RECOMMENDATION 2: Student Learning and Success

To improve student learning and success, the team recommends that the College completes its cycle of program reviews and incorporates into these program reviews the assessment of SLOs at course, program, and degree levels (Standard I.A.4; Standard I.B.1; Standard I.B.6; Standard II.A.2f).

In February 2005, the College was placed on warning for failure to adequately meet the recommendation regarding carrying out its educational planning in a way that draws upon program evaluation results and ties educational planning directly to planning for staffing, budget development and program elimination/addition. Since then, the College has created a Strategic Planning Policy, a Budget Development Policy and Program Review Policy and procedures.

In the October 15, 2005, Accreditation Progress Report of the College, the Chancellor summarized the policies and procedures that now govern planning and decision-making:

Windward Community College decision-making is based on the strategic priorities established by the college in its Strategic Plan. The priorities of the Strategic Plan are based on systematic empirical review of all college programs found in Annual Assessment Reports and five year Program Reviews.

Annual Assessment Reports and Program Reviews are conducted on all academic programs and support units to provide data on which planning and budgeting decisions can be based (See 4.4 Program Review Policy and Procedures). The overall focus of the empirical review is the collection, analysis, presentation and use of evidence to ensure that a high quality of education is being provided to students and that the mission of the College is being achieved. The process provides data from which the College can make informed decisions in the improvement of student learning and resource allocation.

In response to the October 15, 2005, recommendations for SLO assessment, Dean Mullikin responded that the AA Degree and Academic Subject Certificates (ASC) Program Review had been successfully completed on the credit side. This included assessing SLOs at the course level. It was also determined that after two years of assessing the ASCs that Windward offers in Art, Biology, Botany, Business, Psychology, and Hawaiian Studies as stand-alone programs, these subsets of courses which comprise a certificate would be better evaluated as part of the Annual Department Review. This is reasonable as most of the resources for the ASCs come from the departments in which the certificate is housed. Therefore, as of the 2007-2008 Academic Year, analyses of quantitative data and assessment of SLOs for the ASCs has become part of the Strategic Planning and Budget requests generated by each department.
Because Windward Community College is a liberal arts college with one degree program, the AA degree, course and certificate assessments provide important information for determining how well the College is meeting the learning needs of students. The College has defined the expected learning outcomes for 100 percent of the courses on its Master Course List, and requires that each new course present SLOs to the Credit Curriculum Academic Affairs Committee (CCAAC) for validation. The CCAAC, then forwards the SLOs of new courses to the IEC Chairperson, who adds the course to the Master Course List, and submits the new SLOs to the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs for inclusion in the current Catalog.

Every Fall, the IEC Chairperson submits a revised Master Course List to each of the Department Chairs for updating. This to assure that all new courses and those that have been either achieved or deleted are added or removed from the Assessment Plan, which calls for assessing 20 percent of the courses from each discipline over a Five-Year Cycle.