Aloha!

As most of you know, accreditation in higher education is a continuous process of self-improvement, and we’re grateful for all of your efforts to provide the highest quality education for the students we serve. BYU–Hawaii is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and had, as part of the accreditation process, a Special Visit by a WASC committee in March 2012 to follow up on three specific areas of improvement identified in our 2008 accreditation. Following that visit, the WASC Accrediting Commission accepted the committee’s report along with our report on progress in these areas, and expressed their gratitude for the initiatives that we have undertaken to address each area.

As a follow up from the March 2012 Special Visit, the Commission has provided two additional areas for improvement, and I would like to share those briefly with you. These will be on the agenda at our August 2 Faculty Meeting as well, where we can discuss them in more detail.

1) The Commission recommended that we look at ways to strengthen the Bachelor of University Studies degree. Specifically, they recommend that there be more faculty oversight and more clearly defined, appropriate learning outcomes, and a scheduled program review.

2) The second area dealt with the allocation of resources associated with the innovations and initiatives we’re engaged in and how that allocation matches with the quality of the educational offerings to our students. Again, the recommendation is to focus on analysis of learning outcomes related to these initiatives and innovations.

Over the last couple of decades, the accreditation process has increasingly focused on learning outcomes for programs, offerings and initiatives. As we continue to innovate in these areas, we need to emphasize outcomes for our students, and evaluate the effectiveness of these innovations based on the outcomes. We will submit a written report to WASC in 2013 followed by a campus visit in the spring of 2014. In preparation for this report, we will be engaging in research and discussion across campus. We invite your cooperation, involvement and thoughts as we do so – and look forward to the benefits of this dialogue and the improvements that will come with that.

Many thanks for your individual and collective contributions to serve our wonderful students.

Sincerely,

Steven C. Wheelwright
President