Susan Barton summarized the results from the recent faculty survey and the general faculty meeting.

The committee then discussed these results and the feasibility of including each of the top six potential themes identified by the faculty. Extensive discussion centered on whether or not to include the top theme identified in the faculty survey, "fostering spiritual development."

Although central to the University's mission and an important goal to keep as a priority, it was generally felt by the Committee that the University as a whole is already doing well in this area and that maybe we should include other, more critically needed themes. The University is already successful in fostering spiritual development through various aspects of campus life (religion classes, devotionals, service projects, etc.), student activities, and leadership and service opportunities within the campus wards. Graduating students and alumni have indicated that strengthening of their testimony and spirituality has been a major benefit of attending BYU-Hawaii.

Since the general faculty meeting, several faculty members have also expressed to various members of the Steering Committee a reluctance to include this theme in the accreditation proposal for WASC. It was felt that living the gospel is a highly personal matter and that subjecting one's spiritual life to extensive measurements may go too far in intruding into the individual lives of our students. Also, even though we may be able to measure the more outward manifestations of living the gospel (such as Church attendance, number of temple recommend holders, positions held in the Church, hours of service, etc.), one's spiritual life and testimony is much more than these outward manifestations and it was felt that we may not be as satisfied as a University simply measuring the outward manifestations of living the gospel. One faculty member expressed it this way:

"Of course spiritual development is the most important. We need to do that well. However, I do not think we need WASC to be a part of that. Spiritual development is deeply personal and should not be tied to university goals and outcomes."

WASC accreditation requires demonstration of and support for student learning. All members of the committee agreed that this area must be included in the Proposal. Efforts are already underway within academic departments to measure outcomes, student learning and program effectiveness (Nichol's visit in 2001 and the current University Assessment Committee efforts).

The General Education Committee has also expended a considerable amount of time and effort developing the University's Gened model and means of assessing student learning in areas such as writing and problem solving. Both of these areas (GE and program outcome assessment) were also identified by WASC in the last accreditation report (1996) and subsequent 2000 interim progress report as areas needing improvement by the University and should be included in the current proposal. They also were ranked #2 and #3 (respectively) in the faculty survey.

There was also consensus within the committee about using the accreditation process to encourage improvement in key areas of need for the University. Two areas of general agreement include: improve efforts to help graduates find meaningful employment (ranked #4 in the faculty survey), and improve the ability of non-native English speakers to communicate more effectively in English (ranked #6).

With the challenge to increase international student enrollment, particularly from Asia, there will be a tremendous need to assist these students in learning English. There will be a considerable amount of University resources devoted to this area over the next several years and it was felt that including this
theme as a possibility in our accreditation process would help ensure the capacity and sustainability of these efforts that are critically needed. Also, there was general consensus by the committee of the need to increase University efforts to help students find meaningful employment (placement of our graduates). This theme received considerable attention in several of the faculty focus groups held in May. Success in this area will also help increase the number of graduates living and serving in our target areas.

Susan reported that the FAC, in their last committee meeting felt that they would be happy if the Steering Committee selected any of the top six themes to include in the Institutional Proposal.

Susan and Jim were asked to draft a memo to the faculty thanking them for their participation and asking for volunteers this summer to participate in the initial writing and development of these four themes for the Institutional Proposal.

It was also felt that once the Steering Committee receives the rough drafts from these groups, that a smaller writing group of faculty should tweak and unify the writing into a single and solid proposal. Michael and Jim volunteered to assist with this effort later this summer after the initial groups have finished their work.

There was also some discussion of the need for a University Second Language (L2) committee to encourage campus-wide efforts and initiatives to help our international students learn English. Further discussion of this possibility may happen during the University's leadership retreat in August.