



January 31, 2017

MEMORANDUM

To: Sam Giordanengo, Chair
Hawai'i Community College Faculty Senate

Subject: Response to Senate Resolution on Institution Set Standards

Thank you for your deliberations and expressed concerns about CCCP #4.203, Institution Set Standards. I offer the following comments and clarifying remarks.

I share many of your observations. Faculty have a responsibility to maintain the quality and integrity of their courses and programs. It is never acceptable to achieve a result by manipulating grading standards and I don't believe that faculty do so. It is also a college responsibility, not just a faculty responsibility, to help as many students as possible to attain the standards we set for our courses and our programs.

The Federal government directs all accreditors to require that the member colleges set institution set standards, including standards for course completion. In drafting CCCP #4.203, we focused on maintaining a consistency among our campuses on what data was being reported to ACCJC and to align our standards, both the minimum standards and the aspirational values, with our strategic plan. As noted in your resolution, these are achievement standards, not quality standards.

Nothing in the policy is new. Hawai'i CC has been reporting its course completion rate to ACCJC as part of the annual submission to the accreditor. The minimum standard of 70% is actually lower than what you have been able to achieve. Last year your course completion rate was 76.2%, the highest among our colleges. In fact, you already exceed the 2021 aspirational target of 75%. The new policy would require nothing of you except to keep doing the good work you are already doing. I don't see how that creates any pressure for grade inflation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "JM", written over the printed name and title.

John Morton
Vice President for Community Colleges

c: Rachel Solemsaas
Joni Onishi
Deborah Nakagawa