree and institutional learning outcomes, student achievement using direct and indirect assessment, and suggestions for overcoming any challenges or gaps (CFR 2.3, 2.4). Division reports focus on the alignment of concentration and degree learning outcomes as evidenced by curriculum mapping, student achievement using direct and indirect assessment, and suggestions for strengthening program learning outcomes and student achievement of these outcomes. Assessment Committee-led reports center on the use of a generic assessment rubric that can be adapted to disciplinary needs, which is followed by a norming session using this rubric, after which point the assessment coordinators are tasked with sharing the rubrics for authors of concentration and division reports to modify, apply, and evaluate; this step ensures that standards are “set, communicated, and validated” (WSCUC). The next step is to aggregate results specific to and across divisions, so as to ensure that the standards

of performance are being met (CFR 4.1). Major findings are compiled along with recommendations for future assessment cycles via institutional assessment reports (CFR 2.3). These reports relate to each WSCUC core competency and are discussed in the sections that follow.

Written Communication

In 2018-2019, as part of the assessment cycle for the standing Assessment Committee, assessment coordinators and the director of assessment incorporated direct assessments, such that actual student artifacts were collected; these artifacts were either evaluated by faculty according to an agreed upon rubric based on the [Association of American Colleges & Universities \(AAC&U\) VALUE rubric](#) for written communication (CFR 4.1). While the diversity of approaches to this assessment project pointed to strengths and challenges for each discipline's WI courses, three significant campus-wide findings emerged: (1) all student writers showed development from 300-level to 400-level WI courses; (2) integrating evidence in writing is an area in need of improvement across WI courses, therefore, future WI courses should incorporate logical reasoning, socially responsible citation, and effective quoting strategies more clearly; and (3) faculty should be involved in the creation and establishment of a rubric that shows alignment with WSCUC core competencies, CLOs, and DLOs (CFR 4.3). The process reconfirmed the notion that norming student artifacts can provide programs with more in-depth and focused information on students' strengths and challenges in written communication. Changes to assessment procedures, creating an assessment website, providing professional learning opportunities, and sharing best practices for writing assessment have taken place to ensure educational quality of WI courses (CFR 4.4). The full findings are discussed in the [Written Communication Institutional Assessment Report](#).

Oral Communication

The focus of learning outcome assessment in 2019-2020 was the WSCUC core competency of oral communication. Student presentations made as part of regular coursework or program requirements (e.g., symposium presentations) were recorded and submitted as artifacts. Assessment coordinators were responsible for contacting the respective faculty members teaching the designated courses to collect embedded, existing artifacts. Faculty were not required to create new assignments to collect appropriate artifacts but rather to use those already in existence. The institution's director of assessment assigned at least three specific artifacts from each division to each divisional assessment coordinator. After viewing the recording of the student presentation, assessment coordinators completed and submitted ratings via Qualtrics.

Assessment coordinators found, overall, that introductory-level skills for oral communication fell within the expected range of benchmark (n=2) to developing (n=1). Courses at the reinforcing and mastery levels for oral communication fell within proficient levels (n=3), with some discrepancies between 300- and 400-level courses, such as lower at the 400-level versus the 300-level (CFR 2.4, 2.5). Other areas that required more focus included: how to (a) integrate supporting material, (b) strengthen linguistic and rhetorical strategies when presenting, and (c) structure presentations or talks so that audience members can easily follow regardless of their academic discipline. As a result of this finding, the Assessment Committee revised its approach, so as to ensure evaluating educational quality was a more transparent and straightforward process (CFR 4.4). A more detailed discussion is available in the [Oral Communication Institutional Assessment Report](#).

Information Literacy

In 2020-2021 the campus assessment coordinator and librarians conducted direct assessments of information literacy based on student artifacts collected during AY 2020-2021. These artifacts were evaluated in spring 2021 by UH West O'ahu's librarians, using an information literacy rubric adapted from the American Library Association's published rubric (CFR 4.1). Seventy-five student artifacts were collected from biology, business administration, English, and mathematics courses. Information literacy mean scores were compiled and, with assistance from the Institutional Research Office (IRO), were disaggregated by selected student characteristics (e.g., ethnicity, gender), subject, course, and modality. These data were transformed into a customizable and interactive [information literacy assessment dashboard](#) in order to better support the sharing and use of results. While this assessment project highlighted a number of strengths and challenges for each discipline's approach to information literacy, two significant campus-wide findings emerged: (1) Results of the disaggregated assessment data suggested that first-generation and Pell students consistently scored lower on information use outcomes, while there were no meaningful differences

by course attributes (i.e., subject, course number, and modality); (2) Students struggled to generate correct citation styles consistently, particularly at the lower-division level. Moving forward, the campus assessment coordinator will work with each program to develop a set course matrix, curriculum map, and schedule for information literacy assessment. The OVCAA and campus assessment coordinator will also develop standardized wording regarding the submission of artifacts to include on their syllabi. The complete set of findings and recommendations is available in the [Information Literacy Institutional Assessment Report](#) (CFR 4.4, 4.6).

Quantitative Reasoning

The campus assessment coordinator organized the implementation of a campus-wide quantitative reasoning assessment project during AY 2020-2021. Eighty-nine student artifacts were collected from courses in five disciplines: accounting, biology, business administration, chemistry, and mathematics. These artifacts were then evaluated in spring 2021 by a team of mathematics and science faculty, including members of the Faculty Senate's Quantitative Reasoning Subcommittee, using the [AAC&U's Quantitative Literacy VALUE Rubric](#). With the assistance of the campus IRO, quantitative reasoning mean scores were compiled and, once again, disaggregated by selected student characteristics (e.g., ethnicity, gender), subject, course, and modality. These data were transformed into a customizable and interactive [quantitative reasoning assessment dashboard](#). Detailed findings from this project, including student strengths and weaknesses, trends identified through the disaggregation of data, and planned action steps can be found in the [Quantitative Reasoning Institutional Assessment Report](#).

Critical Thinking

The campus embarked upon a substantial critical thinking assessment project during AY 2019-2020, which was interrupted by the onset of the coronavirus pandemic. Faculty members from across all seven academic divisions submitted a total of 582 student artifacts during AY 2019-2020 and AY 2020-2021. During the summer of 2021, the campus assessment coordinator is partnering with faculty and the OVCAA to conduct rubric-based evaluations of a substantial portion of the artifacts collected, using a slightly adapted version of the [AAC&U's Critical Thinking VALUE Rubric](#). Due to limitations with the data collected—specifically the de-identification of the majority of student artifacts by faculty prior to submission to the campus assessment coordinator—the IRO will not be conducting a disaggregation analysis. Nevertheless, a comprehensive study of the aggregated assessment data will inform a Critical Thinking Institutional Assessment Report, which will be available by fall 2021.

In AY 2017-2018 the General Education Committee and standing Assessment Committee evaluated the learning outcome of ethical reasoning, which is a vital part of critical thinking skills and processes. Ethical reasoning entails “analyzing a dilemma, issue or topic to develop an ethical judgment, argument, or position.” The reports that were generated were part of an effort to develop a culture of assessment at UH West O’ahu, and the process involved clarifying what was needed from faculty for assessment purposes, the stakes of assessment, and the methods of assessment (CFR 4.4). Direct and indirect assessments from these projects indicate that expectations for ethical reasoning across multiple divisions were met or exceeded; however, the limited timeframe, the lack of communication, and the disciplinary differences in regards to ethical reasoning pointed to the need for greater transparency and calibration in the assessment process moving forward. Further details about this project can be found in the [Ethical Reasoning Institutional Assessment Report](#).

Conclusions and Next Steps

Now that UH West O’ahu has completed its most recent four-year assessment cycle, the OVCAA is working to improve assessment practices and protocols and restructure the campus Assessment Committee, and has already transformed the campus [Assessment website](#) to make assessment data and reports better organized and more easily accessible to faculty members and the campus community at large. Learning outcome assessment admittedly took a step backward in 2020, due to the chaos precipitated by the coronavirus pandemic and the State of Hawai'i's revenue shortfall, which prompted UH West O’ahu's administration to curtail its provision of course-release compensation to assessment coordinators in AY 2020-2021. The institution also lost its director of assessment in November 2020, with a UH system-wide hiring freeze preventing the timely refilling of the position. At the same time, this vacuum presented a valuable opportunity to implement much needed change in 2021, including the appointment of a faculty mem-

ber to the role of campus assessment coordinator for AY 2020-2021 and AY 2021-2022 and the closer integration of the campus IRO in assessment work, particularly in the areas of data disaggregation and data visualization.

The previous assessment procedures created limitations for using assessment data to implement institutional change and improvement. As such, beginning in AY 2021-2022, the process will change from a bi-annual collection and rating of student artifacts to an institutional multi-year assessment cycle, designed to provide appropriate time to not only collect and analyze student artifacts, but to develop recommendations that can be implemented based on the analyses. Assessment will be focused on WSCUC core competencies as they align with the university's ILOs and GELOs, and assessment will be faculty- and division-led to ensure that degree learning outcomes are routinely and consistently assessed. Specifically, built into the procedural schedule for institutional assessment is a planning year, assessment year, review and reporting year, and change implementation year for each degree program. One key improvement during the most recent cycle can be found in the OVCAA's commissioning of overarching institutional assessment reports that coalesce the reported data from each academic division for each year's targeted learning outcome. It should also be noted that the institution's disaggregation of assessment data in the areas of information literacy and quantitative reasoning constitutes a vital step forward in terms of addressing a long-standing WSCUC concern. This is set to become standard practice moving forward. Furthermore, the IRO has lent its data visualization expertise to develop a set of assessment dashboards, such as these for [information literacy](#) and [quantitative reasoning](#), which allow users to sort and interlace the disaggregated assessment data according to a variety of characteristics that match their particular lines of inquiry. All of these measures will increase the accessibility of assessment data, provide sufficient opportunity for faculty reflection on that data, and allow for assessment results to promote program-level actionable change in the years ahead.



Component 5:

Student Success: Student Learning, Retention, and Graduation

The University of Hawai‘i–West O‘ahu understands that the strength of the institution is measured by the success of its students, with success largely measured by student retention and graduation rates in addition to achievement of high-quality learning (CFR 1.2). Importantly, UH West O‘ahu’s [Theory of Distinctiveness](#), as established in its [Strategic Action Plan](#), positions the learner at the center of its programs, practices, and initiatives. The institution is also committed to the University of Hawai‘i (UH) System’s [Hawai‘i Graduation Initiative \(HGI\)](#), which calls for an increase in the educational capital of the state by improving the participation and completion rates of students—particularly Native Hawaiians, low-income students, and those from disadvantaged regions and populations—and preparing them for success in the workforce and their communities (CFR 1.1).

The following student success initiatives have been designed to promote the academic success and degree completion rates of all students, as well as help contribute to meeting [HGI](#) expectations.

Student Success Initiatives and Supports

New Student Orientation

New Student Orientation offers first-year and transfer students an opportunity to learn more about the university as well as connect with their advisors for guidance on their chosen programs of study (CFR 2.13). [First-Year Student Orientation and Advising](#) is mandatory for all incoming first-year students. [Transfer Student Pre-Registration Workshops](#) provide assistance to transfer students with their academic plans and understanding the requirements for their degrees (CFR 2.14). [Lā Pūnua Orientation Day](#) is an event that supports incoming students’ transition into college by exposing them to UH West O‘ahu’s resources and traditions while connecting them to current and future student leaders in a social environment. Lā Pūnua enables incoming students to meet new friends and network, learn about getting involved at UH West O‘ahu, and get connected to the campus before classes even begin (CFR 2.12). Participants meet their peer mentors, engage with faculty and cohort members, and discover key campus resources.

PUEO Leadership Program

The [PUEO \(Peer Undergraduate Engagement and Orientation\) Leadership Program](#) is a peer mentor program dedicated to helping new students adjust to the social, personal, and academic aspects of college life. New students are connected with a support group of fellow students as well as PUEO Leaders: experienced, positive, and helpful current UH West O‘ahu students who offer attention and guidance (CFR 2.13). These mentors are tasked with coordinating on- and off-campus activities for new students, serving as a go-to resource for assigned mentees, and modeling the behavior of a successful college student. For six years (2014-2020), UH West O‘ahu also operated the Pueo

Scholars program, supported with funding from a Title III: Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian (ANNH) program grant. Deploying a holistic and “high-touch” approach, Pueo Scholars’ initiatives included offering early college classes at target high schools, facilitating summer bridge and peer mentoring programs to support incoming students, providing students with academic and financial aid coaching, and offering work-based experience for students from target communities.

New Student Programs

New Student Programs at UH West O’ahu offer support services and programs that help traditional students transition from high school to college and build the foundation for continued academic success. Programs are designed to put students on a path to graduation even before the first day of class and include:

- ▶ Mandatory [First-Year Student Orientation](#) sessions, presented by [PUEO Leaders](#), where students receive assistance with class registration, advising, and an introduction to student life at UH West O’ahu.
- ▶ ‘Ohana Orientation, sessions where parents and family members of new students have the opportunity to meet UH West O’ahu administrators, faculty, staff, and current UH West O’ahu students and learn about campus support services.
- ▶ A First-Year Experience program that partners with advisors to contact and offer incoming students resources and services to support their academic performance.
- ▶ E Ala Pono, an early intervention program that works with UH West O’ahu faculty members to identify first-year students who are having academic challenges in the first month of the semester.

College Success Advising

UH West O’ahu believes that students succeed best in a learning environment where they are active contributors to their own educational and career planning (CFR 2.5). The purpose of [Advising Services](#) is to teach students the tools they need to succeed in their academic, personal and career pursuits. Advising Services assist students in the development of their own self-awareness and self-knowledge, their career aspirations, and a meaningful educational plan compatible with those aspirations. Advising Services is based on (a) creating relationships, (b) developing a system of shared responsibility, (c) advancing students’ intellectual and cultural development, and (d) preparing and empowering students for a life of change and fulfillment. The unit provides a variety of services to enable students to become successful and lifelong learners. College success advisors assist students with academic planning, major exploration, career clarity, program and university graduation requirements, registration and understanding policies and procedures of the University (CFR 2.12, 2.13).

E Ala Pono

The [E Ala Pono Academic Progress Campaign](#) is an Early Intervention Program that partners with UH West O’ahu faculty members to identify students who are experiencing challenges—whether academic or otherwise. The early intervention teams, which take a holistic approach to student support, consist of [representatives from Advising, Counseling Services](#) and the [No’eau Center](#). This team reaches out to the students identified and connects them with appropriate services or resources to improve their academic performance or help them address other life challenges (e.g., housing or food security, mental health, domestic violence) (CFR 2.10, 2.13). The E Ala Pono initiative thus provides a poignant example of the institution’s efforts to support students as “whole learners.”

Office of Student Life

UH West O’ahu promotes an environment where students can achieve their educational goals through academic offerings and campus life opportunities. UH West O’ahu’s [Office of Student Life](#) develops and implements programming that encourages students to grow as individuals while becoming empowered to embrace learning and civic engagement. To this end, Student Life approaches students as whole learners by offering critical support in areas such as financial literacy and by providing opportunities for place-based cultural learning that deepens knowledge about the diversity of Hawai’i (CFR 2.10, 2.11).

The Office of Student Life appropriately serves as a go-to center for student activities, involvement, and leadership opportunities. The office coordinates events, including the Community and Club Involvement Fair that invites community organizations and businesses as well as student organizations to engage students. The office assists with signature student-led events—Fall Fest and West Fest—which are one-day festivals that celebrate the institution and its students. The office provides campus recreation, fitness, intramural sports, and wellness activities for all students. Student Life also offers unique leadership education experiences on-campus, across the state, and on the continental U.S. The Office of Student Life supports the operations of two types of student organizations – chartered student organizations (CSOs) and registered independent student organizations (RISOs). A CSO is a campus-wide student governance organization that carries out functions for the purpose of serving the entire student body (CFR 4.6). A RISO is an independent and self-governed organization formed with common interests among students that may include academic, cultural, professional, political, recreational, religious, or service pursuits.

The coronavirus pandemic has prompted student leaders involved in student government, advocacy, and programming to migrate to online formats that continue to foster students’ engagement with the campus and with one another. At the same time, Student Life has vastly expanded its virtual office functions, assisting students with questions surrounding student organizations and the registration process, online/digital/virtual event offerings, and more. The office also helps student organizations develop ways to engage their membership more effectively through digital platforms (CFR 4.7).

Student Leadership and Governance

UH West O’ahu promotes student participation in institutional governance, advocacy and delivery of planned programs, services and activities through the university’s four chartered student organizations (CSOs). These organizations are (1) representatives for the student body known as the [Associated Students of the University of Hawai’i – West O’ahu \(ASUHWQ\)](#) Senate, (2) a college union advisory group known as the Campus Center Board, (3) a programming council called the Student Activity Fee Board, and a (4) student media governance group dubbed the Student Media Board. These student governance organizations provide leadership and learning opportunities for personal learning and leadership development (CFR 2.11).

The ASUHWQ Senate continuously fosters student input, voice, and advocacy of student needs, interests, and concerns through purposeful participation in institutional governance and decision-making (CFR 4.5). The Campus Center Board supports student-governed, student-serviced, and student-operated programs, services and activities that serve as the “living room” or “community center” for campus community members. The Student Activity Fee Board fosters a vibrant student life and promotes enriching educational experiences for students through planned events as well as funding to other student organizations and university departments planning student events. The Student Media Board supports and governs student publications including *The Hoot*, the student newspaper. Each CSO’s activities are directly financed through mandatory student activity fees, as authorized by Hawai’i Revised Statute. In addition, students also have the opportunity to provide their perspectives, ideas, and input on a variety of campus issues and areas by serving on a number of university-wide committees including the Health-Technology-Transportation Advisory, Academic Grievance Committee, Commencement Hui, Compliance Hui, and Open Educational Resources (OER) Committee (CFR 4.6).

Library Services

Recognizable from miles away with its [distinctive 100-foot tower](#), UH West O’ahu’s 60,000-square foot [James and Abigail Campbell Library Building](#) serves as a thriving hub of student life and a vital piece of students’ academic experience (CFR 3.5). Housing a diverse set of campus units such as the Information Technology, Counseling Services, and the No’eau Center for Tutoring and Testing, the Library offers a variety of services that draw students inside of its walls. The Library also serves as the home to the state’s [Center for Labor and Education Research \(CLEAR\)](#) and [‘Ulu’ulu: the Henry Ku’ualoha Giugni Moving Image Archive of Hawai’i](#), making the building a true cultural and educational hub for the Leeward side of O’ahu (CFR 4.7).

By providing quiet work spaces along with modern computers and high-speed Internet connections, UH West O’ahu’s

library is instrumental in terms of ensuring student access and equity (CFR 3.5). As expressed in its [mission statement](#), the UH West O‘ahu Library Services unit is committed to “using innovative technologies... [to] meet the “information needs” of the campus community in order to “empower students to become engaged, lifelong learners.” A full-time staff of five faculty librarians and two library staffers is supported by a team of student employees (CFR 3.1). UH West O‘ahu’s librarians organize and develop a combination of scholarly and print scholarly resources while providing workshops and outreach activities in support of information literacy and student success (CFR 2.11).

No‘eau Center

The [No‘eau Center](#) offers an innovative approach to assisting students through peer tutoring, testing, workshops, and other support services. The No‘eau Center promotes life-long learning for students at all levels of ability to gain the skills necessary for effective, confident, and independent learning. The extent of the No‘eau Center’s reach is truly remarkable, with 44% of the entire (unduplicated) student body taking advantage of its tutoring, testing, and workshop activities in fall 2019 before the onset of the pandemic, as noted in table 5.1:

Table 5.1. Number and Percentage of Students Using No‘eau Center Services

Term	Total Enrollment	Headcount Unduplicated No‘eau Services	Percent Unduplicated No‘eau Services	Headcount Duplicated No‘eau Services
Fall 2020	3,168	997	31%	1,604
Fall 2019	3,049	1,345	44%	1,844
Fall 2018	3,128	1,327	42%	1,481

Note: This table represents the number and percentage of students who used the No‘eau Center for tutoring, testing, workshops, or other events.

Tutoring services currently constitute the most widely-used No‘eau program and, although the coronavirus pandemic precipitated the cessation of in-person tutoring from March 2020 onward, the fact that the No‘eau Center had already implemented a robust online tutoring platform years in advance of the pandemic enabled it to migrate rather seamlessly to fully online tutoring formats (CFR 4.7). Student survey data indicates high levels of student satisfaction with tutoring services. Students are invited to complete evaluations after each tutoring session. Per the 110 evaluations administered in fall 2019, an overwhelming majority of students (89.1%) indicated that their tutor made effective use of the session. Additionally, 91.8% of students believed that their success within their course(s) increased after working with a tutor(s), and 90% agreed that tutors provided helpful tips for academic success (CFR 2.10, 2.11).

Table 5.2. Number and Percentage of Students Using No‘eau Center Tutoring and Testing Services

Term	Total Enrollment	Headcount Unduplicated Tutoring	Percent Unduplicated Tutoring	Headcount Duplicated Tutoring	Headcount Unduplicated Testing	Percent Unduplicated Testing	Headcount Duplicated Testing
Fall 2020	3,168	466	15%	974	131	4%	223
Fall 2019	3,049	638	21%	1,734	522	17%	938
Fall 2018	3,128	526	17%	1,481	673	22%	1,252

The [No‘eau Test Center](#) provides testing services to all University of Hawai‘i System students, including placement testing, distance education exams, make-up exams, and exams that require ADA accommodations. The No‘eau Test Center is also committed to assisting the community-at-large and may be able to provide proctoring services for non-UH system testers for a fee. The No‘eau Center acquired an appointment system called Registerblast in fall 2019, improving Test Services by providing students an avenue to create and schedule their own test appointments (CFR 4.7). The unit assisted more than one-sixth of the UH West O‘ahu student body in fall 2019 alone, with numbers predictably declining after the institution transitioned into emergency remote instruction mode. Student demand for

placement testing also decreased with the introduction of automatic placement into introductory English and Math classes in 2020 as part of the institution's revamped admissions processes (CFR 4.6). Through the regular administration of surveys to clients (students, faculty, staff, community members, and test takers requiring accommodations), the No'eu Test Center was able to determine which standardized exams to prioritize (e.g. GRE, LSAT), thereby identifying potential revenue streams moving forward.

Alternate Credentialing and Easing the Transfer Process

Project Lead the Way

[Project Lead the Way \(PLTW\)](#) is an American-based non-profit organization focusing on applied learning experiences in STEM disciplines at the K-12 levels, serving millions of students across all 50 states. Working together with local high schools, UH West O'ahu developed a mechanism to recognize the learning achievements and competencies of PLTW completers by awarding credit for prior learning as appropriate, via the [Project Lead the Way \(PLTW\) Credit by Exam](#) initiative (CFR 4.7).

International Baccalaureate

The [International Baccalaureate \(IB\)](#) program, headquartered in Geneva, maintains a presence in 150 countries. Its diploma (high school) is extremely rigorous and targets the most advanced and ambitious students in the American school system. UH West O'ahu implemented the [International Baccalaureate \(IB\) Credit by Exam](#) program in 2019, allowing students to earn transfer credit and meet degree requirements as appropriate (CFR 2.14). While the rigor of the IB diploma limits the size of the student pool, this initiative provides another example of the institution's commitment to prior learning assessment (PLA) (CFR 4.7).

Interstate Passport

UH West O'ahu participates in the [Interstate Passport Network](#), a coalition of regionally-accredited institutions that agree to transfer completed general education requirements as a block in a seamless and efficient process among its members. Students who transfer into UH West O'ahu with an Interstate Passport from another network-member institution will not have to repeat or take additional courses to satisfy lower-division general education requirements (CFR 2.2a, 2.14). Earning a Passport serves as official recognition that a student has achieved learning outcomes in [nine knowledge and skill areas](#), which all network member institutions agree are consistent with their own general education learning outcomes.

Although UH West O'ahu prides itself in functioning as a transfer-receiving institution, the Interstate Passport provides its recipients with a valuable tool to facilitate their transfer—particularly across state lines—allowing students to avoid the inefficient replication of general education coursework already completed (CFR 2.14). Considering UH West O'ahu's considerable population of active military and military dependents, this is an important service to a segment of the student body, helping them to earn a college degree more quickly and at a lower cost. For the more general student population, attainment of an Interstate Passport functions as a positive milestone of completion marking students' path towards degree completion. UH West O'ahu has awarded [2,115 Interstate Passports](#) since fall 2018.

CollegeSource

The [CollegeSource](#) software platform serves as an example of the benefits of leveraging resources across the 10-campus UH System. UH West O'ahu, like its sister institutions, uses CollegeSource software for degree audit, academic planning, and transfer articulation. CollegeSource is a catalog database used by over 2,000 institutions and has reached more than 151,000 catalogs online (containing more than 123 million course description records) and supports a suite of online tools used in researching transferred credits and managing evaluation decisions. The platform supports student transfer by reducing the time needed to evaluate the transcripts of incoming students (CFR 2.14).

Articulation Agreements

UH West O'ahu currently maintains 44 [articulation agreements](#)—primarily with the University of Hawai'i Community Colleges (UHCCs)—which facilitate the transferability of particular AA, AS, AAS, or AAT degrees into the aligned bachelor's programs. The steady and purposeful development of these pathways in recent years allowed UH West

O‘ahu to achieve a record number of transfer-ins (448) from the UHCCs in fall 2020 (CFR 2.14). The effectiveness of the institution’s articulation agreements was commended by GUILD Consulting in its 2020 [“The Third Decade” report](#) commissioned by the UH System, with the authors recognizing UH West O‘ahu’s particularly high level of success in “actively develop[ing] articulation agreements encouraging transfers from the community colleges” (appendix 5.1: see [Annex B, page 67](#)).

GEAR UP

[Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs \(GEAR UP\)](#) is a competitive grant program of the U.S. Department of Education that increases the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in post-secondary education by providing states and local community-education partnerships with six-to-seven-year grants to offer support services to target middle and high schools. UH West O‘ahu’s GEAR UP program supports 500 students from the (high school) class of 2023 on O‘ahu’s Leeward Coast by helping them become academically, socially, and financially prepared to enter and complete their post-secondary education. The institution’s GEAR UP partners include the Department of Education’s Nānākuli-Wai‘anae Complex Area, Kamehameha Schools, DimensionU, Hawaiian Community Assets, and the Bank of Hawai‘i (CFR 4.6).

Summer Programs

UH West O‘ahu has demonstrated a strong commitment to local high school students by developing innovative programs to help them prepare, transition and eventually succeed in college. These [summer programs](#) help local high school graduates get an early start on the college experience. There are normally several different programs to choose from, including those designed around traditional themes such as effective writing or college algebra or others focusing on a specific area of interest of one of our talented faculty members seeking to inspire the next generation.

Open Educational Resources

In response to the changing nature of 21st-century learning, the institution has participated actively in a UH System initiative to expand the availability and usage of [Open Educational Resources \(OER\)](#). OER materials, which are published under conditions that provide no-cost access, can take the form of lectures, quizzes, lab activities and games, or even open textbooks. The [UH West O‘ahu OER Committee](#), composed of librarians, instructional faculty, and staff, strives to increase awareness and adoption of high-quality OER materials, so that obtaining a college degree becomes a more affordable endeavor for students. In spring 2020, for example, 21% of UH West O‘ahu classes featured zero-cost textbooks. The OER Committee conducts a biennial survey, completed at the beginning of the spring semester. The results of the spring 2020 Textbook Costs & Usage Survey of students are available [here](#) while an overview of prevalence and impact of institutional OER awards can be accessed [here](#). The 2020 student survey revealed that textbook costs have a significant impact on students’ class registration decisions, with 50% of students reporting that the availability of zero-cost textbook designated courses influenced their registration choices. Students are embracing the shift to e-learning materials, as 42% percent of respondents expressed a preference for digital textbooks (CFR 4.7).

Title III PIKO Grant

U.S. Department of Education Title III: Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian (ANNH) programs are designed to strengthen universities and help institutions of higher education better serve students by providing funds to improve academic quality, institutional management, and fiscal stability. Title III grants also provide funding for institutions to improve and expand the capacity to serve Native Hawaiian and Alaska Native students. The UH West O‘ahu Title III PIKO Project grant focuses specifically on the construction of health and wellness facilities and programs that integrate Native Hawaiian values of well-being.

PIKO's Learning Communities

[UH West O'ahu's PIKO Learning Communities](#) are designed to bring first-year students together through an integrated cohort experience for the purpose of successful college coursework completion at the start of the student's academic career. Students participate in activities that foster community engagement, including service-learning projects that are co-planned by instructors and provide opportunities for cultural and relevant knowledge, deeper learning, and student/faculty collaboration. These service-learning projects engage students in meaningful volunteer service to the institution and its surrounding communities—a salient application of classroom learning (CFR 2.11). In the process, students discover how to use their education to enhance lives and change the world. Recent organizing themes for these learning communities have included pre-nursing, environment and education, and gender, sex, and power.

Disability Services

The [Disability Services Office](#) at UH West O'ahu is dedicated to providing a supportive environment where students with disabilities can achieve academic success. The office provides reasonable accommodations and other supports that are intended to address each student's needs with the goal of removing barriers to access to the greatest extent possible. The Disability Services Office assisted 242 students between the fall 2019 and fall 2020 semesters (CFR 2.13). The institution is committed to making its educational and employment opportunities accessible to qualified individuals with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504), Chapter 489 of the Hawai'i Revised Statutes, the UH System policies "[Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action](#)" (A9.900) and "[University Statement of Nondiscrimination and Affirmative Action](#)" (E1.202). By providing full access to qualified students and employees with disabilities, UH West O'ahu demonstrates its belief that the community will benefit from the skills and talents of these individuals (CFR 1.4). As an equal opportunity employer, the institution does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the hiring, promotion, and retention of otherwise qualified faculty and staff.

Mental Health Center

UH West O'ahu offers free and confidential mental health services for all enrolled students. Services are provided by a qualified mental health professional and include individual and group therapy, couples' counseling, and psychological assessment. The [Mental Health Center \(MHC\)](#) was created to provide programs directed at assisting students in maintaining psychological health and developing in ways that support success and retention. To accomplish this, client eligibility criteria have been established and mental health initiatives—including crisis response and intervention, treatment, assessment, outreach, and consultation—have been implemented. Students who meet eligibility criteria may receive mental health care, personal development support, or maintenance treatment. Clients with issues beyond the scope of MHC service parameters receive appropriate community health referrals.

Since the start of mental health programming in 2013, UH West O'ahu has observed an increase in the number of students seeking treatment and the hours of service provided. In 2020 the MHC serviced 122 students with 1,239 hours of direct service, an increase of 284 direct service hours from the prior calendar year. MHC's internal assessment and results can be found [here](#). To accommodate the rapidly growing demand for programming and treatment, the center shifted from an absorption model (2013 to 2019) to a level of care system (2020). This transition has allowed the campus to maintain its position of avoiding treatment caps and eliminating waitlists (CFR 2.13).

Career Services

[Career Services](#) assists in building a rich and rewarding experience for UH West O'ahu students. In addition to individual career advising, career assessments, and job search assistance, the Career Services office participates in various campus events and is available to lead workshops, provide resources, and share career information in classes and in the community. Every semester, the Career Services office hosts multiple fairs and career development events and activities on campus that are open to all students and alumni. These include UH West O'ahu's Career & Internship Fair, Graduate & Professional School Fair, career development workshops, informational sessions, and recruitment tables.

Student Employment

On-campus student employment plays a key role in helping students develop the technical and career skills—including soft skills—that will enable their successful transition into the professional world following graduation. Student Employment opportunities are posted through the [Student Employment & Cooperative Education \(SECE\)](#) website. Federal Work-Study provides part-time jobs for UH West O‘ahu students with financial need, allowing them to earn money to help pay education expenses. The program encourages community service work and work related to the student’s course of study (CFR 2.11). Bridge to Hope (BTH) is an education option for welfare recipients and First-to-Work participants who want to attend college as a means of achieving lifelong economic self-sufficiency. The program can assist with on-campus student employment and other services to help welfare (TANF) recipient students succeed in their educational goals (CFR 1.4).

Hawai‘i Career Explorer

The [Hawai‘i Career Explorer](#) is a UH initiative designed to engage with industry partners to develop relevant curricula that will imbue graduating students with the marketable skills for which businesses are looking. The platform enables users to not only examine occupational data within individual sectors, but also data across all sectors, thus creating a 360-degree view of real-time industry demands and the current spread of occupations (CFR 2.12). The Career Explorer portal provides a user-friendly data dashboard featuring data-rich content on jobs and occupations, allowing readers to parse copious amounts of statistics, researching a vast range of post-graduate questions regarding academic programming, students’ career readiness, job availability, and trends over time. UH West O‘ahu’s OVCAA and faculty have thus come to rely on the Career Explorer as a valuable aid in mapping program outcomes to occupations and companies hiring, which is key in the development of proposals for new degree programs (CFR 2.1).

Veterans Empowered Through STEM (VET-STEM)

With support from the Office of Naval Research, UH West O‘ahu’s [VET-STEM Center](#) supports UH West O‘ahu’s body of student veterans pursuing STEM careers and prepares student veterans for employment in STEM career fields upon graduation. The mission of VET-STEM empowers student veterans by offering guidance, support, and preparation for employment upon graduation. VET-STEM seeks to ensure that student veterans have the resources and tools needed to achieve their academic and employment goals within STEM fields, by providing a center for academic research utilizing state-of-the-art equipment, opportunities for internships, and guidance in utilizing military experience to gain a competitive edge in the workforce (CFR 1.4, 2.1, 2.13).

Cyber Security Coordination Center

The purpose of UH West O‘ahu’s [Cyber Security Coordination Center \(CSCC\)](#) is to offer cybersecurity, information technology, or information security and assurance students an opportunity to work in a cyber operations center and coordinate cyber defense information with local and regional partners. Supported by a grant from the Office of Naval Research (ONR), this campus resource provides students with research experience as network defense subject matter experts in order to prepare them for future employment in the federal government, state government, or private industry. This center also bolsters information security needs in the community and region by acting as a resource supporting research in modern cyber conflicts and emerging cyber threats (CFR 2.11).

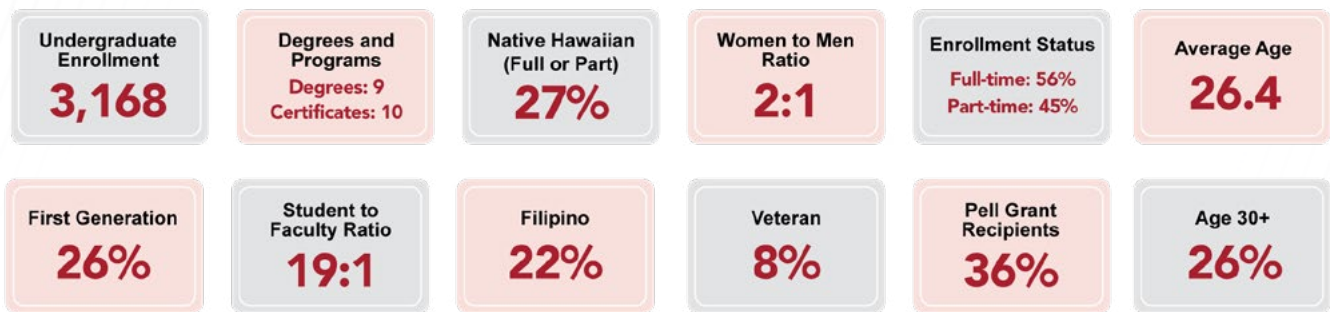
The National Security Agency and the Department of Homeland Security have designated UH West O‘ahu as a National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense Education (CAE-CDE) through 2021. (Reaffirmation is in process with strong indications of renewed five-year certification to be awarded in summer 2021.) The CSCC seeks to evolve into a Center of Academic Excellence (CAE) in Cyber Defense Education to include Cybersecurity of Industrial Control Systems and Cyber Investigations specialties and earn the designation as a CAE – Cyber Operations, educating students to be engaged global citizens and leaders in national and global cybersecurity.

Evidence of Student Success

Commitment to Access

As a Native Hawaiian-Serving Institution (NHSI) under the Title III Higher Education Act, UH West O’ahu acknowledges Hawai’i as an indigenous space whose original people are today identified as Native Hawaiians, through its [Hō’oia ‘Āina](#) (land acknowledgment statement). The recitation of the Hō’oia ‘Āina at official institutional gatherings helps to ground those in attendance in the [pāhupōpu \(institutional values\)](#) that celebrate an inclusive sense of community through indigenous ways of knowing (CFR 1.1. 1.4). Maintaining access for a diverse and historically underrepresented body of students is critical to the campus mission. As mentioned in [Component 8](#), the [demographics](#) of the West O’ahu region include higher percentages of foreign-born persons, homes where languages other than English are spoken at home, persons in poverty, and veterans, and lower percentages of persons with a bachelor’s (or higher) level of degree attainment. The fall 2020 enrollment data (figure 5.1) demonstrates the diversity of the student population (CFR 1.4). At UH West O’ahu, student diversity is not limited to race/ethnicity, but also includes higher than average percentages of non-traditional students (e.g., transfers, part-time, first generation, active military and veterans, distance education students, and returning adults). The average age of UH West O’ahu students is 26 years old. The institution enrolls three new transfer students for every new first-time first-year student and 10% of students actively reside on one of O’ahu’s less-populated neighbor islands. These markers exemplify the unique demographics and characteristics of UH West O’ahu’s region and student population.

Figure 5.1. UH West O’ahu Fall 2020 Enrollment at a Glance

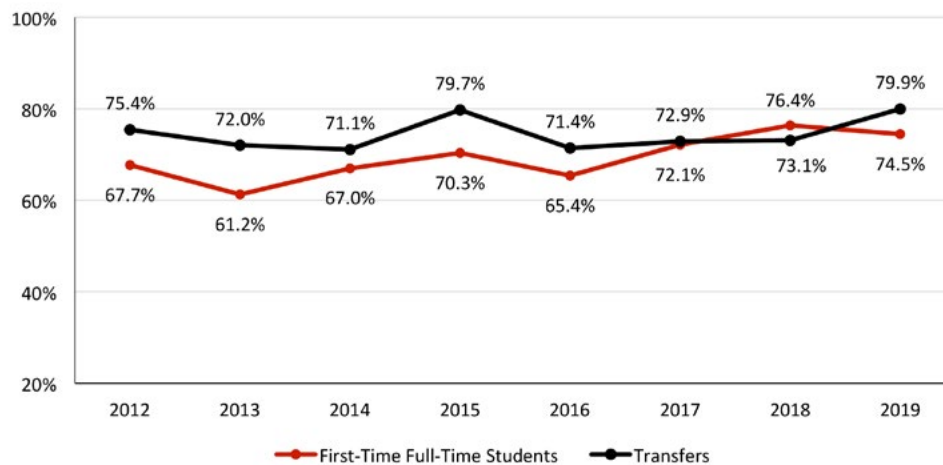


Retention and Graduation Rates

[Retention and graduation rates](#) are key student success measures and as such are included as performance indicators in a number of accountability initiatives such as the [Hawai’i Graduation Initiative](#), the [UH System Strategic Directions Performance Funding Model](#), and the [UH West O’ahu Strategic Action Plan 2018-2028](#).

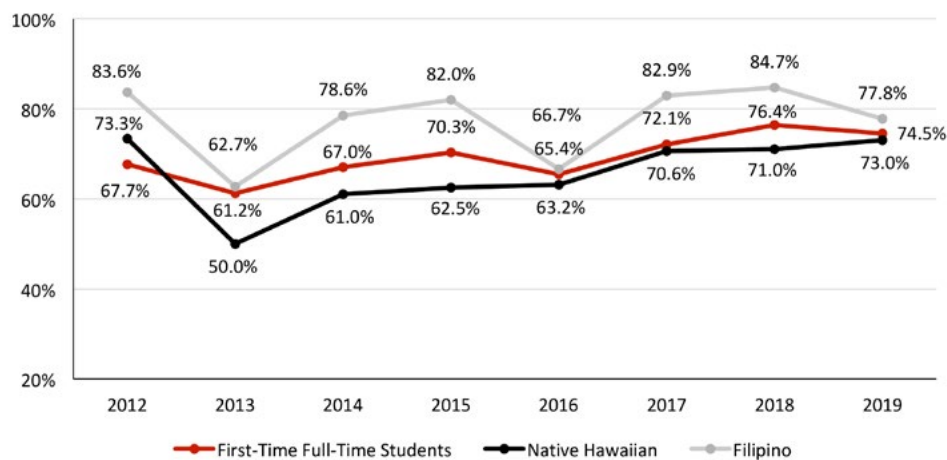
Retention rates over time for first-time full-time and transfer students are provided in figure 5.2. Retention rates are currently among the highest in the institution’s history, with 70%-plus retention rates for full-time first-year students in four of the last five years (CFR 2.10). An extensive [benchmarking research study](#) (appendix 5.2) conducted in 2019 on [UH West O’ahu’s eight peer schools](#), and a larger group of 67 institutions with similar Carnegie classifications, revealed that the institution is out-performing these comparison groups by seven to 10 percentage points respectively (CFR 4.3). These comparatively high retention rates are a point of notable distinction for UH West O’ahu, given its mission to provide access to students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and comparatively under-resourced regions of the state.

Figure 5.2. First-Time Full-Time Student and Transfer Student Retention Rates



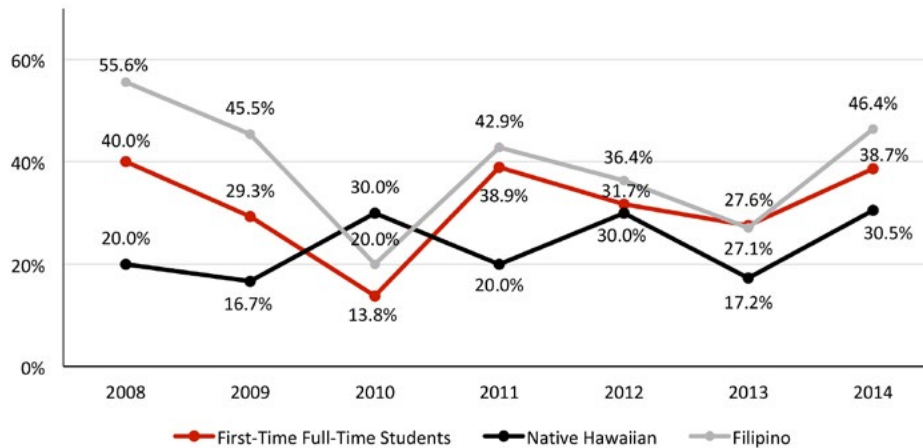
Retention rates for UH West O’ahu’s two largest ethnic groups, Native Hawaiian and Filipino students respectively, are provided in figure 5.3. Tracking student success for Native Hawaiian and Filipino students is obviously critical to the institution’s NHSI mission, and [U.S. Census data](#) indicate that Native Hawaiians and Filipinos are historically under-represented in higher education while being among the largest ethnic groups residing in UH West O’ahu’s geographic region. Institutional leadership is generally satisfied with the tangible progress made in improving retention rates for these groups in recent years. Filipinos are consistently out-performing the first-year student average retention rate, and the achievement gap for Native Hawaiian students has been closing since 2016, with a 73% retention rate for the fall 2019 cohort, just below the 74.5% average for all first-year students (CFR 4.3).

Figure 5.3. First-Time Full-Time Retention Rates (Native Hawaiian and Filipino Breakout)



Six-year graduation rates for first-time full-time students, with a breakout of Native Hawaiian and Filipino rates, are provided in figure 5.4. The volatility of the graduation rates is worth noting and clarifying because, until 2012, the sample size of the cohorts was very small, so caution is necessary when interpreting rates in years prior. Graduation rates are beginning to tick up, and the most recent Native Hawaiian graduation rate of 30.5% is the highest on record. The most recent six-year graduation rate of 39% is tied with the group average for similar Carnegie schools and four percentage points higher than UH West O’ahu’s peer institution average, as reported [here](#) (CFR 2.6, 4.1).

**Figure 5.4: First-Time Full-Time Six-Year Graduation Rates
(Native Hawaiian and Filipino Breakout)**



Student Success Dashboard

UH West O’ahu’s [“Student Success Dashboard”](#) provides all of the key performance indicators for student success (e.g., retention and graduation rates, absolute graduation rate, time-to-degree) in a single interactive report, over several years, with the ability to filter the data by ethnicity, gender, and declared major at entry (CFR 4.2, 4.3, 4.6). The goal of this report is to offer the user the ability to “triangulate” the various student success measures in a single view. The Student Success Dashboard has been instrumental in providing a readily accessible, one-stop, at-a-glance view of student success data with the ability to disaggregate by degree program and key student attributes (CFR 2.10).

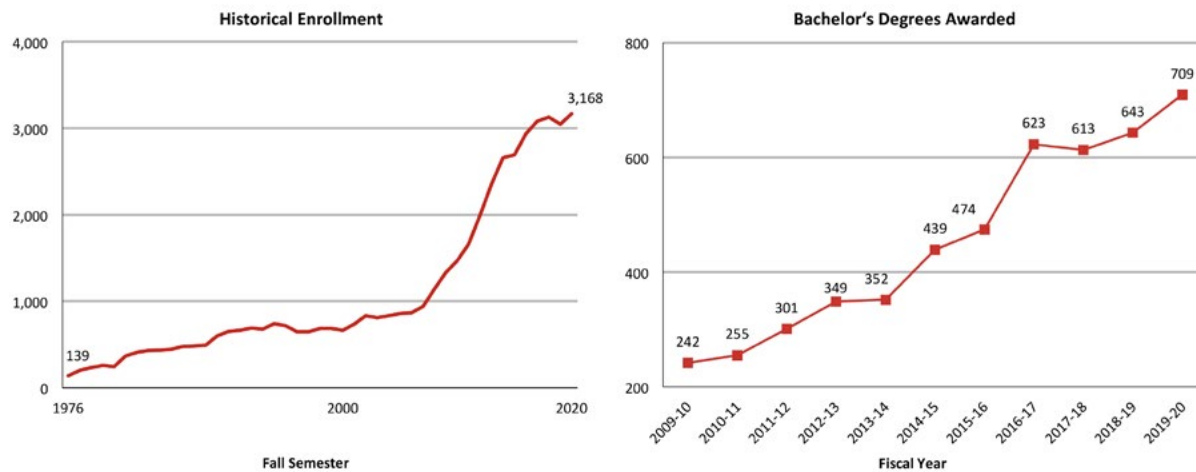
The Student Success Dashboard includes a [graph](#) illustrating UH West O’ahu’s Absolute Graduation Rate (AGR), which has trended upwards every year for the last four years and just increased 16.4 percentage points to an all-time high of 57.2% (CFR 2.10). The AGR is an important metric for the institution, given the high numbers of non-traditional students at UH West O’ahu who are not captured in the standard IPEDS graduation rates. One reason for the AGR improvement is the establishment of dozens of articulation agreements with the UHCCs in recent years, resulting in record transfer enrollments and also allowing transfer students to graduate in an average of 2.61 years (CFR 2.14).

Enrollment Growth and Degree Awards

Sustaining enrollment growth is central to the [UH West O’ahu Strategic Action Plan](#). Although the Kapolei campus was designed to accommodate enrollment growth as high as 8,000 students, reaching this long-term target will require an acceleration in the recruitment of traditional first-year students, in addition to intensifying efforts to recruit and retain larger numbers of prospective students beyond the traditional high school age, such as adults returning to education, military populations, and transfer students (CFR 4.7). Locally, four of the largest high schools in the state are within a 15-minute drive of the campus and present a tremendous opportunity for new student recruitment. As shown in figure 5.5, headcount enrollment stabilized just above 3,000 students for the last four consecutive years. Although UH West O’ahu has nearly tripled its enrollment since moving to Kapolei in 2012, earning the institution title of [“Fastest Growing Baccalaureate College in the U.S.”](#) three years in a row (from *The Chronicle of Higher Education*), local high school graduates are increasingly leaving Hawai’i to attend mainland universities, as evidenced in the [UH System High School Background of First-Time Students report](#) (appendix 5.3, see figure 20, page 15). As the data illustrates, 43% of college-going high school graduates in the state of Hawai’i attended an out-of-state college in 2018, compared to 32% in 2010.

The number of bachelor’s degrees awarded each year at UH West O’ahu has increased at a notable and consistent rate. As shown in figure 5.5, the institution has doubled the annual number of bachelor’s degrees awarded since 2012, a noteworthy achievement that demonstrates its immense contribution to the statewide [55 by ‘25 Campaign](#), a goal focused on increasing the percentage of working age adults with two- or four-year degrees to 55% by 2025. UH West O’ahu has also surpassed its performance funding goals for degree awards every year since the inception of the performance funding initiative. Degree awards among Native Hawaiians students has also been strong, with an all-time high of [177 degrees](#) conferred in AY 2019-20 (CFR 1.4, 2.6).

Figure 5.5. Historical Enrollment and Bachelor’s Degree Awards



Student Satisfaction

UH West O’ahu administered the [National Survey of Student Engagement \(NSSE\)](#) in spring semester 2020, just before the coronavirus pandemic forced the institution into emergency remote instruction. A copious amount of information was collected about students’ participation in programs and activities related to their learning and personal development. The results have provided a clearer picture of how our students spend their time and what they gain from attending UH West O’ahu (CFR 4.1, 4.2, 4.5). A total of 1,580 surveys were distributed to first-year and senior-year degree-seeking students, with a response rate of 26%, just below the average of 28% for similarly sized institutions. UH West O’ahu’s [NSSE 2020 Snapshot](#) provides a concise and easy-to-digest four-page summary of survey results.

Findings from NSSE showed that a majority of students rated their educational experience at UH West O’ahu as “excellent” or “good,” indicating they would attend again. First-year students and seniors rated their overall educational experience as being very high relative to institutional peers. The fact that 92% of seniors rated their experience as “excellent” or “good,” and 93% said that they would attend UH West O’ahu again (compared to a peer average of 80%), was particularly encouraging (CFR 2.5, 4.5). The IRO disaggregated the NSSE student satisfaction survey responses by degree program and found that the disaggregated pools for first-year students were too small to generalize while the responses of students in their senior year varied little between degrees, with all degrees performing above the peer group average (See appendix 5.4).

Student Learning

Direct Assessment

The evaluation of student learning through direct assessment methods is discussed in detail in [Component 4: Educational Quality](#).

Indirect Assessment

Among the key findings reported in the [NSSE 2020 Snapshot](#), the majority of seniors at UH West O‘ahu reported positive experiences in areas related to knowledge acquisition and personal development. First-year students and seniors both reported a significantly higher number of hours spent reading for their courses, and significantly higher number of pages of assigned writing, compared to students in UH West O‘ahu’s comparison group. When asked “To what extent did students’ courses challenge them to do their best work,” 51% of first-year students and 68% of seniors at UH West O‘ahu indicated “high challenge,” compared to 47% and 56%, respectively, for students at peer institutions (CFR 2.5)

The [NSSE 2020 Engagement Indicators report](#) (appendix 5.5) is the most recent and richest source of data on student perceptions of learning available. One of the key NSSE engagement indicators is “Academic Challenge,” which is framed on the theory that student learning is best promoted by challenging students and supporting them to engage in various forms of deep learning. Four Engagement Indicators are part of this theme: Higher-Order Learning, Reflective & Integrative Learning, Learning Strategies, and Quantitative Reasoning. Table 5.3 shows the survey results for first-year students and seniors across these indicators, with all scores falling within 2.0 points of those of comparable institutions.

Table 5.3. Academic Challenge: First-Year Students and Seniors (NSSE)

Mean Comparisons	First-year students comparison			Seniors comparison		
	UH West Oahu	UH West Oahu Peers		UH West Oahu	UH West Oahu Peers	
	Mean	Mean	Effect size	Mean	Mean	Effect size
Engagement Indicator						
Higher-Order Learning	40.0	38.1	0.15	41.6	42.3	-0.05
Reflective & Integrative Learning	35.4	35.6	-0.02	39.5	39.6	-0.01
Learning Strategies	37.7	39.6	-0.14	42.0	40.6	0.09
Quantitative Reasoning	28.5	29.4	-0.06	29.4	30.8	-0.09

Notes: Results weighted by institution-reported sex and enrollment status (and institution size for comparison groups); Effect size: Mean difference divided by pooled standard deviation; Symbols on the Overview page are based on effect size and p before rounding; *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001 (2-tailed).

While the corpus of findings from the NSSE 2020 survey were positive, student-faculty engagement was one area identified for possible improvement. The results of the NSSE student-faculty engagement scores, and the actions being taken to address the performance gap, are described in detail in [Component 4](#). Among the actions being taken, the OVCAA will be facilitating a series of focus-group discussions with faculty and students in fall 2021 to explore this issue more deeply.

High-Impact Practices

Due to their positive associations with student learning and retention, special undergraduate opportunities are designated “high-impact practices” (HIPs), such as service learning, internships, and research with faculty. Many of these HIPs provide poignant examples of UH West O‘ahu’s determined efforts to support the hopena (strategic outcome) of building strong ‘ōiwi leadership skills that are grounded in the history of place and people, as expressed in the [Strategic Action Plan, 2018-2028](#). Results from the [NSSE “High-Impact Practices” \(HIP\) report](#) (appendix 5.6) indicate 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).

Service Learning

One of the most widespread high-impact experiences at UH West O‘ahu is service learning (e.g., community service). NSSE survey results, as seen in the [HIP report](#), show that UH West O‘ahu’s first-year students, in particular, are engaged in significantly more service-learning opportunities than students at peer institutions (+19 percentage points). Indeed, this was the measure that the institution performed highest on relative to its NSSE peer group (CFR 2.5, 4.1).

Internships

Internships form a key component of a number of UH West O‘ahu’s degree programs, so it is not surprising, once more per the [HIP report](#), that 39% of seniors completing the NSSE reported participating in an internship while another 29% indicated plans to do so (CFR 2.5).

Senior Capstone

The Senior Capstone experience is a requirement for all UH West O‘ahu graduates regardless of degree program, with students choosing between a research-based senior project and a field-based senior practicum. The Senior Capstone provides faculty members with a valuable opportunity to closely monitor and measure students’ competencies as they near graduation. Per the NSSE [HIP report](#), 88% of responding seniors indicated that they were either currently enrolled in a capstone course (51%) or planning to take one (37%) (CFR 2.2a, 2.5).

Undergraduate Research

UH West O‘ahu faculty members have actively worked to expand undergraduate research opportunities for their students in recent years, in some cases earning grant awards to support such endeavors. Starting in the fall of 2016, faculty have organized a [Student Research Symposium](#) every semester, providing a forum for students to receive feedback on their projects while gaining valuable presentation experience that helps prepare many of them for postgraduate studies (CFR 2.8). The percentage of seniors reporting having participated in research with faculty (17%) was thus twice as high as the figure for NSSE-defined peer institutions (8%), according to the [HIP report](#).

Predictive Analytics

The campus has been employing predictive analytics for the last five years in an attempt to better understand the factors that most influence student enrollment yield and retention. UH West O‘ahu’s Institutional Research Office (IRO) produces “homegrown” prediction models that are used by student services and enrollment management in the areas of [advising](#) and [recruitment](#) respectively (CFR 2.12). Academic advisors also use the [E Ala Pono](#) early alert program (via the Starfish software platform), which provides predictive analytics data and an interface with instructors, tutoring, and counseling services so that students can be referred to these support services when certain flags arise. The predictive analytics initiative is described in greater details in [Component 6](#).

Postgraduate Outcomes

Tracking student postgraduate outcomes (e.g., employment, wages, student loan debt, graduate school enrollment) is of key importance to UH West O‘ahu. Institutional reports on postgraduate outcome performance are available in the IRO’s [Campus Factbook](#) (CFR 4.1, 4.2). Data on what happens to students following graduation is derived from sources such as an annual [alumni survey](#), the UH System P-20 Office that manages the [State Longitudinal Data System](#), and the [National Student Clearinghouse](#). Findings from these reports are triangulated by the IRO, whose director presents the results regularly at the Chancellor’s Senior Management meetings (CFR 4.2, 4.5). Among the many things that the data on UH West O‘ahu graduates has shown is that they have lower median student loan balances, higher median earnings out of college, lower loan default rates, and a higher income mobility rate relative to peer institutions, as reported in UH West O‘ahu’s interactive [benchmarking dashboard](#).

Conclusion

UH West O‘ahu has taken intentional and strategic steps in recent years to develop a holistic student success infrastructure that engages with students as whole learners (CFR 2.10, 2.11, 2.12). It is important to remember that the institution does not have a deep history serving traditional college students, having only opened its doors to first-year students in 2007 and having seen its first triple-digit cohort of full-time first-time students in fall 2012. UH West O‘ahu provides essential support services designed to assist students directly with their academic endeavors, including academic advising, testing, tutoring, and library services. Equally important, however, has been the expansion of wrap-around support structures that approach students as whole learners. These include career services, military/veteran support services, disability services, mental health counseling, and a variety of programs that allow students to cultivate their leadership skills as they prepare to take on positions of responsibility in their careers and commu-

nities following graduation (CFR 2.13). As a Native Hawaiian-Serving Institution, UH West O'ahu effectively leverages federal grant programs, coupled with the cultural expertise of faculty and staff, to realize its core mission by actuating a campus climate that embraces Hawaiian traditions and perspectives while enabling students of all backgrounds to achieve their academic, career, and personal goals.



Component 6: Quality Assurance & Improvement

The Program Review Process

UH West O’ahu made significant strides in terms of refining and coordinating its program review process in the years immediately following its fall 2014 WSCUC Educational Effectiveness Review. Many of these changes were highlighted in the institution’s 2018 Interim Report, and one of them—namely the establishment of a comprehensive [Program Review website](#) (note: UH login required)—was explicitly commended by the WSCUC Interim Report Panel as an “excellent resource,” offering a regularly updated archive of program review materials organized by degree program. UH West O’ahu’s Faculty Senate revised its charter in 2015 to establish a standing Program Review Committee empowered to provide faculty voice and oversight into the program review process through a set of duties that includes evaluating each program’s internal review and external review before crafting an official set of commendations and recommendations (CFR 2.7, 4.1). The Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (OVCAA) also partnered with the faculty to create an entirely new [Program Review Handbook](#) (appendix 6.1) initially adopted by a Senate resolution in December 2015 before being updated by subsequent Faculty Senate resolutions in 2018 and 2019. This Handbook explicitly established a formative process through which “evidence of academic quality and student learning” can inform planning and budgetary decisions (CFR 3.2, 2.7). The OVCAA recognized the increased workload required for the new program review process by augmenting the course release compensation provided to faculty involved in drafting the internal review of either a degree or certificate program (CFR 2.8., 3.10, 4.4). These changes created a robust cycle of program review that can be illustrated as follows:

Figure 6.1. Program Review Flowchart



Once the labor-intensive internal review (or self-study) stage is completed by program faculty, official [quantitative indicators for program review](#) are provided by the Institutional Research Office (IRO), followed by an additional evaluation of the program conducted by an external reviewer (CFR 2.7, 4.1). The products of those two stages are forwarded to the Faculty Senate’s standing Program Review Committee (PRC), which issues a report detailing specific commendations and recommendations from its findings (CFR 3.10, 4.5). The PRC then assists in brokering a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the OVCAA and the academic division housing the program under review, resulting in the codification of action steps and the parameters of an improvement plan. The OVCAA issues its execu-

tive summary of the particular review cycle once the MOU has been executed.

As stated in the preamble to the [Handbook](#), program review exists as a “cyclical process for evaluating and continuously enhancing the quality of programs.” In addition to adhering to WSCUC Standards for program review, UH West O’ahu remains in compliance with the University of Hawai’i System’s policies governing this process, as expressed in [Board of Regents Policy 5.201 on Instructional Programs](#) and UH [Executive Policy 5.202 on Review of Established Programs](#), the latter of which, among other things, mandates review of all established programs “at a minimum of every seventh year for four-year institutions.” EP 5.202 also provides [guidelines](#) and [quantitative indicators](#), which, along with WSCUC Standards, establish the minimum parameters and requirements for the content and structure of the internal review (CFR 2.7, 3.2). As UH System policy does not require a separate review process for Distance Education (DE) programs, UH West O’ahu currently embeds its review of such programs with its evaluations of the onsite degree and certificate programs as part of the program review cycle. It is worth noting here that all of UH West O’ahu’s DE programs--and all but one of its DE concentrations--have onsite companions and that, even prior to the institution’s migration to emergency remote instruction in March 2020, the vast majority of its onsite students were taking at least one course per semester in an online (or hybrid online) format. As such, UH West O’ahu’s DE and onsite degree and certificate programs are closely intertwined.

The institution’s progress in meeting UH System expectations is tracked through the OVCAA’s [annual executive summary of program reviews](#), which are submitted to the UH Office of the Vice President for Academic Strategy each year and subsequently posted on the campus’ [Program Review website](#) (note: UH login required). While the institution’s prior WSCUC review cycle regrettably featured a rush to complete program reviews shortly in advance of UH West O’ahu’s fall 2014 Educational Effectiveness Review, the OVCAA implemented a more proactive approach this cycle by initiating reviews of degree programs well in advance of the seven-year UH System deadline and staggering the program review schedule to ensure a more even distribution. As a result, five of the institution’s six established degree programs have completed the crucial internal review phase of the process since 2017: business administration (2017), social sciences (2018), humanities (2018), education (2019), and public administration (2020) (CFR 2.7, 4.1). Unfortunately, two of these five reviews experienced delays at subsequent stages of the process, either at the external review stage (in the case of social sciences) or MOU stage (in the case of humanities). These struggles clearly indicate that the administration must continue to critically evaluate the process moving forward, working in collaboration with the Faculty Senate to enact any revisions needed to ensure that the completion of each stage of the process is achievable. On the positive side, UH West O’ahu’s academic programs have experienced considerable success over the past five years in terms of the number of degrees conferred (up 61.5%), while select degree programs—namely applied science, business administration, and creative media—have also witnessed an explosive increase in head-count enrollments. These developments are chronicled in the most recent iteration of the [annual executive summary of program reviews](#).

Ensuring Quality and Integrity of Courses and Programs

Curricular and Program Approval Processes

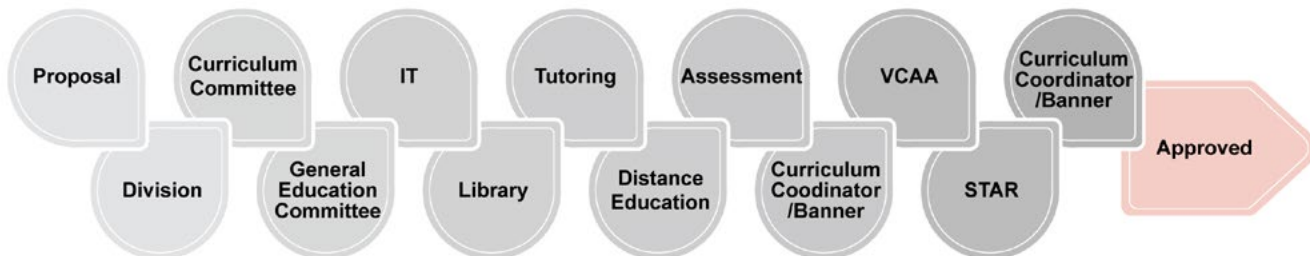
UH West O’ahu benefits greatly from its strong base of unionized faculty whose role in the shared governance of the institution is codified in [Regents Policy 1.210: Faculty Involvement and Academic Decision-Making and Academic Policy Development](#) (CFRs 1.3, 3.2, 3.9, 3.10). This Board of Regents (BOR) policy authorizes each campus faculty to “determine its own organization” and “adopt its own bylaws and rules of procedure” for exercising faculty governance over “academic policy matters.” It endows each campus faculty with “primary responsibility for... curriculum content, subject matter, and methods of instruction” and directs administrators to limit their power to overrule the faculty in such matters “only in exceptional circumstances.” UH West O’ahu’s Faculty Senate, with an elected body and chair and eight standing committees, exists as the official chartered and approved body of faculty governance and exerts “primary” jurisdiction over curricular and instructional matters, in accordance with Regents Policy. The Senate’s purview over curricular matters was reinforced through a 2015 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) entitled, “Regarding the Roles and Consultation Protocols Involving UH Administration, UH Professional Assembly (UHPA) and UH Faculty Senates,” which was subsequently incorporated into the 2017-2021 UHPA-BOR Collective Bargaining Agreement as

[Reference R-20](#). This MOA reaffirmed the administration’s duty to direct “policies related to assessment of courses and programs” to each campus’ Faculty Senate. UH West O’ahu’s administration recognizes the importance of these shared governance endeavors through the provision of course releases to the Faculty Senate chair, Curriculum Committee chair, and other Senate leaders to ensure that they have sufficient time to properly execute their duties (CFR 2.9, 3.7, 3.10).

It is particularly through the Senate’s Curriculum Committee, but also through its General Education Committee and its Distance Education Committee, that UH West O’ahu’s faculty body oversees the establishment of new courses as well as the assignment of course designations (CFR 2.4). This governance structure has evolved with changes in curricular priorities. For example, in 2018 the Faculty Senate erected a (standing) Sustainability Committee and three subcommittees of the General Education Committee focusing on ethical issues, oral communication, and service learning. The Senate’s establishment of the Sustainability Committee and Service Learning Subcommittee, in particular, align with UH West O’ahu’s [hopena \(strategic outcomes\) of aloha ‘āina \(sustainability\) and ‘ōwi leadership \(place and people\)](#) (CFR 1.1). It is also worth noting that UH West O’ahu’s faculty-driven curriculum approval process earned special recognition in the [2020 “Third Decade Study” produced by GUILD Consulting](#) with the report’s authors noting a “level of quality assurance that is missing on other campuses” (see [Annex B](#), page 11) in the form of the Faculty Senate’s separate review and approval of online courses through its Distance Education Committee (CFR 2.4, 3.10, 4.4). Each of the standing committees involved in curricular and program approvals is subordinate to the Faculty Senate and provides regular reports and recommendations to that body. Inter-committee communication is also facilitated through the online [Kuali Student Curriculum Management System \(KSCM\)](#).

As discussed in [Component 3](#), the institution’s 2018 migration to KSCM has helped clarify and coordinate the application approval process for the Curriculum, Distance Education, and General Education Committees. The following flowchart captures the KSCM approval process for new course proposals:

Figure 6.2. Kuali Curriculum Management System Workflow Process



The implementation of KSCM has improved the alignment of learning outcomes, establishing course dependencies based on pre and co-requisites, and provided an integration of course designations within one course proposal (CFR 2.3). The software also provides a searchable database for all programs and courses, thereby making the process of managing the curriculum integrated and cohesive (CFR 4.4).

Credit Hour Policy

The area of credit hour policy will require continued attention in the years ahead. The institution took a substantial step forward in 2013 with the creation of an official campus [Credit Hour Policy](#) via a Faculty Senate resolution (CFR 3.2). In addition to establishing a consistent definition of a “credit hour” across various course formats and modalities, the policy established a process for “periodic compliance review” to ensure accuracy and reliability (CFR 4.3). UH West O’ahu faculty successfully took steps to integrate credit hour review at the course proposal stage, both as an element of review by the Faculty Senate’s Curriculum Committee and by its Distance Education Committee. On the other hand, efforts to embed the credit hour policy review as an element of program review materialized more slowly, in part due to delays in the implementation of a campus-wide audit of course syllabi under the Credit Hour Policy.

The AY 2019-2020 Credit Hour Policy audit project was ambitious in scope and yielded relevant data. At the same

time, there were shortcomings inherent in the process that will have to be addressed moving forward. For example, respondents were asked to classify student work time into an inordinately large number of categories, resulting in data entry levels that rendered a portion of the submissions unusable. The drafting and circulation of a [summary report](#) did not occur until 2021. However, with the findings now complete, the OVCAA has begun reviewing the data with academic division chairs on an individual basis in order to identify potential issues and foster progress moving forward. The audit entailed the evaluation of randomly-selected syllabi from each academic program. Data was collected via a Qualtrics survey that prompted the instructors of record to analyze each course syllabus to determine the total hours of instructional time and out-of-class student work time as organized into a range of different categories (e.g., lecture, lab, writing) (CFR 4.4).

The project generated valid data for 326 different fall 2019 classes, broken down into the following modalities: in-person (149), fully online (142), and online hybrid (35). In all, 32.5% (n = 106) of the classes examined were deemed to have exceeded the expected credit-hour threshold by more than 20%, while 27.9% (n = 91) of classes fell at least 20% short of the expected threshold. The remaining 39.6% of classes examined (n = 129) were found to be within the desired range. One noteworthy finding was that fully online classes were slightly more likely than in-person classes to have either exceeded (29.6%) the expected threshold or fallen within the desired range (45.8%), whereas in-person classes were slightly more likely to have fallen short (28.9% vs. 24.6%). The migration into emergency remote instruction during the pandemic introduced new modalities and further blurred any clean demarcation between fully distance and fully onsite modes of instruction. This suggests that future efforts to effectively measure and enforce credit-hour requirements will necessitate a heightened level of attention from the OVCAA and instructional faculty moving forward.

Assessment and Cycle of Continuous Improvement

To ensure that the “distinct educational experience [is] student-focused, innovative, transdisciplinary, and community(-oriented),” as stated in UH West Oahu’s [Strategic Action Plan, 2018-2028](#), the institution’s standing Assessment Committee has undertaken revisions to ensure that course offerings are attuned to “educating students to be engaged global citizens and leaders in society.” Evaluation focuses on the promotion of excellence across teaching, learning and service through robust, diversified assessment methods (CFR 4.3, 4.4).

The campus Assessment Committee was first formed in 2014, with coordinators assigned to each division to evaluate general education learning outcomes as well as division and concentration learning outcomes based on each concentration’s assessment plan (CFR 2.4). Assessment coordinators, who were afforded course release time to execute their duties, were tasked with generating annual reports that featured direct and indirect assessments (CFR 3.10, 4.4). 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. A particularly effective example can be found in the Division of Humanities’ [Writing Intensive Assessment Report](#) from AY 2018-2019.

Assessment Infrastructure and Schedules

The work of the standing Assessment Committee was bolstered by the hiring of a full-time director of assessment, evaluation, and accreditation, effective December 2017, complementing the appointment of assessment representatives from each division (CFR 3.10). Working in close collaboration with the director of assessment, the various assessment representatives functioned as conduits between the committee and their divisions during the curriculum mapping process to establish a culture of assessment through best practices, tools, and terminology (CFR 4.4). This process led to the creation of an assessment cycle focusing on at least one general education learning outcome and/or WSCUC core competency each year.

From 2018 to 2020, assessment representatives from each division met as a team with the director of assessment to share, provide feedback on, and publish assessment reports on each year’s dedicated core competency or learning outcome: ethical reasoning (2017-2018), written communication (2018-2019); and oral communication (2019-2020) (CFR 4.1). In 2020-2021, budget shortfalls resulting from the pandemic caused the OVCAA to reduce course-release

support for assessment activities. Under a streamlined model, a faculty campus assessment coordinator and other stakeholders were responsible for completing assessment in collaboration with division chairs and concentration faculty, and with data analysis support from the Institutional Research Office (IRO), focusing on quantitative reasoning and critical thinking. For the information literacy learning outcome, UH West O'ahu's librarians partnered with the campus assessment coordinator and stakeholders to collect, codify, and share [results](#) from multiple student writing samples (CFR 4.1, 4.3).

Assessing and Improving the Assessment Cycle

Currently, the OVCAA and campus assessment coordinator are engaged in the process of assessing the assessment cycles thus far; this process involves updating the [Assessment website](#) to reflect all past assessment projects, with cumulative and program specific results readily available (CFR 4.1, 4.3). The OVCAA has also commissioned the completion of annual institutional-level assessment reports, as discussed in [Component 4](#), while the IRO has disaggregated assessment results and developed data visualization tools, such as this [information literacy assessment dashboard](#) and the [quantitative reasoning assessment dashboard](#) to render those findings more legible and actionable (CFR 4.2, 4.4).

The assessment cycles focus on either/both a general education outcome or a WSCUC core competency. This focus involves collecting, rating/reviewing, and aggregating findings from samples of student work, course syllabi and assignment prompts, and/or student and instructor survey responses. Division and concentration assessment coordinators or leads are responsible for conducting assessment projects. Coordinators or leads are typically supported by the director of assessment, or, in academic year 2020-2021, the campus assessment coordinator. In tandem with curriculum maps revisited at the beginning of each assessment project, the implementation of these assessment cycles ensures that each degree program and its concentrations strengthen their curricula and teaching practices based upon data collected, evaluated, and shared with its faculty (CFR 4.6). Faculty can provide input at any time during the assessment cycle.

Changes to Assessment Approach

While the iterative processes across the Assessment Committee, General Education Committee, and institution-wide survey data showcase how indirect and direct assessment is incorporated to ensure educational quality at the course, concentration, degree, and institution level, creating more opportunities for conversations across these entities involves shifting away from concentration and division focuses towards a program-level focus. Program review remains an integral part of the quality assurance process at UH West O'ahu; however, to supplement program review in relation to educational quality necessitates a focus on program learning outcomes rather than the diversity of outcomes from the course to concentration to division. Faculty members mapped these outcomes via curriculum mapping, and are shifting to focus on program outcomes, programmatic processes, and best practices for assessing at the program level (CFR 2.7, 4.1, 4.3). These assessment projects could lead to strengthening the alignment of course, concentration, and degree learning outcomes, as well as encouraging cross-comparisons with like programs at like institutions.

Along with this shift comes a push towards transparency, that is, clarity about the process, about how to find the feedback, and how to incorporate the feedback into not only course offerings, but also to meet learning outcomes from course, to concentration, to degree to institution (CFR 2.3). Therefore, establishing a consistent standard and re-energizing the Assessment Committee are of utmost importance for UH West O'ahu, with timelines for action largely dependent on the duration of the pandemic's financial impact.

Professional Development

Providing professional development is just as important as establishing a transparent and accessible assessment process. According to annual assessment project reports, many faculty members felt assessment in the past lacked sufficient transparency, and that the diversity of results, although useful at a concentration or division level, did not speak to program learning outcomes and how best to strengthen course offerings to meet these outcomes.

As such, the OVCAA strives to provide (a) continual professional development opportunities for assessment coordinators, faculty, and staff to become familiar with national best assessment practices; (b) assessment tools and strategies that they can adapt to their own courses; and (c) ways to involve students and colleagues in the assessment process (CFR 2.4, 2.5). These practices are critical in ensuring that the faculty's evaluation of educational quality at UH West O'ahu aligns with the institution's [Strategic Action Plan, 2018-2028](#), meets WSCUC Standards, and innovates more effective, and transparent assessment methods and processes. In 2018 and 2019, members of the Assessment Committee attended the following educational programs presented in Hawai'i by WSCUC:

- ▶ Assessment 101: Meaningful Assessment for Student Learning, May 17, 2018
- ▶ Program Review That Matters! May 16, 2019
- ▶ Assessment 201: Advanced Topics in Assessment, May 17, 2019

For each workshop, the faculty participants were asked by the director of assessment to submit single-page written reflections about specific sections of the workshops they had attended, in order to reflect on UH West O'ahu's assessment processes and coalesce ideas and practices that could lead to improvement (CFR 3.3).

UH West O'ahu senior management has worked to cultivate a climate of quality assurance through evidence-based evaluation and improvement. In January 2018 a group of campus leaders consisting of the chancellor, VCAA, director of assessment, director of institutional research, and faculty senate chair traveled to California to participate in "[Building a Culture of Quality](#)," a WSCUC retreat for institutional leaders. In January of the following year, UH West O'ahu hosted Natasha Jankowski, director of the [National Institute of Learning Outcomes Assessment \(NILOA\)](#) to present a one-day seminar titled "Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) Day." In addition to the workshop, copies of the book *Degrees that Matter* were provided to each member of the Assessment Committee and Curriculum Committee who attended the workshop. NILOA describes the [DQP](#) as a "learning-centered framework" that helps institutions identify what their graduates "should know and be able to do." As a direct result of faculty participation in this workshop, the creative media program was able to effectively incorporate DQP analysis into its successful BA degree program proposal submitted to the UH Board of Regents (CFR 4.3, 4.4).

As part of the CARES Act funding directed towards professional development related to distance learning, a series of four two-hour workshops related to best practices in assessment in online courses was presented between January 19, 2021 and March 2, 2021. This series of workshops covered topics such as "Connecting Learning: Objectives and Assessments," "Active Learning Strategies," and "Helping Learners Track Their Progress." Among the Faculty Senate's standing committees, the subcommittees of the General Education Committee provide ongoing professional development for faculty, with, for example, the Writing Committee assisting with assessment strategies for courses with a writing intensive (WI) focus designation (CFR 2.4, 3.3).

Advancing the Commitment to Student Learning

While professional development focusing on assessment has been provided to increase transparency and accessibility and to create a culture of assessment, some faculty members have struggled to close the assessment loop, finding themselves unable to transform assessment data into actionable measures that improve learning outcomes. Accordingly, increased efforts have been made to leverage assessment to improve learning outcomes (CFR 2.4, 4.4). Campus-wide institutional learning outcome (ILO) and general education learning outcome (GELO) reports have been developed. Assessment representatives from each academic division present results of ILO reports to their divisional colleagues. Assessment data is also integrated into each academic division's internal review stage of the program review cycle, providing an opportunity for faculty to reflect upon the efficacy of student learning within the degree program in question and, if warranted, to chart alternate paths forward (CFR 4.6). The General Education Committee and its subcommittees are preparing to publish a handbook to clarify the responsibilities, processes, and procedures taken by the General Education Committee (CFR 3.2). In this way, educational quality at the course level is ensured through rounds of feedback from the General Education Committee (CFR 3.10). The institution recognizes that advancing its commitment to strengthen student learning will foster the growth of a culture of assessment and a process of continual reflection and improvement.

Evaluation of Student Services and Co-Curricular Programs

UH West O’ahu has made enormous strides in expanding and strengthening its co-curricular programs and support services in recent years, particularly following its relocation to new, permanent facilities in Kapolei in August 2012, a moment when the institution’s headcount enrollment of first-year students soared by 113% in a single year. In order to strengthen the student experience, UH West O’ahu added a multitude of permanent full-time support positions, including a clinical psychologist, a testing services coordinator, an ADA coordinator, a director of student life, a student recreation services coordinator, and a director of career development (CFR 3.1). Co-curricular programs such as these track their student service volume and conduct periodic student satisfaction surveys to monitor program effectiveness and identify areas for improvement (CFR 4.1, 4.3). The campus’ [Library Services](#), [No’eau Center](#) for tutoring, [No’eau Test Center](#), [Disability Services Office](#), and [Mental Health Center](#) (aka Counseling Services) are examples of support units whose co-curricular support services are discussed in greater detail in [Component 5](#). These units fulfill a vital support role, not only in terms of promoting student success, but also through their commitment to ensuring student access and equity (CFR 2.13).

The results of regular assessments and annual reports demonstrate the broad reach and high level of student satisfaction for the services rendered by these co-curricular units. The [report of the Mental Health Center](#) (MHC), for example, reveals that the unit provided services to 122 different students last calendar year, which constituted 3.9% of headcount enrollment for fall 2020. The 1,239 hours of direct services delivered by the Mental Health Center marked its sixth consecutive year of growth in counseling sessions administered. However, the report also indicates that the MHC is gradually approaching a “limit in the number of therapy sessions (it is) able to offer.” Data maintained by the No’eau Test Center documents its even broader reach—as detailed in [Component 5](#)—serving 22% of the total student population in fall 2018 and 17% in fall 2019. A 2019 survey conducted by the Test Center also revealed that 92% of respondents—primarily faculty and staff members—rated the services rendered as “excellent.” On the other hand, survey data suggested room for improvement in the areas of proctoring room capacity and the expansion of operational hours into the early evening. Similarly, the No’eau Center for tutoring served 17% of the unduplicated student population in fall 2018 and 21% in fall 2019. Student surveys for this unit convey tremendously high levels of satisfaction, with 89% of (110) respondents in fall 2019 agreeing that their tutor had made “effective use” of the sessions and 90% stating that tutors had “provided helpful tips for academic success” (CFR 2.11).

Library services form another mission-critical support structure, playing a key role in addressing the WSCUC core competency of information literacy. Absent of pandemic conditions, the unit benefits from the use of the 60,000-square foot [James and Abigail Campbell Library Building](#), which houses numerous campus services—including testing, tutoring, and information technology—functions as a repository for local artwork and, more importantly, serves as a gathering place for both solitary and collaborative learning for UH West O’ahu’s students. Library services are provided by a team of seven full-time employees, five of whom—the interim library director included—are also faculty members (CFR 3.1, 3.5). This professional staff is, in turn, assisted by a sizable cadre of part-time student workers. The library’s most recent [self-assessment report](#) tracks client data over a period of five semesters (fall 2018 - fall 2020), monitoring key areas such as reference desk activity, circulation desk activity, inter-library loan requests, patron affiliation, and the librarians’ facilitation of class sessions and workshops focusing on information literacy (CFR 4.3). Although the prevalence of pandemic conditions prompting the mass migration of instruction to online formats since March 2020 has dramatically curtailed the volume of in-person services provided by UH West O’ahu’s librarians, assistance is still provided through email, phone, social media channels, and the library’s live chat service. This last medium, which makes it easy to administer satisfaction surveys, has yielded a rating of “excellent” (on a four-point scale) from 97.7% of participating clients (CFR 4.7). The annual [Library Services Survey Summary Data Report](#) examines a wealth of performative metrics—including student demographics, satisfaction, needs, and library service usage—in order to properly identify its areas of strength and weakness and strive for continuous improvement (CFR 2.11).

In the wake of pandemic conditions and statewide fiscal constraints that have forced the institution to search for opportunities for increased efficiency, the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (OVCSA) launched a comprehensive program assessment process, outlined [here](#), in December 2020. The evaluation process, which is directed by the vice chancellor for student affairs (VCSA) and his Student Affairs Leadership Team (SALT), consists of five

specific stages. Following multiple rounds of rubric-based assessments of thirteen OVCSA units and sessions of group reflection and discussion, the SALT will evaluate the data generated to guide decisions regarding the achievement of efficiencies through the possible reorganization of Student Affairs units, reassignment of personnel, or the phasing out or reduction of specific programs and/or services (CFR 4.1).

Key Role of Institutional Research Office

The [Institutional Research Office \(IRO\)](#)—a unit of the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs—is the campus source for reporting institutional data (e.g., [Campus Factbook](#)), conducting in-depth research on student success, and providing data analysis for key accountability and self-improvement activities (CFR 4.2). The IRO works in close collaboration with senior leadership to provide analysis in areas such as division-level workload and productivity, enrollment management, facilities, human resources, and budget (CFR 4.2, 4.7). IRO plays a crucial role in the institution's efforts to fulfill accreditation requirements, access accurate and reliable data, and convert data into actionable strategies (CFR 1.7, 1.8, 4.5).

As the institution and UH System move forward with [UH Strategic Directives](#) and the [UH System Hawai'i Graduation Initiative](#), the IRO occupies an increasingly essential role. There are currently 2.0 FTE in the IRO, which is recognizably small for an IR department, but since the Banner Student Information System is managed centrally by the UH System IR Office, the IRO is "freed up" to focus less on data management and more on conducting [student success studies](#) and developing leading-edge dashboard reports using business intelligence software (CFR 4.2). The IRO director is certified as a UH system-wide subject matter expert in the areas of predictive analytics, data visualization, and benchmarking. The IRO director co-chaired the system-wide [Predictive Analytics Work Group](#) established in 2017 by the UH System vice president for academic planning and policy (now vice president for academic strategy). As part of that assignment, the IRO director produced [enrollment yield](#) and [first-year student retention](#) prediction models for all three of UH's four-year campuses, which significantly advanced the collective understanding of the factors that influence student success while providing the ability to accurately predict student outcomes (CFR 4.1). These projects are underpinned by close collaboration between the IRO and Student Affairs to ensure effective use of the data in areas of student recruitment and retention. Since joining the institution in 2014, the IRO director has received numerous accolades, including a [best presenter award](#) at an international conference, and has facilitated several [national](#) and [regional](#) workshops on data analytics.

The IRO director participates in key initiatives such as the [Strategic Action Planning Committee](#), the Faculty Senate's Program Review Committee, and Institutional Reaffirmation Report Drafting Hui, and serves as project lead for the [2020 NSSE](#) and 2021 [RISC](#) survey administrations (CFR 4.3, 4.5). The IRO developed the [forecast models](#) used by the institution's enrollment management team and [Business Model and Mindset Work Group](#) to forecast enrollment and tuition revenues in real time. During the COVID-19 budget crisis, the IRO worked in close collaboration with senior management to analyze academic program productivity and efficiency (see appendix 6.2). The IRO led an institution-wide effort to revise its list of [peer schools](#) in 2019, a task that was previously outsourced to third-party vendors due to its complexity, thus saving the institution significant money in the process. The IRO is also responsible for coordinating the [student evaluations of teaching](#), supporting extramural grant proposals and compliance efforts, and providing data for Board of Regents and state legislative inquiries. Work assignments and ad hoc requests for institutional research services are [tracked and assessed](#) at regular meetings with the associate vice chancellor for academic affairs to foster continuous improvement of IR services and ensure that activities are responsive to institutional needs (CFR 4.1).

Professional Development of Faculty and Staff

A dedicated program of faculty professional development began in 2008 with the founding of the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE). As a voluntary service project, the CTLE began as a means of supporting faculty members as teachers, providing a venue for pedagogical discussions, and developing classroom-focused research on teaching. The CTLE enhanced its offerings as the project was gradually institutionalized under the OVCAA. With Title III support, faculty attended pedagogical conferences and shared their experiences on campus. Professional develop-

ment became integrated with other entities on campus, including the [Office of Distance Learning](#) (ODL) and new Title III grants that included Pili'āina, a culture-based orientation experience for faculty and staff to begin each academic year. In 2017 the CTLE was reconstituted as OPDAS, the [Office of Professional Development and Academic Support](#), as its mission expanded to serve staff and non-instructional faculty members. In 2019-20 OPDAS offered a full slate of programs for faculty and staff with the support of a half-time faculty position (CFR 3.3). In 2020-21 the distance education director assumed an additional role as coordinator of OPDAS, which has enabled the institution to expand distance education training activities and provide interactive opportunities that foster a collegial environment for staff and faculty despite the physical distancing requirements of the pandemic (CFR 4.7).

The OPDAS Advisory Board is a representative body consisting of faculty and staff from all four branches of the institution whose members are appointed annually by the associate vice chancellor for academic affairs in consultation with the campus executive team. The board's mission is to assist the OPDAS coordinator in enhancing the quality, relevance, and accessibility of campus professional development opportunities in the service of all campus staff and faculty members (CFR 4.5). In doing so, the board strives to ensure that UH West O'ahu fosters a climate of excellence grounded in aloha and respect.

In alignment with Impact Strategy 2 of the [UH West O'ahu Strategic Action Plan](#), OPDAS sustains a climate of academic excellence through the establishment of campus-wide professional development programming (Year 1-2, Tactic 2.4). UH West O'ahu has entered the "Year 3-6" phase of its Strategic Action Plan, and, in accordance with Tactic 2.4, OPDAS "Invest(s) in faculty and staff through pioneering professional development programming that elevates their ability to serve students." OPDAS operationalizes this tactic through programming in support of [staff enrichment](#) and [teaching and learning excellence](#) (CFR 3.3).

Distance Education

UH West O'ahu has made significant progress in terms of support and quality control for its online course offerings since the submission of its 2018 WSCUC Interim Report. A full-time distance education director has been in place since August 1, 2018 (CFR 3.1). In 2019 the OVCAA was restructured to officially include the [Office of Distance Learning \(ODL\)](#) on the organizational chart as part of an Academic Support unit. In alignment with the current institutional [Strategic Action Plan 2018-2028 \(SAP\)](#), a [Tactical Plan for the Office of Distance Learning](#) was developed and implemented in 2019. The term Tactical Plan was decided upon based on consensus that the university should only have one "strategic" plan, with tactical plans that align to the institution's SAP. The short-term outcomes of the Tactical Plan were the focus of the first two years, and a [report of progress toward the short-term outcomes](#) was published in March 2021 (CFR 4.6). In addition to the Tactical Plan, the ODL published the first version of the Distance Learning Faculty Guidebook in 2018. A revised web-based version of the [Distance Learning Faculty Guide](#) was published in 2021 with updated content and an improved user interface (CFR 3.2).

The ODL is physically located in the [James & Abigail Campbell Library](#), and staffed by a director, an instructional designer, a project admin support staff member, and a student support specialist who is located at the University Center on the island of Kaua'i. The project admin support and student support specialist positions are funded through a five-year collaborative U.S. Department of Education Title III Grant with Kaua'i Community College that commenced on October 1, 2019. Instructional design is also supported through student employment positions that were funded through the CARES Act for AY 2020-2021 and renewed for AY 2021-2022 (CFR 3.1). Three student instructional design assistants work closely with the instructional designer and faculty to assist with building content in the Lulima course management system. This assistance with designing content in Lulima allows faculty the opportunity to focus on development of course content related to the subject matter. Three faculty workstations are available in the ODL for faculty to work on digital learning content projects. The workstations include computers equipped with video editing software and large screen monitors. While working at the faculty workstations, direct support can be provided from the instructional designer. Individualized instructional design consultations are also provided as an in-person service and through video conferencing appointments (CFR 3.3, 3.5).

In fall 2019, Distance Learning Compliance Training became a requirement for all full-time faculty teaching hybrid and online courses. The training consists of five online asynchronous modules offered through the Lulima course

management system. The instructional design of the training modules models online pedagogical practices such as checklists for learner self-monitoring and interactive formative assessment polls with immediate access to the poll results. The five modules cover topics including regular and substantive interactions, student identity verification, FERPA and the Internet, copyright and digital content, and accessibility. Successful completion of each module included earning a successful score on an eight-question quiz. The ODL maintains records of all faculty who have completed the training on the Master Designations List and issues certificates of completion to faculty who have completed the five Distance Learning Compliance Training modules (CFR 3.2, 3.3).

Faculty are also provided with access to professional development in online pedagogy. During the COVID-19 pandemic when the majority of courses were offered online, CARES funding was allocated to support professional development opportunities related to distance learning. UH West O'ahu became an institutional member of the [WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technology \(WCET\)](#) and the [Online Learning Consortium \(OLC\)](#), and provided faculty with access to the virtual 2020 OCL Accelerate Conference and 2020 WCET annual meeting. In addition, ongoing professional development is offered directly by the ODL (CFR 3.3). Currently, monthly "edtech together" seminars are provided in a format that models a flipped classroom approach with one-hour online synchronous seminars. Additionally, a library of on-demand video tutorials is available on the [faculty/staff page of the Distance Learning website](#) to assist faculty with the tools available through the Lulima course management system. The UH System also maintains a Lulima help desk that is staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to provide technical support to faculty and students for the Lulima course management system.

Conclusion

Through intentional and strategic action, UH West O'ahu has achieved substantial progress in building a data-driven decision-making structure that undergirds its operations while providing quality assurance and promoting student success (CFR 4.3, 4.4). The activities of the recently-expanded IRO offer an excellent case in point, with that unit disaggregating learning outcome achievement data, developing enrollment and retention forecast models, generating (data visualization) dashboards, and supporting the processes of assessment and program review across the institution (CFR 4.1, 4.2). Although assessment of student learning admittedly experienced challenges during the turbulence of 2020, positive developments can be found in the drafting of institutional-level summary reports of learning outcome achievement, the appointment of a campus assessment coordinator, the redesign of the campus [Assessment website](#), and the institution's aforementioned progress with data disaggregation (CFR 4.4, 4.5). Program review is now occurring on a more regular schedule, despite the bottlenecks that have occurred at particular stages of the cycle. The internal review (aka self-study) phase increased in rigor and thoroughness with the adoption of a new [Program Review Handbook](#) in 2015, and UH West O'ahu's revamped [Program Review website](#), which drew praise from WSCUC's Interim Report Panel, provides a well-organized compendium of program review materials for each established degree program (CFR 2.7). Finally, the establishment and expansion of the Office of Distance Learning, coupled with the augmentation of professional development opportunities, has helped nurture an environment of continuous improvement in the realm of teaching and learning, enabling, among other things, UH West O'ahu to navigate the 2020 transition to remote emergency instruction with comparatively few hindrances (CFR 3.5, 4.7).



Component 7:

Sustainability: Financial Viability and Preparing for the Changing Higher Education Environment

Financial Condition and Stability

As a public institution and member of the 10-campus University of Hawai‘i (UH) System, UH West O‘ahu relies upon General Fund (G-Fund) allocations from the State of Hawai‘i in order to deliver an affordable and accessible higher education to local residents. The institution’s 2012 relocation from temporary facilities in Pearl City to a 500-acre setting in O‘ahu’s “second city” of Kapolei coincided with a period of seven years of consecutive double-digit percentage enrollment growth (2008–2014), driving up tuition revenue as well as operational costs. Fortunately, UH West O‘ahu witnessed its G-Fund allocation increase substantially, despite the emergence of a national climate characterized by the defunding of higher education in many states and heightened pressures on universities to streamline expenditures. Significant progress occurred in Fiscal Year (FY) 2015, in particular, when UH West O‘ahu saw its G-Funds rise 54.3% in a single year. In the first eight years following the opening of its Kapolei campus, the institution’s G-Fund allocation increased by 154.2% (See table 7.1) while faculty and staff full-time equivalent (FTE) positions nearly doubled, rising from [156.6 in Fall 2012](#) to [306.6 in Fall 2020](#) (CFR 3.1). This transformational scale of growth saw *The Chronicle of Higher Education* identify UH West O‘ahu as the fastest-growing public baccalaureate institution in the nation for three years running.

Table 7.1. General Fund Allocation and Tuition, Fees, and Special Funds (TFSF) Revenues (\$000s)

Fund Type	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	Increase
General	\$7,121	\$8,768	\$13,528	\$14,523	\$15,790	\$16,204	\$17,739	\$18,105	154.2%
TFSF	\$9,056	\$11,352	\$13,577	\$15,238	\$17,331	\$18,049	\$17,895	\$17,703	95.5%
Total	\$16,177	\$20,120	\$27,105	\$29,761	\$33,121	\$34,253	\$35,634	\$35,808	121.4%

While UH West O‘ahu could not exist without G-Fund support, its reliance on state funding presents financial constraints that limit its flexibility. The institution lacks the authority to increase tuition or establish permanent faculty or staff positions, the former of which requires Board of Regents’ approval and the latter of which is determined by Hawai‘i’s state legislature. The vulnerability arising from the university’s dependence on state funding has emerged prominently since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, with the collapse of Hawai‘i’s tourism industry triggering a projected state budget shortfall for each of the next four years. UH West O‘ahu is therefore currently bracing for an anticipated reduction in its annual G-Fund allocation, commensurate with the expectations faced by the University of Hawai‘i System as a whole, although the institution’s fiscally responsible strengthening of its financial reserves will help cushion the blow. This challenge looms despite UH West O‘ahu achieving record highs in terms of [headcount enrollment](#), [FTE enrollment](#), and tuition revenue charged (\$8.8 million) in the fall 2020 semester. Furthermore, UH

West O’ahu is now in the midst of a comprehensive budget planning process—discussed in detail below—that seeks to generate a new business model combining strategic cuts with targeted investments so that it can maintain its core operations for the duration of the statewide fiscal crisis (CFR 3.4). It is worth noting that the financial solution will *not* feature tuition increases, with the UH System remaining committed to maintaining the [stability of tuition rates](#) seen in recent years, which in UH West O’ahu’s case has resulted in a mere 2.0% total increase over the past five years:

Table 7.2. Annual UH West O’ahu State Resident Tuition

Academic Year	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Tuition	\$7,200	\$7,200	\$7,272	\$7,344	\$7,344	\$7,344

Financial Reporting and Oversight

UH West O’ahu engages in appropriate financial practices and reporting, consistent with applicable UH Board of Regents policies and WSCUC Standards, in order to ensure its responsible stewardship of public funds (CFR 3.6, 3.9). The entire UH System is audited annually by an independent certified public accounting firm. The UH Annual Financial Report provides a consolidation of financial information from all 10 campuses (including UH West O’ahu) as well as two closely related non-profit entities (the University of Hawai’i Foundation and the Research Corporation of the University of Hawai’i) (CFR 3.4). UH West O’ahu’s annual financial information is prepared as supplementary information to the UH Annual Financial Report for purposes of additional analysis, but is not audited (CFR 1.7).

As required under [Board of Regents Policy 8.204, University Budget](#), UH West O’ahu’s annual operating budget is transmitted to the board for review and approval following each legislative session. The annual budget process begins in approximately March/April (of the prior fiscal year), with the UH West O’ahu chancellor and vice chancellors evaluating the institution’s current financial situation and determining budget guidelines as necessary. The proposed annual budget and narrative for UH West O’ahu is prepared and provided to the UH System University Budget Office (UBO) for review. The UH vice president for budget and finance will present the annual budget for the UH System in July or August (of the current fiscal year) to the UH Board of Regents for its review and approval. [Appendix 7.1](#) (pages 29-34) contains the FY 2021 operating budget for UH West O’ahu that was approved by the Board. Appendix 7.2 presents a detailed overview of the institution’s FY 2021 operating budget in spreadsheet format (CFR 3.7).

On a quarterly basis, UBO prepares a budget-to-actual financial analysis, which it provides to the 10 UH campuses for review. Variances between budget-to-actual financial results are researched and justifications are provided to UBO. The UH vice president for budget and finance presents quarterly UH financial reports to the Board. See appendix 7.3 for UH West O’ahu’s fourth-quarter financial results for fiscal year 2020. On a monthly basis, budget-to-actual financial reports are prepared at the institutional level and provided to UH West O’ahu account supervisors for their review. Additionally, consolidated monthly budget-to-actual financial reports are provided to the chancellor and vice chancellors for their review. These financial reports are generated from financial information recorded in the university’s general ledger via the online Kualii Financial System (CFR 4.6).

A revised [Board of Regents Policy 8.203, Reserve Policy](#), which took effect in October 2020, stipulates that “emergency reserves should be sufficient to provide for continued operations of the University for a minimum of two months, calculated at 16% of the average general operating expenditures over the last three fiscal years.” Accordingly, UH West O’ahu has exceeded the Board’s reserve target by approximately \$3.8 million as of December 31, 2020.

Navigating the Statewide Financial Crisis

Prior to the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, UH West O’ahu was on firm financial footing, having seen its combined revenue from state-allocated G-Funds and tuition, fees, and special funds increase by 121.4% over the prior seven years, as detailed in table 7.3.

Table 7.3. FY 2020 Total Revenue and Total Expenditures

Total Revenue	\$ 35,808,371
Tuition Revenue	\$ 17,702,735
General Funds Revenue	\$ 18,105,636
Total Expenditures	\$ 35,005,835
Payroll	\$ 23,985,195
Scholarship Transfer	\$ 2,264,544
Debt Service	\$ 4,138,674
Utilities	\$ 2,270,731
Operating Expense, System Assessments	\$ 2,346,691

Revenues had exceeded expenditures for seven years running and the institution had deepened its pool of emergency funds. While debt service stemming from the relocation of the institution into its new Kapolei facilities in 2012 constituted a significant financial burden, the campus received valuable support in 2018, when the Hawai'i State Legislature paid off a \$17 million EB-5 loan that had been secured to complete construction of the campus. More recently, the UH System executed a massive [refinancing of more than \\$200 million of its revenue bond debt](#), which will generate an estimated annual debt service reduction of \$365,000 for UH West O'ahu.

Unfortunately, despite UH West O'ahu's success in achieving record levels of headcount enrollment and tuition revenue in fall 2020 to overcome the enormous obstacles presented by the coronavirus pandemic, the institution is not immune from the fiscal crisis gripping the State of Hawai'i. Indeed, the Center on Budget and Planning Priorities has identified Hawai'i as having one of the most substantial drops in revenue of the 50 states, with a [projected 23% decline in General Fund tax revenue collection in Fiscal Year 2021](#), compared to its pre-pandemic levels. UH West O'ahu is therefore forecasting a substantial reduction in its G-Fund allocation for FY 2022 through FY 2025.

Fortunately, the availability of federal funding from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act helped UH West O'ahu address the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Higher Education and Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) featured allocations specifically earmarked for direct transmission to students to ensure that they maintained the financial wherewithal to continue their college education. UH West O'ahu also received institutional HEERF allocations as well as additional funding for which it qualified as a designated Minority-Serving Institution (MSI) as well as a subsequent federal Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) award via the state. While direct redistribution of these grant awards to students was not required, federal guidelines narrowed the scope of the activities they could be used to support. The institution relied on these HEERF funds to cover pandemic-related expenses such as cleaning supplies and plexiglass barriers. UH West O'ahu also upgraded its information technology resources to support the mass migration of coursework to online formats (CFR 3.5). More recently, the institution is planning to upgrade its campus HVAC system to provide more effective air circulation in its facilities so that students can prepare to return to a safe learning environment once pandemic conditions have sufficiently improved (CFR 4.7). Table 7.4 offers an overview of more than \$8.8 million in federal relief funding to date:

Table 7.4. Federal Relief Funding Allocations

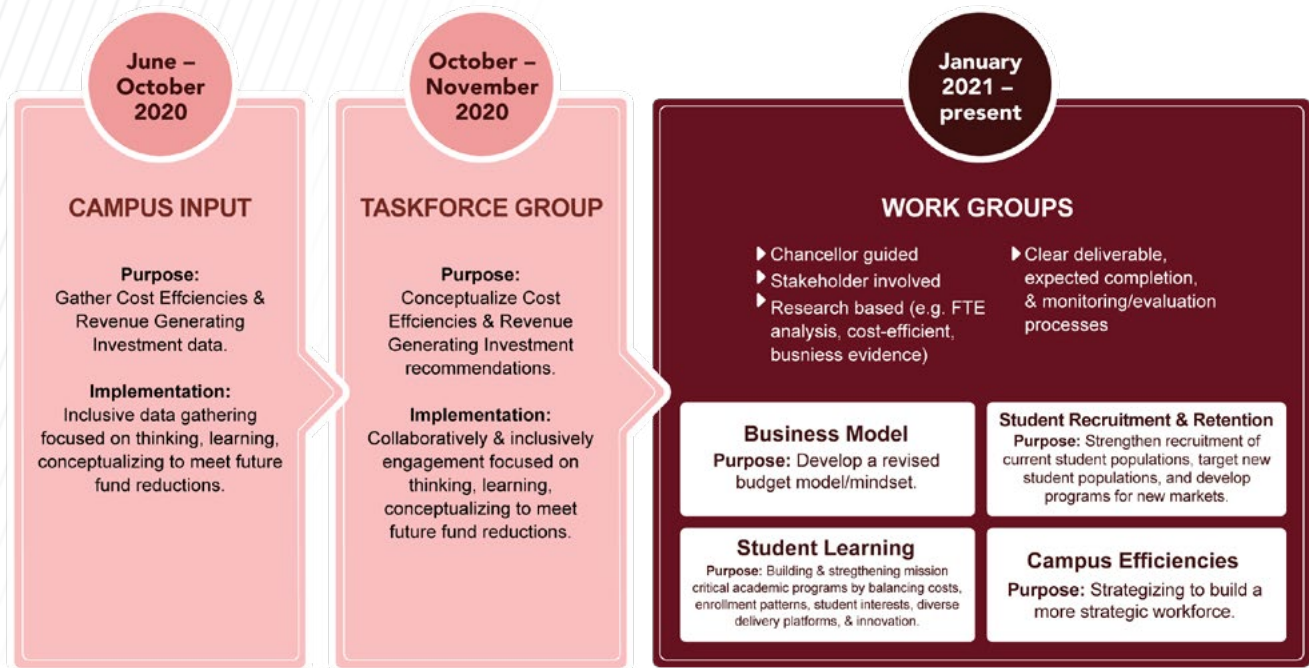
Fund Type	April – June 2020	September 2020	December 2020	March 2021	Total
Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) – student portion	\$697,500	---	---	\$697,500	\$1,395,000
HEERF – institutional portion	\$697,500	---	---	\$2,218,948	\$2,916,448
HEERF – Minority Serving Institution (MSI)	\$1,263,422	---	---	\$2,213,850	\$3,477,272
Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF)	---	---	\$1,007,591	---	\$1,007,591
Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency (HIEMA)	---	---	\$44,624	---	\$44,624
Total	\$2,658,422		\$1,052,215	\$5,130,298	\$8,840,935

Note: The projected 2021 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) figures were not yet available at the time this report was drafted.

The State of Hawai'i's precarious financial position, which was triggered quite suddenly by the onset of the coronavirus pandemic has unquestionably produced an inflection point for UH West O'ahu. The institution is determined to carve out a pathway forward that is based on the decreased availability of state funding support. UH West O'ahu is

therefore immersed in the third stage of a comprehensive “[Pueo Planning Process](#),” which campus leadership initiated in June 2020 (CFR 3.6, 3.10). [Figure 7.1](#) depicts the key components of that ongoing journey:

Figure 7.1. Depiction of the Pueo Planning Process



The entire initiative is closely connected to the extensive strategic planning process launched by Chancellor Maenette Benham in 2017 and commended by the [WSCUC Interim Report Panel](#) in 2019 for its “high level of energy and direction for the future.” These highly intentional efforts culminated in the development of a [Strategic Action Plan, 2018-2028](#), whose hopena (strategic outcomes) of [sustainability/aloha ‘āina, innovation & transformation, and ‘ōiwi leadership](#) continue to frame campus priorities and objectives as administrators, faculty, staff, and students partner together to navigate viable paths forward through these turbulent times (CFR 4.5, 4.6). The first stage (June-October 2020) consisted of information gathering from various campus units, as well as a campus-wide anonymous survey and two successive series of open forums facilitated by the Chancellor’s Office via Zoom in September and October (CFR 3.6). The second stage (October-November 2020) featured the formation of a 22-member [Pueo Stewardship Task Force](#), facilitated by Assistant to the Senior Executive Walter Kahumoku. Key institutional constituencies such as the Faculty Senate, the Associated Students of UH West O’ahu, and the Division Chairs Council were represented on the Task Force, which also included union staff participation from the Hawai’i Government Employees Association (HGEA) and the University of Hawai’i Professional Assembly (UHPA) (CFR 4.5). Over the course of five multi-hour Zoom sessions, Task Force members addressed the following questions:

- ▶ What is UH West O’ahu willing to do to meet its projected deficits in FY 2021, FY 2022, FY 2023, and FY 2024?
- ▶ What must UH West O’ahu do to increase its enrollment, to grow programs that will significantly impact a healthy post-pandemic Hawai’i, and to invest in entrepreneurial initiatives that nurture the institution’s distinctiveness?

These discussions generated two sets of preliminary recommendations submitted to campus leadership—one focusing on cost reduction measures and another focused on the generation of additional revenue streams (CFR 4.7). The third stage of the Pueo Planning Process (January 2021-present) is characterized by the creation and operation of four thematic [Work Groups](#) that build on the efforts of the Task Force: (1) Business Model and Mindset, (2) Student Recruitment and Student Retention, (3) Student Learning, and (4) Campus Efficiencies. Each Work Group is either facilitated or co-facilitated by a senior administrator and features the participation of between 10 and 22 faculty, staff, and student government representatives (CFR 4.5). Three of the four Work Groups feature faculty co-facilitators: the Faculty Senate chair, the Faculty Senate curriculum committee chair, and the Education Division chair (CFR 3.10). As

the initiative continues to unfold, campus leadership remains optimistic that a process featuring shared governance and data-based decision making will foster a climate of trust while generating actionable and effective recommendations that will enable UH West O’ahu to increase its self-sufficiency and maintain its educational effectiveness in the midst of dwindling state funding support.

Extramural Activity

Since its 2012 campus relocation and expansion, UH West O’ahu has made substantial strides in terms of increasing its research and grant activity, providing critical revenue streams to enhance the student experience (CFR 2.8, 3.4). These additional sources of extramural funding supplement the core pools of G-Funds and tuition revenues detailed above. The most sizable of UH West O’ahu’s grant awards in recent years have been provided by the U.S. of Department of Education’s Title III program, in support of UH West O’ahu’s designation as a Native Hawaiian-Serving Institution, followed by the aforementioned CARES and CRF awards, all of which have direct impact on UH West O’ahu students. Other notable examples of active extramural funding include (a) a grant from the Office of Naval Research (ONR) to support the establishment of an on-campus [Veterans Empowered Through STEM \(VETS\) Center](#), (b) a grant from the National Science Foundation to enhance discovery-based learning in STEM classes, (c) a second ONR grant that funds cyber-workforce development and the campus’ student-centered [Cyber Security Coordination Center](#), (d) a second grant NSF grant from its Tribal Colleges and Universities Program that funds the institution’s [Pūko’a Kani ‘Āina](#) initiative designed to build trans-disciplinary STEM capacity in collaboration with the larger educational community, and (e) a grant from the State of Hawai’i Department of Education providing tuition assistance to education majors pursuing an additional field in special education. Further discussion of extramural activities can be found in [Component 8](#).

The institution’s progress in seeking, securing, and administering extramural awards in recent years is clear, even if it has not developed in a straight linear fashion. A single award, if massive enough in scale, can skew the financial data for a specific fiscal year. Nevertheless, it is worth noting, as table 7.5 illustrates, that campus trends point in the right direction for the three reference points of annual dollar amounts for (1) extramural awards, (2) expenditures, and (3) proposals submitted over the past eight years:

Table 7.5. Extramural Activity, Fiscal Years 2013-2020 (\$000s)

Activity Type	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20
Awards	\$2,025	\$1,844	\$3,686	\$5,326	\$5,631	\$6,035	\$8,210	\$2,793
Expenditures	\$1,709	\$2,484	\$2,125	\$2,431	\$3,873	\$7,058	\$4,863	\$4,049
Proposals	\$1,012	\$17,920	\$16,228	\$7,170	\$4,338	\$16,430	\$7,635	\$6,749

Far from coincidental, the student-centered nature of UH West O’ahu’s grant activity is consistent with its campus mission and its role as a teaching and learning institution within the University of Hawai’i System (CFR 1.5, 2.5). Immediately upon assuming leadership of the institution in 2017, Chancellor Maenette Benham established the [Institute for Engaged Scholarship \(IES\)](#) as a unit of the Chancellor’s Office. The IES employs a full-time faculty director who assists other faculty members with the grant identification and proposal development process (CFR 3.6, 3.7). At the same time, IES serves as an incubator for transdisciplinary research, a vehicle through which the institution connects outward to its surrounding community through applied research that addresses immediate and pragmatic needs (CFR 2.8, 4.7). Indeed, this entire approach is aligned with UH West O’ahu’s Strategic Action Plan, 2018-2028, which prioritizes “engaged scholarship and research” as one of its five objectives under [Impact Strategy 2: Advancing Integrated and Dynamic Learning Experiences](#) (CFR 1.1).

Enrollment Management

The institution’s concerted focus on enrollment management precedes the coronavirus pandemic, dating back to the levelling off of (previous record levels of) enrollment growth that UH West O’ahu witnessed circa 2017-2019.

Enrollment management practices were therefore discussed in detail in the institution's 2018 Interim Report. Nevertheless, the onset of pandemic conditions underscored the crucial importance of effective enrollment management in two ways: (1) by prompting the migration of instruction into fully online modalities that threatened to undermine student retention and recruitment and (2) by precipitating a statewide economic crisis—*noted above*—that resulted in a decline in the state's ability to fund the University of Hawai'i for at least the next three fiscal years. Fortunately, UH West O'ahu successfully navigated the first obstacle—for the short term, at least—by achieving record levels of [headcount enrollment](#) (3,168 students) and [full-time equivalent \(FTE\) enrollment](#) (2,204 students) in fall 2020. This success was the product of a pervasive campus-wide recruitment and retention effort that saw UH West O'ahu achieve record [enrollment of incoming transfer students](#) while falling just 1.9% short of the previous high for the fall-to-fall retention rate for first-time, full-time students the campus had attained the year prior (CFR 1.2). These transfer students include many adult learners, who have formed a large component of UH West O'ahu's enrollment base since its inception. In recent years, the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (OVCSA) has strengthened support structures targeting returning adults and [military and veteran students](#), in particular (CFR 2.13, 2.14).

Although enrollment management is an endeavor that spans across multiple campus units, it falls under the immediate purview of the director of enrollment services, who transferred into that position in 2019. Around the same time, the OVCSA executed a reorganization that saw the director of enrollment services also take supervisory responsibility for the offices of Admissions, Registration and Records, and Financial Aid (CFR 3.1). UH West O'ahu's Institutional Research Office (IRO) produces an assortment of tools to promote enrollment management efforts. During the peak recruitment periods, these resources include the weekly release of [point-in-time enrollment and tuition forecast reports](#), which disaggregate enrollment by student classification and tuition type while also providing data on student retention, student transfer, and the institution's interfacing with local high schools (CFR 4.1). As discussed in its Interim Report, the institution benefits considerably from assistance at the University System level, with the [UH Institutional Research, Analysis and Planning Office \(IRAPO\)](#) closely monitoring enrollment trends in order to produce [six-year enrollment projections](#) (note: UH login required) for each campus on an annual basis. The generation of these reports entails collaboration with UH West O'ahu's director of enrollment services and director of institutional research, with factors that feed into the projections including historical enrollment, campus persistence rates, high school student enrollments and forecasts, unemployment rates, and real per capita personal income (CFR 1.6). The IRAPO's fall 2020 report projects that UH West O'ahu will realize a modest 3.9% enrollment increase over the next six years. However, UH West O'ahu exceeded the IRAPO's prior year's projection by 4.9% (or 149) students in fall 2020, and campus leadership remains optimistic that the institution's recent efforts to expand its high school outreach, early college offerings, community college articulation agreements, and degree portfolio will enable the institution to continue to outpace enrollment projections moving forward (CFR 4.6). UH West O'ahu also entered into an agreement with higher education research, technology, and consulting firm [EAB](#) in 2020 in order to increase its visibility and marketability among high school populations, both within the State of Hawai'i and on the U.S. continent.

Even before the onset of the coronavirus pandemic prompted the migration of classes into emergency remote formats, UH West O'ahu had taken important steps in expanding its distance learning infrastructure and capacity (CFR 4.7). Indeed, distance learning has been embedded in the institution's mission from the outset, as UH West O'ahu was originally developed in large part to serve the needs of UH Community College graduates on O'ahu's neighbor islands. The institution's oldest WSCUC-sanctioned distance education baccalaureate degrees—in business administration and public administration—therefore stretch all the way back to 1981. More recently, however, UH West O'ahu has addressed distance learning capacity by hiring its first full-time distance education director (in 2018) and formally establishing an [Office of Distance Learning](#) in 2019 (CFR 3.5). While these activities are discussed in greater detail in [Component 6: Quality Assurance and Improvement](#), it is worth mentioning here that the institution has created a [Distance Learning Faculty Guide](#) and a [Distance Learning Tactical Plan, 2019-2025](#), thereby explicitly addressing one of the recommendations issued by the WSCUC Interim Report Panel in 2019. With the hiring of a new instructional designer, an academic support specialist, and a project administration specialist in 2020, the Office of Distance Learning now features four full-time equivalent positions (CFR 3.1). Furthermore, UH West O'ahu's entrance into the [National Council for State Authorized Reciprocity Agreements \(NC-SARA\)](#) enables the institution to more effectively serve out-of-state distance education students in the years ahead. Finally, the institution is investing \$200,000 of CARES funding, administered through its Informational and Technology Office, in order to retrofit and upgrade all of its campus classrooms to be equipped as hybrid online learning spaces in the post-pandemic world (CFR 3.5, 4.7).

Leveraging Resources in Support of Educational Effectiveness

As UH West O‘ahu moves forward in the midst of statewide economic uncertainty, its leadership will be faced with difficult decisions regarding the leveraging of existing resources. The concept of waiwai (abundance/wealth) that forms one of five of the pahuhopu (institutional values) found in the [Strategic Action Plan, 2018-2028](#) stresses the importance of building capacity in ways that are sustainable and that cultivate relationships in pursuit of academic excellence (CFR 1.1). While the institution refuses to dilute the educational experience of its students in any manner, aggressive action must be taken to forge a new business model that is more self-sufficient and less reliant upon state funding (CFR 1.5). By no means, however, is all hope lost! UH West O‘ahu’s long-term trajectory of enrollment growth remains stable; its abundance is apparent in the form of its vast land resources and breathtaking new facilities; its desirable physical location places it in the epicenter of the state’s fastest-growing economic region; and the steps the institution has taken to expand its distance education capacity will position it well to attract and retain larger numbers of out-of-state students moving forward (CFR 3.6, 4.7).

As discussed in [Component 1: Introduction](#), UH West O‘ahu is blessed with 500 acres of campus lands, resulting from a generous donation from the [Estate of James Campbell](#). The institution moved quickly to monetize a portion of those lands through a long-term-lease agreement with [Hawai‘i Tokai International College](#), which relocated to its current Kapolei location in 2014. Although UH West O‘ahu remains committed to ensuring that any land agreements align with its mission and enhance the overall student experience, it has initiated a renewed effort to broker public-private partnerships in light of the new fiscal challenges it must grapple with (CFR 3.6, 4.5). The 2021 opening of the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation (HART) rail line, with a [rail station](#) situated adjacent to the campus lands, presents additional opportunities for transit-oriented development and the long-term emergence of a “university village,” thereby generating additional revenue streams while fostering a more vibrant atmosphere for student life.

The institution’s prospects for financial sustainability and academic success have been bolstered by the initiation of new degree programs that support 21st-century career pathways coupled with the construction of additional learning facilities directly linked to those degree programs (CFR 2.2a). The UH West O‘ahu administration has participated in a larger, coordinated effort at the UH System level in recent years to integrate academic and facilities master planning, as envisioned in the 2017 Regents authorized [Integrated Academic and Facilities Plan for the University of Hawai‘i System](#) (CFR 3.9). The initiation of a BS in Natural Science degree in 2019 therefore coincided with the opening of a 43,000-square-foot Administration and Health Sciences Building several months prior, featuring three state-of-the-art laboratories dedicated to cellular biology, microbiology, and anatomy (CFR 3.5). More recently, the launch of a new BA degree in Creative Media in 2019 was accompanied by the subsequent opening of a high-tech 33,000-square-foot Academy for Creative Media Building in November 2020, which has drawn [considerable coverage in the local news](#). Featuring classrooms, production suites, an industry-standard sound studio, a 100-seat theater, and an eSports arena, the facility is poised to serve as a hub for a thriving creative media major that already boasts [214 majors as of spring 2021](#) (CFR 3.5). UH West O‘ahu leadership is also optimistic about the latest addition to its baccalaureate degree portfolio – a BS in Cybersecurity that was approved in 2020 and carries great potential, both in terms of enrollment growth and in terms of helping address critical workforce needs for an evolving economy. Although the next three years will undoubtedly prove challenging from a fiscal perspective, UH West O‘ahu has been actively building the foundation that will enable it to thrive as a model of 21st-century educational resilience in the post-pandemic economy (CFR 4.7).



Component 8: Micro-Economy of the Leeward Coast

Campus and Community

As a public institution created to serve its immediate surrounding community, the University of Hawai‘i–West O‘ahu is deeply enmeshed within the micro-economy of Leeward O‘ahu, the State of Hawai‘i’s fastest-growing region and one that is home to communities that have often been historically under-represented in terms of access to higher education. Guided by the value proposition set forth in its [Strategic Action Plan, 2018-2028](#), the institution strives to “engage diverse communities to create a vibrant and just world” (CFR 1.4, 4.6). UH West O‘ahu lies in close proximity to some of the state’s largest and most diverse public high schools, including *the* very largest – [James Campbell High School](#). UH West O‘ahu is a major piece of the comprehensive transformation of O‘ahu’s ‘Ewa Plain, which in recent years has witnessed the establishment of the [Salvation Army’s Kroc Center Hawai‘i](#) in 2012, the opening of the [Ka Makana Ali‘i](#) mall in 2016, and the ongoing development of the 11,750 home, [master-planned community of Ho‘opili](#) just across the new Kualaka‘i Parkway. When construction of the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation (HART) project is complete, UH West O‘ahu will become even more closely integrated to O‘ahu’s population centers via a [dedicated rail station](#).

UH West O‘ahu’s student body, which *The Chronicle of Higher Education’s 2019 Almanac* identified as having the [fourth-highest level of ethnic and racial diversity](#) of 723 four-year public institutions measured, is a reflection of the unique cultural composition of the institution’s surrounding community. As defined and detailed in table 8.1 below, UH West O‘ahu’s immediate service area contains even larger percentages of Native Hawaiian, Asian, Latinx, foreign-born, and non-English-speaking residents than does the State of Hawai‘i as a whole. In fact, only 11.1% of surrounding residents identified themselves as “White alone” in the 2010 census (table 8.1). Furthermore, the service area is characterized by comparatively high numbers of people living in poverty (11.2%, per the 2010 census) and a significantly lower level of bachelor’s degree attainment (23.4%) than the general state population. Finally, data indicates that the state’s high cost of living weighs heavily on Hawai‘i’s families. A 2020 study conducted by Aloha United Way ([ALICE in Hawai‘i: A Financial Hardship Study](#), appendix 8.1) revealed that, as of 2018, in addition to the 9% of state residents living below the federal poverty level, 33% more fell into the category of Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE), meaning that 42% of island residents did not earn “enough to afford basic household necessities” in 2018, a condition that has undoubtedly worsened since the onset of the pandemic. UH West O‘ahu’s ability to provide an affordable and accessible college education is therefore thoroughly intertwined with the elimination of state equity gaps and the elevation of the institution’s surrounding community through the vehicle of higher education (CFR 1.4).

Table 8.1. Demographics of UH West O’ahu’s Service Area*

	Hawai'i State	Service Area*
Total population, Census, April 1, 2010	1,360,301	174,682
Race and Hispanic Origin		
White alone, percent	25.5%	11.1%
Black or African American alone, percent	2.2%	1.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent	0.4%	0.1%
Asian alone, percent	37.6%	43.0%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent	10.1%	14.5%
Two or More Races, percent	24.2%	29.7%
Hispanic or Latino, percent	10.7%	12.3%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent	21.7%	9.6%
Veterans, 2014-2018	105,563	14,557
Foreign born persons, 2014-2018, percent	18.3%	19.4%
2018, percent	26.1%	27.9%
Bachelor's degree or higher, persons age 25 years+, 2014-2018, percent	32.5%	23.4%
Persons in poverty, percent	9.3%	11.2%

*Service area includes Ewa Beach, Kapolei, Mililani Town, Pearl City, Wahiawa, Waianae, and Waipahu. Source: UH West O’ahu Institutional Research Office, US Census Bureau QuickFacts

Although UH West O’ahu is situated on plantation lands once held by the O’ahu Sugar Company, the institution seeks to honor and rejuvenate the rich precolonial history of the region that comprised the Native Hawaiian ahupua’a of Hono’uli’uli. The campus mission, as codified in its [Strategic Action Plan, 2018-2028](#) calls upon UH West O’ahu faculty, staff, and students to “embrace Native Hawaiian culture and traditions” while underscoring the importance of “service to the community.” UH West O’ahu’s sense of place as a Native Hawaiian-Serving Institution (NHSI) permeates the campus culture, whether it be in the traditional design of the Hawaiian Hale KulokuaHuokala tucked away inside the student mala (organic garden), which in turn resides next to a [niu \(coconut\) nursery](#), the chanting of the [Mele Hono’uli’uli](#) to mark the start of official campus events, or the rich colors of the [Ke Ala Hele Uholā O Honouliuli mural](#) inside of the Hawaiian-themed [Nāulu Center for Culture, Engagement, and Well-Being](#), which serves as a focal point for student life and fellowship (CFR 1.1).

Native Hawaiian Culture and Student Success

Through the support of key partners such as [Kamehameha Schools](#) and the U.S. Department of Education’s Title III Division, UH West O’ahu has continually developed programs that support Native Hawaiian student success while serving the needs of the campus community. Title III Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian (ANNH) grants strengthen the institution by supporting access, affordability, and academic success for Native Hawaiian students. UH West O’ahu’s leadership believes that the fruits of such awards benefit the entire student body, and oftentimes the surrounding community. One poignant example can be found in the Nāulu Center’s Outdoor Learning Space, whose construction was funded by the Title III Po’o ‘Ike Kino & ‘Ohana (PIKO) Project. Facing the campus’ massive Great Lawn, the space—completed in December 2020—can be used as a staging area for hula, Hawaiian ensemble, and other performing arts activities for both our students and audiences that include the larger Leeward O’ahu community (CFR 3.5).

Indeed, the institution has benefited immensely from the U.S. Department of Education’s ANNH Title III grant program, receiving four new multi-year awards in 2019:

- ▶ Ke Ala ‘Anu’u (The Path of Steps): a collaborative grant in partnership with Leeward Community College that supports Native Hawaiian student transfer into STEM majors and students’ long-term success in STEM-related career fields.
- ▶ Kelaka’a Ho’ona’auo (Education Delivered through Distance Education): a collaborative grant in partnership with Kaua’i Community College that expands educational opportunities available to Native Hawaiians residing on the island of Kaua’i by fostering their success in UH West O’ahu’s distance education programs.

- ▶ Ho'opūliko Kumu Hou Educational Pathway Project: a Hawaiian culture-based teacher preparation program that seeks to develop a new generation of K-12 teacher-leaders rooted in Hawaiian knowledge, values, and practices.
- ▶ He Poai Lolio (Innovative Learning Environment) and Workforce Development: a facilities-focused award funding the reconfiguration of campus spaces into more flexible learning environments.

In addition to fostering student success, these Title III awards address state workforce needs in the critical areas of STEM and teacher preparation, as UH West O'ahu strives to create 21st-century leaders informed by Native Hawaiian values and ways of knowing who possesses the capacity and motivation to serve their local community (CFR 1.2). This resonates with the value of [hana lawelawe \(service to the community\)](#) that forms one of the five pillars of the campus Strategic Action Plan.

Of particular importance is UH West O'ahu's deepening partnership with Kamehameha Schools, the state's largest landowner, which shares UH West O'ahu's objective of strengthening the community through the vehicle of education. Kamehameha Schools funds a variety of grant programs across the campus, leveraging its resources in ways that support Native Hawaiian access to higher education while addressing systemic issues within the surrounding community. For example, Kamehameha Schools has taken specific interest in UH West O'ahu's academic concentration in sustainable community food systems (SCFS), supporting both a faculty and an organic garden manager position (CFR3.1). It is worth noting that SCFS directly embodies UH West O'ahu's [pahuhopu \(institutional value\) of mālama 'āina \(caring for the land\)](#). In recent years, Kamehameha Schools has funded a number of early college and summer residential programs, allowing high school students to gain exposure to higher education while earning credits towards a college degree. In the spring 2021 semester, the Kamehameha Schools Community Investing (KSCI)-funded Hoakalei Scholars grant program featured a culture-based peer mentoring program and wrap-around support for senior practicum students preparing to enter the workforce (CFR 4.5).

Workforce Development and the Leeward Economy

UH West O'ahu's intentional focus on applied and experiential learning lies at the core of its commitment to community engagement. As articulated in the [UH System's 2017 Integrated Academic and Facilities Plan \(IAFP\)](#), UH West O'ahu is characterized by a "tight link" between "its regional service area and workforce demand through programs that embrace 21st-century innovation and provide needed technical and management skills," as the campus offers career-oriented academic pathways that include degrees in creative media and cybersecurity as well as concentrations in accounting, facilities management, healthcare administration, and health information management (CFR 2.2a). The UH System's [Hawai'i Career Explorer](#) tool has played a critical role in helping the institution align its academic planning with state workforce needs (CFR 2.1). Offering thousands of occupational profiles in an interactive dashboard, with real-time data on salary, educational attainment required, and job opening data in dozens of thematic career fields, [Career Explorer](#) enables the institution to anticipate changes in the job market and has therefore become an integral source of data for faculty and administrators working to develop new academic program proposals (CFR 4.7). Students can also use [Career Explorer](#) to research their job interests and plan their careers.

Much of the institution's recent success with academic programming has been sustained through grant awards and strategic collaboration with key industry partners, in an effort to ensure that UH West O'ahu graduates are capable of enriching the state's workforce. For example, support from the Office of Naval Research (ONR) enabled the creation of an on-campus [Cyber Security Coordination Center](#), which functions as a living-learning laboratory for students pursuing a degree in applied science (with a concentration in information and security assurance) or the new BS in cybersecurity (CFR 3.5). The institution has achieved formal designation as a National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense Education, while UH West O'ahu teams have twice captured the National Cyber League championship and finished 2020 [ranked 12th in the nation](#). Another recent ONR grant has allowed for the establishment of a [VETS \(Veterans Empowered Through STEM\) Center](#), where student veterans can either decompress and socialize or receive practical training in technologies such as 3-D printing (CFR 2.13). Community engagement rose to the fore in the spring of 2020, when UH West O'ahu's VETS Center served as the staging area for [student veterans to create personal protective equipment](#) in support of local hospitals.

One of UH West O‘ahu’s core community partners, and one that figures prominently in the realm of workforce development, is the [Kapolei Chamber of Commerce](#), whose president sits on the Chancellor’s Advisory Council just as Chancellor Benham serves on the Chamber’s Board of Directors. In recent years, UH West O‘ahu and the Chamber of Commerce have partnered together to stage the annual [Hire Leeward](#) job fair and the Campbell-Kapolei Student Career Expo. The latter initiative, now three years in the making, also involves collaboration with Kamehameha Schools and the Hawai‘i Department of Education (CFR 4.5, 4.6). The annual event, which is scheduled to coincide with the period when first-year high schoolers select a career academy, strives to educate students about viable career pathways by connecting them to local employers. The October 2019 iteration of the Career Expo witnessed 1,400 first-year students from James Campbell High School and Kapolei High School stream onto UH West O‘ahu’s campus to interact with more than 80 different employers. While the 2020 Career Expo was transformed into a virtual format, this partnership is poised to continue for years to come.

UH West O‘ahu consistently partners with local employers for the purpose of workforce development. The Hawai‘i Department of Education (HIDOE) presents yet another foundational partner for UH West O‘ahu, with 92% of recipients of the institution’s Bachelor of Education degree taking up employment at state public schools. Key HIDOE members also serve on UH West O‘ahu’s Teacher Education Advisory Council, which strives to foster the continuous improvement of the Division of Education’s BEd program (CFR 4.6). In addition to providing school settings and teacher-trainers for UH West O‘ahu’s BEd degree candidates to complete their student teaching assignments, the HIDOE has partnered with the institution on a number of community-focused initiatives. The most significant example consists of the provision of a \$317,000 grant award to address critical state shortfalls in special education by supporting students who wish to pursue a professional licensure pathway in that area (CFR 4.5). Indeed, partnerships between UH West O‘ahu and local industry abound, and, whether it be through [Student Accounting Night](#), the [Health Careers Meet & Greet](#) event, periodic [workshops with risk management and insurance professionals](#), or participation in the Academy for Creative Media’s [Master Class Series](#), the collegiate journey of a UH West O‘ahu student is typically defined by repeated exposure to industry professionals (CFR 2.12).

Service Learning

Service learning has taken on increased centrality since the inception of the UH West O‘ahu’s [Strategic Action Plan](#), with a mission that emphasizes “service to the community.” This is further captured within the [pahuho-pu \(institutional value\) of hana lawelawe](#), defined in the Strategic Action Plan in the following terms: “We value conscious service to the community that builds the capacity to offer one’s excellence for the benefit of others and the environment.” Students’ engagement in service learning also helps cultivate the ‘ōiwi leadership skills that form one of the institution’s three [hopena \(strategic outcomes\)](#). While the existence of an [institutional learning outcome](#) dedicated to community engagement predates UH West O‘ahu’s most recent strategic planning efforts, its value has been elevated in recent years (CFR 1.2). The Faculty Senate revised its charter to establish a Service Learning Subcommittee within the General Education Committee in 2018, at the same time it created a course designation in service learning (CFR 2.8, 3.10). Students who have completed a benchmark number of hours-of-service learning are now recognized at their commencement ceremony with the bestowal of a red stole. While the senior capstone experience provides UH West O‘ahu students with the opportunity to engage in a meaningful and protracted service learning experience, the majority of students avail themselves of such options much earlier in their college careers. Indeed, the data gathered from UH West O‘ahu’s 2020 administration of the [National Survey of Student Engagement \(NSSE\)](#) reveals that service learning was the most common HIP in which UH West O‘ahu seniors reported having participated. In fact, 71% of UH West O‘ahu’s first-year students reported having completed a service learning project, constituting a rating a full 19 percentage points higher than respondents from NSSE-defined peer institutions and public institutions of the same Carnegie classification and enrollment range. The category of service learning among first-year students was therefore identified in the [NSSE Snapshot Report](#) as the institution’s single highest performing item in the entire survey (CFR 2.8).

Conclusion

True to its mission, UH West O‘ahu creates 21st-century learners who are deeply committed to serving the larger community. With 65.5% of its new first-year students originating from the eight public high schools located in its immediate surrounding region, UH West O‘ahu is very much a local institution. Situated on the rapidly-growing ‘Ewa Plain, UH West O‘ahu exists both as a reflection of the economic and cultural transformation taking place in its region as well as an essential catalyst of that transformation by providing an accessible and affordable higher education to communities that have been historically under-resourced in that regard (CFR 1.2). Through intentional and tactical collaboration with local industry as well as mission-aligned institutions such as Kamehameha Schools, the Hawai‘i Department of Education, and the Kapolei Chamber of Commerce, UH West O‘ahu continues to develop career-focused degree programs that address critical workforce needs while equipping its students with skills needed to thrive in the economy of the 21st century (CFR 2.2a, 4.5). Furthermore, as a Native Hawaiian-Serving Institution, UH West O‘ahu works to preserve and perpetuate Native Hawaiian values in the service of generations to come.



Component 9: Conclusion: Reflection and Planning for Improvement

Pūpūkahi i Holomua (Unite to Move Forward)

It was only four years ago when UH West O‘ahu’s faculty, staff, and students embarked on an intensive strategic planning journey under Chancellor Maenette Benham’s theme of “Pūpūkahi i Holomua” (Unite to Move Forward), firmly grounded in a set of Native Hawaiian [pāhuhopu \(institutional values\)](#). Needless to say, none of the participants in that process could possibly have foreseen what the future portended for the institution, the surrounding community, or, indeed, the entire world over, following the onset of the coronavirus pandemic. However, the fruit of that labor, namely UH West O‘ahu’s [Strategic Action Plan, 2018-2028](#), continues to provide the institution with guidance, lighting a path forward through a vicious storm (CFR 1.1). Pandemic conditions have tested the resilience of our institution in countless ways, from the dangers of infection itself, to migration to emergency remote instruction, to concerns about the mental health of students, staff, and faculty, to the longer-term statewide financial reverberations arising from the massive contraction of Hawai‘i’s tourist economy. Nevertheless, UH West O‘ahu continues to thrive and serve its students, establishing record highs in enrollment (fall 2020) and graduates (AY 2019-2020) and closely approximating its highest fall-to-fall full time, first-time retention rate (CFR 1.2, 4.7). The institution also set a new benchmark for fall semester graduates, with 309 degrees awarded in fall 2020, despite grappling with the challenges of the pandemic.

There is much cause for optimism that UH West O‘ahu is positioned for continued success in a post-pandemic world that will clearly look much different from what the institution knew before. With 500 acres of real estate on O‘ahu’s ‘Ewa Plain—the state’s fastest-growing region—at its disposal and linkage to the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation (HART) rail system via a dedicated rail station set to launch in the fall of 2021, UH West O‘ahu possesses distinct geographic advantages. Recent capital improvement projects such as the additions of the Administration and Health Sciences Building (2018) and the Academy for Creative Media Building (2020) offer students the opportunity to benefit from state-of-the-art facilities (CFR 3.5). Similarly, innovative and forwarding-looking additions to the UH West O‘ahu’s degree portfolio—such as the BA in Creative Media (2019) and BS in Cybersecurity (2020)—will prepare students for success in the rapidly-evolving economy of the 21st century (CFR 2.8, 5.7). UH West O‘ahu is also characterized by a truly exceptional level of diversity, with *The Chronicle of Higher Education* identifying its faculty as having the [greatest racial and ethnic diversity](#) of any four-year institution of higher learning in the nation – public or private (CFR 1.4).

Distance learning is certain to figure prominently in the years ahead and UH West O‘ahu made enormous strides in building its DE capacity even before the onset of the pandemic, through the hiring of its first full-time distance education director (2018), the formal establishment of an [Office of Distance Learning](#) (2019), and the institution’s entrance into the [National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements](#) (2019). The creation of a [Distance Learning Faculty Guide](#) and [Distance Learning Tactical Plan](#) constitute additional landmarks on UH West O‘ahu’s path of maturation as a propagator of effective distance learning (CFR 3.2). The campus leadership has leveraged its CARES awards

to upgrade computer technology, retrofit classrooms for hybrid and HyFlex learning modalities, and provide a greater array of distance learning professional development opportunities for its instructors (CFR 3.5). Moving forward, the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs must collaborate with the Office of Distance Learning, the Faculty Senate, and the campus faculty as a whole to continue to refine its assessment and program review practices to more effectively evaluate and improve student learning in UH West O’ahu’s online courses and Distance Education programs (CFR 2.7). This task will only become more complex in the years ahead, as the advent of new technology increasingly blurs traditional lines of demarcation between onsite and distance learning.

Lessons from the Self-Study Process

UH West O’ahu submits this Institutional Report for Reaffirmation as the culminating project of a continuous process of evaluation and improvement that began as its accreditation was formally renewed by WSCUC in 2015. Many of the institution’s early achievements were highlighted in its [2018 Interim Report](#) and commended by the [WSCUC Interim Report Panel](#) in 2019. These include progress with faculty governance, program review, and faculty mentoring, and a comprehensive strategic planning process that featured a “high level of energy” and “envisioned a direction for the future.” Direct preparation for the Institutional Report for Reaffirmation (IRR) commenced with the formation of a WSCUC Steering Committee and a self-assessment of institutional performance measured against WSCUC Standards and Criteria for Review in 2019, followed by the establishment of IRR component work groups and, subsequently, a core IRR drafting and support team in 2020. The dissemination of a full draft report to the campus community on April 1, 2021, coupled with opportunities to provide feedback, either via an [anonymous survey](#) or by attendance at any one of eight question-and-answer sessions facilitated by the IRR team during the month of April, ensured far-reaching participation in this mission-critical initiative (CFR 3.6, 4.5).

The timing of this self-study, coinciding with the larger public health and fiscal crises, has afforded UH West O’ahu a valuable opportunity for self-reflection as it stands at a critical juncture in its institutional journey. How will UH West O’ahu address the fiscal challenges precipitated by the statewide financial crisis? How will the institution strike an appropriate balance between onsite and distance learning experiences in the midst of rapidly evolving technologies and learning styles? How will UH West O’ahu continue to evolve its processes and practices to prepare its graduates for an unpredictable 21st-century economy? While solutions to these challenges lie beyond the scope of the Institutional Report, the introspection generated by this study has certainly uncovered specific areas of improvement, not limited to the following:

- ▶ Particularly in the wake of an impending reduction in its General Fund allocation from the State of Hawai’i, UH West O’ahu must develop a new business model that enables it to adapt to decreasing financial support from the state while maintaining its commitment to academic excellence (CFR 1.7).
- ▶ Although federal stimulus and relief funding has provided critical short-term support to address pandemic-related expenses, the campus administration must find ways to institutionalize equipment and services (e.g., information technology and professional development) that will continue to play a central role in the delivery of classes in hybrid and HyFlex formats (CFR 1.5).
- ▶ As universities across the nation plan ahead for the predicted contraction of the pool of high school graduates circa 2026, UH West O’ahu should strive to position itself better to target and serve the needs of nontraditional students and, in particular, the large population of working adults who have completed some college coursework without earning a degree. This might entail digital badging and/or micro-credentialing and might also feature the targeted marketing and expansion of select distance education programs to out-of-state students, now that the institution has joined NC-SARA. At the same time, in order to live into its designation as a growth campus within the UH System, the institution must intensify its recruitment of traditional students, particularly given that the [number of first-time students from Hawai’i high schools](#) matriculating at UH West O’ahu declined substantially between fall 2017 and fall 2019, before recovering slightly last year (CFR 4.7).
- ▶ UH West O’ahu must continue to refine and organize its assessment practices and structures, which—while demonstrating evidence of long-term improvement—have suffered from continued turnover of assessment support staff and, more recently, the challenges of the pandemic. Similarly, while the campus program review

process has improved through the establishment of a dedicated Faculty Senate standing committee, the implementation of a new [Program Review Handbook](#) outlining a more rigorous evaluation process, and the creation of a user-friendly [Program Review website](#) (note: UH login required), the institution must work to more clearly delineate its reviews of Distance Education programs while moving towards review at the program rather than divisional level, particularly now that there are academic divisions housing multiple degree programs (CFR 2.7).

- ▶ As the [Pueo Stewardship Work Groups](#) continue to develop solutions to current fiscal challenges and formulate official sets of recommendations, the campus leadership team will need to determine how to redirect its limited resources so as to invest in opportunities that will best enable UH West O‘ahu to develop a post-pandemic business model that will allow the institution to continue to flourish in the years and decades ahead (CFR 1.7, 3.6, 3.10).

UH West O‘ahu exists as an outgrowth of the community that surrounds and sustains it, a Native Hawaiian-Serving Institution with tremendous potential and room for growth. After spending its first 36 years in an assortment of temporary facilities, UH West O‘ahu found a permanent home on the fertile ‘Ewa plains in 2012 (CFR 3.5). It has come so far so fast in its institutional maturation in the nine years since and failure is not an option. Much like its landmark library tower, UH West O‘ahu stands out as a beacon of hope to the ethnically and socioeconomically diverse communities of Leeward O‘ahu, playing a vital role in providing an affordable, accessible, and high-quality college education to local residents. At the same time, UH West O‘ahu functions as a guardian and propagator of indigenous knowledge, and Native Hawaiian ways of knowing in particular (CFR 1.1). Lands whose purpose in the century prior was to provide sugar to far flung communities beyond the Pacific region now exist to nourish the hearts and minds of local residents, and, as stated in UH West O‘ahu’s [value proposition](#), to “prepare 21st-century leaders... [who] engage diverse communities to create a vibrant and just world!”

List of Appendices

**These appendices are available for viewing by the WSCUC Visit Team members in the Box platform.*

Component 1

- 1.1 [University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu Strategic Action Plan, 2018-2020](#)
- 1.2 [Colleges with the Greatest Racial and Ethnic Diversity Among Faculty Members, Fall 2020 \(CHE 2020 Almanac\)](#)
- 1.3 [Academic Affairs Reorganization Plan, January 2019](#)
- 1.4 [Chancellor's Office Reorganization Plan, September 2018](#)
- 1.5 [WSCUC Notice of Concern, July 2012](#)
- 1.6 [WSCUC Commission Action Letter, March 2015](#)
- 1.7 [2018 Interim Report](#)
- 1.8 [WSCUC Interim/Progress Report Action Summary](#)

Component 2

- 2.1 [WSCUC Standards and Compliance with Federal Requirements Worksheet*](#)
- 2.2 [Hope Center Basic Needs Insecurity During the Ongoing Pandemic: Report for UH West O'ahu](#)

Component 3

- 3.1 [UH West O'ahu General Catalog, 2021-2022](#)
- 3.2 [NSSE 2020 Snapshot Report](#)

Component 5

- 5.1 [The Third Decade: Findings and Recommendations for 2030 by GUILD Consulting](#)
- 5.2 [UH West O'ahu Peer Institution Revision 2019](#)
- 5.3 [High School Background of First-Time Students, Fall 2020](#)
- 5.4 [2020 NSSE Results: Selected Student Survey Satisfaction Items by Degree*](#)
- 5.5 [NSSE 2020 Engagement Indicators Report](#)
- 5.6 [NSSE 2020 High-Impact Practices Report](#)

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List of Acronyms

AAC&U	American Association of Colleges and Universities
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AGR	Absolute Graduation Rate
ALICE	Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed
ALO	Accreditation Liaison Officer
ANNH	Alaska Native and Native Hawaiians
ARPA	American Rescue Plan Act
ATP	Authorization to Plan
AY	Academic Year
BOR	Board of Regents
CAE - CDE	Center of Academic Excellence - Cyber Defense Education
CAEP	Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation
CARES	Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act
CCAO	Council of Chief Academic Officers
CES	Course Evaluation System
CLEAR	Center for Labor Education and Research
CLO	Concentration Learning Outcome
CRF	Coronavirus Relief Fund
CSCC	Cybersecurity Coordination Center
CSO	Chartered Student Organization
CTLE	Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence
DE	Distance Education
DLO	Degree Learning Outcome
DQP	Degree Qualifications Profile
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
FW	Foundational Writing
FY	Fiscal Year
GELO	General Education Learning Outcome
HART	Honolulu Area Rapid Transportation
HEERF	Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund
HGI	Hawai'i Graduation Initiative
HIDOE	Hawai'i Department of Education
HIP	High Impact Practice
HVAC	Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning
IAFP	(UH System) Integrated Academic and Facilities Plan
IEEI	Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators
IES	Institute for Engaged Scholarship
ILO	Institutional Learning Outcomes
IPEDS	Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System
IRAPO	(UH System) Institutional Research, Analysis and Planning Office
IRO	Institutional Research Office
IRR	Institutional Report for Reaffirmation
KSCI	Kamehameha Schools Community Investing
KSCM	Kuali Student Curriculum Management System
MCR	Mid-Cycle Review
MHC	Mental Health Center
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement

MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSI	Minority-Serving Institution
NC-SARA	National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements
NHSI	Native Hawaiian-Serving Institution
NILOA	National Institute of Learning Outcomes Assessment
NSSE	National Survey for Student Engagement
ODL	Office of Distance Learning
OLC	Online Learning Consortium
ONR	Office of Naval Research
OVCAA	Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
OVCSA	Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
PIKO	Po'o 'Ike Kino & 'Ohana
PLA	Prior Learning Assessment
PRC	Program Review Committee
QR	Quantitative Reasoning
RISC	Revealing Institutional Strengths and Challenges
RISO	Registered Independent Student Organization
SALT	Student Affairs Leadership Team
SAP	Strategic Action Plan
SCFS	Sustainable Community Food Systems
SD	Student Development
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
UBO	(UH System) University Budget Office
UH	University of Hawai'i
UHCC	University of Hawai'i Community College
VCAA	Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
VCSA	Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
VETS	Veterans Empowered through STEM
VPAS	Vice President for Academic Strategy
WCET	WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technology
WI	Writing Intensive
WICHE	Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

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