

BYU
HAWAII

SPECIAL VISIT REPORT

In preparation for a special visit by WASC
March 2014



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I. NATURE OF THE INSTITUTION AND MAJOR CHANGES SINCE THE LAST WASC VISIT

Brigham Young University Hawaii (BYU–Hawaii) is a private religious institution owned and operated by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church). BYU–Hawaii is located 35 miles north of Honolulu on the island of Oahu, on a 100-acre campus in Laie, Hawaii. The surrounding area is rural, with a population of over 6,000. The LDS Church also owns and operates BYU-Idaho and BYU in Provo, Utah which have much larger, mainly North American enrollments. All three institutions share the same Board of Trustees.

BYU–Hawaii was founded in 1955 by David O. McKay, at that time the ninth president of the LDS Church. As a Church-sponsored institution, BYU–Hawaii’s mission reaches beyond academics “to integrate both spiritual and secular learning, and to prepare students with character and integrity who can provide leadership in their families, their communities, their chosen fields, and in building the kingdom of God.” The University has traditionally placed a blend of academic excellence and moral/spiritual character development at the center of the students’ educational experience. Originally providing academic and vocational training to students from Hawaii and the greater Pacific, BYU–Hawaii now serves over 2700 undergraduate students from 77 countries. In fall 2013, 42% of these students were international and 47% of these students were from the primary Asia-Pacific target area (including Hawaii). (See [2013 Quick Facts for fall](#)) The University’s goal is to have 50% of the students from the international target area, another 15% from Hawaii and the balance from the continental U.S. and other international countries. Recently, the Board of Trustees approved growth to 3200 full-time students by 2018.

In response to increased demands of enrollment growth, the University is making significant changes. One of the challenges BYU–Hawaii faces is making sure that international students are prepared both in academics and English fluency to successfully complete their bachelor’s degree. Several initiatives respond to these challenges:

- To provide more academic options for international students, two online degrees were recently approved by WASC. They are the Associate of Science in Business Management (ASBM) and the Associate of Arts and Sciences (AAS).
- To improve academic readiness, several hundred international students can now take English and general education courses online, receiving help from in-country mentors before they enroll at BYU–Hawaii.

Other significant changes include:

- Building plans for expansion to ensure adequate support for students, including the new Heber J. Grant multipurpose building, two new married-student apartment buildings, and three new residence halls for single students
- Creation of the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) to promote deep and transformative learning and align the culture of teaching to true student learning principles and practices
- To build career ties for students in their home areas, 25 on-campus student alumni chapters were organized and 192 students participated in international Career Connect trips in 11 countries during 2012-13
- New ALO in fall 2012, Rose Ram, the Associate Academic Vice-President for Assessment and Accreditation
- [Institutional Learning Outcomes](#) (ILOs) which align BYU–Hawaii’s teaching and learning goals to all courses being taught

II. STATEMENT OF REPORT PREPARATION

The principal authors of this report were Rose Ram, Paul Freebairn, and Colleen Tano. Rose serves as the ALO and is an Associate Vice President with primary responsibilities over institutional effectiveness, including institutional research, assessment, program review and accreditation. Paul Freebairn is Director of University Assessment and Testing. Colleen Tano is an Assistant Professor in Education. For the past year or so, the Institutional Effectiveness and Accreditation Steering Committee (IEAC) met once or twice per month to discuss accreditation matters and to plan for this report and the upcoming WASC visit. In August 2013, Colleen Tano was invited to join Rose Ram and Paul Freebairn as a principal author. Since then the writing team met weekly to discuss and prepare this report. They have sought and received valuable information from a variety of sources, including:

- Max Checketts, Vice President of Academics
- John Bailey, Dean of the College of Human Development
- David Buckner, Faculty Lead for the University Studies Major
- Michael Aldrich, University Librarian and Academic Support Director
- Jim Tueller, Professor of History in the College of Language, Culture, and Arts, and current Chair of the Faculty Advisory Council (FAC)
- Ellen Bunker, Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of English Language Teaching and Learning
- Jared Marcum, Director of the Online Department
- David Bybee, Associate Professor of Biology in the College of Math and Sciences, and the Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning
- Dean's Council
- Academic Council
- President's Council
- Institutional Effectiveness Accreditation Committee (IEAC)
- Semester-in-Residence Committee
- Recent academic program reviews (including University Studies and EIL)
- Institutional Research, Accreditation, Assessment, Testing & Evaluation (IRAATE) team

III. RESPONSE TO ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY THE COMMISSION AND THE LAST VISITING TEAM

A. Issues Mentioned in the July 10, 2012 Commission Letter and by the 2012 Visiting Team:

A.1 Accelerated learning environment and its impact on student learning

...by shortening the time for baccalaureate degree completion to nine semesters in three years, undue pressures are being placed on... students. It appears that this is especially affecting the large population of international students, who are mastering language and study skills while expected to work outside the classroom on campus and Church-related jobs for a substantial number of hours, and are failing to achieve their learning goals in this compressed time frame. [July 10, 2012 Commission Letter, p. 2]

BYU–Hawaii should re-evaluate the 9 semesters/3-year degree academic model to ensure that the compressed and accelerated learning environment is actually serving the student population. Currently, the rigidity of the

structure significantly constrains students' options, potentially negatively impacts student learning and preparedness, and appears to be contradictory to the BYU–Hawaii Framework for Student Learning. [2012 WASC Special Visit Team Report, p.23]

The Institutional Effectiveness Accreditation Committee (IEAC) in-cooperation with Lenard Huff, former chair of the Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC) and Jim Tueller, current chair of FAC, and the Institutional Research Accreditation Assessment Testing Evaluation (IRAATE) team worked together in examining this issue. The FAC played a key role in setting up the framework for this study. The IRAATE team helped by supplying additional data, plus further analyzing the issue from a longitudinal perspective. The IEAC team combined the work produced by FAC and IRAATE to write this section.

First, it is important to understand the evolution of the Nine [Semesters-in-Residence \(9 SiR\) policy](#).

A.1.1 Historical timeline and evolution of the current Nine Semesters-in-Residence (9 SiR) policy

2007: When President Wheelwright arrived in 2007 he was given 3 imperatives by the LDS Church Board of Trustees to continue to improve quality, lower costs to students and the University, and serve more students. As part of this mandate, the University was encouraged to better use physical facilities and in so doing improve the quality and productivity of the summer semester.

2009: Following up on an initiative to better use limited resources and with approval from the Board of Trustees in winter 2009, the President's Council implemented a program for students to complete their bachelor's degree in three years. Under the initial program students were required to complete 120 credits within 3 years (40 credit hours per year), requiring students to attend two semesters and two of three terms per year.

2010: The President's Council wanted to further understand the impact of this policy on students and their educational experience and requested that the IRAATE team conduct an analysis of data including GPA, credit hours, and enrollment. The average GPA increased slightly, average number of credits taken per year increased, and total enrollment increased. This study was also updated in 2013 (see [Academic Calendar power point 2013 update](#)).

2011: President's Council approved [Thru Put Guidelines and Rules](#) which reinforced the 40 credit hours per year principle, allowing students to qualify for University housing with 36 credit hours per year, and requiring that students have at least one summer semester included in their (Major Academic Plan) MAP. The IRAATE team continued to gather and update information for the academic calendar study.

2012: Early in 2012, administration met with students in information sessions to share the Nine Semesters-in-Residence program and policies and how these would impact students over the next several years (see [9 SiR Transition Procedure document](#)). This information was reported on page 8 of the [2012 WASC Special Visit Report](#).

2013: In working through the details and as the “three year graduation” model evolved, it became apparent to the administration that student lives and situations were unique and the program was difficult to enforce. During 2013, the President's Council modified this three-year degree to a more flexible approach, with each student having the same allotment of nine semesters in residence. This change, limiting “in-residence” semesters, provides students with additional educational experiences off-campus and does not drain limited campus housing resources. These off-campus experiences include such programs as internships, study abroad, and online-only semester options. This 9 SiR policy is far more flexible and allows students to be “mapped” in a way that works best for their personal circumstances.

It is therefore now possible for students to take more than four years to finish their nine semesters in residence. However, there are currently three exceptions: 1) I-WORK students (“[International Work Opportunity Return-ability Kuleana](#)”), 2) students who receive University academic scholarships and 3) students wishing to keep their campus housing. Regarding these students, University policy states:

Academic scholarships are based on academic performance and being registered for 14 credits during the semester the scholarship is received and the previous semester (the expectation is only for 12 credits during summer). So, those who are not full-time students in summer would not be eligible for an academic scholarship in fall. Those receiving the full I-WORK scholarship are expected to attend school year-round and meet their work requirements. To live in University Housing students must be enrolled full-time, carrying 12 credits in any semester in which they live in on-campus housing. After leaving full-time status and housing for a semester, except for a university-approved internship, the student will be placed at the end of the housing waiting list. After one semester of absence students must reapply for University Housing (*see [9 SiR website](#) and select “University Scholarships & I-WORK”*).

The policy for campus housing is particularly understandable. Because of demand for the heavily-subsidized rent, the married student housing (TVA) always has a waiting list, often between 100-200 people. Likewise, especially during fall and winter semesters, there are also waiting lists to get into the residence halls. This limited availability has led Housing to give priority for full-time students in residence.

A.1.2 Additional information on 9 SiR policy

When the last visit was made the 9 SiR policy was still very new and the impact was the strongest on the students whose plans had already been made. There was a grandfathering policy developed to allow people to graduate without any appeals with however many semesters they had by the end of 2012, and then to bring the number of semesters to 10 for those graduating by the end of 2013, with the expectation that everyone else could either make adjustments or have the option of completing an appeal to approve the number of semesters that would be necessary. If an appeal for a tenth semester is necessary, this appeal is reviewed by the Semesters-in-Residence Committee, composed of the Academic Vice President, Associate VP for Curriculum, Academic Advising Manager, and the Registrar. If there are extenuating circumstances and an appeal for an eleventh semester is needed by the student, the appeal is reviewed by the President’s Council.

At the same time, all departments began to look more closely at the sequencing of their coursework to make sure that it could be completed in nine semesters for new freshmen. During the past 18-months, there have been adjustments that were needed to be made for both individual student plans (MAPs) and also how courses were being offered by departments. Curriculum requirements balance the need for content and sequencing of courses to develop knowledge and skills relevant to the major with the reality of the semester allotment granted to the students.

Since the initial implementation of the policy this process to balance curriculum requirements with semester allotment has become routine. The University realized how critical it was to make sure that people came to BYU–Hawaii with clear expectations of what the terms of their enrollment would be. The information about the 9 SiR policy for new, returning, and transfer students was posted in the University Catalog and also a letter to new admits has had a link to the 9 SiR policy since winter 2012. The online University Catalog was improved in summer 2013 to more clearly reflect the policy. The updates included clearer explanations for the semester allotment to reinforce information that is sent to newly admitted students. New student orientation has had a 9 SiR component since summer 2012 and it has been developed even more to explain the rationale of an allotment of semesters starting fall 2012.

All students are required to have a Major Academic Plan (MAP) by the time they earn 30 credits. MAPPER (an online program which assists students in creating their MAP) is designed so that every student can see what courses they need and when they should graduate, which is linked to the graduation date in PeopleSoft. Almost all students are mapped for nine semesters, or they have made an appeal for an additional semester. This information is documented in the system and students are aware of expectations and their unique situation.

A.1.3 Summary of the analyses regarding the 9 SiR Impact on students

Even with changes in policies addressing the Board of Trustees mandate, academic key performance indicators (Retention, Graduation, and Placement) for BYU–Hawaii have remained stable for domestic, international (non-IWORK), and I-WORK students. Measures such as grades and placement rates indicate that student performance has not declined over the past five years. The average GPA for I-WORK students has remained steady and has consistently been lower than domestic and international (non-IWORK) students, even prior to the implementation of the 9 SiR policy. However, I-WORK students in core classes such as English 101 and Math 106 have a higher failure rate. This needs further study. To address this issue, the Academic Support Department (ASD) was organized in 2013 to work with at-risk student populations. Also, following the ELT Program Review, EIL is continuing to revise curriculum, refine exams and align instruction with program-wide standards to help our international students.

Based on finding from the NSSE 2013 survey, BYU–Hawaii Students are more conscientious of their use of time when it comes to both employment and preparation and studying for class. International first-year students generally spend more time preparing and studying for class than first-year domestic students. Both international and domestic seniors spend about the same amount of time preparing and studying for class. For employment on campus, both international first-year and senior students are spending slightly more time working than domestic students. This is consistent with findings from the Framework for Student Learning survey and time study during 2012.

iLead was developed as an online training program for all student employees at BYU–Hawaii. This program includes a variety of management and leadership resources to help students set priorities, more effectively use their time, and become self-directed and envisioning. The student development course (Student Development 101) helps orient students to BYU- Hawaii University life and contains several units devoted to time management. Central to this effort is that students understand the importance of doing rigorous study before class in order to be prepared to engage in class. Faculty members are committed to educating students of the expectation that they spend about 2 hours studying outside of class for every hour in class, and find creative and innovative ways to hold them accountable to do so. In addition, the Academic Support Department (ASD) has partnered with faculty to help students who are struggling academically and at risk of dropping out of the University.

Overall, NSSE, GSS, and focus group results show that student satisfaction has remained consistently high over the past five years. Although a majority of students are neutral or positive about how changes in policies and academic calendar have impacted their educational experience and would still recommend BYU–Hawaii to a friend, a significant number of students still feel that these changes have had a negative impact on their educational experience. Focus group and survey comments strongly suggest that students should be better informed about institutional policies, regulations, and their implementation. Even though the Catalog has been updated, the link to the 9 SiR policy has been included in letters to students, and the information on the website has been further clarified, the University needs to find more effective ways to communicate this information and provide venues for students to successfully navigate new policies that are put in place. The Associate AVP for Curriculum in conjunction with the Dean’s Council is working on ways to resolve this concern in 2014.

Acknowledging student and faculty concern about the well-being of I-WORK students, the President’s Council is working towards developing a semester-off (leave-of-absence) option. However, some challenges include: 1) the University’s current definition of “required” semesters (fall and winter) for the U.S. Government, meaning that the summer semester is the non-required semester which international students could take off; and 2) because I-WORK policy requires students to work at the Polynesian Cultural Center during the five-week mid-Summer break, taking summer as a semester off is not a good fit. The University is working to redefine the non-required semester as “variable” so that I-WORK students can have a semester break (other than during summer). I-WORK students could then take a “leave of absence” (LOA) sometime after their third semester, therefore fitting an LOA in to their academic MAP. They could also have an internship semester during their last two or three semesters, thus pacing themselves rather than being under the constraint of nine semesters in three years. It is likely that the University would stipulate the LOA semester for I-WORK students be during a semester other than summer.

Though changing the official definition of the “required” semesters has not happened yet, the University is proactively finding ways to offer breaks from semesters in residence. In addition to an LOA option, an online-only semester is being developed that students can opt for during a semester other than summer. Right now this would be by exception rather than as a general policy, but the University is preparing to have a more flexible framework within which I-WORK students can have both their nine semesters in residence and also take breaks.

A.1.3.1 Details of the analyses regarding the impact of the 9 SiR policy on students

Working with IEAC and the IRAATE team, the FAC studied the effect of policies such as 9 SiR and the current academic calendar on the students’ educational experience. The first part of this section of the report looks at non-native speakers of English. After which, the report will look at an analysis of domestic, international non-IWORK, and I-WORK students using data requested by FAC and additional data supplied by the IRAATE team to help analyze the issue from a longitudinal perspective.

Students who are not native English speakers are among this at-risk population. During 2013, the English Language Teaching and Learning (ELT) Department, which includes English as an International of Language (EIL), conducted a self-study in preparation for their program review. This self-study addressed EIL proficiency levels. (See [2013 ELT Department Self-Study](#)) These findings are analyzed in more detail in the following section.

A.1.3.2 EIL program proficiency levels

Following the reduction from 24 to 18 credits allowed students in the Advanced Level of the EIL program, data showed a sharp drop in SLEP and TOEFL scores (see [2013 ELT Department Self-Study](#), p. 12, Table 1.3). This drop in proficiency markers was a cause of concern. The EIL program recently changed the manner in which it assesses some of its outcomes by placing greater emphasis on balancing internal measures of English proficiency (course final exams) with external measures (such as the SLEP and the TOEFL), using these known external exams as benchmarks. In addition, data show that some students—during these times of curricular change and pressure to move students quickly through the program—were being advanced through the program even though they were not gaining the required level of proficiency. In fall 2012, TOEFL results indicated that students were, on average, one EIL level below their BYU–Hawaii counterparts prior to the credit reduction. This analysis by the EIL faculty members has led to their own recommendations. They implemented three changes to help resolve this issue:

- Increased English admission requirements. TOEFL scores have been raised from a minimum composite score of 59 to 61. The University is continuing research to track what might be appropriate levels for admission to BYU–Hawaii and working on internal EIL testing to be more predictive of English language ability.
- Initiated an academic support function that specifically targets students who are at risk. There are four full time staff contacting and counseling students in this group in an effort to avoid problems or address solutions quickly.
- Met and counseled with all on-campus students studying English as a second language to help them take their early University experience more seriously and to work as hard as will be expected of any student. The students have responded with increased effort. In rare cases where their academic skills are inadequate or language acquisition has fossilized, the EIL program has tried to find alternatives to continuing in an unproductive effort, or have sent them home.

Further analysis by the EIL faculty has led to looking at time students have in EIL based on the current academic calendar. Although most international students can graduate within the nine semesters in residence even with EIL coursework, those who place too low and start in Intermediate Levels 1 or 2 have an appeals process that grants them more time. The EIL faculty members are still concerned and feel that less time in class contributes to less progress in English language skill development. With this knowledge, the EIL program is increasing its efforts to support language learning within the tighter credit constraints, including such things as more in-service sessions for teachers, more training for student tutors, the appointment of an assessment coordinator, the addition of a grammar class, and more direct teaching of vocabulary. Some improvements have been made, although current EIL student scores on the SLEP and TOEFL are not as high as their pre-reduction levels. Another factor in the drop in scores could be attributed to curricular changes that focus more on integrated skill classes (at the Advanced level) and a greater emphasis on communicative skills instead of skill-specific instruction that lends itself more towards SLEP and TOEFL preparation. The self-study report from EIL proposed the following program quality improvement actions:

- Continue to revise curriculum to more clearly articulate course objectives for all skill areas at all proficiency levels. This will be undertaken one skill area (listening/speaking, reading, and writing) at a time across the curriculum over the next two to three years. Vocabulary and grammar learning will be included as part of each skill area review and revision in the curriculum.
- Following revision of course objectives, continue to refine level final exams to better reflect these course objectives.
- As revisions are made to course objectives and final exams, work to ensure that instruction and assessment are aligned with program-wide standards. (See *2013 ELT Department Self-Study*, p.34)

A.1.3.3 Analyses of data on domestic, international (non-IWORK), and I-WORK students

Part of this study requested by the FAC focused on analyzing a variety of data using measures such as GPA, failure rates, credit overloads, and grades in critical GE courses. The IRAATE team analyzed data on retention rates, recent placement data, and key questions asked in the Graduating Student Survey (GSS) and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). In 2013, under the direction of the FAC, focus groups were also conducted with students and faculty to assess their feelings about the current climate of learning on campus.

Summary of FAC requested data analyses:

Average Annual GPA
(fall and winter semesters only):

The average annual GPA for all students has stayed virtually the same during the past six years. The average GPA for domestic students also remained relatively stable, but for international (non-IWORK) students the average GPA has increased slightly, while GPA for international I-WORK students remain the same. *(See Table 1 below)*

Percent of Failing Grades
(fall and winter semesters only):

The percent of grades that were failing has not changed very much over the past five years. For all students, there was a slight decrease in the number of failing grades. For domestic students, there was a slight increase. For international non-IWORK students, there was also a decrease however, for I-WORK students, there was a slight increase. *(See Table 1 below)*

Percent of Students with Credit Overload
(taking more than 18-credit hours in fall or winter):

Although students are taking on average about .5 credits more per semester now than they did five years ago, there is little evidence that student credit overloads are increasing in order for students to graduate in nine semesters. For all students, the number of students with credit overloads has increased slightly. For domestic students, the percentage decreased, but for international non-IWORK students, the percent increased. The largest increase was for I-WORK students. *(See Table 1 below)*

Percent of Students with Failing Grades in Select GE Courses
(fall and winter semesters only):

The FAC evaluated actual students' grades to determine how students do in similar GE courses, such as English 101, 201 and 315, History 201 and 202, Biology 100, Math 106 and 110, and IDS courses which almost all students must take as part of their GE core. Overall for all students, there was a slight increase of failing grades in these GE courses. For domestic students, there was also a slight increase. For international non-IWORK students there was a decrease, and for I-WORK students there was a slight increase in percent of failing grades for select GE courses. *(See Table 1 below)* Also, I-WORK students particularly in core classes, such as English 101 and Math 106 have a higher failure rate, but not in other GE courses analyzed. *(See [Failing Grades in Select GE Courses](#))*

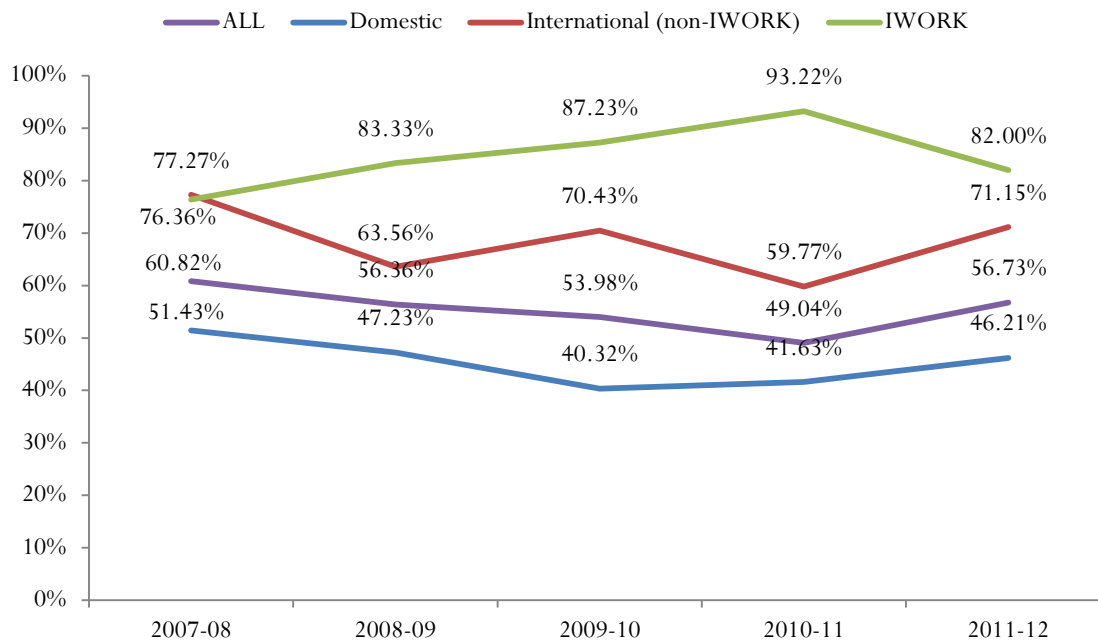
Table 1 - Summary of FAC Requested Data

	Overall		Domestic		International (Non-IWORK)		I-WORK	
	2007-08	2012-13	2007-08	2012-13	2007-08	2012-13	2007-08	2012-13
Average Annual GPA	2.99%	3.04%	3.1%	3.07%	2.95%	3.14%	2.76%	2.76%
% of Failing Grades	5.57%	5.26%	4.45%	4.84%	5.71%	3.91%	8.05%	8.75%
% with Credit Overload	1.59%	2.35%	2.39%	2.22%	0.94%	2.67%	0.65%	2.29%
% Failing in GE Courses	4.39%	5.09%	3.35%	4.64%	4.42%	3.80%	6.88%	8.64%

Placement: 12-month placement rates for the past two years have remained fairly steady. Domestic students placed in graduate school increased slightly from 11% in 2010-11 to 13% in 2011-12, and for all international students, placement also increased slightly from 9% in 2010-11 to 10% in 2011-12. Placement in gainful employment for domestic students increased from 44% in 2010-11 to 51% in 2011-12. However, for all international students, placement in gainful employment actually decreased slightly from 54% in 2010-11 to 53% in 2011-12.

Retention: Historically, a large majority of international students continue to the second year at BYU–Hawaii. Analyzing the last five complete years of retention data available (2007-08 to 2011-12), for all students the rate decreased from 60.82% in 2007-08 to 56.73% in 2011-12. For domestic students, the retention rate decreased from 51.43% in 2007-08 to 46.21% in 2011-12, and for international non-IWORK students, the rate also decreased from 77.27% in 2007-08 to 71.15% in 2011-12. However, for I-WORK students continuing to the second year, there was an increase from 76.08% in 2007-08 to 82.00% in 2011-12. (See Graph 1 below)

Graph 1 – Retention to Second Year: 2007-08 to 2011-12 Freshman Cohorts



A possible reason for the decline in 2012-13 was the lowering of missionary age in October 2012 to 18 for young men and 19 for young women. Over the past four years, averages of 15% of students have left after their first-year of college to serve full-time missions for the Church. The University expects this number to rise for the 2012-13 cohort.

Graduation: The number of students graduating each year with a bachelor’s degree has steadily increased. (See Table 2) For all students, the number graduating increased from 520 in 2007-08 to 663 in 2012-13. For domestic students, the number graduating increased from 277 in 2007-08 to 396 in 2012-13. For international non-IWORK students, the number graduating increased from 129 in 2007-08 to 144 in 2012-13. For I-WORK students, the number graduating increased from 114 in 2007-08 to 123 in 2012-13. The total number of graduates was 773 in 2012-13. Of these, 13.97% or 108 were awarded an associate degree, of which 85 were given to domestic students. Of those who were awarded an associate degree in 2012-13, 12.96% are enrolled and still pursuing a bachelor’s degree here at BYU–Hawaii.

Table 2 – Degrees Awarded: 2007-08 to 2012-13

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Bachelors	520	456	521	544	694	663
Associates			24	44	62	108
Teaching Certificates	12	10	15	6	4	2
Grand Total	532	466	560	594	760	773

Another way to look at the graduation rate is to see how long students actually take to graduate. The following table (*see Table 3 below*) shows the average number of semesters that students needed to graduate, based on when they were admitted to BYU–Hawaii and whether they are domestic, international (non-IWORK) or I-WORK students. For the 2012-2013 graduates, the average number of semesters for international (non-IWORK) students was 10.72 compared to 16.70 prior to 2000; for I-WORK students it was 10.33 semesters in 2012-13, compared to 13.00 prior to 2000. Overall, the number of semesters students take to graduate has been decreasing, indicating that students are focused and using valuable time much more efficiently in completing their degrees.

Table 3 – Average Semesters to Degree for Freshmen by Entry Year: 2012-13 Graduates

By Student Entry Year to BYU–Hawaii

		2012-13 Grads Total Average	Before 2000	2000-08	2009 and later
Bachelors	Domestic	9.73	13.69	10.20	8.91
	International (non-IWORK)	10.72	16.70	10.79	10.08
	I-WORK	10.33	13.00	11.39	9.70
Bachelors Total		10.11	14.71	10.55	9.43
Associates	Domestic	4.81		6.50	4.71
	International (non-IWORK)	5.43			5.43
	I-WORK	7.90		10.17	6.93
Associates Total		5.23		8.07	4.97

GSS survey: For the past five years, the Graduating Student Survey (GSS) was given to all graduating students about two weeks prior to their graduation. In the survey they were asked, “How did the changes in the academic calendar and efforts to help students graduate faster effect your personal educational experience at BYU–Hawaii?” Although there were a few minor changes in the wording of the question during the past 5 years, responses to this open-ended question may be helpful.

For domestic students, positive responses remained relatively stable at an average of about 26% over the past five years, while neutral responses increased and negative responses decreased. It appears that international students had a larger percentage of negative responses with an average of about 38% over the past five years, but this number seems to be decreasing. In analyzing individual comments, students who were positive about these changes mentioned graduating

faster, focusing more on their academics, and saving money. Students who were neutral about these changes indicated that they would have graduated in about the same amount of time anyway. Students who were negative about these changes mentioned lack of availability of classes when needed, having to attend summer semester to keep scholarship and housing, feeling rushed and pressured to complete their degree, and for international students, time spent in EIL counting against time allotted to finish their degree. (See Table 4 below, which provides responses by year to this question in the Graduating Student Survey)

Table 4 – Graduating Student Survey (GSS) Results

	Response	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Domestic	Positive	28%	31%	25%	23%	23%
	Neutral	17%	19%	36%	35%	30%
	Negative	56%	50%	39%	33%	43%
	N	115	294	380	496	398
International	Positive	45%	39%	30%	37%	35%
	Neutral	24%	14%	29%	26%	16%
	Negative	31%	47%	41%	33%	39%
	N	83	249	261	282	280

Looking at the 2013 GSS survey responses, data was filtered to view only responses from students who rated the impact of these changes on their BYU–Hawaii educational experience as somewhat or mostly negative. Of the 307 students that responded negatively to these changes, 67.8% agreed or strongly agreed that they would recommend this University to a friend, and 73.9% agreed or strongly agreed that they were generally satisfied with their educational experience at BYU–Hawaii. Analysis of the GSS data is on-going and used to provide feedback to campus departments and the administration. Selected data from the GSS is included in academic and co-curricular program reviews. All departments have [access to GSS data](#) on the University website and many include this data in their annual assessment plans and also use this data to support their annual Stewardship and Budget Reviews.

2012 Framework for Student Learning and time study: At the request of the Associate Academic Vice President for Instruction, the IRAATE team was given the task to benchmark current student learning activities, opinions and time usage in order to better understand how students engage in learning and to measure the amount of time spent on weekly activities. A survey instrument was developed, field-tested with students, and further modified to make improvements. 1092 students were randomly selected to participate in the Framework for Student Learning (Framework) study during winter and summer 2012, with a response rate of 29% (n=313). During winter semester, the first half of summer, and fall semester 2012, a time study was also conducted where a randomly selected group of students logged their time usage for an entire week (n=105). These students also took the Framework survey prior to logging their time.

Based on the analysis of the data from the 2012 Framework survey and time usage study, students underestimated the amount of time spent doing assignments and studying outside of class. A t-test showed statistically significant ($p < .05$) results for both summer and fall semesters. Students predicted spending about an average of 12 hours per week, but actually recorded spending on average about 16 hours per week studying outside of class and 5.6 hours per week preparing for class. Domestic students estimated 6.1 hours per week on average preparing for class and 10.6 hours doing assignments and studying outside of class. While international students estimated spending 7.7 hours per week on average preparing for class and 13.5 hours doing assignments and studying outside of class. For on-campus employment, domestic students indicated working on average 12.7 hours per week, while international students worked 15.6 hours per week. Students also underestimated the amount of time they spent on exercise and entertainment, with t-tests

showing a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) between their predicted and actual time usage for all three semesters. Students predicted spending about an average of 31 hours per week spent on exercise and entertainment, but recorded in their time logs spending about an average of 43 hours per week.

NSSE survey: On the 2013 NSSE survey, 84% of first-year and 86% of senior BYUH students rated their overall educational experience as excellent or good (slightly lower than the national average of 87% and 88% respectively). 87% of first-year and 83% of senior students would probably or definitely attend BYU–Hawaii again, compared to the national average of 85% and 83% respectively. Even though the proportion of BYU–Hawaii students at the upper end of the scale is slightly higher than the national average, the overall mean score on this question for BYUH seniors was 3.2, which is significantly lower than the national average of 3.4. Also, in analyzing survey responses about on-campus employment, first-year domestic students spent on average 6.1 hours per week working and senior domestic students spent 12.7 hours. First-year international students spent on average 8.1 hours per week working, while senior international students spent 13.1 hours.

In the area of Academic Challenge (a NSSE Engagement Indicator), for first-year students, the average weekly class preparation time was 14.9 hours (compared to 14.3 nationally) and for seniors 16.6 hours (compared to 15.0 nationally). Also, in analyzing survey responses about class preparation, first-year domestic students spent on average 14.6 hours studying per week and senior domestic students spent 16.7 hours per week. First-year international students spent on average 15.9 hours per week studying, while senior international students spent 16.5 hours. For their courses, students reported a weekly average reading time of 9.1 hours (first-year) and 9.4 hours (seniors), compared to a national average of 6.4 and 6.9 hours respectively. The average number of pages assigned in papers, reports and other writing assignments for first-year students was 60.1 and for seniors 107.3, compared to a national average of 46.5 and 80.0 respectively.

Under High Impact Practices (*see High Impact Practices Report*), 73% of BYU–Hawaii seniors participated in two or more high impact practices, such as service learning, research with faculty, internships, culminating experiences, etc. (substantially higher than the national average of 60%). 52% of BYUH seniors completed a culminating experience, like a capstone course or project (compared to 45% nationally), and 35% worked with faculty on a research projects (compared to 27% nationally). 49% of BYUH seniors held a formal leadership role in a student organization or group (compared to 31% nationally).

In the area explaining experiences with faculty (*see NSSE 2013 Snapshot*), first-year students rated effective teaching practices (such as providing prompt and detailed feedback on tests and assignments, clearly explaining course goals and requirements, providing feedback on work in progress, using examples to explain difficult points, and teaching in an organized way) significantly lower than the national average. Seniors rated the quality of interactions with faculty significantly higher than the national average.

Finally, some trends from NSSE 2010 (*see NSSE13 and NSSE10 Frequencies and Statistical Comparisons*)

- *Overall educational experience* (2010 FY=3.24 average, SR=3.31; 2013 FY=3.2, SR=3.2, based on a 4-point scale with 4 being “excellent”)
- *Would students return to BYU–Hawaii?* (2010 FY=3.42, SR=3.34; 2013 FY=3.4, SR=3.2, based on a 4-point scale with 4 being “definitely yes”)

Focus groups: In May 2013, researchers from IRAATE conducted focus groups with four categories of students: scholarship students, students wanting to keep their campus housing, I-WORK students, and “control” students who had no financial or housing benefits with stipulations attached.

The student focus groups covered a number of questions regarding their educational experience at BYU–Hawaii. Students in the focus groups were very positive about the quality of their professors, the religious environment and the cultural diversity on campus. Though focus group participants were few and may not be representative of the large number of international students on campus, some expressed concern about the 9 SiR policy and that this policy may restrict students from having a social life or attending different activities on campus. Pressures mentioned were: EIL students having limitations placed on their time to graduate, international students adhering to this policy while also following the rules of being an I-WORK student, and students having to accelerate through school to complete their degree. Other students expressed concern that some majors require more time than others and that this should be taken into consideration in formulating policy. (*Student focus group reports will be available in the Team Room.*)

In May 2013, the FAC organized and conducted two faculty focus groups with a total of 18 of 121 faculty members participating. Faculty members were asked to evaluate the current climate of learning and scholarship on campus, for both students and faculty. They expressed appreciation for the support the University has given for research and teaching, and were particularly excited about the new Heber J. Grant Building and prospects for further University growth. With a relatively small faculty-to-student ratio and support for Student Research Associates (SRA), faculty members felt that motivated students have opportunities that are rare for undergraduate students. However, they also felt that with the 9 SiR policy, students: may not have enough time to develop, may feel pushed, stressed, or tired, may struggle to maintain balanced lives, limiting their ability to develop leadership skills and participate in extracurricular activities, and that it is difficult for students to complete requirements for their desired degrees. They felt that current policies are especially hard on more vulnerable students, particularly I-WORK students, and that students have very little flexibility or breathing room. Students cannot afford to make mistakes, change majors and find themselves.

Faculty made it clear, though, that a policy requiring students to finish their education in nine semesters is perfectly reasonable. The problem was in requiring some students to finish in three years but not others, and that this was unfair. Some of these faculty members may not have been aware that this practice was changed in winter 2012 to “nine semesters-in-residence” for all students, which allows greater student flexibility, and that the University is developing a more flexible “leave of absence” (LOA) policy for students to take breaks after their second or third semester and also participate in internships. (*Faculty focus group report will be available in the Team Room.*)

In summary, we have examined institutional data and have conducted several focus groups with students and faculty. Since the focus group participants were limited in numbers and may not be representative of a broader group of students and faculty, we need further analysis of the data to address the effects of policies, such as 9 SiR and the current University calendar. We will work more closely with FAC in winter 2014 to share and analyze data with the general faculty and determine recommendations. In 2014, we will be administering the HERI faculty survey with some additional questions added that relate to these issues. Results will be available sometime in August and will be compared to results from the [2011 HERI faculty survey](#).

A.1.3.4 Reflection on the impact of the 9 SiR policy on students

More students are graduating and taking less time to do so. Academic key performance indicators have remained stable for most students. Measures such as grades and placement rates indicate that student performance has not declined. All of these results speak to academic efficiency, addressing two of the Board of Trustees’ imperatives to the administration.

However, in the course of this self-study, the University has realized that I-WORK students have had and will continue to have academic challenges at BYU–Hawaii. The Academic Support Department (ASD) has partnered with EIL faculty and will play a key role in helping students who are struggling academically and at risk of dropping out of the University. BYU–Hawaii will continue to evaluate TOEFL scores for admission requirements with the intent to make adjustments appropriate to meet the educational needs of students from the target areas. Although student satisfaction has remained consistently high, as indicated by GSS, NSSE and focus group feedback from students, there are still enough complaints about the pressure students feel to warrant further investigation. Their comments reveal that regulations tied to the 9 SiR policy and how these regulations are communicated and implemented are at the heart of students’ concern. In the evaluation of all this information, it is apparent that the challenge may not be the policy, but the regulations that are put forth and how they are implemented. Through the LOA and online-only semester options, BYU–Hawaii will continue to explore greater flexibility for I-WORK, housing, and scholarship students. The University recognizes that some students come to campus more at risk than others, acknowledges this challenge, and is committed to evaluating and improving current processes that impact students.

A.2 Students better informed about the need for careful planning

BYU–Hawaii should ensure that both prospective and current students are better informed through advising processes about the need for careful academic planning in addition to the rationale for curricular requirements. [2012 WASC Special Visit Team Report, p. 24 item #3]

When the last visit was made the 9 SiR policy was still very new and the impact was the strongest on the students whose MAPS had already been made. There was a grandfathering policy developed to allow people to graduate without any appeals with however many semesters they had by the end of 2012 and then to bring it to 10 semesters for those graduating the end of 2013, with the expectation that everyone else could either make adjustments or have the option of completing an appeal to approve the number of semesters that would be necessary. The students were informed in multiple ways by the President’s Council: special meetings with faculty and students, announcements, President’s Q&A sessions, the nine semester-in-residence website, and in the admissions process, new students were informed of the 9 SiR policy prior to admissions.

Since the initial implementation, this has become routine. The University realized how critical it was to make sure that people came to BYU–Hawaii with clear expectations of what the terms of their enrollment would be. The information about the 9 SiR policy for new, returning, and transfer students was posted in the Catalog and a letter to newly admitted students has had a link to the 9 SiR policy since winter 2012. The website was improved in summer 2013 to be even more focused on this audience and to explain the reasons for the allotment of semesters. To reinforce the information that goes out in the letters to the new students, new student orientation has had a 9 SiR component since summer 2012 and it has been developed even more to explain the rationale of an allotment of semesters starting fall 2012.

Academic advisors have carefully worked with students over the last few years to successfully map their academic plan. By 30 credit hours, each student must have a curriculum “MAP” approved by their academic adviser which helps them to know courses needed for graduation and when to take these courses. The self-help program “MAPPER” is built so that every student can see when they should graduate as they plan their MAP; this is tied to the graduation date in PeopleSoft. Almost all students are mapped for 9 semesters or have made an appeal for an additional semester and that is documented. All students are aware of the University’s expectations and their individual situation. In the 2013 Graduating Student Survey, 74% of all students rated their personal experiences with their academic advisers as good, very good or excellent.

At the same time all the departments began to look more closely at the sequencing of their coursework to make sure that it can be done in 9 semesters for new freshmen. There were adjustments that needed to be made to both individual plans and also to how courses were offered (see example of [approved Biochemistry curriculum changes](#)). Curriculum requirements balance the need for content and sequencing to develop knowledge and skills relevant to the major with the reality of the semester allotment granted to students.

A.2.a Adequacy of support for academic programs and alignment of resources

As BYU–Hawaii continues to implement its plan for enrollment growth, it should pay careful attention to the effect on the institution’s culture of stewardship, intimate sense of community, and ability to meet the emerging needs of its students, staff, faculty, and facilities. [2012 WASC Special Visit Team Report, p. 24 item #4] The Commission expects BYU–Hawaii to undertake a careful analysis of the impact of resetting its financial priorities and to make changes that will assure the adequacy of support for the academic programs and the alignment of resources to promote student achievement. [Commission Letter July 10, 2012, p. 3]

As the visiting team recognized, this is not an issue of financial viability, since the institutions financial measures are all well above average for higher education. The University has and will continue to look at use of resources to improve the overall experience of the student as they study and learn at BYU–Hawaii.

A.2.b Impact of policies on faculty development

“...by shortening the time for baccalaureate degree completion to nine semesters in three years, undue pressures are being placed on faculty...” [Commission Letter, July 10, 2012, p. 2] “...faculty contracts that call for increased teaching loads restrict time for professional development and other necessary academic work, such as assessment and advising. [Commission Letter, July 10, 2012, p. 3] BYU–Hawaii should continue its efforts to publicize and explain the new policies regarding faculty development and criteria for continuing faculty status and rank advancement, and begin now to develop means of evaluating the effectiveness of those policies in the coming years. [2012 WASC Special Visit Team Report p. 24 item #5]

BYU–Hawaii has taken a number of steps to strengthen our faculty development program and faculty awareness of available resources. Each year faculty members meet in an annual stewardship interview with their respective college dean. During that interview, faculty report on their goals for the coming year and progress with the previous year’s goals (see [Annual Stewardship Interview Form](#)). During this interview faculty members are made aware of resources that they can draw on as they plan. To obtain the resources faculty members submit a [faculty development proposal](#). The resources available for faculty development include: one course release a year from their dean; one course release every third year from the Academic Vice President; academic leave at full pay for a semester and half pay for 2 or 3 semesters; and professional development monies available by application through the Academic Vice President’s office (the faculty has yet to use all of the funds allotted annually).

To cover course releases, the University draws on part-time faculty to teach some of the face-to-face and online classes. Faculty use these resources to conduct research, write papers for conference presentations and books, work on improving their pedagogy, such as developing hybrid or flipped classes, attending conferences, pursuing certifications, updating their content, extending the area of their expertise, and so forth.

During the annual stewardship interview, college deans focus on upcoming continuing faculty status (CFS) and rank advancement applications. Faculty members are encouraged to review the criteria for CFS and rank advancement and the faculty member and dean discuss progress and any concerns in the upcoming application.

Another avenue for communicating with faculty about professional development opportunities is through the new faculty orientation program. At the beginning of each year, new faculty members meet in a half-day seminar to discuss faculty life at BYU–Hawaii. A segment of that program covers the expectations for faculty to pursue a program of faculty development that will keep them current in their discipline as well as regularly improving their craft as a teacher. The new faculty member is also informed of the annual stewardship review, course release and academic leaves, and financial resources available to them for professional development.

Progress and data: The following data accounts for the extent to which faculty have participated in course releases and academic leaves during 2013.

- 60% of the faculty (67 of 116) received a course release from their college dean.
- Three percent (four faculty members) requested and received a second course release from the Academic Vice President. However, the budget funds are available to give a second course release to 38 faculty members each year (33% of the faculty).
- Taking number one and two above into account, there were a total of 154 course releases available during 2013 and 71 of them were used (46%).
- Finally, each year the University budgets for five academic leaves. In 2013 all five academic leaves were granted, one on half-salary for a full year and four on full salary for a semester.

Analysis: The resources available for professional development are not being fully utilized. Specifically, 54% of the available course releases were not claimed in 2013. On a brighter note, 100% of the resources available for academic leave were used. It is imperative that the academic leadership in concert with the faculty pursue a pathway that maximizes the use of professional development resources. Doing so will provide the support faculty need to stay active in their disciplines and provide a robust and dynamic faculty in the coming years. The Administration continues to track and monitor faculty participation in important development activities.

More effective use of professional development resources: There appear to be two primary impediments to faculty more fully participating in professional development opportunities. First, due to the rural setting of the University and the small population, there are a limited number of part-time faculty members that the University can draw on to cover classes when full-time faculty members receive a release. As a result, department chairs and deans are not at liberty to release faculty from courses that must be taught, particularly with the emphasis on course availability and timely graduations. Second, it is possible that some faculty prefer to teach their full course load each year rather than take a course release. Preparing a faculty development plan and being held accountable for executing this plan may be perceived by faculty as more difficult than simply teaching one's courses.

Action plan: First, the strategic plan of the University is to address these challenges with online classes and intervention through deans and department chairs. Though there are a limited number of part-time faculty members available in the area, there is an abundance of online part-time instructors available nationally. As the online program continues to grow, department chairs and deans will be in a better position to fill vacancies created by faculty releases through online adjunct instructors.

Second, the annual stewardship interviews that faculty have with their deans will be a key to challenging and supporting all faculty to have a plan for using available course release each year. Central to the mission of the University is the quality of student learning and teaching. BYU–Hawaii is committed to providing meaningful professional development opportunities in order to preserve a vibrant faculty capable of delivering deep and transformative learning experiences for students and staying active and current in their disciplines.

Third, the new Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) which began in fall of 2013 is providing excellent development resources for both new and seasoned faculty members. For example, the CTL is documenting innovative teaching methods that are already happening on campus, videotaping them and posting them online via the BYU–Hawaii YouTube channel. They are also providing expertise from both off- and on-campus to help faculty shift from standard teaching modes to more active learning strategies. Among other initiatives, the CTL has developed: weekly workshops, monthly faculty teaching and learning study groups with assigned reading and discussions, and is currently working on developing a symposium on teaching and learning with three keynote speakers and a variety of different venues. In a general faculty meeting early this semester, faculty will be invited to participate in three upcoming events, one of which is a five-week seminar on teaching and learning that meets 2.5 hours each week. To encourage participation, faculty members who complete the seminar receive a \$500 stipend. Last fall the CTL ran a similar seminar devoted to ESL issues in teaching and learning, and filled all available seats. A website rich with resources for innovative pedagogies on teaching and learning is being developed by the CTL and will be used as a means to effectively communicate upcoming events and opportunities.

Finally, the annual stewardship interview with the dean provides an excellent opportunity to insure that faculty are progressing toward Continued Faculty Status (CFS) as well as rank advancement. The CFS and rank advancement policies and document are covered as part of new faculty orientation. The annual stewardship interview provides the opportunity to review faculty progress and help faculty align their goals with professional development resources available. Results are being analyzed by the Academic VP and are being discussed in the Dean’s Council, by the President with other LDS University Presidents, and with the Commissioner’s Office. This item will be on the Dean’s Council agenda again during winter 2014.

A.3 Increase of online enrollment by resident students and its impact on learning

Larger numbers of credits are being taken online by residential students at least in part because the condensed academic calendar does not allow students to fit required classes into their schedules. No analysis has been undertaken to understand how these changes may be affecting learning. [July 10, 2012, Commission Letter, p. 3]

When the WASC Review Team visited our campus in 2012, the Online Department was in its beginning phase. More residential students are now choosing online courses, at least in part because more online courses are being offered and because online courses allow greater flexibility in their schedules. Feedback from students indicates positive educational experiences in the online program, equal to face-to-face classes. Although most classes can be taken on campus, one of the primary purposes of the BYU–Hawaii online program is to give students increased degrees of freedom as they navigate toward a timely graduation. The first round of initiatives to help students was executed by creating a large range of GE classes that are broadly prescribed by the student body. At the same time, a select few major courses that were deemed to be bottle-neck courses in a program were also put online, such as Economics 201 and Biology 100.

With this first stage of online courses having recently been completed, BYU–Hawaii now has asked the Online Department in conjunction with University research and assessment to evaluate the degree to which students are finding

online options helpful in providing a pathway to a timely graduation. This information will be shared with the Academic Council, the Dean's Council, Academic Departments, and with the faculty who will review the curriculum for online courses. Recently, the University has also begun the second phase of the online program. In this phase, department chairs and deans have been asked to be even more intentional in developing an online strategic plan. In that plan, departments and colleges are encouraged to extend even further their use of online classes in order to accomplish two purposes: to broaden the use of online classes in students' efforts to complete their majors within nine semesters and, at the same time, consider key courses that will need to be offered online in order for faculty to receive more annual course release time to insure professional development opportunities.

As deans and department chairs intentionally orchestrate these two key objectives by leveraging online resources, both students and faculty will be more effective at accomplishing their objectives. The Dean's Council will analyze the collected data and work in conjunction with academic departments and the Online Department to make better leverage of online resources to help both students and faculty.

In recent student ratings of courses during winter 2013, online courses fared well in comparison to on-campus classes. On a seven-point scale (with 7 being excellent), Biology 100 was rated 5.6 on campus compared to 5.5 online; Communication 110 was rated 5.5 on campus compared to 5.3 online; English 101 evaluations were both rated the same, 6.4; History 201 was rated 5.7 on campus versus 5.6 online; and Music 102 was rated 5.3 on campus compared to 5.7 online. The only major difference was History 201 which had an average rating of 5.4 on campus as compared to 4.4 online. Online EIL courses were also rated similarly to on-campus courses: EIL 223 (on campus 6.4/online 6.7); EIL 227 (on campus 6.6/online 6.5); and EIL 229 (both on campus and online ratings were 6.6).

A.4 Advancement of learning assessment and program review processes

BYU–Hawaii should continue to focus on advancing its learning assessment and program review processes, including the incorporation of clear and measurable learning outcomes in course syllabi. [2012 WASC Special Visit Team Report, item #6 p. 24]

During the 2012 WASC visit, the visiting team commended BYU–Hawaii for its assessment efforts and encouraged BYU–Hawaii to “continue to focus on advancing its learning assessment and program review processes.” The University continues to sustain assessment of student learning by curricular and co-curricular units. Several decisions by the administration have made this possible.

a. Student learning has become more central to the Program Review process for academic departments. Along with the dean and department chair, a member of the Institutional Effectiveness and Accreditation Committee (IEAC) also reviews the department's self-study and provides helpful feedback. Departments are provided better information on writing their self-study and preparing for the review, including an annual kick-off meeting with all departments being reviewed during the following year. Visiting teams are also provided more focused direction on what to review, especially in connection with student learning and program level learning outcomes. The Associate AVP for Assessment and Accreditation is much more actively involved in each team visit and is on the ground providing them support during the visit. This has been extremely helpful in coordinating efforts with departments and the review team, and meeting their needs, including recommendations to meet with faculty as a group instead of individually, and to meet with more students in class settings during the visit. Recent program review team reports, such as in English, Exercise and Sport Science (EXS), and Pacific Island Studies have been very helpful in identifying department and student learning needs. Co-curricular units are now beginning to conduct program reviews. The Library was the first co-curricular unit to be

reviewed (see [Library self-study and team report](#)). Other co-curricular units are scheduled for review in the future, along with academic units (see [review schedule](#)).

b. Each year during budget and stewardship reviews, departments meet with the President's Council and other financial officers and are required to provide evidence on how they are effective in meeting department outcomes and supporting the student learning experience on campus. Departments will share dashboards, annual assessment plans and other metrics which show their effectiveness and establish need for funding and budgets for the coming year. Efficiency in funding is one of the key imperatives established by the Board in the justification of using Church funds, and funds are prioritized to have the most impact on improving the quality of the students' educational experience. Departments take this review very seriously. In addition, all academic departments have a dashboard which includes how they are doing with assessing student learning and following up with recommendations from their most recent program reviews. (For an example see [2012 Accounting dashboard](#))

c. In a mentoring role, an active and representative assessment committee (UAC) meets annually to review with all academic, administrative and student development departments to review assessment efforts and provide helpful feedback directly to department chairs in their annual review meeting with a review team assigned by the UAC. A UAC mentor is also assigned to work with and assist each department throughout the year. This committee has been active since 2001, engaging departments in annual and campus-wide assessment efforts.

Several key assessment projects were also launched this past year:

a. One of the concerns of the WASC visiting team was incorporating "clear and measureable outcomes in course syllabi." With the help of the IRAATE team, academic departments addressed this concern by pulling together samples of course syllabi for review. The team worked with several students to evaluate these documents for clarity, effectiveness and student learning outcomes. A [rubric for evaluating course syllabi](#) was developed. These reviews were shared with college deans, and departments were encouraged to review their courses and establish clear and measureable learning outcomes aligned to program and institutional-level learning outcomes (where applicable). Training was provided to department chairs in a recent department chair retreat. These efforts are continuing with further revisions to the rubric. (See [Course Planning Worksheet](#), [Course Planning Frame](#), [Discovering the Connection between SLOs, PLOs, ILOs and the Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of the Degree \(MQID\)](#), and [Meaning, Quality and Integrity of Degrees in the ELT Department](#))

b. Several workshop opportunities in Hawaii provided by WASC have been instrumental in providing insight into the meaning, quality and integrity of a degree from BYU-Hawaii, and assessing core competencies. During fall 2012, University officials attended the review of the revised WASC accreditation standards and review process, with special attention given to 2.2a on assessing core competencies. The follow up MQID workshop in May 2013 was well-attended by academic department leaders and very helpful to University officials in taking a broader view of student learning outcomes. GE curriculum was under review with a new model being developed – student learning outcomes identified by the GE committee dovetailed with WASC's focus on core competencies, and measuring learning of graduating students in the core competencies. University leaders realized that this was not just a GE effort, but a needed focus for all academic programs. A [model](#) of how ILOs, PLOs and SLOs are aligned and supported by GE, Major and co-curricular experiences was developed by the Associate AVP for Assessment and Accreditation. This was shared widely by the AVP with faculty during the opening faculty meeting fall 2013. These efforts have helped direct the focus on measuring core competencies and learning outcomes. A schedule of assessing core competencies was established in preparation for the 2016 re-accreditation cycle, and means of assessment were identified and planned. An analysis of existing instruments like the Graduating Student Survey (GSS) was conducted by the IRAATE team, and extensive work was done to get student feedback and modify these instruments to be more helpful in providing needed feedback from

students on core competencies and ILOs. NSSE was also conducted in 2013 and provided helpful feedback from students on student learning and student engagement. These results were shared with the FAC, the Dean's Council and the Academic Council in fall 2013. A link to the NSSE results was sent to all faculty members fall 2013 and the results were shared with the President's Council members.

B. Issues mentioned in the July 29, 2013 Commission Letter Include:

Request that the institution, as part of the Special Visit scheduled for spring 2014 address in both greater specificity and governing logic the rationale, pathways to entry, and unique outcomes of the BUS degree within the context of the institution as a whole, and with reference to the meaning, quality, and integrity of the degree component of the 2013 Handbook; the institution should make this a specific section of evidence for the Special Visit, drawing on the suggestions and encouragements in the previous commentary. [July 29, 2013 Commission Letter, p.2]

These issues are addressed in sections B.1-B.5.

B.1 Use of the terms “degree” and “major”

The term “degree” and “major” appear to be used interchangeably, and the institution is encouraged to consider how to be more specific in its designations. [July 29, 2013, Commission Letter, p. 1]

In discussion with the Academic Council, the administration has spent time looking at BYU–Hawaii’s publications to help clarify the use of these terms. The Board of Trustees has requested that the University use the term “degree” where appropriate, but sparingly not expanding the number of degrees unnecessarily. Currently, BYU–Hawaii is limited to two associate degrees (ASBM and AAS) and five bachelor’s degrees (B.A., B.S., B.F.A., B.C.I.S. and B.S.W.). Within the bachelor’s degrees the Administration has approved 20 majors that have specific requirements leading to future career or graduate school plans.

B.2 Confusion about 28 credit hours for University Studies major

There is some confusion about how the 28 units of upper division credit for the BUS that are designated as necessary to complete the degree are in fact consistently accounted for by advisors and the registrar. [July 29, 2013, Commission Letter, p. 1]

The 28 units of credit is for a student’s primary focus in one or more pre-approved academic areas (see [Catalog](#)) and is not necessarily all upper division credit - it depends on the student’s interest and focus in their specialty area. Once an application has been approved by the Dean, the approved student plan is forwarded to the academic advisor and Registrar’s Office for processing. Approved student plans are tracked in the automated Major Application Plan (MAP) system which is monitored by the academic advisor.

The enrollment process in the University Studies major is initiated when a student meets with their academic advisor for an evaluation of their progress in the major of their choice. In conjunction with the academic advisor, the student’s options are considered and a plan is developed for presentation and review by the Faculty Lead assigned oversight for the program. This typically occurs prior to the student completing 90 hours of academic credit. The student is then advised to submit to the Faculty Lead a proposal in which the student explains in detail their academic and occupational goals.

(See [Major Requirement Sheet \(MRS\)](#) and [University Studies Application Letter Expectation](#)) Employment goals should be supported by specific academic requirements associated with the occupation of choice, as well as employment/unemployment data from their area of residence. Upon receipt of the application, the Faculty Lead will review the student's proposal. In counsel, both will determine which courses are to be included in the 28 units of credit for the student's primary area of focus, when these courses will be taken, and how the capstone project will be implemented.

If warranted, the Faculty Lead may request additional information or clarification of portions of the proposal. The Faculty Lead for University Studies will accept or reject the application. If the proposal is accepted, the Faculty Lead will approve the plan and forward the application to the Dean of the College of Human Development (where the University Studies major currently resides). All students requesting admission to the University Studies major are required to complete this process prior to acceptance.

B.3 Requirements for entry into the major

Related to these outcomes are the exact requirements for entry into the program so that it is more than a simple “fail safe” opportunity to assure that a student gets a degree. While it was explained that a student may not migrate to the BUS program with more than 100-110 credits and that they must be enrolled in the program for at least two semesters, that exact path to gain admission to the degree program should be explicitly codified for all interested students.

Initially, students were allowed to enter the University Studies program with more than 100 credits. This is no longer the practice. Students who wish to pursue a University Studies major should plan to declare this major before reaching 90 credit hours (see [Catalog](#)). Also, based on careful review of the recent University Studies Program Review team report, it was recommended that the University “establish a steering committee, composed mostly of faculty drawn from across the curriculum, that is responsible for establishing (1) a template for the ‘capstone experience plan,’ and (2) an appropriate model(s) for a capstone experience(s) that adequately serve the needs of both the students and the institution.”

This recommendation came recently from the University Studies review team report and is subject to the review of the Faculty Lead in conjunction with approval from the Dean and Academic Vice President.

a. Students seeking admission to a B.S. in University Studies must do the following:

- Meet with their academic advisor to address educational options (i.e., IDS, University Studies, etc.). If the University Studies major is a viable option for the individual student, the advisor and student develop a possible academic MAP detailing course work needed to fulfill degree requirements. A copy of this [MAP](#) is sent to the Faculty Lead for evaluation.
- Develop and submit to the Faculty Lead a proposal detailing the student's academic and occupational goals. (See [Major Requirement Sheet](#) and also the [Expectations for the University Studies Application Letter](#) in the [Catalog](#))
- Upon completion of both the academic MAP and the program proposal, the student meets with the Faculty Lead to discuss possible admission into the University Studies major and their capstone project

b. Once the application is completed by the student, the Faculty Lead will:

- Evaluate application materials and sign off on the capstone project

- Forward the completed application to the Dean for final approval
- Forward the approved application to the Registrar’s Office which completes the application process

c. Students majoring in University Studies that complete a degree will have met the following requirements:

- A minimum of 120 semester hours of earned credit, including all of the General Education and Religious Education requirements
- A minimum of 30 credit hours in residence at BYU–Hawaii
- The completion of a minimum of 28 credit hours of primary focus in one or more preapproved academic areas, such as minors, emphases or clusters (*see Catalog*)
- A selection of at least 12 credit hours in career preparation that support their primary focus
- A cumulative GPA of at least 2.0
- Of the 40 credit hours required for this major, a minimum of 15 must be upper-division credit hours (300- or 400-level classes), excluding GE
- The completion of a capstone experience, typically during the student’s final semester
- No more than 6 credit hours of “D” grades within the major

d. Typically, the culminating capstone experience is taken for credit in courses such as independent study (390R), internship (399R) or student research (496R), during the student’s final semester. The capstone experience must:

- Be approved in advance and receive all necessary approvals before it is undertaken – no capstone experience will be approved “after the fact”
- Be clearly relevant to the proposed curriculum and integrate areas of academic emphasis
- Approximate the academic rigor of a capstone course
- Be fully described in a written proposal – the description should include details of what will be done, how the experience will be evaluated, including who will evaluate the experience (department chair and site supervisor are appropriate)
- Be reported and the results evaluated by the Dean

B.4 B.S. degree in University Studies

The panel reviewers believe that the institution must clearly differentiate the BA and the BS vectors of the BUS degree.

The University has determined to only use the B.S. in University Studies. The B.A. in University Studies will no longer be offered. The Academic VP and Dean’s Council looked at the grouping of students who traditionally received the Bachelor of University Studies. Historically, the pathway of the course groupings predominantly led to a B.S. degree, and many students were on a math and not a language track.

B.5 Meaning, quality, and integrity of the B.S. degree in University Studies

Using the 2013 Handbook of Accreditation, wherein the Commission has delineated its expectation with respect to the meaning, quality, and integrity of the degree, for what has the B.S. in University Studies prepared a

student, what skills and capabilities has the student acquired, what employment opportunities will the student be able to consider?...The curriculum mapping exercise is at an emerging level, and the panel suggests that BYU–Hawaii continue its efforts to develop a comprehensive tracking of program learning outcomes and program/course requirements. With the practice of students moving to this degree after having matriculated for a period of time in other curricula, this mapping must be especially precise. If it is not, then it is unlikely that the institution can demonstrate that students accomplished the expected program learning outcomes. [July 29, 2013 Commission Letter, p.1-2]... the University will be expected to demonstrate assessment of program outcomes for at least one cohort of students in the BUS program and completion of a program review for the BUS degree, including reflection of the assessment data. [July 10, 2012 Commission Letter, p.3, item 4]

In anticipation of the WASC 2014 special visit, BYU–Hawaii acted on the need to speak to the meaning, quality and integrity of the University Studies major. A Program Review team, equally balanced with faculty internal and external to BYU–Hawaii, was convened on-site over two full days, November 21-22, 2013, to evaluate the Bachelor of Science in University Studies major. Prior to convening, the team members were provided with extensive documentation about the University and the major. While on site, the team was afforded extensive access to students, staff, advisors, faculty, and senior administrators. (See [The University Studies Self-study](#) and [University Studies Review team report](#))

As part of preparing for the program review in University Studies, assessment of program quality was undertaken in five specific areas: a) assessment of student learning, b) student satisfaction, c) success of program graduates, d) academic rigor and e) enrollment and graduation data for the University Studies major, some of which were addressed in the self-study.

Assessment of student learning: According to the recent program review of University Studies, *“The statement of learning outcomes, while a good initial response to the WASC concerns, still needs a lot of work. As it is currently promulgated on both online and printed materials, it is rather vague and uneven. The inclusion of the specific outcome of ‘demonstrate proficiency in a variety of software useful in professional environments’ casts the program in a somewhat vocational light.”*

With regard to the assessment of general education-related learning outcomes indicated on the BYU–Hawaii Multi-year assessment Plan, the review team also stated that, *“it is not clear how the program can adequately do this, because the most crucial and obvious context for doing this is the capstone course, and it is not clear what this is supposed to be.”* The team also recommended that a *“more rigorous, 2-3 credit hour capstone experience should be standardized and designed specifically for these students”* and that the *“currently designated course is simply inadequate.”* (See [2013 University Studies Program Review Team Report](#))

Based on the recommendations by the Review team, the University is considering the following actions: a) the Dean’s Council will establish a Steering Committee for University Studies composed mostly of faculty drawn from across the curriculum; b) student learning outcomes will be revised to reflect input from the Steering Committee and will be aligned to Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs); c) the Steering Committee will work with the Faculty Lead to establish a five-year assessment plan; and d) the Faculty Lead will assess learning outcomes annually and report to the University Assessment Committee beginning Fall 2014. These actions are contingent upon review by the Faculty Lead and approval by the Dean and Academic Vice President. As an interim measure, the ILOs will be used to assess student learning in the major beginning with the fall 2013 cohort.

Student satisfaction: Data concerning student satisfaction has been obtained from a survey sent to graduates of the University Studies major. While 220 students have graduated with a University Studies major, the number of students responding to the survey was only 26. Students were asked a variety of questions ranging from the quality of instruction

to the validity of the major in helping graduates obtain gainful employment. A review of the data from the survey indicated that 72.8% of the graduates were satisfied with the courses that they took, and 76.2% were satisfied with the quality of teaching in the major. 61.9% of the graduates expressed feeling strong support from faculty. Faculty mentoring was favorable with 68% indicating that the quality of mentoring they received was satisfactory. 68.2% of the graduates also indicated that their academic advisor was helpful as they progressed through their major. 54.5% of the graduates responding to the survey indicated that if they “had to do it all over again” they would choose a different major, but would still attend BYU–Hawaii for their undergraduate education. It should be mentioned that 82.3% of those responding to the survey graduated prior to changes made since April of 2013.

Success of University Studies graduates: When specifically asked whether or not the University Studies major provided strong preparation for their current occupation, positive responses indicated that 36.4% agreed or strongly agreed that they had been prepared for their current occupation, 18.2% somewhat agreed that they program provided them with the preparation they required while another 27.3% indicated that it did not.

Academic rigor: The subject of academic rigor has been an important issue for the administration, faculty and students alike. Since many of the University Studies participants were previously enrolled in majors where their academic success was questionable, some individuals voiced concern that students having the opportunity to change majors late in their academic programs were receiving undergraduate degrees that lacked the academic rigor that is an essential component of a degree from an accredited university.

In response to these concerns, University administration requested each academic department to generate a list of “clusters”, that is, groups of specific courses selected by the faculty which would insure that the students enrolled in the University Studies major had undertaken courses that were (1) academically rigorous, (2) would provide an academic focus for students in a specific field, and (3) were recognized by the administration, faculty, and occupational entities outside of the University.

Although a list of acceptable “clusters” was approved and included in the University Catalog, the Review Team pointed out that these clusters need clearly identified goals and learning outcomes. The team also noted that many of the clusters are composed entirely of lower-division (100- and 200-level) courses. They recommended that each cluster, at a minimum, should include at least one upper-division course, and that these clusters need to be better thought through by the departments and more thoroughly explained in the BYU–Hawaii Catalog. The Faculty Lead, Dean, and Academic VP are working on this and considering the use of approved minors instead of clusters or emphases for this major.

Enrollment and graduation data for the University Studies major: Responses from the surveyed graduates indicated that 55.6% selected the University Studies option during their senior year, and another 22.2% applied for the major during their junior year. 57.1% of the graduates were female, 41.2% indicated that their home area was Hawaii, 29.4% were from Asia and the Pacific, and 29.4% were from the mainland United States.

Since 2009, a total of 220 students graduated with a degree in University Studies. These 220 students represent approximately 6% of the total students graduating from BYU–Hawaii between 2009 and 2013. 122 or 55% of these students were from the United States, and the remaining 45% from countries primarily in Asia, Micronesia, Pacific Islands, Polynesia, and Oceania. The second and third largest enrollments were from Japan (11%) and Tonga (6%).

The meaning, quality, and integrity of this degree is still under review. The recent program review process was helpful in identifying key areas needing to be improved. This will give added value to the students receiving this degree and

improving the quality of their educational experience. The administration along with the Faculty Lead and Dean will carefully consider already established minors instead of clusters. The same group will consider the recommendation given by the external program review team to create a steering committee revising student learning outcomes associated with the University Studies major.

IV. IDENTIFICATION OF OTHER CHANGES OR ISSUES THE INSTITUTION IS FACING

The University was recently approved by the Board of Trustees to grow the student population from 2700 to 3200 students. Since community housing is very limited, the University will need to build infrastructure, especially on-campus student housing to handle this growth. This will be accomplished through remodeling existing on-campus student housing that adds additional space.

BYU–Hawaii continues to work on improving educational quality while making efficient use of financial resources. As the target student credit hours generated is projected to increase from 13% to 20%, growth of the online program is a priority for the University. Also, to improve efficient use of facilities the University is making a concerted effort to increase enrollment in face-to-face classes held during summer semesters. The University continues to focus on educational quality through program review, encouraging faculty members to take advantage of professional development leave options available to them, implementing of Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs), as well as other operational efficiencies that align budget allocations to key performance indicators across all campus departments.

V. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

After thoughtful review and reflection about the WASC action items and issues raised by the Commission in the July 10, 2012 and July 29, 2013 letters, BYU–Hawaii has taken this opportunity to engage University stakeholders in exploring the impact of the Nine Semesters-in-Residence policy on all students, but especially our international students. We are engaged and committed to systemic review and improvement of students' educational experiences. In this review, we have gained great insight from the program review processes as well as feedback from external reviewers, students, faculty and staff. There were eight academic program reviews completed this year as well as one academic co-curricular unit review. Through partnership with the Faculty Advisory Council (FAC) and the IRAATE team, we have and will continue to explore and share data which will help give all University stakeholders a better longitudinal perspective that speaks to balancing efficiency and quality. We look forward to the opportunity and are carefully preparing for the March 5-7, 2014 WASC Special Visit.

