Response to College Recommendation #3

As was recommended by the 2006 evaluation team, in order to meet the Standards, the college must "develop a formal assessment process to evaluate the effectiveness of its Distance Education program in meeting the institutional mission. The process should include a systematic evaluation, analysis, communication, and improvement of the program, including assessment of how well each online course is satisfying its student learning outcomes, support for staff development, and technical assistance for faculty." This review must include a formal evaluation of student support services and learning resources including its design and delivery. The college should compare the instructional quality of face-to-face and distance education courses and develop a strategic plan for distance education. (Standards II.A.2.e, II.A.2.f, II.B, II.C.l.c, III.A.5.a)

HCC has fully addressed this recommendation in the following ways:

1. HCC has developed and finalized its Distance Education Strategic Plan (see Appendix A.) The DE Strategic Plan covers all areas specified in Recommendation #3, including assessment and faculty development/technical assistance. [link, DE strategic plan]

2. The DE Strategic Plan was developed by the Distance Education Coordinator, the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and the Dean of Academic Support Services, with broad input from the campus community, including the Distance Education Advisory Committee (DEAC) and DE faculty, via the following:
   a. Most recently, a survey of all students enrolled in DE courses as of Spring 2013. The results of this survey were used extensively to guide development of the Plan. [link, survey results.] Prior forms of DE assessment include surveys of DE students and reports compiled from those surveys, documented discussions with DE faculty, as well as research on DE management at other institutions, and a review of the ACCJC manual governing Distance Education.
   b. A campus-wide Town Hall meeting was held on May 3, 2013, from 2:30pm-4:30pm. The meeting was attended primarily by faculty and IT staff. The results of the student survey were presented, and input on various aspects of DE was obtained. Minutes of the Town Hall can be found at [link, Town Hall minutes.] The Town Hall was critical in identifying immediate and longer-term actions that needed attention.

3. Based on the assessment provided by the Town Hall in Spring 2013, a mandatory orientation providing technical support and course development assistance for all faculty teaching DE courses in Fall 2013 was held on August 21, 2013. [link, orientation agenda.] A survey conducted at this meeting also provided additional perspective on critical issues. [link, faculty survey.]

4. A series of training workshops for faculty teaching DE courses in Fall 2013 (and planning to teach DE courses in Spring 2014) are being held during the first three weeks of the Fall semester. This will enable DE faculty to better serve their current DE students, and also to better plan for the Spring 2014 DE courses. Topics given priority for
the workshops were determined based on recent survey results as well as prior discussions with DE faculty. The schedule of training sessions can be found at [link, training session schedule].

5. A resource page with information and links specifically for DE students has been developed as a tab on the college’s official course management system, Laulima. This tab will automatically appear for all students registered in DE courses and will provide them direct access to information and contacts. A copy of this page can be found on Laulima; [guest access to the Laulima group “HCC DE Student Links” can be provided on request.]

6. An updated DE resource page is directly accessible to all students and faculty via the Honolulu Community College main web page [link, College website] The DE resource page can also be accessed directly [link, DE page].

7. All faculty who taught DE courses in Spring 2013 were contacted by Cynthia Smith, former DE Coordinator and veteran DE instructor, regarding the need to document their SLO assessment and validation against face-to-face sections of the course (if applicable.) For faculty teaching DE courses in Fall 2013, this need was emphasized in the mandatory orientation and will be covered in the training sessions. [?links, list of faculty doing comparison; notes from Cynthia Smith?] Several summary reports are posted of assessment analysis for specific departments or disciplines, and individual inventory reports are available for review upon request. [links, reports, inventory form.]

8. To address the possible classroom shortage due to the current renovation of building 7, one of the primary classroom facilities at the College, the College partnered with Kapi‘olani Community College (KCC) to utilize training materials that KCC had developed in Laulima. Mary Hattori, Director of the Center for Learning, Teaching and Technology at KCC, and Joy Shirokane, Distance Education Coordinator at KCC, came to HCC on February 15, 2013 to do an in-person presentation on their Laulima training site designed with information on standards and best practices for creating DE courses. Guest access to the Laulima group “HonCC.OnlineConnection” can be provided on request.

[Any follow-up on who came? Those taking advantage to use this resource? Indication that this had an impact?]

9. The College continues to support elements of institutional infrastructure for quality assurance of its Distance Education offerings. These include the following:

   a. A Distance Education Coordinator, whose responsibility it is to oversee all aspects of the College’s distance education offerings;

   b. A Distance Education Advisory Committee (DEAC), chaired by the DE Coordinator [link, DEAC] The DEAC, with campus-wide membership, has provided important input on Distance Education issues and has contributed to the creation of a number of resources, including a DE Handbook [link, Handbook]; and
c. A process of regular certification and recertification of all distance education offerings (both online and cable), in which faculty must address issues of delivery, assessment, meaningful interaction between instructor and students, and security questions (e.g., proctoring of exams.) To facilitate and compile evidence of ongoing assessment of Distance Education classes, the effort was undertaken to meet and/or communicate with all instructors teaching DE courses in Fall 2012, Spring 2013 and Fall 2013. Instructors were asked to report on their assessment strategies, the results found, and responses identified to improve courses based on results. In addition, where applicable, information regarding assessment strategies, results and identified improvements related to student achievement of SLOs was compared between DE sections versus face-to-face sections. All assessment information gathered is summarized in a table charting ongoing DE assessment [link, Cynthia Smith to create.] In some cases, individual results were compiled, analyzed and reported on at the department level, and these are posted on the internet for campus access. [link, ?title, location?] Individual course assessment reports are retained by the Distance Education Coordinator.

The College has carried out review and certification of Distance Education courses since [identify date?] The Distance Education Review Board (DERB) was initially created by the campus-wide Committee on Programs and Curricula (CPC); the process of reviewing and certifying has been assessed and revised a number of times in the past five years; courses for which faculty are seeking certification/recertification are now reviewed by a Distance Education Review Board (DERB) pertinent to the specific discipline or field of study. The current process specifies clear standards to be met, and requires revision of those courses that do not meet established standards. The recent growth in the number of DE courses and the maturation of the DE program has led to the need to clarify processes and timetables for recertification. The DERB in conjunction with the DEAC will finalize this process in Fall 2013. [links: DERB guidelines for application, application form; updated list of DERB-approved classes.]