




UNIVERSITY
of HAWAII®
MĀNOA

August 3, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jeffrey Carroll, Dean
College of Languages, Linguistics and Literature

FROM: Reed Dasenbrock 
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

SUBJECT: One-Year Progress Report on 2013 Review of LLL

Thank you for your One-Year Progress Report on the 2013 LLL Program Review dated May 12 and for our meeting last week discussing the report. It is clear that many of the suggestions in the Program Review are being acted on in exactly the way we hope. I don't feel the need in this response to your report to discuss your report point-by-point as much as discuss the relatively small number of cases where we don't quite have the forward momentum we hope for and to highlight a couple issues of importance.

The physical space many faculty and staff work in in LLL is frankly substandard, in some cases appalling. You do accurately report "some progress" but the rate of progress is clearly inadequate. I have finally filled the associate vice chancellor position in my office, and Deborah Halbert actually begins today. I am asking her to take on a larger role on facilities than Krystyna Aune did, building on Krystyna's important work improving classrooms to be a general point person on facilities within academic affairs. So I would suggest you work with her on moving the agenda on renovating Lincoln Annex, completing the improvements in Spalding, addressing the space needs of the Chinese flagship, etc. The larger issue of funding the Kuykendall renovation is beyond your or my control: I will continue to push for the project but in the meantime, I do think you as dean will need to be more proactive, working with AVC Halbert, on some of the smaller projects that can and should be accomplished.

The issue of low enrollment programs has surfaced publicly since the Program Review, with the Board of Regents and the Legislature expressing concern about whether we are using our instructional resources as efficiently as possible. This comes in two forms, one a concern about degree programs with few majors and the other about courses that have few students in them. Your Progress Report focuses on the former and mentions the participation of Professors Arboleda and Harris-McCoy in the Low Enrollment Pilot OVCAA is launching. We appreciate their participation, and hope that it is useful not just for their programs but for others in LLL in the same situation. This is a sensitive and complex matter: my approach to this has been to stress that because we think these are important programs, we want more students to benefit from them. I cannot yet say where the BOR and legislative interest in this issue will lead us in the way of new policies and directives, but I do hope that the faculty understand that the best way to avoid any procrustean beds here is to work

2500 Campus Road, Hawai'i Hall 209
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822
Telephone: (808) 956-8447
Fax: (808) 956-7115

Jeffrey Carroll
August 3, 2015
Page 2

proactively to increase the enrollment in these valuable programs. I look forward to you working with the faculty in low enrollment programs to develop this proactive response.

Courses with low enrollment are a somewhat different issue. I believe that it is an important part of UH Mānoa's reputation, identity and mission to offer a broad array of languages, and I frequently cite with pride the fact that we offer more Asian and Pacific languages than any university in the country after BYU. Yet you as dean have a budget to balance, and the economic pressures from classes with small enrollments will only grow as our budget becomes more and more tuition dependent and as we move as we have to a budget model in which there is an 'instructional return' to schools and colleges proportionate to their enrollment. You identify some steps being taken already to address this issue. Online courses may help, so the involvement of the CLT to train faculty on online instruction is a great step. It is also worth noting that some lesser-taught languages in the college—such as Hindi—have had sharp increases in enrollment, so there may be lessons learned from one language program that can be imported into others. But I do think there are additional steps to be taken, and the Dean's office needs to lead in some of these areas.

I do think the proposed Comparative Literature program—if designed well—could help enrollments in some of the lesser-taught languages. SPAS provides important external support for some of these languages, and I think partnering with SPAS on seeking additional external funding will be helpful. I don't know if other embassies share the Thai Embassy's interest in supporting the teaching of their national language, but there may be opportunities there worth pursuing. Finally, I think we need to work with advisors across campus, but probably particularly with those in the new joint Arts and Humanities/LLL advising center, to see if we can encourage the study of a broader range of languages than Mānoa undergraduates typically take, with their strong focus on Japanese, Spanish, Korean, Samoan, and a few others, neglecting the potential opportunities that your college's rich menu of offerings provides.

One of the mysteries of Mānoa enrollment patterns has historically been the low enrollment in Chinese, and you mention growth in Chinese enrollments and the funding of the Chinese Flagship programs as positive developments over the past year. As administrators, we can become too focused on problems and challenges and not pay sufficient attention to nurturing areas of excellence. The college has a number of strong graduate programs, with SLS and Linguistics being the most graduate-focused departments. The low enrollment in the doctoral programs in EALL can be seen as a kind of weakness inside an area of strength, as these programs have strong reputations and excellent faculty. Your progress report encourages a reconsideration of the pause on submitting a proposal for an MFA in English, and makes a good case for pushing ahead with the proposal: it will be necessary to assess the likely fate of such a degree during the approval process before giving you a clear green light here, but I will consult with the Chancellor and get back to you soon on this.

I look forward to receiving a report from the College addressing further progress on the report recommendations by August 3, 2017.