




UNIVERSITY
of HAWAII®
MĀNOA

November 8, 2010

MEMORANDUM

TO: Thomas Bingham, Interim Dean
College of Arts and Humanities

FROM: Reed Dasenbrock 
Vice Chancellor
for Academic Affairs

SUBJECT: Arts and Humanities Plan to Address Recommendations from Program Review

Thank you for your two memoranda of August 19 and September 15, outlining your college and department-specific plans to address the recommendations in the Arts and Humanities Program Review conducted this spring. We then met on November 1st along with Hye-ryeon Lee, Krystyna Aune and Wendy Pearson to discuss the College's plan. As your August 19th memorandum notes, the reviewers spent some time discussing issues outside the College in their report, and it is hard to see how some of the issues they raise are within the scope of a college-specific review. So we agree with your focus on college and department-specific issues and endorse your plan to address the recommendations from the Program Review.

There are themes in the review and in our discussion, however, that may not have emerged fully in your departmental recommendations, and the purpose of this memorandum is to describe some of the issues as we see them in OVCAA that need to be addressed over the next year with an eye to what should be accomplished by and reported in the one-year progress report due Monday, May 16, 2011.

A Focus on Graduating Students: A number of the issues that are department-specific involve steps each department needs to take to help achieve the overall university mission of reducing time to degree and improving student retention. Comments such as "undergraduate majors take a back seat to students in our MA and PhD programs" illustrate the problem more than they delineate a solution. Some departments have more capacity to educate undergraduates whereas others have capacity challenges, so 'rightsizing' departments will be a concern in the years to come. We welcome History's focus on increasing undergraduate majors and commend the steps American Studies has taken to increase its undergraduate majors. Although we hope to be able to reward credit hour growth with additional resources not just this year but in the future, every department with capacity challenges (i.e., more undergraduate majors or students in particular courses than are easily accommodated) need to be examining their requirements and their modes of course delivery and reconsidering where they place additional instructional resources. We welcome the Art Department's development of a four-year matrix, but we wonder why they

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need to develop a new data system for their majors since the data they say they intend to collect is already in STAR. We are committed to working with the College to address course pressure points and see the College as central to our focus on an enhanced undergraduate experience.

Graduate Students: Concerns involving graduate students surface in a number of departments. There is a general concern across many programs that we need to do more to support graduate students, and we agree that additional support for graduate students will help with the issue of time to degree in many graduate programs as well as with the lack of selectivity and competitiveness in some graduate programs. One way to support additional graduates is to propose investments in key gateway undergraduate courses through additional teaching assistantships; another way is through an active development campaign. We look forward to learning more about the College's plans in these key areas.

New Programs: The Program Review comments on discussions underway concerning new degrees in a number of departments, an M.A. in Historic Preservation in American Studies and Ph.D. degrees in Religion and in Speech. Each of these seem to require additional tenure-stream faculty focused on graduate education in order to move forward. To be realistic, we do not imagine that in the present circumstances new graduate programs in these areas are going to be at the top of the priority list for either the College or the campus as a whole. Any additional faculty lines we are able to place into the College in the near future will need to be dedicated to our needs in undergraduate education.

Facilities: The quality of the facilities in the arts is mentioned in several places. We share those concerns. We are happy to be able to report that a new temporary structure for Dance will be erected soon, and there is additional funding forthcoming this year for investments in classrooms used by faculty in the College. Additionally, substantial improvements to the infrastructure in Sakamaki were made this year, and additional renovations to Sakamaki may be forthcoming in the near future. However, again to be realistic, we don't see a Concert Hall on campus in the near future, and the prospects for funding the Kennedy Theatre Annex in the present financial situation are not as bright as one might hope.

A common thread runs through some of these comments, which is that the Program Review and the departmental responses sometimes focus on ideas that are unlikely to be realized at the present time. We urge a concrete focus on next steps achievable this year, and we think there are plenty of achievable and discrete next steps in the Program Review and the responses to it that can keep us quite busy over the next year.

c: Interim Associate Vice Chancellor Aune
Program Officer Pearson