2024 Hospitality & Tourism (HOST)
Annual Program Review Update (APRU)
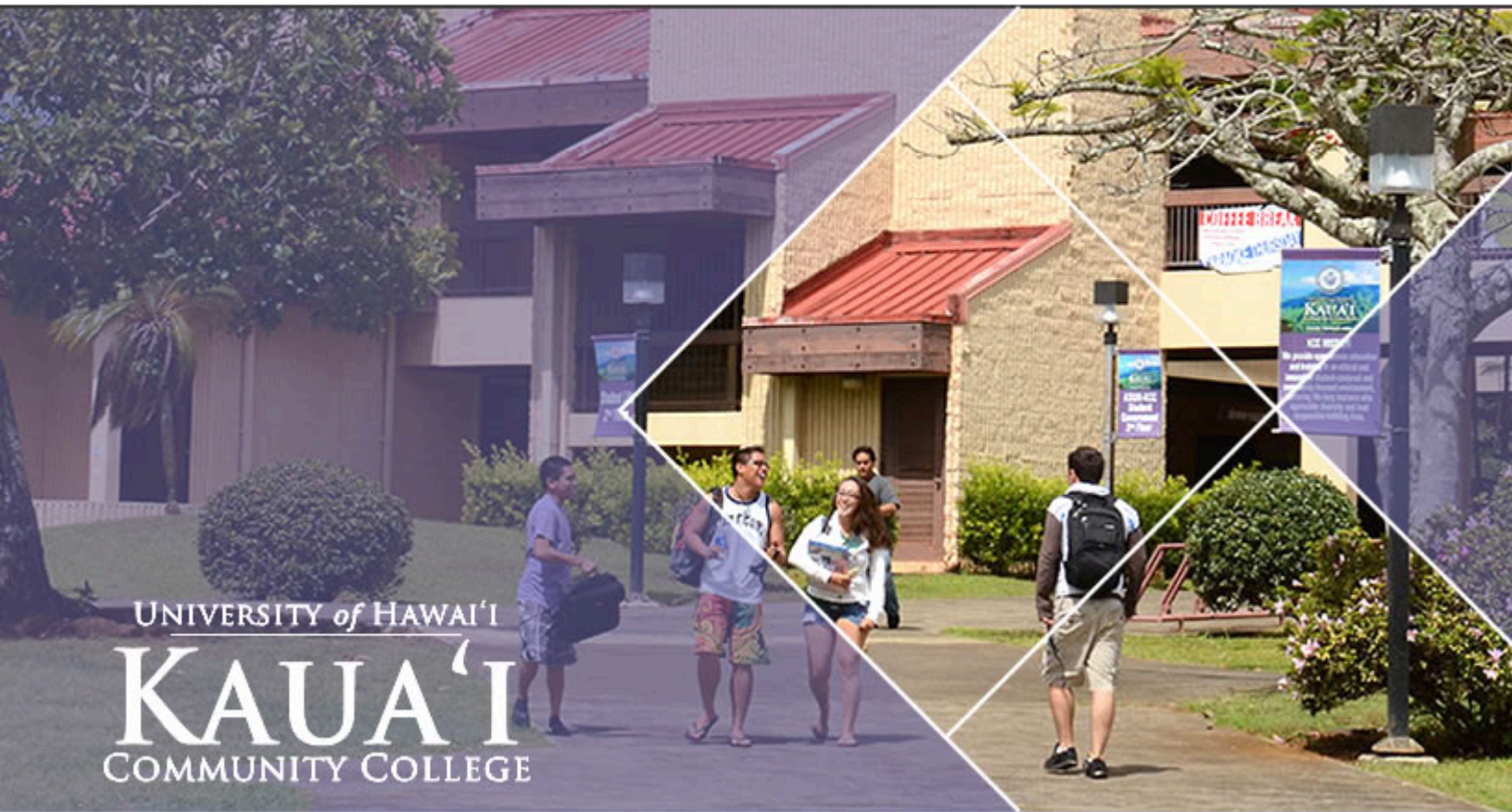
1. Program Mission

The Hospitality & Tourism (HOST) program provides students a quality education, and prepares them for a career in the Visitor Industry or for transfer to a bachelor's degree in Business and/or Travel Industry Management. The HOST program promotes positive work ethics, self-esteem, service excellence, customer-centric attitudes, cultural understanding and appreciation, quality and productivity, positive interpersonal skills, professionalism; and supports students in achieving their goals. "Ensuring the sustainability of Aloha in the Hospitality and Tourism Industries"

College Mission Alignment
Kaua'i Community College's mission statement is, "Kaua'i Community College is a kahua that inspires, engages, and empowers learners and educators to enrich our community and our world." The HOST program aligns with the college's mission statement by motivating our students to apply their hospitality knowledge and skills to make positive impacts and contributions to our island community via the hospitality/service industry.

2. Program Student Learning Outcomes

The HOST Program Student Learning Outcomes are:

1. Develop critical thinking skills to effectively function in the hospitality and tourism industry.
2. Demonstrate an awareness of diversity and exhibit professional work ethics that promote positive service interactions and teamwork skills.
3. Utilize interpersonal written and oral communication skills necessary for effective organizational operations.
4. Incorporate the principles of aloha to promote the sustainability of Hawaiian cultural values in the hospitality industry.

In 2023-24, the Program assessed its PSLOs through the following methods:

- Aligning all CSLOs to PSLOs. Following the five-year course review schedule, the HOST Program has conducted its course assessments for HOST 280 for the period.
- Alignment with meeting all four PSLOs were successfully completed with all students passing with a "C" or higher for the HOST 280 course. Program course assessment was approved by the Assessment and Curriculum Committees.
- Assignments and exams that were focused on the course and program objectives were used to measure students' achievements.

Given the benchmark of 70% and HOST 280 *Hospitality Management* being an exit level course, 100% rate of students achieving a "C" or better aligns with meeting the PSLOs, thus validating that the students have been exceeding the benchmark.

Per the HOST program 5-year Comprehensive Program Review (CPR), **all HOST course students' learning outcomes (CSLOs) will be reassessed in AY 2025-26**.

3. Analysis of the Program

HOST Program 2024 Annual Report of Program Data (ARPD) direct link:
https://uhcc.hawaii.edu/varpd/index.php?y=2024&c=KAU&t=CTE&p=3067

Demand
The number of majors dropped compared to 2022-23, but only by two students (from 17 to 15). Since we had two students graduate last spring, this may have had an impact on our total number of majors.

According to the Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism's (DBEDT) latest Labor Market Dashboard ("Job Trends by Sector (monthly data)) in August of 2024 there were 31,600 total non-agricultural jobs on Kauaʻi. Of these jobs, 8,800 were classified as accommodation, food service, and drinking places. This means that about 28% of all jobs here on Kauaʻi are in the hospitality industry. These numbers prove that this is a major industry for our island and one with ample job opportunities.

According to the United States Census Bureau's Post-Secondary Employment Outcomes Explorer (PSEO), 23% of graduates (from all instructional programs) work in the "accommodation and food service" industry five years after earning an associates degree at Kauaʻi Community College (KCC). So irregardless of their majors while *attending* college, almost a quarter of our KCC graduates wind up working in the hospitality industry *after* college. Since HOST majors do not make up 23% of KCC's enrollment, one can assume that the majority of these students are non-HOST majors who end up working in the industry anyway. Had these students majored in HOST, they would be better positioned to succeed in their current roles. The KCC HOST Advisory Committee has identified several reasons why a HOST degree is valuable to workers in the hospitality industry; earning a HOST degree:

- Better prepares employees for management roles by developing critical thinking skills
- Strengthens employees' written and oral communication skills
- Sets realistic career expectations for when students enter the workforce (career-paths, salaries, etc.)
- Familiarizes students with job titles, duties, and industry concepts before they enter the industry
- Shortens the learning curve when employees make the jump from entry-level positions to management
- Makes job candidates' resumes stand out over their peers with no education
- Demonstrates intent to pursue a lifelong career in hospitality

Much of the HOST program's curriculum focuses on lodging operations (hotels, condos, timeshares, etc.). According to our [ARPD Website](#), the average earnings for occupations aligned to the program learning outcomes is $80,746 for lodging managers. This figure is more than double the ALICE survival budget for a single adult (which is less than $40,000). Lodging managers are well-paid here on Kaua'i and this profession offers a more than livable wage.

The demand data above reveals that the hospitality industry is high paying and has plenty of job opportunities right here on-island. Indeed, almost a quarter of KCC students go on to work in this industry after graduation, regardless of their major. Taking all of this into consideration, one might assume that HOST is a sought after degree here at KCC, but unfortunately this is not the case. The reality is that the HOST program has struggled with enrollment for a number of years. While an exact reason is not known, the answer may very well be that it's a combination of things. Here are a few *unproven* theories as to why HOST enrollment is low:

- **"No education needed":** In an effort to fill job openings, many hospitality employers have touted the fact that a college degree is not *required* in order to be eligible for entry-level positions. While this is true, it's important to note the multitude of reasons why local employers still see value in hospitality education (see bullet-points above)
- **"The tip of the iceberg":** In recent years it has become apparent that people outside of the industry are unaware of the immense job potential within hospitality. They only know what they see when they walk into a hotel, but they cannot see all that lies below the surface (thus the "iceberg" analogy). Please see the action section below for ways that the KCC HOST program is combating this misconception.
- **"The 'perception' issue":** It's true that Hawai'i's visitor industry has gotten a "bad rap" in recent years for several reasons: contribution to overtourism, hosting rude and careless tourists who lack respect for Hawai'i's unique environment and culture, degradation of natural resources to build new resorts, and a multitude of issues surrounding native Hawaiian land-rights and a lack of wealth-sharing from large corporations. The Covid-19 pandemic certainly did not help–with many people losing their hospitality jobs and moving on to different industries altogether. Despite all of this negative publicity, one cannot deny that tourism is Kaua'i's number one industry and employs most of the people on this beautiful island. Walk into any hotel and you will see local people working there. These jobs put food on tables and roofs over heads; eliminating Kaua'i's visitor industry would destroy the livelihoods of almost one third of her residents virtually overnight. Please see the action section below for ways that the KCC HOST program is combating this perception issue.
- **"Starting at the bottom" (hotel-specific):** No matter how much education someone has, if they wish to enter into the hotel business without prior-experience, they will unfortunately need to start out in an entry-level position. This is because the hotel industry is extremely specialized. People who have never worked in a hotel have a tendency to grossly underestimate the complexity of this business. One cannot step into a management position until they have mastered everything that their subordinates do on a daily basis–and then some. Indeed, this issue is not unique to the hotel industry–even students graduating with bachelor's or master's degrees in business will need to have a certain level of experience and knowledge in order to step into a managerial position. Still, this doesn't mean that a HOST degree is not valuable; as the bullet-points above explained, two of the many benefits of a

HOST degree are that it (1) will shorten the learning curve when employees make the jump from entry-level positions to management and (2) will also set realistic career expectations for when students enter the workforce (career-paths, salaries, etc.). Whatever the industry, a degree is meant to *educate* a student–which sets them up for success–but never to make them feel *entitled* to any particular position, title, or salary.

Efficiency
With an average class size of 12 students (vs. 10 last year) and a fill rate of 49.3%, both of these metrics have seen year over year increases with the latter increasing for the past two years running (46.4 and 47.6% in 2022 and 2023, respectively).

In 2023, a reduced number of sections and off-sequence classes were offered in an attempt to make more efficient use of resources. As the number of majors fell, the program still needed to offer all of the classes that are required for graduation. This has contributed to the number of low enrolled classes. Classes have been allowed to run with minimal numbers (i.e. less than 10 students). The total number of low-enrolled classes has remained stable at 5 (down from the peak of 6 in 2022 and 2021). The second semester classes typically will run with lower numbers than the first semester classes, as many non-majors take the introductory classes as electives.

Effectiveness
This year, successful completion has fallen to 68% (from 74% in 2023) and withdrawals have skyrocketed to 25 (from just 3 in 2023). This is no coincidence, as we ran an unprecedented number of HOST Early College courses at a local high school in the Spring 2024 semester with a total of about 60 students. As it turns out, many of these high school students were unprepared for the rigors of college education and decided to withdraw with "Ws" when faced with the prospects of "Fs" at the end of the semester. Successful completion was negatively affected because some students stuck with it and still received "Ds" and "Fs" in the end. Please refer to the Action Plan section below to see how the HOST program intends to improve on this in the future. Despite these hiccups, the high level of interest from the local high schools is certainly a promising sign for the future of the KCC HOST program.

Persistence fall to spring is 69%–a huge increase of 24 percentage points year-over-year (YOY)(vs. 45% in 2023); persistence fall to fall also had a significant YOY increase of 10 percentage points (40% vs. 30% in 2023). The YOY gains continue when looking at degrees and certificates awarded: unduplicated degrees/certificates awarded (8 in 2024 vs. 5 in 2023), degrees awarded (3 in 2024 vs. 0 in 2023), certificates of achievement awarded (6 in 2024 vs. 2 in 2023).

Distance Indicators
The number of distance education classes taught dropped only slightly from 8 in 2023 to 7 in 2024. The fill rate fell slightly as well, down from 48% in 2023 to 42% in 2024. The number of withdrawals in the distance indicators increased from 3 to 6 students. Successful completion remained fairly stable compared to last year, with only a 2 percentage point decline from 74% to 72%. It's definitely worth noting that this successful completion rate (in the distance indicators

section) has been fairly stable over the last 3 years and much higher than the 53% seen in 2019 to 2020.

Perkins Indicators
Two Perkins core indicators were met:

- 1P1 postsecondary placement - actual 100 vs. goal of 35 who are placed or retained in employment following program completion.
- 2P1 earned recognized credential - actual 80 vs. goal of 35 received postsecondary credential during participation in or within 1 year of program completion.
- 3P1 nontraditional program concentration – data was not available

Performance Indicators
The HOST program's performance indicators have been on a steep decline since their peak in 2021; however, this downward trend has finally halted in 2024 with the number of degrees and certificates increasing to 9 (vs. 2 in 2023). This year the program had 0 transfers to a UH 4-yr (down from 2 in 2023). It's important to note that this metric is historically low for this program, with a running 5-year average of just 1.6.

Program Changes
There has been some positive movement with the HOST program in regards to Early College (EC) offerings. After halting HOST EC courses for a year to redesign their pathways within the DOE, Kauaʻi High School (KHS) resumed HOST EC classes this year with four classes running in the spring of 2024 (three sections of HOST 100 and one section of HOST 101). KHS is also scheduled to run one section of HOST 101 in the spring of 2025. There has also been positive action with Kapaʻa High School as well: they are running their very first HOST EC course this semester (fall 2024). The current class size is small, but the hope is that these classes will gain traction by attracting more students in the future. Kapaʻa High School has expressed an interest in possibly adding more HOST EC courses in the future, but this depends on a number of variables that are out of KCC's control. In due time, all of this EC activity should have a positive impact on the potential pipeline of students continuing on to Kauaʻi CC after graduation.

Last year's APRU went into detail explaining the unique predicament facing the KCC HOST program. Essentially, the question became, "how can we expect a program to survive if we are not giving it the attention and resources that it deserves?" Last year's APRU was a call to action: the HOST program needs to have at least one full-time faculty in order to survive and prosper. Fortunately, this plea for program revitalization resources was answered and a non-tenure FTE position was approved and posted in the summer of 2024. The search was successful and a new employee is scheduled to start on January 1, 2025.

4. Action Plan

The HOST Program is scheduled for CPR in fall 2026. To achieve the program goals, from now until the next CPR, the program has identified the following actions:

2024 ARPD reveals that this has been a successful year for the KCC HOST program overall. Last year's action plan has paid off, but there is definitely ample room for improvement. Now more than ever, the program will continue to work with community outreach, student recruitment, and job placement strategies in order to improve demand indicators and increase the number of majors. The program will continue to offer and work to expand course offerings in Early College, promote prior learning assessment (PLA) and online course offerings to industry managers and unions, and support campus international short-term study abroad students. Include specialized lessons focused on addressing the "tip of the iceberg" and "perception issues" from above.

These strategies are also targeted to have an impact on the efficiency indicators with average class size and fill rate as well as the effectiveness indicators to improve degrees and certificates awarded. Finally, the program will work collaboratively with DOE partners to ensure that high school students are properly vetted before enrolling in EC course offerings; this will have a positive impact on the metrics of successful completion and withdrawal rates for HOST courses.

These strategies will be accomplished by working collaboratively with our DOE partners, Academic Support, Student Support Services, the Trades Career Track Coordinator, and industry and community partners that are in direct alignment with the campus mission.

5. Resource Implications

☑ **I am NOT requesting additional resources for my program/unit.**