TO: Virginia Hinshaw, Chancellor
VIA: Reed Dasenbrock
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
FROM: Thomas R. Bingham
Dean, College of Arts and Humanities
SUBJECT: D/D Advance Action Plan

UNDERGRADUATE RETENTION & GRADUATION RATES

Among the factors identified at the Advance that influence retention and graduation rates are the quality of education and student engagement. The College takes pride in the level of our teaching and we have been taking steps to improve student/faculty engagement for several years, but we recognize that there is room for improvement.

Already in place
Teaching
- Increased focus on excellence in teaching by creating annual college-level teaching awards: Since beginning the awards two years ago, all the college’s recipients have also received the Regent’s Medal for Excellence in Teaching, and graduate assistants have received campus teaching awards.
- Articulation with community colleges: Five of nine departments have had productive discussions with their CC colleagues regarding courses and pathways to Mānoa. Another is revisiting discussions from previous years, and another will begin contact this year.
- With few exceptions, tenure track faculty are teaching the introductory courses.
- The College funds 12 additional graduate assistants from tuition funds to allow large courses to conduct breakout and discussion sections.
- Support faculty travel to learn and develop innovative teaching, the most recent example being a history assistant professor and student attending a conference about creating history classroom games.

Student Engagement
- Mandatory Advising: Data shows that early student engagement with faculty significantly affects retention. All A&H freshmen and sophomores see a faculty advisor every semester. Junior and seniors see a faculty advisor every year. Students are referred to the Arts & Sciences advisors as needed.
• Departments have various engagement-focused activities, such as orientations, new student receptions, student organizations, undergraduate conferences, newsletters, capstone project seminars, student award ceremonies, designated student gathering places, etc. One department has an annual faculty vs. student bowling tournament.
• The College provides funding for social events that put students together with faculty.

**Going to do**

• The four colleges of Arts & Sciences, the Center for Teaching Excellence, and the School of Pacific and Asian Studies are collaborating to present a series of workshops for new faculty that will focus on high impact teaching and learning practices.
• Three A&H departments have unusually high time to graduation numbers. Rather than rely on anecdotal evidence to formulate plans, these departments will gather and compile data from graduating students regarding time to degree and specific reasons for delaying graduation (working, course availability, course scheduling, credits that didn’t transfer, etc.).
• Articulation with community colleges: As noted above, departments with existing agreements will refresh their relationships with the CCs, with one goal being to ensure students arrive at Mānoa with the proper courses and preparation.
• Departments have agreed to increase their efforts to identify and engage new students as early as possible.
• The College is considering requiring, as part of all tenure and promotion dossiers, a response to a question, “What have you done to improve your teaching?”
• The College will re-emphasize the need for faculty advisors to include discussions regarding career options with their students.

**GRADUATE EDUCATION**

The A&H Program Review noted issues with adequate funding of our graduate students, a long-standing concern in the College given that most A&H disciplines have limited opportunity for securing support through grants and contracts.

**Already in place**

• Funding: As noted above, the College provides support for 12 graduate assistants from tuition funds.
• Teaching and funding: Departments provide as many opportunities as possible for graduate students to teach summer session courses.
• Departments are reviewing their admission criteria to focus on quality over quantity.

**Going to do**

• Time to completion, attrition: The College will create four Dissertation Research Awards and four Thesis Research Awards to support students working on their terminal projects.
• Grad Division data indicates that two departments have unusually high rates of attrition in their Masters programs. The College will assist the departments in determining possible causes and formulating plans of action.
• The College will work with faculty advisors to include discussions regarding the varied career paths students might pursue upon graduation.
• The Dean will increase efforts to develop a donor base for graduate student support.

NATIVE HAWAIIAN

Already in place
• 20+ courses focused solely on Hawaiian topics
• Six full time faculty (including two Native Hawaiian) and six lecturers whose scholarship and teaching is primarily focused on Hawaiian topics.

Going to do
• The College has been awarded two catalytic hires, one in Hawaiian Music and one in Hawaiian Theatre. These two faculty will be expected to develop curriculum and interdisciplinary and community projects, and nurture our links to the corresponding community college programs. The Hawaiian Music faculty will reactivate the Hawaiian Music undergraduate program and collaborate with Hawai‘inui‘akea to develop interdisciplinary graduate programs. The Hawaiian Theatre faculty will produce plays with Hawaiian themes, nurture Hawaiian playwrights, and foster collaboration between Theatre and Hawai‘inui‘akea.
• Approximately 12.3% of the A&H undergraduates are Native Hawaiian, compared to only 5.5% of our graduate students. The College will explore ways to recruit more Native Hawaiian students for A&H graduate programs, thus creating more Native Hawaiian candidates for faculty positions.
• The College will work with Hawai‘inui‘akea to encourage Native Hawaiian students to double major in A&H programs, eventually leading to more Native Hawaiians qualified for faculty positions.
• The College will work with Hawai‘inui‘akea to identify potential candidates for vacant faculty positions.