

November 24, 2003

Keith Roberts
Vice President for Academics
Brigham Young University – Hawaii Campus
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Dear Keith:

At its November 18, 2003, meeting, the Proposal Review Committee considered the Brigham Young University – Hawaii Campus Proposal for its next reaffirmation of accreditation review. Members of the Panel asked me to express their appreciation for your participation in the telephone conference call, and for that of your colleagues William Neal, Assistant to the President; Jeff Burroughs, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences; Michael Allen, Associate Dean, College of Arts & Sciences; Paul Freebairn, Director of University Assessment Testing; Meli Lesuma, Director of Academic Internships; Jay Hanson, Director of Financial Services; Susan Barton, Chair, Faculty Advisory Council; and Norman Evans, English Language Teaching and Learning Department. The Panel recognized the interest and engagement of such a broad cross section of the institutional leadership in participating in the telephone call and also in their contributions to writing the Proposal. Your collective responses to Panel questions and comments were helpful in assisting Panel members to understand better your institutional context and the intent and approach of your Proposal for the comprehensive review.

The Committee commended the University for its well-written, thoughtful, and well-reasoned presentation. The selection of topics appear quite appropriate for the University and in alignment with the interests of WASC in its accreditation review process. In Committee discussion following the conference call, the Committee characterized the Proposal as exemplary and thought it would be of value for other institutions to see. I will call you in the near future to seek your permission to share the Proposal with other institutions.

The Committee acted to accept the Proposal and the timeline for review, with the Preparatory Review to be conducted in spring 2006, and the Educational Effectiveness Review conducted in spring 2007 (specific dates to be determined). As you proceed with implementing the Proposal, the Committee identified several issues for your consideration:

1. The timeline for the review does not reflect internal institutional steps or milestones. The Committee urges the BYUH WASC steering committee to develop a more detailed planning schedule, including how the work will be done, what structures or groups will be responsible for implementing the key issues and topics identified for the review, the proposed process for reflection and coming to conclusion, and when each step should be completed. The steering committee will need a more detailed timeline to facilitate clarity and consensus for University engagement.
2. As discussed in the telephone call, more thought needs to be given to how data and other information gathered for the Preparatory Review might connect to the themes selected for the Educational Effectiveness Review, in the context of the Standards and Criteria for Review. How might the Preparatory Review identify the capacity elements of the themes and the infrastructure for Educational Effectiveness? For example, the Preparatory Review might include information about resources, support, and the structure for program reviews for Theme #1, while the Educational Effectiveness Review could focus on results: what the University is learning about program effectiveness, pedagogical innovation, and scholarly and creative work, and how you have taken action for program improvement.
3. The Committee appreciates the diversity of the BYUH student body and sees diversity as an important institutional strength and a subtext for the review. As indicated in the telephone call, Committee members encourage the University to adopt the broadest possible definition of diversity when it addresses this topic in the review, particularly in its response to the last Commission's letter. The Commission intends that evaluation of diversity should include inquiry into campus climate, pedagogy, and curriculum, as well as accounting for ethnicity distributions of students, faculty, and staff.
4. With respect to Theme #3, Employment, while the Committee supports the University's intention to focus on career development programs and internship and placement services, it encourages the University in its intention to focus on alumni surveys, and urges it not to miss the opportunity to include evaluation of the skills and knowledge alumni gained while attending BYUH. Criterion for Review 2.6 states, for example, that "the institution demonstrates that its graduates consistently achieve its stated levels of attainment ..." It would seem that documentation of student achievement and learning would serve as strong demonstration of the University's commitment to its students and their success.
5. The University has selected four integral and challenging themes to explore in the Educational Effectiveness Review. The Committee encourages the University to pursue these themes as scholarly research inquiries, including developing framing questions and including the examination and evaluation of student learning results and outcomes where appropriate.

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The Proposal now becomes the framework for the accreditation review process, and represents a plan of action and commitment by the institution. The Proposal will be shared with the visiting teams for the Preparatory and Educational Effectiveness Reviews, and with the Commission following each Review. It is understood that adjustments in the activities undertaken as outlined in the Proposal will be made as implementation occurs. Major changes to the Proposal, such as in the direction or focus of institutional activities for the accreditation review process, are to be approved in advance by Commission staff.

We wish you well and look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Griego
Associate Director

Cc: Eric Shumway, President
Proposal Review Committee
Ralph Wolff