



MEMORANDUM

Wednesday, December 2, 2020

TO: UH West O'ahu's Pueo Stewardship Task Force: Reframing & Budgeting
RE: Response/Action to Pueo Budget Taskforce – FY 21 Report
FROM: Maenette Benham, Chancellor

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Maenette Benham'.

Aloha mai Task Force Members!

Once again, mahalo nūnui for sharing your expertise, time and commitment to this important effort. I am appreciative of the profound discussions had and the respect shown for differing ideas/approaches as you sought deeper understanding of both the global Hawai'i issues and its implications on the university and our campus. Per my email dated, Thursday, November 19th, I have reviewed the recommendations with appropriate unit managers, budget and finance, and vice chancellors. In light of the nature of several of the recommendations, I did not meet with division chairs (see below for future discussions with DCs). **Your recommendations were informative and useful, and aligned with as well as expanded current key actions.** The report further supported the crucial drivers that continue to inform campus leadership decision making. These include:

- Addressing operational cost-centers (all campus units).
- Improving student recruitment, retention and persistence to graduation – this includes maximizing opportunities for students to cultivate career/work skills to be gainfully employed after graduation and/or attainment of certificate(s).
- Prioritizing Academic programs (Division Chairs with OVCAA).
- Developing new programs to reach new students (currently a system-wide discussion).

Your recommendations for FY 21 is, indeed, the start of many steps toward a stronger, more sustainable campus! Additionally, the efforts of the task force supports our ability to provide clear, concrete cost cutting measures to the UH System and our Board of Regents.

Regarding each of your recommendations:

- A. **Building Consolidation** (*first choice from survey results): **For FY 21 we have closed most of our buildings with the exception for some office spaces, labs, and several classrooms used for DE.** And, yes, the hours of usage is currently limited. It is important to note that the library has limited hours but remains open to students, faculty and staff only. Also, the newest building – Creative Media – is not yet open and would not come fully online until our campus reopens. We are monitoring our utilities costs and will continue to decrease costs while ensuring appropriate building maintenance requirements.

Note: Should we re-open campus Fall 2021, we would need to revisit facilities use and costs. This is being monitored by OVCA facilities reporting to VC Ishida.

- B. **Reducing Faculty Course Overloads: Concur and in-process.** VCAA Moniz and AVCAA Rosenfeld with Division Chairs began implementing this strategy for fall 2020 and are optimistic in their current effort to decrease overloads for spring 2021 while still balancing the need to support student success. This is being monitored by the OVCAA Adrian Lee and Clinton Nishida reporting to VC Moniz.
- C. **Reduction of Operating Costs: Agreed and continued efforts to reduce.** Many of the suggested recommendations have already been implemented. Monthly and quarterly we examine our costs and will continue to work on reducing costs while taking care not to negatively impact our core endeavor of teaching and learning. It is important to note that as a result of our drop in enrollment, Spring 2020, the campus, under the direction of the chancellor, began a rigorous and comprehensive approach of cash preservation across all cost centers. This is being monitored monthly by UHWO Budget & Finance (B&F) Linda Saiki and Sheri Ching who report to Chancellor Benham.
- D. **Implementing a Program Assessment: Suspend action.** While an important point, the OVCAA will discuss further with with Division Chairs. Several preliminary assessments were initiated to guide our fall 2020 and spring 2021 semester efforts, and much of the work is being accomplished via the existing Program Review of Established Programs required by policy. Next steps in our Academic Prioritization process, which includes program assessment will be facilitated by VC Moniz, AVCAA Rosenfeld, Division Chairs and other campus faculty and staff representatives.
- E. **Increase Course Capacity (# of students in a course): Suspend action.** This is a sound recommendation that will require more discussion with Division Chairs regarding operationalization. It will be included in the discussion effort mentioned in “D” above.
- F. **Increase Blended Courses: Suspend action.** This is a compelling idea that has merit, however, it requires more discussion. How it provides cost efficiencies and/or revenue generation requires more detail.

Regarding survey and survey responses:

- Mahalo nūnui to the TF and staff for the many hours of work it took to put the survey together, disseminate, collect and analyze, and report results! The survey comments and the TFs recommendations (informed by the survey) provided campus leadership with a snapshot of campus community perspectives.
- We will continue to review and discuss “survey comments”, in particular the suggestions and recommendations regarding cost efficiencies.

Regarding Next Steps:

- We are awaiting the general fund budget information from Hawai‘i’s Governor regarding FY 21 Quarters 3 & 4 allocations as well as our biennium budget (FB 21-23). While we have an approved FY 21 budget (approved by BOR at the November meeting), this is a “tentative” budget until our general fund allocation is determined. We anticipate that Hawai‘i’s Governor’s office will communicate additional budget information in mid-December. Note: Over 50% of our operations is reliant on the state’s general fund allocation.

- All state agencies were asked to prepare for a 10-20% general fund reduction starting in July 2021. While we wait for further notice from the state regarding the impact to our general fund allocation, it is prudent for our campus to prepare and plan on addressing the budget reductions that are forthcoming. We are currently anticipating a 15% or \$2.7M reduction each year for FY22, FY23, and FY24. This represents 3.4% of the total anticipated reduction for the entire University.
- We await the final report from the Pueo Stewardship Task Force, recommendations for FYs 22, 23, and 24.

Mahalo again for your vigilance and contributions to this effort.