

OVERVIEW

THE AUDITOR
STATE OF HAWAII

Management Audit of the College of Education

Summary

The State Auditor initiated an audit of the College of Education, University of Hawaii at Manoa (college) to determine whether the college's management processes can be improved to enable the college to more effectively prepare its candidates to become competent teachers in the public schools.

The college, with nine instructional departments, is one of the primary sources of teachers for the state's public school system. It offers a variety of upper division undergraduate and graduate programs. Each year, approximately 500 undergraduate or certificate-seeking students and 160 graduate students complete their course of study in the college.

The college has not clarified its mission or its strategy to achieve clarity on that mission. The college has failed to seek a resolution to the conflict between a single mission to prepare teachers for the public schools set out in Section 304-20, HRS and the broader university mission of teaching, research, and public service. It has failed to develop a strategy to prioritize its competing missions. The college has not been able to gain the Department of Education's acceptance of the college's perception of multiple missions, in part because the college has failed to explain its priorities among teaching, research, and public service.

The college lacks clear policies and guidelines to guide its program development process. The authority structure over program development for degree-granting and certificate-granting programs is confusing and not clearly defined. The college has not consistently followed university standards guiding the program development process.

College students are not routinely informed of the college's specific expectations of them because goals and objectives for some programs are either rudimentary, unclear, or non-existent. Further, the college is making a fundamental change to a "cohort model" of program delivery. Under this model, a group (or cohort) of 20 to 30 students is admitted to a program as a unit and progresses through the program by taking most of the same classes and proceeding at the same pace. The college has not adequately addressed important issues regarding the implementation of that change. Moreover, the college does not have a formal policy requiring faculty teaching the same course to address a common objective for that course.



Finally, the college's teacher preparation programs are not adequately evaluated. The university needs to conduct program reviews of the Bachelor of Education in Elementary Education and the Bachelor of Education in Secondary Education programs. The college does not have a formal process to evaluate its teacher preparation programs. The college's existing data collection efforts can be better coordinated.

Recommendations and Response

We recommend that the college achieve consensus in clarifying its mission. It should seek the assistance of the university administration, the Board of Regents, and the Legislature if it believes Section 304-20, HRS prevents it from clarifying its mission.

We also recommend that the college provide clearer guidance to its program development process. The college should establish a set of policies and procedures to direct and guide its undergraduate programs by identifying responsible parties for developing programs. It should also clarify who has program approval authority within the college. The college should also ensure all program proposals provide the information required by university policy and that such proposals contain cost and impact statements. Clear goals and objectives for each degree-granting and certificate-granting program should be set. The college should also clarify how resources are to be allocated to its cohort programs, whether sufficient resources are available for those programs, how faculty roles and workload will change, and how students may reapply to the cohort programs. The college should ensure that each course has a specific objective or series of objectives common to all instructors who teach that course.

We also recommend that the college develop a coordinated evaluation process. Finally, we recommend that the university ensure that program reviews are conducted of the Bachelor of Education in Elementary Education and the Bachelor of Education in Secondary Education programs.

The college essentially agreed with our recommendations. The college plans to work toward a revision of Section 304-20, HRS. The college also indicated that the program governance process is currently being reviewed by the Interim Dean and his administrative staff. The college agreed that it can improve surveys to provide better information on the effectiveness of its programs and how well its graduates are doing in the classroom. In addition, the college agreed that it needs to ensure that survey information is channeled back to faculty. The college also pointed out some clarifying language on the program development process and the evaluation of the teacher preparation programs which we incorporated into the report.

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