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ABSTRACT

Articulation is the process of meshing the students' previous education, either in terms of credits or in terms of substance of their education, with their baccalaureate program. The problem arises because of the large number of students who attend community and junior colleges and then transfer into baccalaureate programs at a four-year college or a university. This paper deals with articulation within the University of Hawaii but application throughout the country. Models of articulation are briefly described to indicate the major options that decision-makers have had. The creation of the University of Hawaii system is reviewed and current articulation practices are outlined. The articulation controversy is analyzed in terms of some academic and economic stresses within the system. Finally, a tentative solution to some of the problems is suggested. (Author/JMF)

# ARTICULATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII:

# AN ACADEMIC DILEMMA



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"Articulate: to form or fit into a systematically related whole"[1]

## I. Introduction

A major change occurred in higher education after World War II with the creation of a large number of community and junior colleges throughout the country. While many of the students attending these two year institutions did not plan to continue their education at a four year college or at a university, a substantial number did transfer into baccalaureate programs. The number of students transferring has increased until it now involves thousands of students every year. When they transfer the students bring with them the credits earned in specific courses at the junior institution. The process of meshing the students' previous education, either in terms of credits or, more recently, in terms of the substance of their education, with their baccalaureate program has been labeled "articulation".[2]

This paper deals with articulation within the University of Hawaii. Models of articulation are briefly described to indicate the major options which decision-makers in the Hawaii system have had. The creation of the University of Hawaii system is reviewed, and current articulation practices are outlined. Next the articulation controversy is analyzed in terms of some academic and economic stresses within the system. Finally, a tentative solution to some of the problems is suggested.

Although this study focuses on the University of Hawaii, the problem that is analyzed is nation-wide.[3] It is how to integrate discrete educational institutions which have wide diversities in functions and goals (diversities which are reflected in differing admissions standards, faculty qualifications and course offerings) in such a way that the student passing through both the junior and senior institution will not be penalized either by unnecessary barriers at the senior institution or by lack of academic preparation at the junior institution.

The problem, while wide-spread, is intensified in Hawaii for a number of reasons. Structurally, all of public higher education is centralized in a single Board of Regents and President. This centralization has implications for the educational program of each campus and for articulation which

will be explored below. Politically, higher education has been important in the last two decades during which time the State's Governor from 1962-1974 and a Democratic majority in the legislature viewed education as a critical element in the drive to bring some of Hawaii's non-Caucasian citizens into the political and economic mainstream of the State.[4] This very support of higher education has, however, resulted in an intertwining of higher education and politics which also has had an impact on the articulation process.

In addition, the smallness and geographic isolation of the state has made articulation both more important and more controversial than it is in most other states. While specific data are not yet available, the vast majority of students who transfer from a community college to a four year institution do so within the University of Hawaii system. Conversely, the University of Hawaii-Manoa (UHM) accepts more transfers from University of Hawaii community colleges than from all others combined. In Fall 1974 the total number transferring from within the system was 923.[5]

Finally, policy decisions made by the University's central administration have resulted in a major shifting of student enrollment within the system toward the community colleges, a fact which has also served to complicate the articulation process.

## II. Models of Articulation

There are three major models of articulation with a number of variations played on the basic themes. Each model represents a different educational philosophy as well, one suspects, as different political realities, although the latter proposition is beyond the scope of this study to document.

Chronologically, in the United States, the first model that was developed places all decision-making power in the senior institution. The senior institution has (theoretically) complete discretion as to whether it will accept credits from the junior institution and if so, how many and what requirements they may be used to fulfill. This articulation may be done on an ad hoc basis as individual students present their transcripts for evaluation or on an institution-wide basis with the entire curriculum of a junior institution being evaluated by the people at the senior institution who are responsible for articulation.[6] The UHM follows this model

and has proceeded both on an ad hoc and on a community college-wide basis.

The second model is the reverse of the first. In this one the community college certifies courses as being at the transfer level and may also certify that courses fulfill certain specific general education (or "core" or "distribution") requirements at the senior institution. In addition, the community college may certify that the student's entire general education program has been completed, in which case the senior institution may not require additional general education courses.[7] The University of Hawaii-Hilo (a four year college) uses a variation of this model. This paper is a study of the articulation problems between the UHM and the community colleges, however, because this is the area of continuing controversy within the University of Hawaii.

The third model represents a compromise between the other two. Under this arrangement a joint evaluation of the junior institution's specific courses and/or programs is made by members of both institutions. A variation of this approach is to have the senior institution make the initial decision which may be appealed to a joint committee for a final decision.

## III. The Creation of the University of Hawaii System

In 1964, four of the five technical schools that had been under the jurisdiction of the State Department of Education were transferred to the University of Hawaii and became the community colleges of a State-wide higher education system called the University of Hawaii.[8] Since then the fifth has joined the system and two more have been created.

The community colleges were given the responsibility of:

1. "Developing technical programs of varying lengths, some leading to associate degrees or certificates; others, short term programs of several weeks or months. . . ,

2. Providing continuing education for updating and improving job competence, for cultural broadening and personal citizenship effectiveness, and . . . ,

3. Establishing a program of general education, including means for transfer into baccalaureate curricula."[9]

As currently operated these community colleges accept in-state students eighteen years or older; no high school diploma or standardized test score is required. This "open door" policy is designed to give students who could not meet entrance requirements at other colleges or universities an opportunity to obtain needed job skills and/or to be introduced to the liberal arts. They are also "second chance" institutions for students who have been suspended or dismissed from other schools. It should be noted, however, that students are advised not to take certain programs if they lack the basic skills necessary for satisfactory performance.

IV. Current Articulation Practices at the UHM

The problems attendant on the transferring of students were not directly addressed in the legislation creating the University of Hawaii system. Since then, however, a number of policy decisions have been made by a variety of committees and administrators. Present policies call for the transfer of the student's grade point average (GPA), and admission to the UHM after 24 credits have been completed at a community college if the student meets the general UHM requirements, or at any time for the student who was accepted at UHM but chose initially to go to a community college. Occupational courses numbered 1-99 ("non-transfer" occupational courses) do not transfer unless they fulfill a specific requirement as determined by the UHM department. Liberal arts courses numbered 1-99 (non-college level" liberal arts courses), do not transfer. All courses numbered 100 and above transfer as elective credit and may be used to fulfill certain specific degree requirements. The decision as to the applicability of transfer courses to degree requirements is made at the UHM. As a result of these agreements most students do not have trouble in transferring although occasional problems do arise. The major difficulty now is in the articulation of courses developed at the community college which are not identical to UHM courses.

Until recently all articulation was done on a course-by-course basis, often between an instructor at a community college and the chairman of the department in which the similar course was taught at the UHM. These articulation agreements, which were limited to a single course, were both oral and in writing and rarely were circulated to either the UHM college or campus level. The advisors who actually evaluated the students' transcripts did not always know about the existence of the agreements, nor in fact, did the committees who were actually responsible for making some of the decision, especially those involving the general education requirement, a fact which became something of a problem and embarrassment.

From the community college point of view, this process made curriculum planning and student advising difficult. Some community college faculty and administrators were

uncertain about whom to contact when they wanted to have a course accepted for transfer. In addition, because the articulation process itself was not clarified, it was difficult to know when the "final approval had been received.

Several UHM administrators were sensitive to these problems and the process they used this spring semester to help to solve them is instructive since it bears on Section VII of this paper. They consulted widely with faculty and administrators concerning both the extent of the problem and possible solutions. Meetings were held with college deans who would have to help in the implementation of any changes that might be made. The problems were discussed from a number of different perspectives by a number of people who were concerned with articulation.

As a result of these discussions the UHM articulation process is now being administratively centralized in the Office of the Chancellor. That office will receive all articulation requests and will send them to the appropriate departments or committees. It will keep track of the decisions these groups make and will notify the community colleges of the status of their courses and/or programs. It will also inform the individuals throughout the UHM who evaluate transcripts of the agreements as they are finalized.

The articulation procedures now in effect at the UHM are similar to those outlined in Model I above. There is, however, a growing interest in having more meetings with and consultation among faculty on the various campuses.

The community colleges have proposed a plan which approximates the second model. This plan, called "Option II" (as opposed to "Option I," the current procedure), would permit the community colleges to certify that specific courses meet the UHM general education requirements or that the student's general education requirements have been fulfilled.[10] A UHM college could require no further general education courses except a foreign language if the particular college into which the student transferred required it of its own students. Table I (page 6) shows the distribution and number of credits which would be required in Option II and those that are now required in the College of Arts and Sciences at the UHM.

TABLE I
Credit Distribution for Option II
and UHM College of Arts and Sciences

| | OPTION II | Credit | UHM COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES | Credit |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| English Composition | | - | | 3 |
| Math/Logic | | - | | 3 |
| World Civilization | | - | | 6 |
| Foreign Language | | - | | 12-14 |
| Humanities | Includes "language arts" | 15 | | 18 |
| Natural Sciences | Includes math | 12 | | 10 |
| Social Sciences | | 12 | | 12 |
| TOTAL | | 39 | | 64-66 |

Option II has not been accepted by the UHM although some individual professors and college level administrators have voiced support for it. The disagreements over Option II at the University of Hawaii are similar to differences found throughout higher education today on the question of which articulation model should be used. The disagreements over the models, and, indeed, over the whole articulation process itself, have become the focal point of a problem, or rather an intricately related group of problems, which are analyzed in the following section.

## V. Articulation as a Symptom of Academic Problems and Economic Constraints

The academic dilemma which higher education faces in the articulation process was stated briefly in the introduction to this study. It is how to permit the transfer of students from one institution to another without raising unnecessary impediments while at the same time assuring that the quality of education the student receives at the junior institution will be a foundation for success in the senior institution.

The economic dilemma is how to allocate scarce resources so as not to damage the senior institution while at the same time creating educational opportunities for large numbers of economically and educationally disadvantaged students who want to and who might succeed in higher education if given the chance. The academic and the economic problems are tied together, but for the sake of clarity they will be dealt with separately here.

### A. Unresolved academic problems at the community college level.

Community colleges generally have different (lower) admission standards than do four year colleges or universities. The University of Hawaii's "open door policy" has been described in Section II above. One result of this policy is that community college students have more heterogeneous capabilities than do UHM students who generally must meet a modest and flexible requirement of 430 on the Scholastic Aptitude Test. While the top community college students may be similar to the top university students, the bottom ones certainly have much lower academic skills (not necessarily abilities) than do the lowest university students.

In addition to the difference in students there is a corresponding difference in the range of academic training (not necessarily ability) between community college and University faculty. In Hawaii 12% of the community college instructors have less than a BA, 20% have a BA, 61% have an MA, and 7% have a PhD.[11] At the University 63% of the faculty have a PhD, 24% have an MA, 9% have a first professional degree, and the remainder have a BA or AA degree. Almost all of the community college faculty who are responsible for developing liberal arts transfer courses have at least an MA, although that is not necessarily true of the members of the faculty curriculum committees which must approve the courses.

The community college liberal arts faculty typically teach general education courses and courses which are the first or second course in a major series. They must teach these courses to three kinds of students: students who plan to transfer, non-transfer liberal arts students, and, in some courses, vocational/technical non-transfer students. In some instances all three kinds of students are in the same class.

The educational dilemma then is whether, given the faculty the community colleges have and the students they were established to serve, these colleges can offer educationally sound general education programs which do not have some guidance from and foundation in a program created by University faculty.

There are faculty and administrators at both the University and the community colleges who believe that in order to create and teach good general education courses the instructor must have a wide-ranging academic background. This should include an understanding of the scope and methodology of the discipline, the important substantive factual information in the area, and the theories which currently govern the discipline. The material must be put together in such a way that the student being introduced to the subject for the first time will come away from the course with a sense of the whole enterprise and an ability to pursue any interest which the course may have aroused in him, either through further course work or through independent study later. The demand on the instructor is magnified several fold if the course is to use an interdisciplinary approach.[12] Those who hold this position usually support Option I.

Faculty and administrators who support Option II (Model II) argue that the community college faculty should be able to create their own programs designed to meet the needs and

abilities of their students and the talents and interests of their faculty. They point out that the community college faculty's entire professional time is devoted to lower division instruction, a situation which is rare at the University. They observe that the University general education program, which is the critical part of the community college transfer program, was developed with political and economic as well as educational imperatives in mind. They point to studies which indicate that transfer students usually do as well academically as native students.[13] Finally, they resent what they view as a lack of confidence in the professional abilities of community college faculty on the part of some university professors.[14]

B. Unresolved academic problems at the university level.

At many large research universities the teaching of general education courses is often given to new PhD's, with little effort to ascertain whether their highly specialized and narrow training at the PhD level equipped them to teach a general, wide-ranging undergraduate courses. Likewise, it is common practice for discussion sections of these courses to be taught by graduate students about whom similar questions might be raised. The latter practice is followed at the UHM, although most lecturing in general education courses is not done by novices.

As far as articulation is concerned, the major difficulty which Model I presents, if one accepts its basic philosophy, is that the standards and criteria for judgment at the receiving institution are not always clear to the sending institution. This is one of the most widely criticized aspects of the University of Hawaii variant of Model I, Option I. The community college instructors who want to create transfer courses which have no counterpart at UHM are placed in the position of having to do so without knowing the standards and expectations of the various people who will pass judgment on the course. Catalog statements and even the basic document which established the general education program usually are so vague as to be useless as guides to what the people at the University will accept. Take for instance, the rationale from the 1966 "Report of the Committee on University Curricular Requirements" regarding world civilization: "The committee is of the opinion that a review of the broad sweep of cultural development, bringing man's experience as nearly as can be within one span of cognition, is an element of general education so valuable, and so widely lacking among students entering the University,

as to be required of all seeking a bachelor's degree.[15]

The statements outlining "distribution" requirements are even more vaguely worded. The section on the humanities provides:

> This area, traditional center of a liberal or general education, is defined to include three subject matter groupings: literature and drama; philosophy and religion; the fine arts (music, painting, sculpture, dance, etc.). The first two broad subject matter groupings contribute to a deeper understanding of the human condition and of the ends of life; they provide many perspectives on the meaning of existence and the great moral problems faced by men. Study of the fine arts exposes the student to great creative works and helps him to understand them in historical context. In the process the student may be helped to develop his standards of beauty and judgment.
>
> Judgment is perhaps the distinctive quality sought in the humanities, as "critical understanding" is in the natural sciences. From a study of literature, philosophy, religion and the arts it is to be hoped that the critical judgment of the student, with respect to both esthetic and moral values will be informed and strengthened.[16]

The instructor faced with only these statements as guidelines for course preparation has very little concrete information which would help in the creation of a new course. To make matters worse, these statements are sometimes couched in terms of results for which, at least at the UHM, most professors have never themselves tested.

An even more serious problem at the senior institution from the community college point of view is that only

"college level" courses may transfer, but there is no clear definition of "college level." The distinction is an important one to the community colleges since it determines the transferability of their courses, and the inability of the senior institution to state either in general terms or for specific courses what constitutes "college level" again puts the community college instructors in the position of having to develop courses to meet criteria which they may not understand.

C. The economic dilemma

The community colleges have great appeal to large numbers of students. They are close to home, the classes are usually considerably smaller than comparable classes at the UHM, they have no admissions requirements and, it is alleged, although I have seen no documentation of this, some of the courses are easier. In addition, they are far less expensive to attend. The University of Hawaii resident tuition for Fall, 1974, for the community colleges was $30.00, for the UHM undergraduate programs it was $161.00.

The growth of the community colleges and the reduction in the lower division at the UHM is the result of a conscious decision on the part of the central administration and the state legislature to increase enrollment at the community colleges while cutting back lower division admissions at the UHM. This decision had at least the initial support of the UHM faculty. At one time the ratio of undergraduates to graduates was planned to be two to one by the late 1970's. Those figures have not been reached and probably will not be achieved in the near future. The ratio is now about three to one.[17]

The increase in the enrollment at the community colleges and the decrease in the lower division enrollment at the UHM are shown in Table II (see page 12). A couple of caveats are in order. First, many of the liberal arts students would never have gone on to any kind of post-secondary education. The community colleges thus have come to serve people who would not have chosen to attend the UHM. Additionally, some of those who would not or could not have gone to the UHM presumably later transfer, only after having been successful at the community college. Thus all of higher education, including the University's upper division, has gained by having these particular students attend a community college. It does appear, however, that while the community colleges serve many students that the UHM would not serve, they do create a drain on the UHM lower division by enrolling students who otherwise would have gone to the UHM.

TABLE II
Community College and UHM Lower Division Enrollment

| | COMMUNITY COLLEGE ENROLLMENT | UHM LOWER DIVISION ENROLLMENT |
|---|---|---|
| Fall 1964 | 1,874 | 4,665 |
| Fall 1965 | 2,010 | 5,955 |
| Fall 1966 | 2,444 | 6,450 |
| Fall 1967 | 3,494 | 6,927 |
| Fall 1968 | 5,494 | 6,838 |
| Fall 1969 | 8,197 | 7,392 |
| Fall 1970 | 10,296 | 8,159 |
| Fall 1971 | 12,042 | 8,097 |
| Fall 1972 | 13,559 | 7,766 |
| Fall 1973 | 14,438 | 7,548 |
| Fall 1974 | 15,794 | 6,915 |

Opening Fall Enrolment Report, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Fall 1974, p. 3; Enrollment Status, Classified and Unclassified Students in Regular Credit Programs Only, Community Colleges, Fall 1964 - Fall 1974.

## VI. The Politics of Articulation

The academic and economic differences between the junior and senior institutions tend to become focused on articulation because it is one of the few processes in which the institutions must come together. In Hawaii (and in other states) this has led to a politicization of the articulation process with the community colleges requesting State legislators to introduce bills which would mandate the use of Option II.

Such legislation has not passed in Hawaii although similar requirements have been enacted in other states through legislative or executive action.[18] The local orientation of the community colleges in Hawaii and the small, intimate communities served by those campuses outside of metropolitan Honolulu have tended to bring the community college faculty and administrators into closer contact with their State legislators than is true at the UHM. Threatened legislative action on Option II and the fact that during a recent period of fiscal austerity the UHM budget was reduced in actual dollar amounts while the community college budgets were not, reflect, in part, this closer tie between the community colleges and the State legislature.

## VII. Model III

Both Models I and II create a situation in which the faculty and administration of one institution have (theoretically) complete control over an important aspect of another institution's programs. These are dominance or power models and tend to invite conflict. As long as community college students are dispersed to a number of senior colleges and as long as a senior college does not receive a substantial number of transfer students from only a few community colleges the problem may not be too serious, especially for the institution in control of articulation. When hundreds of students move within one system, as is true in Hawaii and some other states, neither Model I nor Model II may provide the best method of articulation.

Model III in many respects represents a mode of operation which does (or used to) exist on most campuses. The academic name for this model is collegiality. It is based on the principles of professional respect, consultation, and the sharing of responsibility. It is true that collegiality may break down under stress and that when that happens an administrator

may be placed in the difficult position of having to make the decision for the faculty. It is also true, however, that, for the large number of decisions which constitutes the daily running of a university, collegiality works. Articulation potentially represents just this kind of decision-making.

To permit collegiality to work in a diverse educational system some educating of the educators may be necessary. Mutual suspicions exist which need to be controlled, if not overcome, before the mutual respect which is required for this approach to work is to develop.

VIII. The University of Hawaii and Model III

To date the University of Hawaii system has demonstrated a modest interest in experimenting with collegiality. An articulation meeting was held in January 1974 at which time faculty from throughout the system were brought together with their counterparts to discuss their courses and their articulation problems. The vast majority of participants indicated that the meeting was a good beginning and that they would like to see such a forum continued. Some faculty did, in fact, establish regular contacts as a result of the meeting. The fear of familiarity breeding contempt was not born out in most cases.

At least at the beginning, this coming together on a mutual academic enterprise requires administrative leadership. The people who have responsibility for the whole have a responsibility for fitting the parts into a whole. This will take adminstrative time; it will also take money since to date no regular administrator has been assigned the responsibility for sytem-wide articulation.

In addition to the central administration cost for executive leadership in this area, budgets for each campus must be expanded or revised to accommodate the expenses of bringing together individual faculty often enough and for long enough periods of time for substantive work to be done. Some busy faculty also need an impetus to come together.

A group should be formed of administrators and faculty from the community colleges, the UHM, and the central administration who understand the roles and problems of both kinds of institutions to establish articulation procedures

which protect the transferring student as well as the institutions. Faculty in related areas should be brought together on a regular basis every few semesters to discuss courses, programs, methodologies, etc. Students should be included in these groups. With a commitment of administrative resources a joint committee of thoughtful, responsible faculty and administrators from both the community colleges and the UHM should be able to settle most differences between the institutions on the basis of collegiality if the climate at the institutions promotes it.

The joint use or exchange of faculty is another way of attacking some of the academic and economic problems that constitute part of the articulation controversy. To a minor extent this is already happening on an ad hoc basis since a number of graduate students teach in the community colleges while earning a Ph D. from the UHM. In addition, the occasional circulation of the better faculty from all of the campuses throughout the system could improve the content and the teaching of lower division courses.

## IX. Summary

Articulation, itself a rather minor and innocuous aspect of higher education, has become the focus of a number of conflicts which have developed with the expansion of the community colleges. These conflicts are both academic and economic. The two primary models of articulation are based on control of articulation residing in either the senior or the junior institution. The third model, which requires money, time and energy from administrators and faculty throughout the system, also preserves the concept of collegiality.

The collegial model has proven to be generally successful at many institutions of higher learning, especially in the area of curricular decision-making. It is, in principle, applicable to articulation in non-centralized as well as centralized higher education situtations, and it may be a better approach than the other alternatives. It may also result in better education for the students at both levels. Certainly that prospect itself is adequate impetus for the allocation of the resources required to implement it.

## FOOTNOTES

1 Webster's New International Dictionary, Second Edition, Unabridged, (Springfield: G. & C. Merriam, Co. 1960), p. 157.

2 See Frederick Kintzer, Middlemen in Higher Education, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1973), pp. 1-2 for an expanded explanation of the articulation process.

3 See Julius Menacker, From School to College: Articulation and Transfer, (Washington: American Council on Education, 1975), pp. 59-85; and Kintzer, op. cit., pp. 26-34.

4 Honolulu Star-Bulletin and Advertiser, Sunday, April 6, 1975, p. A4.

5 "Manoa Community College Transfers," Institutional Research Unit, Office of the Vice Preseident for Community Colleges, University of Hawaii, 1975.

6 Universities which follow this model include The University of California, The University of Michigan, and The University of Missouri. See for example, "Articulation Agreement Between and Among Public Institutions of Higher Education in the State of Missouri," 1975, Appendix A.

7 An example of this model is Executive Order 167, "Transfer of Credit," for the California State University and Colleges.

8 Act 39, Session Laws of Hawaii, 1964.

9 "Academic Development Plan II for the University of Hawaii," 1969, p. 135.

10 "The Option II Associate in Arts Degree," Second Revision, March 1974. In addition, students could transfer up to 12 credits of vocational/technical courses into a baccalaureate program.

11 "Selected Characteristics of Full-Time Professional Staff, Community Colleges, Fall, 1974," Institutional Research Unit, Office of the Vice President for Community Colleges, University of Hawaii, (December, 1974).

12 "Report of the Committee on University Curricular Requirements," December, 1965, p. 16.

13 "The Performance of 420 Selected Community College Transfer Students at the Manoa Campus Fall 1969-Spring 1974," University of Hawaii, Office of the Vice President for Community Colleges, Institutional Research Unit; Kintzer, op. cit., p. 15; Bruce Dearing, "Substantive Issues in the Transfer Problem," in College Transfer, Working Papers and Recommendations from the Arlie House Conference 2-4, December 1973, (Washington: ERIC), 1974, pp. 38-60.

14 Kintzer, op. cit., pp. 26-29.

15 "Committee on University Curricular Requirements," op. cit., p. 9.

16 Ibid., p. 10.

17 "Controlled Growth for the University of Hawaii--Community Colleges," Policy Statements by the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii, Fall 1970, p. 8. See Todd Furniss, "Toward Solving Transfer Problems," in College Transfer, op. cit., p. 23 for an analysis of some other economic ramifications of articulation.

18 Title V, California Education Code, 1969.