

# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI‘I-WEST O‘AHU



## DISTANCE LEARNING

## TACTICAL PLAN 2019-2025

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## PURPOSE FOR A TACTICAL PLAN FOR DISTANCE LEARNING

With the advent of new web technologies that make online education more accessible, flexible, and rewarding, Distance Education (DE) has developed into an expansive field that has changed the scope, depth, and delivery of teaching and learning. New modes of delivery, learning domains, principles and values, processes and outcomes, and roles, responsibilities, and entities are continually transforming as DE enters and occupies new spaces to house new learners (Bozjurt et al, 2015). As emerging technologies appear, DE encourages for many educational entities the building of additional bridges that span gaps between teachers, their learners, and instructional resources. No longer is education restricted to the four walls of the classroom or hampered by the distance between the learner's home and proximity of school. Advanced sophisticated communications now allows teachers in one location to virtually explore with their learners—no matter where they are—other communities across the world and the knowledge held within (Simonson, Schlosser, & Orellana, 2011). As of 2015, more than six million learners in the United States are enrolled in distance education with more than one in four taking at least one DE course per semester (Allen & Seaman, 2017).

As UH West O‘ahu strives in the next decade to fulfill three major outcomes—becoming a leader of innovation and transformation, ‘ōiwi leadership, and sustainability—DE will remain at the forefront of this institution’s expanding services ([UH West O‘ahu Strategic Action Plan, 2018](#)). In an accreditation report conducted on behalf of the Western Association of schools and Colleges, Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC, 2015), some 34% (630) of full-time students at UHWO were enrolled in DE programs. Moreover, the largest growth in student population—26% as compared to 12% for onsite programs—at UHWO during the years 2013 to 2015 occurred in DE. In fact, UHWO’s Institutional Research Office reported that from 2013 to 2018, the total number of DE classes increased from 99 in 2013 to 243 in 2018, a growth of 45%. The student headcount in purely online courses has also risen 27.7% and the total DE semester hours taken by students, whether full or part time, has also increased by 52.1% during this same period. UH West O‘ahu is not only reaching more students across the state through Distance Education but also bringing quality education to those in the remotest parts of the state where the physical distance of going to school makes higher education out of reach.

To ensure the continued advancement of DE—technologically, systematically, and innovatively—UH West O‘ahu needs to invest in a plan of action that would steer the future of this valued work. Some of the WSCUC report (2015) recommendations advocate for:

- Enhanced content training for faculty around pedagogy, use of technology, and assessing student achievement.
- Expansion of the Blackboard platform to subsume new technology.
- Increased oversight for DE programs—standards based curriculum, course embedded assessment, governance (policies and procedures) over the monitoring of quality, operational infrastructure, and other areas.
- Development and implementation of a comprehensive strategic plan—in this case, because UHWO already has a Strategic Action Plan in place, the Office of Distance Learning will develop a shorter-termed tactical plan that is aligned with this institution’s overarching Strategic Action Plan.

The latter—developing and implementing a comprehensive tactical plan—is the premise for this document. Although UH West O‘ahu has continued to magnify its DE services through increasing numbers of Hybrid classes that offer in-person and online contact, HITS (UH system of mix site classrooms) classes, and Interactive Video Conferencing that allows whiteboard content to be broadcasted to multiple classrooms, and interactive video that is pre-recorded or transmitted synchronously via the internet, a master plan that carefully examines the strengths, opportunities, barriers, and future outcomes can provide the needed compass to chart a strong future for Distance Education on this campus. In addition, increasing student support services, particularly tutoring, library access, and advising, requires strategic thinking in order to match the increase in online learners. Finally, such a tactical plan will help the Office of Distance Learning move forward in ways that are aligned with the overall strategic direction of UHWO.

The [2018-2028 Strategic Action Plan for the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu](#) was developed under the guidance of Chancellor Maenette Benham through an open, collaborative and collective process. The Strategic Initiative of the Office of Distance Learning aligns with the value proposition, mission, vision and values of UH West O'ahu, and the three Impact Strategies of the UH West O'ahu 2018-2028 Strategic Action Plan.

#### **UH WEST O'AHU'S 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!

#### **UH WEST O'AHU 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.

#### **UH WEST O'AHU 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.

## UH WEST O'AHU VALUES

Shared values are the commitments made by the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu community regarding how work will be conducted. Our values at UH West O'ahu include:

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### PO'OKELA

We value excellence in education to meet the high aspirations of students, faculty and staff, and the needs of the community.

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### WAIWAI

We value abundance/wealth that develops a culture of philanthropy and sustainable use of resources through the cultivation of quality relationships, creativity, exploration, and transdisciplinary learning.

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### MĀLAMA 'ĀINA

We value environmental responsibility that links our love and care of land, water and people.

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### KAIĀULU

We value viable, healthy communities where everyone feels included, welcomed and respected.

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### HANA LAWELAWE

We value conscious services to community that builds the capacity to offer one's excellence for the benefit of others and the environment.

## UH WEST O'AHU IMPACT STRATEGIES

### IMPACT STRATEGY 1: INCREASE STUDENT SUCCESS AND ENGAGEMENT

We will foster a learning environment that ensures our students persist through graduation and develop promising career paths. By creating a welcoming and culturally-responsive academic home, we will help our students engage the surrounding community.

### IMPACT STRATEGY 2: ADVANCING DYNAMIC AND INTEGRATED LEARNING EXPERIENCES

We will offer a distinct educational experience that is student-focused, innovative, transdisciplinary, and engages the community. We will build upon our strong academic programs that address the needs of all students, whether first-generation, transfer, non-traditional, or recent high school graduates.

### IMPACT STRATEGY 3: STRENGTHENING OUR ASSETS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

As the fastest growing public baccalaureate university in the nation, we are strengthening our assets and infrastructure to meet the rising demand. We will optimize and expand our resources by designing a culture of prosperity, advancing our state-of-the-art environment, and fostering campus and community relationships.

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OFFICE OF DISTANCE LEARNING OVERVIEW

**FACULTY GOVERNANCE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION**

UH West O‘ahu’s Faculty Senate established a standing Distance Education Committee in May 2011, invested with the authority to review policies related to distance learning, including the “evaluation and assessment of online courses”. The Committee reports regularly to the Faculty Senate, disseminating the information on these projects to the wider faculty body so that they may share it with students enrolled in their online classes as well.

In May 2015, the UH West O‘ahu Faculty Senate revised its Charter to clarify the respective missions of the Curriculum Committee and Distance Education Committee and to provide additional oversight for courses delivered through distance modalities. The new charter language specifies that, “Faculty members seeking [approval for] Distance Education modalities must submit a separate application to the Distance Education Committee.” The Distance Education Committee subsequently established a rigorous course approval process requiring faculty to explicitly demonstrate that the proposed courses meet requirements for minimum contact hours and provide interaction both among students and between students and faculty. As with in-person courses, homework, class assignments, and research or other outside work independent of the course do not count toward contact hours. This enables faculty to clearly delineate the amount of time they plan to spend interacting with the students in the courses, as well as how to structure successful peer-to-peer engagement in order to further meet student learning outcomes.

In January 2019, in consultation with the Director of Distance Education, the Distance Education committee established a review process for proposals for new Distance Education degree concentrations and certificate programs. Proposed new Distance Education programs must provide a program sheet and academic map identifying the sequencing of core and elective courses offered through distance modes of delivery for the program.

## THE OFFICE OF DISTANCE LEARNING

The Office of Distance Learning was established in 2015, staffed by a half-time Distance Education Coordinator and a full-time Instructional Designer. In August 2018, the part-time Distance Education Coordinator position was replaced with a full-time, tenure-track, faculty specialist position serving as the Director of Distance Education. In the 2018 reorganization of the Academic Affairs unit of UH West O‘ahu, the Office of Distance Learning was formally identified as an entity under Academic Support which has oversight by the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. The Office of Distance Learning maintains a [website](#) with information regarding Online Education at UH West O‘ahu, as well as information for current students and for faculty and staff. The website includes a LibChat feature that provides access to immediate assistance to faculty and students during business hours of 8:00 am to 4:00 pm on weekdays.

The University of Hawai‘i System includes three four-year institutions of which two are located on O‘ahu (University of Hawai‘i at Manoa and University of Hawai‘i – West O‘ahu) and the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo, located on Hawai‘i Island. There are seven UH Community Colleges serving the islands of O‘ahu, Hawai‘i Island, Kaua‘i and the Maui Complex (Maui, Moloka‘i and Lana‘i). Aside from UH Hilo, the opportunity for neighbor island residents to pursue higher education from their home island beyond an Associate degree is limited. Distance education programs are the only option for students to continue their pursuit of higher education, without having to relocate.

The Office of Distance Learning partners with University Centers at [Kaua‘i Community College](#), [UH Maui College](#) and the [Pāalamanui campus](#) of [Hawai‘i Community College](#) for local support services such as proctoring of exams and facilitating of communication among campuses. UH West O‘ahu also works with UH Maui College Education Centers in Hana, Lahaina, Lana‘i and Moloka‘i, Hawai‘i Community College’s North Hawai‘i Education and Research Center and Leeward Community College’s Wai‘anae Moku education center.

### OFFICE OF DISTANCE LEARNING MISSION

The Office of Distance Learning (ODL) supports students, faculty, lecturers, staff and administrators as they pursue excellence in online teaching and learning through course and



program development, evidence-based best practices in inclusive and culturally responsive online pedagogy.

#### OFFICE OF DISTANCE LEARNING OUTCOME

Students will be able to meet their educational goals by accessing engaging technology-mediated instruction in online, hybrid, and livestream courses offered through Interactive Video (ITV), as well as web-enhanced face-to-face courses. Faculty are provided services, mentoring, and instructional design support needed to assist them with the development, design, evaluation of new and existing distance learning courses using evidence-based best practices in online pedagogy.

#### DISTANCE EDUCATION AT UH WEST O‘AHU

The capitalized term “Distance Education” is used to designate programs at UH West O‘ahu possessing WSCUC approval and students majoring in those programs. Distance Education (DE) students refer to students who reside on the neighbor islands who are officially enrolled in Distance Education programs. The vast majority of UH West O‘ahu students take courses through distance modes of delivery. The term “online learner” is used in reference to all UH West O‘ahu students who take some or all of their courses online in any given semester. The term “distance learning” is used when referencing distance education in a generalized manner that encompasses both Distance Education students and online learners.

UH West Oahu currently offers 8 baccalaureate degrees. Three degrees were originally approved for Distance Education by WSCUC in 1981. In 2019, a new Bachelor of Arts in Creative Media was the fourth degree approved for Distance Education. Within degree programs, several concentrations are available for students to focus their degree in a particular field. Among the degrees approved for Distance Education (Business Administration, Public Administration and Social Sciences) there are twelve concentrations offered through Distance Education. The BA in Creative Media includes four concentrations offered through Distance Education that are currently in development.

At the time of initial WSCUC approval, UHWO served transfer students from community colleges, and offered upper division courses for the third and fourth year classes for a baccalaureate degree. In 2007, UH West O‘ahu began offering lower division courses and admitting first-year students. In 2012, UHWO established a permanent campus site in

Kapolei, and began offering four-year programs. However, Distance Education programs have maintained the upper division, third and fourth year model. Therefore, after completing lower-division coursework at a UH Community College or UH Maui College, students may apply to complete the upper-division coursework of select programs fully online as Distance Education students.

UH West O‘ahu’s approach to online learning currently focuses on Hawai‘i residents, particularly the underserved populations of Hawai‘i’s neighbor islands. As of Fall 2018 301 neighbor island students (or 10.4% of the student body) were enrolled in officially designated Distance Education programs at UH West O‘ahu. The capitalized term “Distance Education” is used to designate programs possessing WSCUC approval and students majoring in those programs. The terminology “online learning” refers to the larger group of courses delivered through synchronous and asynchronous distance modes of delivery.

Online learning impacts the vast majority of students at UHWO, regardless of geographical location within the state of Hawai‘i. In Fall 2018, distance modes of course delivery, including Interactive Television (ITV), Fully Online, and Hybrid courses accounted for 52.1% of the Student Semester Hours at UHWO, with 79.1% of all students taking at least one distance learning course. Of the 529 courses offered during Fall 2018, 45.9% were offered through distance modalities. Of the 3,128 students, 37.7% were enrolled exclusively in courses offered through distance modes of delivery.

Although there are often O‘ahu residents who are enrolled entirely in online courses in a given semester, neighbor island Distance Education students receive priority registration privileges for courses that are part of WSCUC approved Distance Education programs. Additionally, since UH West O‘ahu is not a member of the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA), the institution is not authorized to admit out-of-state residents into its Distance Education programs. Furthermore, UH West O‘ahu does not offer fully online programs. Therefore, most lower division courses and courses meeting General Education requirements are not offered through distance modes of delivery.

#### **UH WEST O‘AHU DISTANCE EDUCATION DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES**

UH West O‘ahu currently permits Distance Education students to complete any of 16 concentrations that exist under four Bachelor of Arts (BA) degrees:

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- ◆ BA in Business Administration with concentrations in
  - Accounting
  - General Business Administration
  - Hospitality and Tourism
  - Marketing
- ◆ BA in Public Administration with concentrations in
  - Community Health
  - Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management
  - General Public Administration
  - Healthcare Administration
  - Justice Administration
- ◆ BA in Social Sciences with concentrations in
  - Early Childhood Education
  - Political Science
  - Psychology
- ◆ BA in Creative Media with concentrations in development: (in development)
  - General Creative Media
  - Design and Media
  - Video Game Design and Development
  - Communications and New Media

Additionally, four certificate programs are also offered through Distance Education, including:

- ◆ Certificate in Substance Abuse and Addictions Studies
- ◆ Certificate in Risk Management and Insurance
- ◆ Certificate in Healthcare Administration
- ◆ Certificate in Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management

## **DISTANCE LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES**

The Office of Distance Learning collaborates with Student Affairs to ensure Distance Education students have an equitable, authentic and engaging experience as UH West O‘ahu students, regardless of their geographical location. In Fall 2018 semester and Spring 2019 semester, a UH West O‘ahu team comprised of the Director of Student Life, Career Services Coordinator, two Academic Advisors and the Director of Distance Education held Pueo Connect events on the campuses of UH Maui College, Hawai‘i Community College - Pālamānuī, and Kaua‘i Community College in collaboration with the University Centers. The intent of the Pueo Connect events is to build community and strengthened sense of connection for DE students’ UH West O‘ahu identity, and opportunities for in-person access and demonstrations of how DE students can engage with campus services through technology such as video conferencing, online tutoring and LibChats.

The No‘eau Center plays a vital role in the campus’ Distance Education program by providing online versions of the on-campus support services. Under the direction of the Center’s full-time Online Services Specialist, peer tutoring is available through platforms that include video conferencing, instant messaging, and telephone support. For students unable to complete these synchronous sessions, an online submission form enables asynchronous peer feedback within two to three business days. During the 2018-19 academic year, Center tutors conducted 1,109 tutoring sessions via these distance modalities. The success of these services is a result of active partnerships between Center staff and instructional faculty. The No‘eau Center also offers online workshops via video conferencing aimed towards student success, with topics such as study tips, time management skills, citation styles, and scholarly writing and research. These online workshop, available to online and on-campus students alike, generated 496 live and recorded views during the 2018-19 academic year. No‘eau also maintains a visible online presence through social media via Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, running social media campaigns through these platforms that promote Native Hawaiian epistemology and help cultivate a sense of place among UH West O‘ahu students.

#### ONLINE TEACHING SUPPORT FOR FACULTY

UH West O‘ahu’s Office of Distance Learning (ODL) provides instructors with essential wrap-around services in a rather similar fashion to the way the No‘eau Center supports distance learners. In collaboration with the Office of Professional Development and Academic Support (OPDAS), between August 2018 and April 2019, the Office of Distance Learning offered 34 professional development workshops for faculty on 10 different topics. Thirty of the 34 workshops were offered through a combination of in-person and virtual synchronous live stream modes of delivery using video conferencing. The flexible modes of delivery provided convenient opportunities for faculty, staff and lecturers to participate in the workshops regardless of their geographical location.

In addition to workshops, the Office of Distance Learning provides faculty with individualized support with instructional design and effective course management through Lulima. Faculty also can complete asynchronous modules to earn a Lulima Certificate, and instructional video tutorials for assistance with various learning technology.

The Office of Distance Learning is located in room B-222 in the James and Abigail Campbell Library. In the ODL, there are two faculty workstations available for faculty to work on course materials, and curriculum proposals with assistance from the ODL staff.

#### TECHNOLOGICAL CAPACITY

The Office of Distance Learning works collaboratively with the Information Technology (IT) Department to ensure that students, faculty, lecturers and staff have access to technical support. The IT department provides drop-in support during regular business hours at the IT Support Desk located in the James and Abigail Campbell Library. Additionally, DE students can access IT support through live chat, email and phone.

During onboarding, new faculty are issued a computer, either PC or Mac, depending on faculty preference. Additional accessories are available on loan to faculty, including webcams, microphones, speakers, voice recorders, and web conferencing cameras for faculty use in designing course materials. The Office of Distance Learning provides support with training on the use of educational technology tools and accessories.

The entire campus community has access to Google Apps for Education through their UH account. Additionally, there is campus-wide access to Office 365. Faculty and lecturers have access to video editing software and screencasting software through site licenses for Camtasia and Snagit. Adobe Acrobat Pro is available through a UH system-wide site license for faculty to create and edit PDF files. The IT department has a dedicated team of specialists who assist with remediation of digital documents, particularly PDFs to ensure that all documents and websites are accessible. The ODL and IT departments partner in delivering training for the campus community on creating accessible digital content.

The UH System uses Lulima, a version of Sakai, as the official learning management system (LMS). Every course record number (CRN), for any mode of course delivery, is automatically assigned a Lulima site when the CRN is created. The UH System Information Technology Services provides 24/7 technical support for Lulima via phone and email for students, faculty and lecturers. Self-guided help resources are accessible from every site in Lulima as well. The Office of Distance Learning provides ongoing training and workshops for faculty and lecturers in the use of Lulima tools.

### **ASSESSMENT OF DISTANCE EDUCATION**

The UH System uses CES for student evaluations of courses at the end of each term. Distance Education courses are evaluated in the same manner as face-to-face courses for student evaluations. In accordance with the UH West O'ahu Assessment Handbook 2018, the process of assessment at the institutional level and program level are consistent across modes of course delivery. The Office of Assessment, working with the Assessment Coordinators, to develop curriculum maps that guide the assessment of institutional and program learning outcomes. Student artifacts are solicited from faculty teaching in all modes of delivery in order to disaggregate and compare student learning outcomes between face-to-face and distance delivery.

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## STRATEGIC SCAN

### THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

As online education programs are maturing, additional fields of study are emerging and gaining interest. For example, while Business Administration continues to be the most sought after undergraduate field of study for online education, areas such as Computer and Information Technology, and STEM fields are gaining in interest and popularity as more online programs are emerging across the nation and globally.

Online students are bypassing the on-ground classroom for added convenience. Nearly 60% of online college students who had a choice between online and on-ground actively chose online learning. Online students are seeking opportunities to take year-round courses, and accelerated courses. Transfer policies and opportunities to earn credit for prior learning and experience ease time to degree completion. Z-degree or open degrees are providing access to higher education while eliminating the added financial burden of the cost of textbooks through the adoption of Open Educational Resources (OER) and Textbook-Cost-Zero initiatives.

While Distance Education students appreciate the flexibility of pursuing higher education through mobile learning technologies that provide freedom from geographical and sometimes time constraints, fifty-seven percent of past and current online students report that interactions with classmates are very important to their academic success (Harris & Martin, 2012). In addition, research indicates a dramatic alteration in pedagogy. Knowledge is no longer limited to a small number of experts, professors and books; information is being conceptualized as moving from static locations to dynamic interconnections. “Connected learning” is becoming a new paradigm. The hybrid or “Flipped” classroom, providing improved individual attention and more immediate feedback, has become a favorable learning environment. There is also an evolving shift in the analytics-based approach to education, with a focus on measuring mastery, comprehension, and demonstration as the proper objective of instruction.

Faculty and administrators of higher education need to keep pace with these technological, generational and pedagogical shifts. Faculty are being required to shift their instructional strategies and are seeking professional development opportunities to keep up with digital learning technologies. In a similar vein, despite the ubiquitous infusion of technology into

social and communication aspects of today's society, students are often unprepared to succeed in the changing environment where technologies are incorporated into the realm of academics.

## THE INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

The University of Hawai'i System [Executive Policy 5.204](#), Distance and Online Learning states that, "the primary purpose of distance learning at UH is to provide increased access to post-secondary education to the residents of the State of Hawai'i," (E.P 5.204, section I, p.2). With the rapid advancement of digital and mobile technologies, the availability of learning technologies has significantly advanced since UHWO was first approved to offer degrees through distance education. Online education is a powerful and flexible enabler of distance learning by transcending geographical barriers as well as serving students who need to take some combination of online courses, campus-based courses and hybrid courses.

The [2018-2028 Strategic Action Plan of the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu](#) calls for the development of an operational plan to implement academic programming that responds to community needs (Strategic Tactic 2.6, Years 1-2). A major facet of this planning process will be to address the long-standing need to more effectively strategize the organization and delivery of online learning. This process will include the Director of Distance Education, the Director of Information Technology, and the Director of Enrollment Services, as well as the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. Their work crosses over into Strategic Tactic 2.2 (High Impact, Transdisciplinary Signature Programs) and 3.3 (Technology) of the new UH West O'ahu Strategic Action Plan as the campus strives to develop innovative technological approaches to engage and develop 21st-Century learner-leaders. The operational plan that emerges from these discussions will include appropriate metrics such as increased retention rates and graduation rates for students enrolled in Distance Education programs and eliminating any identifiable achievement gaps, including those measured through assessment of learning outcomes. Since UH West O'ahu does not aspire to expand distance learning beyond the current ratios, the campus will not measure success in terms of the quantity or percentage of courses delivered through distance modalities. Instead, the primary objective will be to ensure that students enrolled in online courses receive an effective and authentic colleges experience as measured by persistence, graduation rates of students enrolled in DE programs.



Review of information regarding distance learning at UH West O‘ahu has been collected from multiple sources including institutional data, input from the UH University Centers, and input from a variety of stakeholders in both the Academic Affairs and Student Affairs units of UH West O‘ahu. During the Spring semester of 2019, the Office of Distance Learning held 10 focus groups for faculty, staff and students both in person and through video conferencing. Student focus groups were held in-person on the UH West O‘ahu campus, as well as in-person focus groups on Kaua‘i, Maui and in Kona on Hawai‘i Island. Analysis of the data from the focus groups was used to inform the assessment of the status of Distance Education at the UH West O‘ahu suggest the following:

- Students of all demographics are requesting quality distance education offerings for degrees, credits, and/or certification.
- Top tier higher education institutions are offering increasing numbers of online courses and collectively, UH must continue to compete in the market.
- State legislators, the UH Board of Regents, the State of Hawai‘i and UH strategic initiatives seeks to reduce the cost of higher education.
- Educational standards are moving toward demonstration of knowledge and mastery-based learning, which will require increased amounts of student assessment data.
- UH West O‘ahu wants to continue to increase its overall student base in numbers while strengthening academic quality.

While the inception of the Office of Distance Learning is relatively recent, the following successes have already been marked:

- A new concentration in Community Health has been added to the Distance Education program offerings for the BA degree in Public Administration. A new Bachelor of Arts degree in Creative Media has been approved for distance mode of delivery.
- Fifty-three faculty, staff and lecturers completed at least one Online Teaching professional development workshops during the Fall 2018 semester. Seventeen of the

53 completed three or more workshops as well as follow-up activities to earn a professional development certificate in Online Teaching.

- Eleven faculty members also completed a 12-hour professional development institute on Open Educational Resources (OER) offered in May 2019.

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## SWOT DETAILS

### STRENGTHS

- Three well-established degree programs offering the upper division components of 12 concentrations via Distance Education programs.
- Large percentage of courses offered through distance modes of delivery resulting in 76% of UHWO students taking at least one online course.
- Faculty governance process for approval on new online courses and new Distance Education programs.
- National recognition of being recognized among [Online Colleges in Hawai'i](#) (Health Care Administration, Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management).

### WEAKNESSES

- DE programs aligned with current workforce needs, particularly in STEM fields.
- DE student engagement and sense of belonging.
- Distance Education graduation rate lower than graduation rates for all transfer students.
- Data analysis system that accurately tracks Distance Education students and online learners.

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- Need the Office of Distance Learning to become self-sustaining.
- Inability to serve Distance Education students outside of the State of Hawai'i.

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Talents and intellectual property of our faculty that we harness to deliver learning through different media.
- New pathways to emerging degrees and certificate programs that facilitate career creators.
- Online learning that helps Early College students better prepare for life as 21st Century learners and leaders.
- Becoming an innovation leader in Online Learning and Digital Learning Technology.
- Increase sustainability of Distance Education program and UHWO.

### THREATS

- Competition from online universities extending distance learning opportunities as a new source of revenue.
- Competition from other educational institutions offering alternative pathways for workforce development such as badging, micro-credentialing, stackable certificates, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) for Continuing Education Units (CEUs)
- Balancing priorities and interests of on-campus students while serving the needs of Distance Education students.

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## PLAN FOR GROWTH

The growth of UHWO distance learning initiatives is important. Equally important is that we grow responsibly and with the highest regard to quality. The immediate priority is to strengthen policies and procedures to support Distance Education programs offered to students across the state of Hawai‘i. Among the priorities is to obtain membership in the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) to strategically plan to serve students outside of the state of Hawai‘i. The priority and immediate, short-term need being the ability to continue to serve UH West O‘ahu students who relocate to another state, and wish to complete their degree requirements at UH West O‘ahu.

## CURRENT ENROLLMENT IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

In Fall 2018 37% of UH West O‘ahu students took all of their courses through distance education. This includes students on O‘ahu as well as students on the neighbor islands. Four out of five students took at least one course through distance education.

UH West O‘ahu enrolled 249 degree-seeking Distance Education students in Fall 2018 who had registered addresses on the islands of Maui, Moloka‘i, Lana‘i, Kaua‘i, and Hawai‘i Island. Of the 249 DE students, 41% identified as Native Hawaiian or Part Hawaiian. Two-thirds of the DE students enrolled part-time, and 55% were over the age of 30. DE Students have a persistence rate of 75% compared to 81.4% for all transfer students.

## ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS

As the UH West O‘ahu aspires to increase enrollment to being sustainable at a student body of 8,000 by 2028, the percentage of DE students residing on the neighbor islands is expected to remain at approximately 10% of the student body. Total enrollment of fully online learners in any given semester is expected to be approximately 40% of the student body. This will include students located on O‘ahu as well as potentially students located in other states. However, it is anticipated that the number of online learners, students taking one or more distance education classes, will continue to include 70 to 80% of the student body. Therefore,

distance learning will continue to be a part of nearly every UH West O‘ahu student’s experience.

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## THE OFFICE OF DISTANCE LEARNING AREAS OF STRATEGIC FOCUS

The [Theory of Distinctiveness](#) in the UH West O‘ahu Strategic Action Plan identifies three strategic outcomes that distinguish this institution from any other, UHWO hopes to create a campus that embodies Sustainability, Innovation and Transformation, and Ōiwi Leadership. These three outcomes are situated around a central focus of Engaged Scholarship and a Transdisciplinary focus. The Strategic Focus Areas for the Office of Distance Learning align to the Theory of Distinctiveness

### EQUITY OF OPPORTUNITY

Ensuring that Distance Education students have authentic learning experiences, as well as similar academic and co-curricular opportunities that strengthen their UH West O‘ahu identity and experience.

### SCALE

As the UHWO Strategic Action Plan achieves the goal of being sustainable at a student population of 8,000 by 2028, that Distance Education courses and program offerings continue to develop to scale. Thus providing Distance Education students with relevant and new degree programs and services as the campus community experiences overall growth and development.

### SUSTAINABILITY

Development of fiscal sustainability, human resources as well as technology resources to support faculty, students and staff to sustain scalable growth of information technology services, and support for online student services and digital learning technologies.

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## HOPENA (OUTCOMES):

THE ODL STRATEGIC OUTCOMES ARE ALIGNED TO THE 2018-2028 UH WEST O'AHU STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN, IMPACT STRATEGIES, AND ODL STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

### ODL STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

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#### 1. RETENTION AND PERSISTENCE:

Advance persistence, degree completion and post-graduate success for Distance Education students.

- Impact Strategy 1
- Focus Area: Equity of Opportunity

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#### 2. STUDENT EXPERIENCE AND SENSE OF BELONGING:

Strengthen DE students' and alumni sense of belonging and responsibility for learning through powerful, positive experience facilitated by virtual and in-person connections on campus and in their community.

- Impact Strategy 1
- Focus Area: Equity of Opportunity

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#### 3. SUSTAINABLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS:

Enhance student success through vibrant, engaging, and accessible online synchronous and asynchronous learning experiences that reflect standards-based best practices in online teaching and learning.

Impact Strategy 1  
Focus Areas: Equity of Opportunity, Scale

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4. ALIGNMENT ACROSS OUR EDUCATIONAL AUWAI  
(Pre-12 to Community College to 4-Year to Post-Graduate & Beyond)

Intensify dynamic Distance Education pathways to and through UH West O‘ahu by expanding vertical and horizontal alignment of educational streams across the state of Hawai‘i which address workforce needs and post-graduate careers.

Impact Strategy 2  
Focus Area: Scale

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5. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR ALL FACULTY AND STAFF:

Bolster dynamic learning by enhancing professional skills and knowledge related to online pedagogy and online support services.

Impact Strategy 2  
Focus Area: Sustainability

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6. ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP AND RESEARCH

Contribute to a thriving culture of engaged scholarship, exploration, and creativity of faculty, students, and staff to include research, civic engagement and service learning through Distance Education programs.

Impact Strategy 2  
Focus Area: Sustainability  
Focus Area: Scale

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7. **TECHNOLOGY:**

Advance the use of appropriate virtual technologies and rich media to meet the demands of the 21st Century online learner-leader.

Impact Strategy 3

Focus area: Scale

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8. **CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS:**

Foster relationships with community stakeholders, and inter-campus collaboration across the UH system to strengthen the assets and infrastructure of the Office of Distance Learning.

Impact Strategy 3,

Focus Area: Sustainability

## SHORT TERM OUTCOMES

By the end of 2020, UH West O‘ahu’s Office of Distance Learning will achieve the following short-term outcomes: (aligned with a. Theory of Distinctiveness b. ODL Outcomes)

1. Offer stable and high quality student outcomes by aligning Distance Educational programs with accrediting body standards, such as the C-RAC (Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions) Guidelines.
  - a. Innovation and Transformation,
  - b. Sustainable Learning Environments
2. Establish innovative distance learning practices through means that transcend geographical barriers.
  - a. Innovation and Transformation, Technology,
  - b. Student Experience and Sense of Belonging
3. Model best practices for engaged digital learning through professional development.
  - a. Ōiwi Leadership, & Technology



- b. Professional Development for all Faculty and Staff
- 4. Strengthen student recruitment by engaging with high school students on neighbor islands, and strengthening collaborations with Early College, UH Community Colleges, and System University and Education Centers.
  - a. Sustainability, Alignment Across our Educational Auwai,
  - b. Campus and Community Relations
- 5. Promote student retention by expanding virtual student support services and Student Life events accessible by online learners.
  - a. Innovation and Transformation,
  - b. Student Experience and Sense of Belonging, Retention and Persistence
- 6. Establishing reciprocity policies to serve UH West O‘ahu students who relocate to the continental United States, to provide the opportunity to complete their degree requirements as a UHWO Distance Education student.
  - a. Sustainability
  - b. Retention and Persistence
- 7. Create data systems that demonstrate outcomes for DE programs and online learners.
  - a. Sustainability
  - b. Retention and Persistence
- 8. Explore strategies for sustainability by identifying extramural funding opportunities to expand DE programs.
  - a. Sustainability
  - b. Engaged Scholarship and Research

## MIDTERM OUTCOMES

By the end of 2022, UH West O‘ahu Office of Distance Learning will achieve the following midterm outcomes:

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1. Advance the use of virtual technologies and artificial intelligence to personalize the online teaching and learning experience. (Innovation and Transformation; Sustainable Learning environments)
  - a. Identify and incorporate best practices in the use of adaptive technology, personalized learning, and learning analytics in online course design.
2. Increase innovative distance learning practices that improve student engagement and sense of belonging. (Innovation & Transformation, Technology; Student Experience and Student Belonging)
  - a. Incorporate innovative pedagogies, like active learning and experiential learning.
  - b. Expand robust academic support programs using predictive analytics aimed at student success, student mentoring or student readiness assessment and support.
3. Utilize powerful professional development and networking to improve digital learning pedagogy, curriculum and assessment. (Ōiwi Leadership, & Technology; Professional Development for all Faculty and Staff)
  - a. Develop faculty mentors through a UH West O‘ahu Certified Distance Education process recognized through the use of quality course review process.
  - b. Incentivize and support faculty development programs, including course development and instructional design support, and standards for online teaching and learning.
  - c. Expand standards based quality course review through faculty community of practice or Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) research.
4. Increase Student Recruitment by providing fluid, student-centered approaches to taking online courses. (Sustainability, Alignment Across our Educational Auwai; Campus and Community Relations)
  - a. Working collaboratively with UH West O‘ahu Alumni Ohana, Early College, Community Colleges and University Centers to enroll and support the transition to being UH West O‘ahu online learners.

5. Advance student success and outcomes through highly engaged educational practices and support. (Innovation and Transformation; Student Experience and Sense of Belonging, Retention and Persistence)
  - a. Working collaboratively with the No‘eau Center to develop and asynchronous tutoring process for all disciplines.
  - b. Expanding pathways to UH West O‘ahu Distance Education programs to Early College.
  - c. Pilot reciprocity procedures to serve Distance Education students who reside outside of the state of Hawai‘i in Distance Education programs.
  
6. Evaluate and assess Distance Education program outcomes by comparing outcomes for DE programs and on-campus programs. (Sustainability; Retention and Persistence)
  - a. Implementing a quality assurance process for reviewing online programs
  - b. Assuring faculty are appropriately qualified to effectively supported.
  - c. Initiating quality procedures aligned with accrediting body guidelines.
  
7. Increase Sustainability of the Distance Education programs through expanding the reach of professional development through engaged scholarship and research. ((Sustainability; Retention and Persistence, Engaged Scholarship and Research)
  - a. Creating structure in organization and develop innovative practices that lend to external offering of professional development (at cost).
  - b. Targeting extramural funding sources to expand DE programs.

#### **LONG-RANGE OUTCOMES**

By the end of 2024, The Office of Distance Learning will achieve the following long-range aspirational outcomes:

1. UH West O‘ahu will be a leader in providing opportunities for exploring and applying integrative forms of distance learning that are effective, transformative and scalable. (Innovation and Transformation)
  
2. UH West O‘ahu will develop, execute and assess integrated strategic marketing and communications programs to strengthen, promote and protect the Office of

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Distance Learning's brand identity, relevance, accomplishments and excellence.  
(Sustainability)

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