

Process of Institutional Review for Substantive Change—Distance Delivered Programs University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

“The University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa is a globally-connected Hawaiian place of learning unlike any in the world. Ours is an academy of tremendous diversity, open to world cultures and scientific advancement. . . . Because of our remote location, we have unique challenges, opportunities, and futures.” (University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa Strategic Plan: Defining Our Destiny, 2002-2010)

As noted in the Mānoa Strategic Plan, the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa is committed to delivering “a modern, flexible, diverse and multicultural curriculum, supported by excellent teachers, classrooms, and information technology”. Further, UH Mānoa is committed to “effectively employ the most up-to-date information and communication technology to enhance instructional activities on campus and globally.” Distance delivery of courses and programs allows access to quality higher education to students who are unable to enroll in campus-based courses. Further, distance learning technologies strengthen and augment good teaching and life-long learning. Distance learning creates new opportunities to investigate learning styles and pedagogy. It can create more flexible and accessible opportunities for student learning. It creates new opportunities for collaboration within and across academic disciplines and between researchers, teachers, instructional support specialists, and learners. Learning through distance technology will continue to increase in importance as both a primary mechanism for the delivery of educational programs, as well as a supplement to traditional methods of instruction.

The University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa established the Mānoa Distance Learning Committee in August 2001, which together with colleges and individual departments insures that the institution provides high quality programs via modern distance technologies.

The Accrediting Commission of the Western Association of Senior Colleges (WASC) requires that all degree programs be approved by the WASC Substantive Change Committee if 50% or more of the program is delivered off-campus or via distance modalities. UH Mānoa has been granted the permission by WASC to conduct its own institutional review of substantive changes, in accordance with WASC requirements, regarding distance delivered programs through June 30, 2010.

All programs provided through distance technology are subject to the same requirements of program review as proscribed by *UH Executive Policies E5.201, Approval of New Academic Programs and Review of Provisional Academic Programs*, and *E5.202, Review of Established Programs*. This assures that the faculty and administration will periodically evaluate all programs, independent of the mode of delivery. The assessment of student learning outcomes is a critical component of the program review process.

Furthermore, *UH Executive Policy E5.204, Distance Learning Plans, Policies*, Article IV.C Program Quality Assurance and Accreditation established the *WICHE Principles of Good Practice for Electronically Offered Academic Degree and Certificate Programs* as the official policy framework for specific quality control procedures. Assessment is also mandated by *UH Executive Policy E5.210, Institutional Accountability and Performance*, and the requirement for accountability via formative and summative assessment.

The following is a summary of the review process for (1) the establishment of new distance delivered or off-campus programs or (2) the delivery of existing programs via distance modes or off-campus.

ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAMS, AT LEAST 50% OF THE PROGRAM TO BE DELIVERED OFF-CAMPUS OR VIA DISTANCE DELIVERY

Proposals for new academic programs must follow the Authorization to Plan process and the guidelines provided in UH Executive Policy E5.201, Appendix B. In addition, new programs which include the off-campus or distance delivery of at least 50% of the program must follow the review process outlined here.

Proposed by Department: Before new courses or programs, which will be delivered by distance modes, can become available to students, they undergo a process that assesses program coherence, pedagogy, content, learning outcomes, faculty support, and quality of delivery. Proposals for new academic programs which include the off-campus or distance delivery of at least 50% of the program must address the items on the *Outline of Elements for Distance Delivered Programs*.

Reviewed by appropriate College Program and Curriculum Committee and Dean: Once a proposal for a new distance delivered program has undergone and passed a departmental review committee, the process moves to a larger college-wide program and curriculum committee. The appropriate college review body assesses that the curriculum and learning outcomes are equal to the rigor and breadth of traditional on-campus programs, that essential technology, academic, and student support services are more than adequately accessible. This group must approve a distance delivered program request before it is forwarded to the Dean for approval.

Approved by the Mānoa Chancellor's Office and the Board of Regents: The approval of new academic programs, including new distance delivered programs, is granted by the Board of Regents. The Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs coordinates the final review processes. For distance delivered programs, the OVCAA assesses and guarantees, in consultation with the departments and colleges, that the University of Hawai'i has satisfactorily met institutional requirements as outlined in the *WICHE Principles of Good Practice*.

Prior to recommending approval to the Chancellor and the Board of Regents, the OVCAA will transmit the proposal for review to (1) the Mānoa Faculty Senate, (2) the Graduate Division (for graduate programs), and (3) the Mānoa Distance Learning Committee. The Mānoa Distance Learning Committee consists of faculty, staff, and administrators who are appointed by the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. Their charge is to review all distance learning proposals that come from the Mānoa campus in accordance with the *Checklist of Elements for Distance Delivered Program Proposals*.

After successful review by the OVCAA, the Graduate Division (as appropriate), the Mānoa Faculty Senate, and the Mānoa Distance Learning Committee, new program proposals are submitted to Chancellor and the Board of Regents for approval.

In addition, proposals for new off-campus programs are submitted to the WASC Substantive Change Committee for review and WASC approval.

REVIEW PROCESS FOR THE DISTANCE OR OFF-CAMPUS DELIVERY OF AT LEAST 50% OF AN EXISTING ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Proposed by Department: Proposals for the off-campus or distance delivery of at least 50% of an existing academic program must include the items on the *Outline of Elements for Distance Delivered Programs*. Departments are responsible for assessing the appropriateness of the proposed mode of delivery with respect to maintaining program coherence, content, learning outcomes, faculty support, and quality of delivery.

Reviewed by appropriate College Program and Curriculum Committee and Dean: Once a distance delivered program has undergone and passed a departmental review committee, the process moves to a larger college-wide program and curriculum committee. The appropriate college review body assesses that the proposed mode of delivery maintains the curriculum and learning outcomes of the existing on-campus program and that essential technology, academic, and student support services are more than adequately accessible. This group must approve a distance delivered program request before it is forwarded to the Dean for approval.

Approved by the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at Mānoa: The final institutional approval for distance delivery of existing academic programs is granted by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. It assesses and guarantees, in consultation with the departments and colleges, that the University of Hawai'i has satisfactorily met institutional requirements are outlined in the *WICHE Principles of Good Practice*.

Prior to granting approval, the OVCAA will transmit the proposal for review to the Mānoa Distance Learning Committee. This committee consists of faculty, staff, and administrators who are appointed by the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. Their

charge is to review all distance learning proposals that come from the Mānoa campus in accordance with the *Checklist of Elements for Distance Delivered Program Proposals*.

Proposals for distance delivery of existing graduate programs will be transmitted to the Graduate Division for their review.

In addition, proposals for the establishment of off-campus programs will be transmitted to the WASC Substantive Change Committee for WASC approval.