

August 15, 2002

Dear UH Hilo Faculty:

Welcome back! I hope that you had an exceptional summer. I would like to take a few minutes of your time and communicate with you a few important issues.

Strategic Planning Process

The UH Hilo Congress Strategic Planning Committee has produced a UH Hilo Strategic Plan which was approved in substance by the Congress on May 8. In a campus-wide process early in the summer, a number of administrators, deans, directors, division and department chairs, faculty, and staff worked together to propose a total of 19 strategic initiatives based on the strategic goals in the Plan. The UH system has responded by supporting a record number of capital improvement projects (CIP) for UH Hilo that include a College of Hawaiian Language building, a College of Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resource Management second phase addition, a College of Business and Economics building, a marine laboratory at Puako, and a pre-vet teaching laboratory and hospital and many others. The strategic planning and initiatives efforts have also produced a record number of program change requests (PCR). More importantly, the process has given us a sense of direction, unity and ownership. I thank all of you for your involvement. For details you can visit the web sites:

<http://www.uhh.hawaii.edu/~vcaa/UHHSIMay3102.pdf> and
http://www.uhh.hawaii.edu/~congress/Draft_Strategic_Plan.pdf

Accreditation

We have received separate approval from WASC for our requests for two substantive changes in the institution: our master's degrees in counseling psychology and China-US relations. Together with our master's degrees in education and in Hawaiian language, these new graduate programs advance UH Hilo into the WASC category of master's-granting institutions. We will no longer be required to submit substantive change requests for master's degree programs to WASC.

We are in the middle of preparing the first of two institutional reports to WASC, both of which are based on the self study completed in 2000-2001 and institutional changes in the year since. There will be a WASC site visit in March 2003, which will focus on our institutional capacity, and a second visit in March 2004, which will focus on our educational effectiveness. We have a clear purpose, institutional integrity, and fiscal stability and will continue to seek an organization structure that will empower people and encourage growth. In pursuing educational effectiveness, we have defined our program objectives and embarked on a process of review and fostered a culture of learning outcome assessment. The UH Hilo Congress will be busy with issues related

to general education, assessment, academic policy and budget; the Congress has established-committees in each of the four areas. I encourage you to serve on these committees.

Academic Focus

During this coming academic year we hope to address a number of important academic related issues such as academic advising, student retention, articulation with community colleges, distance learning policy, health and wellness initiative, and center for teaching excellence. Please contact Paulette (pfching@hawaii.edu) if you have passion and commitment in these areas and wish to contribute to our efforts in any of these areas.

Classroom Scheduling

Some minor changes that have been made to the Classroom Scheduling process at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo. Initial scheduling will be done as it is currently done by Division Chairs and Deans' Offices. An additional step has been added with the intent to bring all parties together to foster communication among the colleges and to better meet the teaching and learning needs of the entire campus community.

After the Deans and Division Chairs have completed tentative college schedules of room assignments, they will meet together as a group chaired by the University Registrar to resolve any unmet facility needs or scheduling conflicts yet remaining. Preparing the final schedule will be the responsibility of the Registrar. This coordinating group will also be very useful in making recommendations for classroom improvements and for doing advance facility use planning so we can begin to fulfill the goal of multiple year class scheduling.

Faculty members needing to schedule classrooms for meetings, special classes, or any other reason should continue contact to their dean's office as has been the practice for many years.

Those who need to use classrooms and academic facilities at night, on weekends or in the summer should contact the College of Continuing Education and Community Service as is done currently. College of Continuing Education and Community Service will then coordinate with the Registrar.

We hope this minor change will foster communication and coordination and will better meet the teaching needs of our faculty at all three colleges.

Salary Adjustment

Learning from the experience we had in the past fiscal year, we hope to have a much simpler and efficient process this year. David Miller and I have met numerous times and I believe that we have come up a mechanism that is not cumbersome but timely. A simple one-page form has been distributed to the VCSA, deans and directors. Instructions are included on the form. During the last academic council meeting deans and directors also agreed to establish the following timeline:

November 15	Faculty are encouraged to send their salary adjustment requests to VCSA, deans and directors by this date
December 1	Feedback from departments is back to offices of VCSA, deans and directors
January 1	Recommendations are forwarded to the Chancellor's office
January 15	Recommendations leave UH Hilo and are forwarded to the President

Our goal is to have a process that is fair, speedy and simple and that will deliver the adjustment to the deserving faculty in a timely fashion.

Reorganization had been mentioned on and off and is an important but complex issue. Hoping to facilitate discussion and reach a general consensus, I am attaching to this letter a separate letter addressing reorganization.

Keith Miser gave me a book entitled *Scholarship Revisited* by Ernest Boyer, the former president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. It discusses the symbiosis and dichotomy between teaching and research; and offers a new paradigm that recognizes a full range of scholarly activity that includes discovery, integration, application and teaching. It has helped me to envision a healthy, dynamic balance among faculty teaching, research and service activities at UH Hilo, a teaching institution with growing emphasis on research.

I am grateful for your acceptance and support during the past six months, and looking forward to sharing a rewarding academic year with you.

Sincerely,

Chris Lu
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs