

# BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY HAWAI'I

## Capacity and Preparatory Review

December 2005

### Executive Summary

#### **Becoming a Learning Institution**

BYUH is determined not only to be a model of excellence in higher education, but also to excel in the ability to learn as an institution. The Capacity and Preparatory Review charts our progress since our last accreditation (1996), and outlines a road map for the future. The following documents, principles, and themes guided the preparation of the Capacity and Preparatory Review:

- **Documents**
  - BYUH Institutional Proposal (October 2003).
  - WASC response to Institutional Proposal.
  - Previous accreditation reports.
  - *WASC Handbook*.
- **Principles**
  - *Participation* by a broad cross-section of faculty, staff, and administrators.
  - Accumulation and dissemination of accurate and relevant *data*.
  - Adherence to the *mission* of BYUH.
- **Themes**
  - The four WASC standards (see below).
  - Educational Effectiveness themes outlined in 2003 Institutional Proposal (program outcomes, general education outcomes, employment for graduates and returnability of international graduates, improved English language ability for non-native speakers).
  - Fundamental framing questions: *What* can we learn? Can we *apply* what we learn?

#### **Standard I: Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives**

***Mission and Context: BYU-Hawai'i as a Latter-day Saint University in the Pacific and in Asia.*** Based on its religious identity, its international and intercultural mission, and its highly diverse student body, BYUH has a strong sense of mission and purpose. This sense of mission permeates everything that happens at the university.

BYU-Hawai'i has an unwavering commitment to the education of both the spirit and the intellect. Intellectual inquiry, the search for truth and virtue, and the development of Christlike character are core educational values within the Church. We see these values as mutually supportive emphases, equally necessary in order for a student to achieve a full education. From its inception in 1830 to the present

day, the Church has promoted learning “even by study and also by faith,” and has proclaimed that “the glory of God is intelligence or . . . light and truth” (D&C 88:118, 93:36). Members of the Church are encouraged to seek learning and wisdom “out of the best books” (D&C 88:118).

Fundamental to the learning process is the essential truth that men and women are immortal souls and spirit sons and daughters of God. Hence, the purpose of learning and the mission of BYU-Hawai'i is “to assist individuals in their quest for perfection and eternal life,” [from BYU-Hawai'i's mission statement] and to develop not just the “whole” person, but the “eternal” person.

Our curriculum is grounded in the arts and sciences, with strong professional programs in business, teacher education, and computing. We have a special mission to extend the blessings of education to students from the Asia-Pacific region, though we are determined that all students, regardless of origin, will benefit deeply and equally from the opportunities that BYUH provides. For all of our students, we seek to develop curricular and co-curricular programs that combine academic achievement with leadership, intercultural sensitivity, and the building of faith.

***Intercultural Competence and Understanding.*** A number of programs on campus seek to promote the university's mission of producing men and women who will help create the conditions for peace internationally. In addition, we wish to help our international students return to their home regions equipped with skills that will make them leaders in their homes, church, and communities. While continuing to pay great attention to the academic and professional skills our non-native speaking students will acquire at BYUH, we have established the goal of ensuring that the entire campus works together to make BYUH a place where non-native speakers of English develop clear competence in the English language. We have devoted considerable time, thought, and other resources to the issues that arise from the intercultural, international aspects of our mission. It is this mission that makes us unique in the LDS Church's educational system. We are not content, however, simply to be unique. We recognize that there must always be a sustained commitment to improve, to be better at what we do well. The 50-year jubilee anniversary we have just celebrated gives us an occasion to recommit the university to being an institution in which everyone—

faculty, staff, and students—is involved in learning, both through the curriculum and through our everyday interactions.

### **Standard II: Achieving Educational Objectives through Core Functions**

*From Instruction to Learning: Shifting the Focus at BYU-Hawai'i.* Like many other institutions of higher education, BYU-Hawai'i has sought in recent years to become much more intentional with regard to the educational objectives we establish for our students. To this end, we have taken a number of steps to shift our focus from teaching to learning, and to develop mechanisms that will gather clear and systematic evidence to support the rhetoric of learning, and will provide the kind of data needed to fuel or encourage improvement. Our primary focal points are three:

- **Departmental assessment plans.** During the 2004-2005 academic year, each academic department submitted a list of desired student outcomes for their majors to be published in the university's general catalog. These outcomes will provide the basis for multi-year assessment plans, which will be included in departmental portfolios displayed on the university's assessment website. The next step, begun in Fall 2005 and continuing into 2006, is for each department to produce an outcomes matrix, aligning each of the program's courses with the program's desired outcomes. We expect that this step will help departments scrutinize their programs and evaluate how effectively their curriculum and pedagogy support student learning outcomes.
- **Program reviews.** A schedule has been established that will result in thorough reviews of all programs by 2009. These reviews combine an in-depth self-study with visits by external reviewers. Completed program reviews are posted on the university's assessment website. In addition to the ongoing schedule of program reviews, some specific programs are seeking or have obtained professional accreditation (education, social work, business, and computing), a process which in all cases involves extensive self-study and examination of capacity.
- **General Education assessment.** After an extensive review and streamlining of the GE program in 1999, the GE Committee has undertaken the task of devising, testing, and implementing means of assessment for the program's educational outcomes. During any given academic year, the committee will be working on 2-3 of the seven "qualities of a generally-educated person" identified in the GE mission statement (on page 73 of the Capacity and Preparatory Review document).

*Faculty Development and Evaluation.* Faculty development at BYU-Hawai'i takes a number of forms: support for improvement in teaching performance, support for scholarly and creative activities, support for new faculty, support for adjunct faculty, support for faculty use of technology in teaching, and student involvement in faculty scholarship. From smaller class loads to student/faculty research, a teaching-centered emphasis at BYU-Hawai'i places an emphasis on quality faculty interaction with students. Given the university's need to have a faculty that will strongly identify with the institution, strategies for promoting the professional development of the faculty within the context of a focus on educational objectives is among our highest priorities. Such activities constitute one part of the evaluation of faculty for promotion and continuing faculty status. Teaching and university citizenship are the other two criteria for such evaluations. In annual faculty evaluations, the greatest weight is given to teaching. BYU-Hawai'i faculty members have made regular contributions to the scholarship in their field through presentations and publications.

### **Standard III: Developing and Applying Resources and Organizational Structures to Ensure Sustainability**

*Organizational Decision-Making in Councils.* BYU-Hawai'i adopts much of its decision-making style from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This involves leadership by councils, and the academic equivalent of a rotating lay leadership at the department and college/school level. Since most members of the faculty, staff, and administration are members of the Church, this is an approach to decision-making with which they are generally familiar and comfortable. While the President's Council is the decision-making body in policy and program matters, the Academic Planning Council, Faculty Advisory Council, Promotion Review Committee, and Strategic Planning and Budgeting Committee provide advice, feedback, and reviews of proposed policies. On most matters having to do with normal academic operations, the Academic Planning Council, with input from the Faculty Advisory Council, is the decision-making body.

*Utilizing Resources to Achieve Organizational Goals.* We have examined our resources in four broad categories: human resources, financial resources, electronic and information resources, and shared resources.

- **Human resources.** We currently have 117 full-time faculty members, in addition to seven full-time master's-level English language lecturers in our English as an International Language program, and approximately 10 educational service missionaries at

any given time. We also have a number of adjunct faculty members, but the vast majority of the student credit hours at BYU- Hawai'i are taught by the full-time faculty. Our faculty will probably never be as ethnically diverse as our student body, but we have tried to move in the direction of greater minority and gender representation among the faculty. In 2005, 22% of the faculty were non-Caucasian, while women have constituted roughly 20-25% of the faculty over the past five years. Faculty are selected by faculty search committees, who make a recommendation to the President's Council via the Vice President for Academics. This recommendation is then submitted to the Board of Trustees for final approval. The faculty retention rate is relatively high (about 81 percent during the past four years), and the faculty workload falls within the guidelines established by the American Association of University Professors.

- **Financial resources.** BYU-Hawai'i receives the majority of its financial support from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and has a history of stable financial management and resource sufficiency. With the support from the Church, combined with revenues received from tuition payments, PCC rents, and development activities, revenues are stable and adequate for achieving the educational objectives of the university. The Board of Trustees has assured us that support for the university will be unwavering and continuous.
- **Information and electronic resources.** The Joseph F. Smith Library maintains a collection of 200,000 books and monographs, plus numerous paper and electronic periodical subscriptions, as well as 8,000 audio-visual media items. A healthy acquisitions budget (\$575,000 in 2005) is crucial in maintaining the strength of the collection. Since our last accreditation (1996), we have been very active in trying not only to keep aware of useful technologies, but to look ahead in our planning to allow for constant renewal of our ability to utilize the information technology resources that will most enhance our capacity to accomplish our educational objectives. This includes wireless access points (to include the entire campus by the end of 2006), "smart" technology-equipped classrooms, and a favorable 5:1 student-computer ratio.
- **Shared resources.** One notable advantage we enjoy is the ability to share resources with the other two universities in the LDS Church Education System. Such shared resources include interlibrary loan, electronic access to BYU library resources, counsel from university attorneys, exchange of faculty and other experts, access to BYU TV for programming related to BYU-Hawai'i activities, and other areas. The ability to share resources means we have a pool of expertise and even a purchasing power

substantially greater than would be the case if we stood alone.

#### **Standard IV: Creating an Organization Committed to Learning and Improvement**

**Identifying Priorities.** Beginning in 1999, with the issuance of a 14-point charge by President Shumway, the faculty of BYU-Hawai'i engaged in a process of identifying clear priorities and the means by which those priorities can best be pursued. One of the major objectives was to become more efficient in moving students toward graduation in a more timely manner, without in any way diminishing the quality of educational programs. Through the concerted efforts of faculty, staff, and administrators, substantial progress was made, driven by the use of data to reveal areas in which we could do better. As a result, in 2005 the annual number of graduates was 56% higher than in 1998, thus reducing the cost per graduate dramatically.

**Strategic Planning: Implementation and Results.** One of the most important suggestions that came out of the 1996 WASC accreditation report was that BYU-Hawai'i should implement a strategic planning process in order to better align mission, planning, and budgeting. This has been done. The Strategic Planning and Budgeting Committee, co-chaired by a faculty member and the Assistant to the President, has played an increasingly important role in creating both a forum for greater faculty involvement in planning decisions and a means for pursuing initiatives that answer directly to the university's mission. Initially started as a response to an accreditation issue, BYU-Hawai'i's strategic planning process can be summarized as an evolution from reaction to oversight, moving now toward a role as catalyst for alignment and improvement.

**Evidence-Based Decision-Making at BYU-Hawai'i.** Evidence-based decision-making can be defined as a process of purposeful reflection and planning, a process by which programs, courses, procedures, and activities are systematically evaluated in order for decision-makers to identify both strengths and areas needing improvement. Two examples of the way in which BYU-Hawai'i has become a more evidence-based, data-driven institution are "returnability" and the development and implementation of a university-wide language plan.

- **Returnability.** The question of returnability (the objective that graduates from the Asia-Pacific region will take up residence in Asia and the Pacific to live for a period of time) has become increasingly important as enrollment from Asia and the Pacific has increased. Efforts to increase the return rate of students from our "target area" have included the creation of a task force to study the problem and

make recommendations, the hiring of a new Director of Career Services, a push for more international internship opportunities (supported by generous donor funds), and a strengthening of the message that Asia-Pacific students who come to the university under financial sponsorship programs assume an obligation to return after graduation. We are in the process of collecting data on the results of these efforts, and will use that data to drive subsequent decisions about how best to create a culture of returnability at BYU- Hawai'i.

- **Language plan.** The need for a campus-wide language plan arises out of the fact that while an increasing number of our students come from non-English speaking backgrounds, the task of preparing those students for academic work in English has traditionally been seen as the sole responsibility of the English as an International Language program. A university-wide L2 (second-language) committee has been created to oversee the creation and implementation of a language plan that more effectively mobilizes all campus personnel for this task. The data they generate on student use of language, faculty perceptions of English-language learning at BYU-Hawai'i, and student achievement in language from the time they enter until the time

they leave, will enable us to have a better picture of the dimensions of the challenge. Accumulating and interpreting such data will also allow us to move forward with confidence that our efforts to improve are based on a sound understanding of the current situation.

### **Looking Back, Looking Ahead**

In 2005, BYU-Hawai'i celebrated its 50-year Jubilee anniversary. It was a time of considerable reflection on our past, but also a time for looking ahead at the next decade and beyond. Even if our enrollment stays at its current level, we will experience pressures for new facilities, new programs, and new faculty positions. It will be crucial, therefore, that the processes begun over the last decade become part of the culture of the university so that decisions on the future of the institution will be made on a rational basis that will elicit the support of stakeholders both inside and outside the university. The future we envision is one in which all university stakeholders understand the institution's mission, and are provided with the data they need to make informed decisions directed toward that mission.