To:    Erika Lacro, Vice President of Community Colleges

Via:   Melanie Wilson, Dean for Liberal Arts and Public Services, Hawaiʻi Community College

From:  Carrie Mospens, Hawaiʻi Community College (Convener)
        Christine Quintana, Hawaiʻi Community College
        Kelly Kennedy, Leeward Community College
        Anthony Silva, Kapiʻolani Community College
        Derek Snyder, University of Hawaiʻi Maui College
        Kalehua Kamakawiwoʻole, Honolulu Community College

RE:    We serve the Community in University of Hawaiʻi Community Colleges

VISION

We seek to be the model of postsecondary education for English language learners in Hawaiʻi.

Our Working Group

We are University of Hawaiʻi Community College (UHCC) educators who are dedicated to serving English language learners (ELLs). We are leaders and professionals in a community of practice that encompasses English as a Second Language (ESL), Second Language Studies (SLS), Second Language Acquisition (SLA), Applied Linguistics, International Education, and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). We are all products of the University of Hawaiʻi Second Language Studies graduate program, which has attained top-ranked international recognition for excellence in the field.

Our working group had been regularly meeting well in advance of UHCC cross-campus discussions. We much earlier recognized a need for synergy to better assist us with our important mandate as a UH system serving our residents in the state of Hawaiʻi - to provide equitable, open access to higher education for our English language learner populations, and subsequently, ensure successful pathways for these students once enrolled in our institutions of higher education.
Our Purpose

1. We serve to support the missions of our home institutions and the Office of the Vice President for Community Colleges, especially with regard to the first principle of Access: 
   *To broaden access to postsecondary education in Hawai‘i, regionally, and internationally by providing open-door opportunities for students to enter quality educational programs within their own communities.*

2. We serve to provide expert English language instruction and advising for students learning English as an additional language, as well as serving as resources for our colleagues.

3. We serve to foster communication across languages and cultures and support our students in becoming responsible global citizens locally, nationally, and internationally.

4. We serve to prepare our students with the English language skills and knowledge necessary to pursue their chosen careers or fields of study.

5. We serve to support and advocate for English language learners in our communities.

6. We serve to use and contribute up-to-date, evidence-based methods for English language instruction, curriculum and materials development, assessment, placement, and advising of English language learners.

Our Students

How many languages do students in Hawai‘i speak?
The graphic below shows the various languages used by public school students, with the larger and bolder text representing languages that are most commonly used.

![Language Graphic](Image Source: Hawai‘i Data eXchange Partnership (DXP) English Learners Data Story (SY 2018-19))

It is important to recognize the diverse student population that we serve. Our students are multicultural and multilingual, and they bring a wealth of cultural and linguistic knowledge and
experiences to our campuses. The languages our students know include Ilokano, Tagalog, Chuukese, Marshallese, Japanese, Spanish, Vietnamese, Samoan, Tongan, Mandarin, Cantonese, and Cebuano/Visayan, among many others. In a single class, it is normal to have students of different ages, ethnicities, and backgrounds, with varied life experiences.

Although they are diverse, there is one characteristic that our students have in common: they know more than one language, and English is their second (or third, or fourth, etc.) language.

We serve two groups of students: resident English language learners and international English language learners. The following are general patterns observed in these two groups:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resident English Language Learners</th>
<th>International English Language Learners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● May be green card holders or U.S. citizens</td>
<td>● Are full-time students on F-1 visas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● May be full- or part-time students</td>
<td>● Are in English classes 18 hours per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Range from 18 to 60+ years old</td>
<td>● Tend to be younger (18-22 years old)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Tend to think of Hawai‘i as home</td>
<td>● Tend to think of their countries of origin as home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● May have served in the military or be military dependents</td>
<td>● May be living in homestays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● May have gone to high school here</td>
<td>● May experience culture shock and homesickness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● May have experienced shaming or discrimination for being English learners</td>
<td>● May have strong study skills and literacy in their first languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● May not be literate in their first languages</td>
<td>● May have earned advanced degrees abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● May have had limited or interrupted formal education</td>
<td>● May have studied English for years in school but rarely used it to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Tend to have greater proficiency in spoken English; may be fluent speakers</td>
<td>communicate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● May experience anxiety about tests and written assignments, but seem comfortable speaking English</td>
<td>● Tend to have less proficiency in spoken English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Tend to have weaker study skills</td>
<td>● May experience anxiety about speaking English, but seem comfortable with tests and written assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● May be working full- or part-time</td>
<td>● May be studying abroad for 1-2 semesters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● May be parents or caregivers</td>
<td>● May be seeking a degree or certificate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● May be seeking a degree or certificate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Central to the following recommendations is the steadfast tenet that there is much untapped potential for collaboration and growth, including increased student enrollment, that exists for our respective and collective programs within the UHCC System. As we strive to reimagine our UHCC System moving forward, we call upon our individual campuses and our UHCC System to
better meet the language learning needs of our unique resident English language learner populations for each region and island. Importantly, the recommendations below align with UHCC Strategic Directions (http://uhcc.hawaii.edu/ovpcc/strategic/strategic_directions.php).

We advocate for a “community model” of cooperation and collaboration among existing programs.

**Recommendation 1: Maintain at least one full-time ESL/ESOL faculty member on each campus with a current program designated for English language learners.**

- This presence is necessary in order to maintain the current level of support for each campus’ local community, especially language learners with lower-level English proficiency, who learn best in face-to-face class modalities.
- To provide the necessary support for English language learners, it is essential for our campuses to offer courses designated for English language learners taught by faculty who have the requisite knowledge and expertise to serve this student population (Please see Appendix A for more information).
- Maintaining the presence of ESL faculty will allow for clear campus connections for pathways with the Hawai‘i State Department of Education (HIDOE) and support increased enrollment and retention of English language learners, including support for adult language learners within the community.
- A substantial population of high school English language learners exists within each campus’ service area to justify such a presence. For example, in the McKinley K-12 complex, 28% of students are active English learners; in the Farrington complex, 27%; in the Kaimuki complex, 26%; in the Waipahu complex, 21%; in the Maui complex, 15%; in the Baldwin complex, 15%; in the Ka‘ū complex, 19%; and in the Kealakehe complex, 16% (P-20 Partnership for Education English Learner Data Story, SY 2018-2019).
- Slightly over 348,000 (26%) Hawai‘i residents speak a language other than English at home, with a little over 161,000 of them (46%) speaking English less than “very well” (State of Hawai‘i Data Book 2019).
- Bridging the ELL student enrollment disparity between DOE and UHCC is an important goal. As an example, Chuukese and Marshallese languages represent 2 of the top 3 languages spoken by ELL students in the DOE, yet all students identifying as Micronesian at UHCC (not just Chuukese and Marshallese) comprise less than 1% of the total student population in the UHCC system (Please see Appendix B for details).

**Recommendation 2: Designate at least one counselor on each campus to help support English language learners as part of their primary duties.**

- A designated counselor who has or is willing to develop the skills and expertise necessary to work with English language learners will help facilitate the application, orientation, and registration processes, and increase the odds that these students will persist and succeed.
- Although designated counseling support for international students is available on some campuses, we know of no such support on any campus officially designated for local
English language learning US citizens, US nationals, CoFA citizens, or permanent residents.

- While data on English language learners in the UHCCs is not available (see Recommendation 3, below), if data from the DOE are any indication, ELLs with the proper support can succeed academically (P-20 Partnership for Education English Learner Data Story, SY 2018-2019).

**Recommendation 3: Implement a system-wide process to identify English language learners.**

- State and Federal mandates require that open-access institutions receiving State and Federal funding provide language support to students who have limited English proficiency in order to ensure equitable access to programs and degree pathways. ACCJC Standards also require institutions to support *equity in success for all students* (Standard II.A.7). ([Please see Appendix B for more information](#)).
- UHCCs are currently unable to identify how many English language learners exist on each campus; how well they are being supported; whether they are being made aware of the language learning options available to them; or whether they are persisting, completing degrees / certificates, or transferring at acceptable rates.
- This identification system would include, but not be limited to:
  - Adding a line item to the system-wide common application ([Please see Appendix C for a well-researched implementation method](#)).
  - Working with campus outreach offices.
  - Working with high school counselors and P-20 coordinators.

**Recommendation 4: Share course offerings across campuses where possible to reduce the number of low-enrolled courses.**

- Utilize a cross-campus course matrix to identify course equivalencies and direct students to appropriate courses on other campuses, as necessary. [Cross-Campus Course Matrix](#).

**Recommendation 5: Formalize the ESOL/ESL Work Group.**

- ESOL / ESL practitioners have extensive experience working with, and considerable knowledge of the needs of, English language learners, and thus need to be a part of UHCC decisions regarding this population of students.
- This formalized group would serve in an advisory role in the UHCC System to help identify English language learner recruitment, support, retention, and other infrastructure needs and good practices.
- This group would also continue to collaborate across campuses, including sharing resources and knowledge of good practices for supporting English language learners.
- Proposed name: The UHCC English Language Learners Council

*We are dedicated to serving English language learners in the UHCC System, and we seek the support of our leaders in continuing to offer high-quality English language instruction that promotes equity and success for all students.*
APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

The Differences Between Developmental ENG and ESL

All students in degree programs take a college writing course as part of their program (e.g., ENG 100). However, many newly-admitted students are not prepared to be successful in such a course. While some English language learners may fall into this group, it is important to distinguish them from remedial or developmental education students.

Remedial education students enroll in remedial / developmental courses in order to review high school-level content that was not adequately learned (or learned so long ago that it needs refreshing). Remedial English courses focus on shoring up student writing skills (e.g., ENG 22) or reading skills (e.g., ENG 21). These courses also may include instruction in study skills (note-taking, time management, etc.).

English language learners enroll in ESL courses in order to accelerate their learning of a new language --- in this case, English --- to prepare them for the language demands of college courses. These students have various education backgrounds, depending on their age of arrival in Hawai‘i. Some have attended local public school(s) for one or more years; others have completed high school or even college in their home countries. ESL courses focus on grammar and vocabulary, and provide students with opportunities to use the grammatical structures and academic vocabulary they are learning in various listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities. These courses may also include information on U.S. college culture.
APPENDIX B

Resident ELL Enrollment Disparities / Potential

English Language Learners in the State of Hawai‘i

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2019), 26% of residents in Hawai‘i speak a language other than English at home.

https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/HI/POP815219#POP815219

English Language Learners in HI DOE

In the Hawai‘i Department of Education complexes, there is an average of 9% of the total student population who are English language learners, with some complexes having much higher percentages of students, even more than 25% in some cases.

http://hawaiidxp.org/quick_data/datastory/el
English Language Learners in UHCC System

In the UHCC system, there exists discrepancies and at times, potentially large gaps, between the census data for English language learners in the state and enrollment in the UHCC system campuses. It should be noted that since we currently do not identify English language learners during application processes, it is difficult to know empirically the exact number of ELL students enrolled in UHCC. However, if we align data with what we know about English language learners in our state with their respective language backgrounds, we can infer that these important gaps exist in our enrollment.

One example:

If we know that Chuukese and Marshallese are two of the top 3 languages spoken in the DOE ELL student population, we could anticipate the same needs for higher education.

http://hawaiidxp.org/quick_data/datastory/el
Yet, we see only 160 students out of 25,236 students identify as Micronesian in the UHCC Fall 2020 student population. This is less than 1% of our student population, and clearly indicates a need for greater enrollment recruitment for our DOE ELL student population.

https://www.hawaii.edu/institutionalresearch/home.action
APPENDIX C
Identification and Assessment of English Language Learners

The Guidelines under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 state that it is the responsibility of educational institutions to identify and assess students with developing English language skills in order to determine their ability to participate in their selected programs. If students are assessed as having limited English proficiency, educational institutions must provide the necessary support for them to gain meaningful access to programs and degree pathways.¹

We want to ensure that our institutions are not out of compliance with State and Federal regulations due to the lack of a system-wide protocol for identifying and assessing English language learners. There is a perception that asking questions about first language or language background is discriminatory; however, not asking these questions puts our institutions at risk of placing students into English language learner courses based on their national origin or immigration status rather than their level of English language proficiency. Also, without identifying English language learners and assessing their level of proficiency, we are limited in our ability to provide the support these students need to succeed.

To be in compliance with Federal regulations, we need to identify and assess English language learners as early as possible in the onboarding process. We recommend asking what languages students know and if English is their first language. Including these questions in the onboarding process will allow students to self-identify as having English as an additional language. Once a student self-identifies, the student’s home institution is responsible for assessing the student’s English language proficiency and ability to participate in the selected program.

There are State and Federal mandates that open-access institutions receiving State and Federal funding must provide language support to students who have limited English proficiency in order to ensure equitable access to programs and degree pathways. This is also essential for institutional accreditation.²

In the admissions process, we recommend that ALL students be asked BOTH of the following questions:

1. **What language(s) do you know well?**
   In response to this question, students may select or enter one or more languages. Since many of our students are bilingual or multilingual, we should not force them to select one

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¹ Please see the joint letter by the Department of Justice and the Department of Education for details: "Dear Colleague" Letter, January 7, 2015.
² The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) Standard II.A.7 states, “The institution effectively uses delivery modes, teaching methodologies and learning support services that reflect the diverse and changing needs of its students, in support of equity in success for all students.”
language only. We recommend providing a list of the most frequently spoken languages in Hawai‘i in their respective orthographies and an “other” field.

State law (HRS 321C) requires state-funded institutions to provide language assistance for individuals who have difficulty communicating in English in order to gain meaningful access to programs and degree pathways. Therefore, it is essential to ask this question as early as possible in the admissions process.

What language(s) do you know well? Check one or more:

- American Sign Language
- العربية (Arabic)
- 廣東話 / 广东话 (Cantonese)
- Kapasen Chuuk (Chuukese)
- English
- Deutsch (German)
- Pidgin (Hawai‘i Creole)
- Ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian)
- Ilokano (Ilocano)
- 日本語 (Japanese)
- 한국어 (Korean)
- Kosrae (Kosraean)
- ສາລະວິພາສາ (Lao)
- 國語 / 普通话 (Mandarin)
- Kajin Majõl (Marshallese)
- Pohnpei (Pohnpeian)
- Português (Portuguese)
- русский язык (Russian)
- Gagana Samoa (Samoan)
- Español (Spanish)
- Filipino (Tagalog)
- ภาษาไทย (Thai)
- Lea faka-Tonga (Tongan)
- Tiếng Việt (Vietnamese)
- Cebuano (Visayan)
- Other language(s): _______________________________

2. Was English your first language?
   In response to this question, students select “Yes” or “No.” If students select “No,” they should be flagged for assessment. A response of “No” indicates that the student needs to be assessed for English language proficiency. A response of “No” does not necessarily indicate ESL/ESOL course placement.
English Language Proficiency Assessments

We currently use and recommend the following tools for assessment and placement:

1. **Accuplacer: ESL Reading Skills and WritePlacer**
   Campuses that offer courses in ESL/ESOL Listening and Speaking may also require the Accuplacer ESL Listening test.

2. **Human Evaluation by the ESL/ESOL Department at the Home Institution**
   A human evaluation may include an assessment of the student's reading and/or listening comprehension skills, a writing diagnostic, and/or an oral interview.

Following the assessment, the student’s course placement should be entered in Banner and STAR.