INTRODUCTION

As part of the ongoing University College ongoing program assessment effort, a last minute survey was designed and administered to Associate of Arts graduates at the Spring 2006 commencement at the Waikiki Shell. That survey yielded valuable insights about graduate perspectives of the program, so it was decided to revise/refine the survey and launch a similar, but better organized, effort at the 2007 commencement.

The two page (front and back) survey instrument (attached to this report) included some basic demographic information, the evaluation of perceived General Education student learning outcomes, and ratings of various aspects of the HCC institutional environment. Given the fact that students completed hard copy versions of the survey while awaiting the rehearsal for their graduation, the survey was quite short - it took most graduates fewer than five minutes to complete the survey.

Response rate: Thirty-two surveys were completed (virtually every A.A. graduate who “walked”).

While this report represents the “population” of A.A. graduates at commencement, it should be noted that two-thirds of the 2006/2007 A.A. graduates chose not to attend commencement. The researchers will contact non-attenders via e-mail to request that they complete an online version of the survey. Those data will be added to the dataset and this report will be modified; however, it is unlikely that an e-mail based effort will yield many more responses - therefore, the essential findings of this report are not likely to be significantly affected.

FINDINGS

Respondent Demographics:

Gender: 75% of respondents were female; 25% were male.

Age: Graduate age ranged from 20 to 58 - the median age was 26.

GPA: Grade point averages ranged from 2.5 to 4.0 - the mean GPA was 3.34.

Colleges Attended: 69% of respondents had attended colleges other than HCC:

28% Kapiolani C.C.  13% Leeward C.C.  13% Hawaii Pacific U.
9% Windward C.C.  6% Hawaii C.C.  3% Maui C.C., Chaminade, UHWO
31% None  Other: LA Valley, Pierce, Riverside, Heald, Pike’s Peak, UMUC,
              CC of USAF, Gainesville CC, Athens Tech
Intended Transfer Campus: 62% UH-Manoa  Other possible transfer campuses: UH-Hilo, UH-West Oahu, HPU, Chaminade, UNLV, Central Texas, Maryland, Genesse C.C., U. of Wyoming, U. of Rhode Island

HIGH MARKS FOR A.A. EXPECTED STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Respondents were asked to rate their ability/skill levels in fifteen specific A.A. degree related expected learning outcomes.

The response scale included: Poor, Fair, Good, Excellent.

93% or more of the respondents rated 11 of the 15 Student Learning Outcome items as Good or Excellent. The lowest rated outcome was rated as Good or Excellent by 74% of respondents.

A mean value was computed for each learning outcome area.

The overall mean for this entire group of General Education SLO items was a quite high: 3.36 (3.0 = Good...4.0 = Excellent) - ranging from a high mean value of 3.55 for Appreciation/tolerance for Diversity to a low mean value of 3.13 for Mathematical Knowledge/Reasoning.

The top third of ranked items included several of the global learning outcomes developed across the range of courses that students take as part of the A.A. General Education Core Curriculum:

✅ Appreciation/tolerance of diversity
✅ Effective reading
✅ Ability to examine ethical issues
✅ Effective speaking
✅ Historical/cultural knowledge/reasoning

The bottom third of items included:

✅ Mathematical knowledge/reasoning
✅ Scientific knowledge/reasoning
✅ Aesthetic, artistic, or musical understanding/appreciation
✅ Computer literacy (using computers/software)
✅ Social scientific knowledge/reasoning
The bar graph below rank orders all General Education Learning Outcome items by mean values - from the top rated (3.55) *Appreciation/Tolerance for Diversity* item to the lowest rated (3.13) Mathematical knowledge item. Even this lowest rated item received a rating between *Good* (3.00) and *Excellent* (4.00).

Figure 1: **BAR GRAPH - GENERAL ED ITEMS - RANK ORDERED BY MEAN VALUE**

The overall mean (same scale: Poor to Excellent) for the thirteen items in this section of the survey was significantly lower than for the learning outcome section: 3.12 (Institutional Environment) vs. 3.54 (Student Learning Outcomes).

The top ranked items: *Overall quality of education received in the A.A. Program; Personal attention received in classes; Assistance received from faculty; Personal security on campus; and the Overall quality of the library.*

The lowest ranked items: *Quality of counseling for A.A. classes; Availability of courses need for transfer program; and the Quality of transfer counseling.*
IMPACT OF GENDER: FEMALE RESPONDENTS MORE POSITIVE THAN MALES

With only a few exceptions, females rated Learning Outcomes and Institutional Environment items higher than did male respondents. The gender differences in graduate perceptions may be somewhat related to the higher GPAs reported by female graduates.

Bar Graphs: Learning Outcomes (Quality of Preparation) Items by Respondent Gender
Bar Graphs: Institutional Environment Items by Respondent Gender

Figure 5: BAR GRAPHS - QUALITY OF INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT BY GENDER OF RESPONDENT

Overall
Quality of HCC Environment/Services

Quality of counseling for A.A. classes: 2.81
Quality of transfer counseling: 2.98
Availability of courses you needed for your transfer program: 3.09
Scheduling of A.A. classes to meet your needs: 3.57
Assistance you received from your faculty: 3.59
Personal attention you received in your classes: 3.69
Assistance you received from HCC Admission/Records: 3.95
Assistance you received from Financial Aids Office: 3.95
Overall quality of classroom facilities: 3.95
Overall quality of the campus facilities/grounds: 3.95
Overall quality of the library: 3.95
Your feeling of personal security on the campus: 3.95
Overall quality of the education you received in A.A. Program: 3.95

Mean

[Bar Graphs with detailed data points for each category]

Your sex/gender:
Female

Quality of HCC Environment/Services

Quality of counseling for A.A. classes: 3.08
Quality of transfer counseling: 2.69
Availability of courses you needed for your transfer program: 3.20
Scheduling of A.A. classes to meet your needs: 3.46
Assistance you received from your faculty: 3.57
Personal attention you received in your classes: 3.29
Assistance you received from HCC Admission/Records: 3.30
Assistance you received from Financial Aids Office: 3.00
Overall quality of classroom facilities: 3.67
Overall quality of the campus facilities/grounds: 3.46
Overall quality of the library: 3.64
Your feeling of personal security on the campus: 3.85
Overall quality of the education you received in A.A. Program: 3.85

Mean

[Bar Graphs with detailed data points for each category]

Your sex/gender:
Male

Quality of HCC Environment/Services

Quality of counseling for A.A. classes: 2.34
Quality of transfer counseling: 2.00
Availability of courses you needed for your transfer program: 2.34
Scheduling of A.A. classes to meet your needs: 2.75
Assistance you received from your faculty: 3.75
Personal attention you received in your classes: 2.75
Assistance you received from HCC Admission/Records: 2.71
Assistance you received from Financial Aids Office: 2.75
Overall quality of classroom facilities: 2.88
Overall quality of the campus facilities/grounds: 3.14
Overall quality of the library: 3.00
Your feeling of personal security on the campus: 3.14
Overall quality of the education you received in A.A. Program: 3.14

Mean

[Bar Graphs with detailed data points for each category]
RESPONDENT COMMENTS

Respondents were asked to provide comments about the BEST and WORST aspects of the HCC A.A. Program.

What was BEST about the Program?: (Representative comments)

Positive comments focused on the quality of the faculty, the supportive environment for learning, the intimate environment, and the personal attention they received from faculty/staff.

*The faculty, they really do care and are sincere about teaching. The faculty are truly TEACHERS!!!! Thank you!* ... Great faculty - Professors Smith, Pine, Cleveland, Gopal, Panisnick, Mauz, and Moore are better than any of my UH (Manoa) faculty. ... The ratio of students to teachers ... More personal and intimate; a lot of help, student aren't pushed into a large campus ... Good class availability ... The ability to take courses online and at other locations ... Schedule of classes was very easy to work with. All the teacher I had always had time when I had a question. Great Teachers: Mr. Mario (Chemistry) Ms. Judy (Logic) ... Has some great influential instructors. The was very efficient, financial aid, records, cashier. Everyone was knowledgeable and respectful. Awesome staff and faculty. ... The teachers are excellent ... Volunteering (service learning) in Rick Ziegler's class...It takes out the rough edges of a person and give a good foundation in/for a higher education. ... Being exposed to various possibilities of thoughts and a "free" topic of conversation ... Very supportive; quality education; personal attention ... Faculty was very helpful; atmosphere was good ... The personal attention...
WHAT WAS WORST ABOUT THE PROGRAM? (Representative Comments)

Respondents were displeased with the availability of classes (wider range) and scheduling; the information about deadlines and activities; and some aspects of the physical environment: air conditioning, chairs/desks, elevators.

More funding for other A.A. Programs like Nursing! ... Parking and cafeteria ... Better class availability and higher standards ... None ... Unorganized aspect of counseling ... Not being informed about groups (Honor Society); Not knowing about deadlines (Graduation Application); I did not go on campus very often ... Not having air conditioning in some classrooms we used. ... If possible, have more classes. It's interesting that (foreign) language is not a requirement to graduate with an A.A. ... Class availability and scheduling - I had several classes canceled repeatedly ... There should be more of a focus on business classes. There are no business courses at present. ... The facilities need much improvement - elevator in Bldg. 7. Chairs and desks are too small.

CONCLUSIONS

This small scale study of HCC A.A. graduates reveals that this year’s graduates:

- Are very pleased with the overall A.A. Program
- Rave about the quality of the faculty and the attention/assistance they received from faculty
- Feel they have achieved the expected global learning outcomes associated with an Associate of Arts Degree
- Are pleased with the quality of the Library, but somewhat less so with classroom facilities/grounds, Financial Aids, AA & Transfer Counseling, Course Availability