RECOLLECTIONS
FROM THE SHELL

SPRING 2009 HCC A. A. GRADUATE SURVEY

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INTRODUCTION

For the past four years, Honolulu Community College (HCC) has conducted annual surveys of Associate of Arts Graduates at Commencement.

To improve this year’s response rates, graduate survey administration was linked with the filing of graduation applications. Graduates who did not complete surveys when filing graduation applications did so at the May 15 Commencement ceremony at the Waikiki Shell.

The two page, 49 item questionnaire (attached to this report) includes some basic demographic information, a section on General Education student learning outcomes, ratings of various aspects of the HCC institutional environment, and graduate comments. Given the fact that some students completed the hard copy version of the survey just before graduation, the questionnaire was quite brief - it took most graduates fewer than seven minutes to complete the survey.

RESPONSE RATE = 57%  31 of 54 Spring 2009 A.A. graduates completed the survey - 18 hard copy versions collected when students filed graduation applications, 7 online versions, and 6 at Commencement.

FINDINGS

Respondent Demographics:

Gender: 58% of respondents were female; 42% were male.

Age: Respondent age ranged from 19 to 52 Median age = 24

GPA: Grade point averages ranged from 2.0 to 3.8 - Mean GPA = 3.01

Colleges Attended: Over three-quarters (77%) had attended colleges other than HCC:

Of those who attended other colleges:

46% Kapiolani C.C. 33% UH - Manoa 21% Leeward C.C.
13% HPU 8% Windward C.C. 8% Maui C.C.
4% Hawaii C.C. 21% Other
(Santa Barbara C.C. - Coastline C.C. - College of San Mateo - Tennessee Tech - UNLV)

Most (90%) Have Immediate Transfer Plans - 62% to UH-Manoa

62% to UH-Manoa Other possible transfer campuses: 21% to Hawaii Pacific University, 7% to Kapiolani CC, 3% to Windward CC, 3% to UH-West Oahu, 4% to “Other”
ULTIMATE ACADEMIC GOAL BOOSTED SIGNIFICANTLY WHILE AT HCC

Respondents report that their ultimate academic goals are dramatically higher than at initial HCC enrollment - when initially enrolled, only 39% aspired to earn baccalaureate or high degrees; at graduation, 93% plan baccalaureate or higher degrees.

HIGH MARKS FOR ASSOCIATE OF ARTS 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.

Nine of the 15 listed Student Learning Outcome items were rated as Good or Excellent by 95% or more of respondents. Even the lowest rated outcome (Aesthetic/artistic/musical skills) was rated as Good or Excellent by 79% of respondents.

Mean values were computed for each learning outcome area.

The overall mean for this entire group of General Education SLO items was quite high: 3.41 (3.0 = Good,... 4.0 = Excellent) - ranging from a high mean value of 3.74 (Diversity appreciation) to a low mean value of 3.13 (Mathematical knowledge/reasoning).

The bar graph below rank orders all General Education Learning Outcome items by mean values - from the top rated (Read Effectively) item to the lowest rated (Mathematical knowledge) item. Even this lowest rated item received a rating (3.13) between Good (3.00) and Excellent (4.00)

Figure 2: BAR GRAPH - QUALITY OF PREPARATION - RANK ORDERED BY MEAN VALUE
1.0 = POOR .... 4.0 = EXCELLENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Education</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation/tolerance for diversity</td>
<td>3.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information retrieval ability</td>
<td>3.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to learn independently</td>
<td>3.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective reading</td>
<td>3.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer literacy</td>
<td>3.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to examine ethical issues</td>
<td>3.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective writing</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective speaking</td>
<td>3.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking/reasoning</td>
<td>3.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical/cultural knowledge/reasoning</td>
<td>3.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logical reasoning</td>
<td>3.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social scientific knowledge/reasoning</td>
<td>3.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific knowledge/reasoning</td>
<td>3.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesthetic, artistic, or musical understanding/appreciation</td>
<td>3.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GRADUATES RATED 14 ASPECTS OF THE INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Highest institutional environment marks were given to the faculty on the item - *Personal Attention You Received in Your Classes* - where 97% of respondents rated that attention as *Good or Excellent*.

Areas where 90% or more of the ratings were at the *Good or Excellent* levels included:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT ITEM</th>
<th>% Good or Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistance you received from faculty</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall quality of HCC education</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall quality of the Library</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Counseling for HCC classes</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal attention received in your classes</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lowest rated items included:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT ITEM</th>
<th>% Good or Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall quality of Career/Employment Center</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall quality of the Cafeteria</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling of Personal Security on Campus</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance received from Financial Aids</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall quality of student parking</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IMPROVED MARKS FOR CAMPUS PARKING

While availability of campus parking received the lowest marks, this year over half (61%) of respondents rated the parking as *Good or Excellent*. In similar surveys conducted over the past few decades, the majority of respondents have rated campus parking as *Poor*. For example, in the Fall of 2006, students rated parking on a similar scale - 58% rated parking as *Poor or Fair*. The opening of a major, gravel on-campus parking lot behind the library building has dramatically increased parking availability and is probably responsible for parking’s improved marks.
AJOR GAINS IN QUALITY OF HCC & TRANSFER COUNSELING

2009 A.A. graduates rated the quality of counseling significantly higher than did 2008 graduates. Last year, only 70% of respondents rated transfer counseling as Good or Excellent - compared to 89% of this year's graduates. Marks for HCC course counseling also improved from 82% to 89% (Good or Excellent).

RESPONDENT COMMENTS: BEST & WORST ASPECTS OF HCC A.A. PROGRAM

Positive Comments About the HCC A.A. Program (Representative comments)

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

The relationship between the Institution itself and the real world industry. ... Tremendous support from the ECE staff ... the relationships with the faculty and my classmates, the overall friendliness of the students and staff (compared with other colleges) ... Taking Philosophy course from Judy Sokes ... The Student services and activities provided for students on campus. ... The diversity ... E.C. Ed classes and the professors are excellent! ... Your class sizes and teachers ... Teachers were good. ... Diversity of education. ... The faculty rocked. ... Philosophy ... networking ... The faculty and students who made every school day interesting. ... Liberal Arts Professors ... The counselors are very helpful with any information that you need. ... The history and math teachers are great. ... Meeting People. ... The instructors are personable, understanding and encouraging. ... Small classes that helped in the assistance of personal help. ... The teachers were awesome! ... The faculty. I've had some really awesome teachers who really cared about the students. ... Gaining knowledge needed for me to move on further in life. ... Nice staff like Mr. Patterson. ...
I learned a lot from the teachers and they were passionate. HCC has great teachers. I received top-notch education for a fraction of the price. The instructors care about their students. The four courses I took were distance education which really worked out well. The instructors were very nice and helpful. I also saw a counselor, she was very helpful and got me on the right track, letting me know what courses I needed to take to complete my program. The class was smaller, so we got more hands on attention and we were able to learn better. Teachers were available for help all the time. Counseling, teachers being personal and helpful. Helpful teachers and friendly students. Personal attention from the professors; helpful that was needed was given to get through the class.

CRITICISM OF THE HCC A.A. PROGRAM (Representative Comments)

Some respondents expressed displeasure with parking (want the temporary new lot paved), with classroom equipment/furniture, class scheduling, counseling, campus appearance, and with transferability of HCC classes.

Some of our equipment was a little dated. Need more classes offered at night. The flexibility of classes. Working students can’t always take the course that are provided during certain times. Stuff. Parking/location. The desks. Better facilities and equipment i.e. desks, air conditioning. Pave it!!! Inform students of classes that might not transfer within the UH system. The counseling. Time frame. Parking. Other than parking issues and stricter rules from the computer lab, class wise nothing bad to report. Seeing some of my classmates drop their classes at the end of the semester. Maybe beautify the campus a bit more. It has a lot of concrete and not enough green.

ACADEMIC RIGOR - NEEDS ATTENTION?

This year’s evaluation instrument included an item focused upon the degree to which students were “challenged” by the rigor of the HCC A.A. Program.

Only 8% of respondents found the program to be Extremely Challenging while 63% found it to be Quite Challenging; over a quarter (29%) found it to be only Slightly or Not at All Challenging.

![Figure 10: CHALLENGE/RIGOR?](chart)

Overall, how challenging/rigorous was HCC educational experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not at all challenging</th>
<th>Slightly challenging</th>
<th>Quite Challenging</th>
<th>Extremely challenging</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Frequency (%)
RECOMMENDATIONS

Continue Effort to Create a UH Seamless General Education Web

Given the high rate of attendance at other UH Campuses and that three-fourths of graduates plan transfers to UH campuses (62% to UH-Manoa), continued emphasis on improving general education articulation with the UH System is highly recommended.

Mathematical Skills Dilemma

While graduates are generally confident about their general education skills, year after year the lowest scoring general education area is Mathematical knowledge/reasoning.

HCC’s current catalog lists the Learning Outcomes expected of its Associate of Arts degree recipients on page 78. The text of learning outcome #1 states:

Communicating effectively by means of listening, speaking, reading and writing in varied situations, understanding basic quantitative information (mathematical skills) and writing in varied situations.

While this general education outcome has long been a part of HCC’s (and of those of virtually every college in the country) general education student learning outcomes statement, the structure of the curriculum does not ensure that the outcome will be achieved.

Students at HCC are not required to take transfer level mathematics classes to earn Associate of Arts degrees - the quantitative component of the UH wide general education core can be met by taking a symbolic reasoning (PHIL 110) course which, while rigorous and demanding, does not directly develop mathematical skills.

Furthermore, there was a time when the social science disciplines were divided into two groups (roughly qualitative and quantitative oriented disciplines) - students were required to complete at least one course from each group - ensuring exposure to mathematical/statistical disciplines like Economics, Psychology, and Sociology. In the past decade, changes in the structure of the UH core have reduced the number of required social science classes from three to two and the expectation that these courses be taken from quantitative and qualitative oriented disciplines has been eliminated.

The college is, therefore, in something of a structural dilemma. We expect A.A. graduates to possess mathematical skills, but we have made it possible for them to earn degrees without these skills. If we unilaterally impose new math requirements, we will find ourselves out of step with the rest of the UH System and incoming transfer students from these institutions may be faced with an additional requirement not present at their sending UH campus.
HCC should begin addressing this dilemma - which when reviewed will be identified as a UH System problem. Resolving the dilemma will require collaborating with other UH campuses to adopt curriculum structures/strategies that will lead to improved mathematical student learning outcomes without jeopardizing within UH System transfers.

Just as the development of writing skills can not be the sole responsibility of the Language Arts and Writing Intensive faculty, the development of mathematical skills can and should be shared by an array of disciplines that can integrate mathematical analysis within their courses.

CONCLUSIONS

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

- Are very pleased with the overall program - 97% rated their HCC education as Good or Excellent (43.3% Good - 53.3% Excellent)
- Rave about the quality of the faculty and the attention/assistance they received from faculty and counselors
- Feel they have achieved most of the expected global learning outcomes associated with an Associate of Arts Degree
- Report extremely high outcomes in developing appreciation/tolerance for diversity
- Are satisfied with most support aspects of the campus
- Report some lack of confidence in Mathematical and Aesthetic/Artistic skills
- Suggest improvements in student parking, financial aid services, campus security, the cafeteria, career/employment center, and availability of courses needed to complete the program.
- Greatly appreciate the support programs, facilities, personal security, and counseling
- Attended (77%) other colleges - a majority earned credits at other UH campuses
- Majority (62%) plan to transfer to UH-Manoa
- Changed their ultimate academic goals while enrolled at HCC - from 39% to 93% expecting to complete baccalaureate or higher degrees
SPRING 2009 HCC GRADUATE SURVEY

This survey of students who are about to graduate from an HCC Degree or Certificate Program is being conducted to develop insights about graduates and their perceptions of their programs and the college. The findings will be used to gauge program quality and to guide modifications to improve student learning/satisfaction. Your responses will be anonymous.

(1) Your sex/gender:  
☐ Female  ☐ Male

(2) Your age: ____________________________

(3) Your Cumulative GPA at HCC: ________________________

(4) From which HCC Program are you receiving a certificate/degree?  
☐ Liberal Arts  ☐ AMT  ☐ CENT  ☐ ECE (Early Childhood)  ☐ HSER  ☐ SMP  
☐ ADRP  ☐ APT  ☐ COSM  ☐ EMT  ☐ MARRVESL  
☐ AEC  ☐ AVIT  ☐ COSM  ☐ FT  ☐ OESM  
☐ AERO  ☐ CA  ☐ (Esthetician)  ☐ IED  ☐ WELD  
☐ AJ  ☐ CARP  ☐ DISL  ☐ FIRE  ☐ RAC  
☐ Other, please specify: ________________________

(5) What type of degree/certificate are you receiving?  
☐ Certificate  ☐ Associate of Arts  ☐ Associate of Science  ☐ Associate of Applied Science  ☐ APC CENT

(6) How many semesters did it take to complete the Degree/certificate (including enrollment at other colleges)?  
☐ 1  ☐ 2  ☐ 3-4  ☐ 5-6  ☐ 7-8  ☐ 9 or more

(7) Other colleges attended (check all that apply):  
☐ UH-Manoa  ☐ Windward CC  ☐ Hawaii CC  ☐ HPU  
☐ Kapiolani CC  ☐ Maui CC  ☐ UH-Hilo  ☐ Chaminade  
☐ Leeward CC  ☐ Kauai CC  ☐ UH-West Oahu  ☐ BYU-Hawaii  
☐ Other, please specify: ________________________

(8) What are your AFTER GRADUATION PLANS?  
☐ Continue at HCC in another major  ☐ Immediate employment  
☐ Transfer to another college  ☐ Assume family responsibilities  
☐ Other, please specify: ________________________

(9) If you plan to transfer from HCC to another college, which college/university do you plan to attend? (check all that apply):  
☐ No transfer plan  ☐ Leeward CC  ☐ Kauai CC  ☐ UH-West Oahu  ☐ BYU-Hawaii  
☐ UH-Manoa  ☐ Windward CC  ☐ Hawaii CC  ☐ HPU  
☐ Kapiolani CC  ☐ Maui CC  ☐ UH-Hilo  ☐ Chaminade  
☐ Other, please specify: ________________________

(10) If you plan to transfer to another college, when do you plan to enroll at that college/university?  
☐ No transfer plans  ☐ Spring of 2010  ☐ Within 3 years  
☐ Summer or Fall of 2009  ☐ Summer or Fall of 2010  ☐ Unsure

(11) When you BEGAN at HCC, what was your ultimate academic goal?  
☐ Program Certificate  ☐ Associate of Applied Science  ☐ Bachelor's Degree  ☐ Doctorate or Professional Degree  
☐ Associate of Science  ☐ Associate of Arts  ☐ Master's Degree  
☐ Associate of Arts  ☐ Master's Degree  ☐ Doctorate or Professional Degree

(12) To what degree were your initial academic/program goals met at HCC?  
☐ Not at all  ☐ Partially  ☐ Mostly  ☐ Completely

(13) If your goals weren't met or changed while at HCC, please explain why/how: ________________________

(14) Now that you have COMPLETED this HCC program, what is your current ultimate academic goal?  
☐ Reached it- no further academic plans  ☐ Associate of Science  ☐ Master's Degree  
☐ Program Certificate  ☐ Associate of Arts  ☐ Doctorate or Professional Degree  
☐ Associate of Applied Science  ☐ Bachelor's Degree

Students who complete a college degree should be able to demonstrate competence in an array of general education areas. Please review your educational development and candidly report the degree of confidence you now have in your ability to demonstrate the following competencies/skills.

GENERAL EDUCATION SKILLS

(15) Effective reading (understand and critically evaluate what I read) ________________________

(16) Effective writing (write clearly, concisely, grammatically) ________________________

(17) Effective speaking (communicate clearly, logically, confidently) ________________________
Critical thinking/reasoning (evaluate the legitimacy of what is being stated) ................................................................. Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Mathematical knowledge/reasoning (ability to use mathematics to solve problems) ................................................................. Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Logical reasoning (apply symbolic reasoning skills to solve problems, evaluate arguments, and interpret information) ............. Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Scientific knowledge/reasoning (understand scientific method, data analysis, and basic statistics) ........................................ Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Social scientific knowledge/reasoning (individual development, social processes, institutions, cultures) ................................ Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Historical/cultural knowledge/reasoning (review current events with insights from the past and from various cultural perspectives) Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Aesthetic, artistic, or musical understanding/appreciation ........................................................................................................ Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Appreciation/tolerance for diversity (ethnic, gender, religious, sexual orientation, disabilities, etc...) ...................................... Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Computer literacy (using computers/software) .......................................................................................................................... Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Information retrieval ability (conducting library/online research) ............................................................................................. Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Ability to examine ethical issues .................................................................................................................................................. Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Ability to learn independently ...................................................................................................................................................... Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

EVALUATION OF OTHER ASPECTS OF THE COLLEGE

NA  Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Quality of counseling for my HCC classes/program .................................................................................................................. Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Quality of counseling to prepare for transfer to another college/university ............................................................................ Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Availability of courses you needed to complete the program/degree .......................................................................................... Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Scheduling of classes to complete the program and meet your needs ........................................................................................ Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Assistance you received from your faculty ................................................................................................................................. Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Personal attention you received in your classes ........................................................................................................................ Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Assistance/Service you received from HCC Admissions ............................................................................................................ Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Assistance/Service you received from HCC Records .................................................................................................................. Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Assistance you received from Financial Aid Office .................................................................................................................. Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Overall quality of classroom/program facilities and equipment ................................................................................................ Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Overall quality of the campus facilities/grounds (public places, etc.) ....................................................................................... Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Overall quality of the cafeteria ....................................................................................................................................................... Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Overall quality of the library ........................................................................................................................................................ Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Overall quality of student parking ................................................................................................................................................ Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Your feeling of personal security on the campus ........................................................................................................................ Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Overall quality of Career and Employment Center services .................................................................................................... Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Overall quality of the education you received at HCC ................................................................................................................ Poor  Fair  Good  Excellent

Overall, how challenging/rigorous was your HCC educational experience?

☐ Not at all challenging  ☐ Slightly challenging  ☐ Quite Challenging  ☐ Extremely challenging

What were some of the BEST aspects of your HCC Program?

What are the worst aspects of your HCC Program and what should we do to improve those aspects?

Mahalo for completing this survey!