



Executive Summary

Stated shared values of the UH System include aloha, collaboration, respect, intellectual rigor, integrity, service, access, affordability, diversity, fairness, leveraged technology, innovation, accountability, and sustainability. The UH system suggests, "...innovation and empowerment can overcome resource limitation and bureaucratic entanglements." Further, the UH System suggests a shared value for the spirit of service which infuses UH activities. We wish we consistently observed these traits in the Facilities and Grounds leadership and workforce.

The UHM is an inviting setting with the ever so beautiful Manoa Valley as a backdrop—a backdrop of abnormal beauty that has proven it can unleash its fury as evidenced by the October 30, 2004 flood that wreaked millions of dollars in damages to the campus.

An executive summary from a 1999 Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) accreditation visit stated, "The Campus has an urban feel with trees and landscaping creating a pleasant environment." The WASC summary went on to state, "...surprisingly in view of serious budget concerns, and to the credit of the grounds and maintenance crews, by casual inspection the campus appeared to be maintained very well."

As part of the WASC accreditation review, the same executive summary expressed serious concerns about instructional and support needs. The accreditation review team pointed out that,

"There are, however, major concerns about the long-term consequences of decreased maintenance of the entire plant. During the last seven years, major reductions have been made in the repairs and maintenance (R&M) budget line item. These reductions took the ratio of R&M to gross square feet from \$2.16 per square foot in 1992 to \$.35 per square foot in 1997. In fiscal year 1998, \$6.2 million has been added to the capital improvement budget specifically earmarked for re-roofing, mechanical and electrical systems. This area has been designated as a high priority for future budgets and will be protected from major additional cuts. This decision is important as UHM is an aging campus and is very susceptible to minor issues that left untended will become major problems. The campus has a sizeable work force to take care of minor repairs, custodial activities, landscaping, grounds maintenance, environmental health and safety, and campus security. The autonomy act has been helpful in managing these important functions by providing more flexibility with staffing and procurement."

The same WASC report recognized that equipment and facilities for research present a critical part of graduate education and research. In 1999, that report noted the science faculty reported no apparent adverse effects in facilities and was astute enough to observe that over time the lack of state investment in research facilities will be felt.

Past observations from the WASC predictions are important to set the stage for the observations of the FMEP review team. Equally important is the small level of commitment which Facilities and Grounds organization exercised in preparation for the team's arrival.

A self-study and evaluation of the Facilities and Grounds organization is a prerequisite of a successful FMEP process. APPA FMEP review teams expect to arrive with a clear understanding of the mission and standards of Facilities and Grounds organization. The self-evaluation provides the participating institution with an opportunity to articulate its assessment of its own performance including an inventory of its existing best practices as well as its known deficiencies. The review team expects to arrive with a basic level of understanding of organizational mission, values,

programs, structure, policies, procedures, practices, and programs that are already in place. The absence of a Facilities and Grounds self-evaluation caused the review team to spend a considerable amount of its time seeking information that would normally have been provided in advance.

Facilities and Grounds placed itself at a severe disadvantage in the FMEP process by not evaluating and acknowledging its own assessment of its performance.

First impressions are lasting impressions. The absence of a self-evaluation was the review team's first impression of the Facilities and Grounds organization. The second significant impression of the Team occurred during a tour of the campus on the first day of its schedule. The setting of the campus, while marvelous and in a treasured location, was generally clouded by litter, debris, peeling paint, broken and heaved concrete, tripping hazards, graffiti in restrooms, burned-out light fixtures, and an observed general state of disrepair.

Buildings and campus spaces ranged from those carefully planned to the more eclectic appearance that occurs without careful planning. The review team's search for design standards for the physical plant came up empty. Simple campus standards for repetitive facility components are inherently missing. There does not appear to be a strong relationship between the UFI system's planning and capital improvement responsibilities and the operational responsibilities of Facilities and Grounds organization.

The potential for a stellar physical plant has been overshadowed by neglect, deferral, fatigue, budgetary reductions, a lack of responsiveness, and closely held information in a time of desired organizational transparency.

As the review team worked through a comprehensive schedule, the prophetic words of the WASC in 1999 were noted to have, in fact, become a reality. Sinister words of anger, frustration, and despair about the performance of the Facilities and Grounds organization resounded from a large portion of the campus community. The organization appeared tired, worn-down, unappreciated, and beaten, particularly, when so much focus was required to mitigate and recover from the 2004 flood. Certainly, there were

accolades and islands of support, but the vast majority of the community expressed dismay with the overall performance of the Facilities and Grounds organization.

The review team recognizes that the university is not the campus, not the buildings on the campus, not the grounds, but a collection of the faculty and students. The university consists of those who come into and move through the physical plant. The physical plant can influence and impact the ability of the institution to accomplish its teaching, research, and public service mission. The knowledge that is advanced and transferred within the physical plant should occur with the least amount of disruption possible and the most possible support from those in Facilities and Grounds.

Unfortunately, the review team observed physical conditions, maintenance practices, or the absence thereof, and reports from the campus community about service problems that compelled the team to conclude the physical plant is past the early stages of becoming a threat to the institution's ability to accomplish its mission at the same time that the institution is suffering from a rather expansive lack of permanent leadership at multiple levels throughout the UH system and the Manoa campus.

Deeper investigation into the Facilities and Grounds organization made it clear that there was not a unified strategic vision or sense of purpose among the staff. Roles and responsibilities for the campus-built environment were confused with noted disconnects between campus planning, capital improvement projects, and maintenance and operations. An overall sense of responsibility for the general condition and appearance of the total physical plant, including the upper campus, the lower campus, and auxiliary areas, could not be found. Several reported improvements in the upper campus landscape conditions were noted, despite operational roadblocks, including outdated and worn out equipment necessary for an efficient and effective workforce.

Policies were not written or centrally available at both the campus and the Facilities and Grounds level. There is an absence of written information about physical responsibilities leading to confusion about who is responsible for certain physical segments of the campus and who has the financial responsibility for the operation, repair, and im-

provements to certain segments of the campus. Technology and the internet tools are not commonly used by the Facilities and Grounds organization to share information, manage data, or facilitate the management of the plant. The organization is not known for its innovation. Baseline data and metrics to help evaluate performance are noticeably absent. Organizational budgets are not well understood and the department's financial accounting has not kept pace with organizational changes.

An outdated and elementary work order system was in place. Preventive maintenance programs are on someone's wish list rather than an actual institutional practice and computerized monitoring of building conditions does not exist. Equipment replacement programs have been incredibly shortchanged. A detailed inventory of physical conditions to support the institution's deferred maintenance estimate was informal and incomplete. The campus seeks a Facilities and Grounds organization that understands its deferred maintenance needs and that works together to establish priorities for repair and maintenance projects.

Resource limitations and bureaucratic entanglements are common. An understanding of workloads and the flexibility to increase and decrease resources according to workload demands is needed. Procurement practices and limited procurement resources cause noticeable delays that impact the timeliness of the performance of the Facilities and Grounds staff.

Decision making within the Facilities and Grounds organization is centrally controlled. Training and professional development are not an area of focus despite changes in technology. Useful products that can help improve the overall performance of the physical plant are missing. Horizontal and vertical communications need to be improved. Facilities and Grounds employees do not appear to meet the UH System shared value of "empowerment." Needless to say, morale was also found to be low. Recognition for performance would be welcome.