



UNIVERSITY  
of HAWAII®  
MĀNOA

October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2013

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Brian Taylor  
Dean, SOEST

FROM: Reed Dasenbrock, Vice Chancellor  
For Academic Affairs

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Reed'.

SUBJECT: SOEST Program Review

I want to thank you and the SOEST faculty and administration for your role preparing for a successful program review and for this serious and substantive response to the Program Review report.

We are quite comfortable with the tenor of your responses and endorse the action steps you outline for SOEST, while recognizing that some of the recommendations in the report touch on issues outside your (and my) area of authority. The first recommendation, that Arts and Sciences do more to encourage students to take SOEST introductory courses, is one that will be much easier to implement given some changes inside of Arts and Sciences. I prefer to see this as a recommendation that SOEST should take a number of steps to encourage undergraduates to take courses in SOEST, and a conversation with A & S would clearly be one important step to take. I think this is an extremely important long term priority, as I believe many students could benefit from the programs SOEST offers. This is not just a matter of a few tweaks, and this is an area where a more comprehensive approach is certainly worth developing.

The discussion later in the report concerning the development of a program in Global Environmental Policy to complement the Global Environmental Sciences

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program is, I believe, a step in the right direction that fits in with this overall direction. The change from the outdated name “Meteorology” to “Atmospheric Sciences” is another step that should help attract more students.

A number of issues in the report concerning graduate students and post-docs. The campus is in the middle of discussions that should address the issues raised in the report concerning post-doc benefits. The issues concerning campus climate, diversity, and inappropriate behavior are serious and need to be addressed urgently; I am confident that they are on the School’s radar screen and will be addressed appropriately.

Finally, we are all operating in a resource constrained environment. There is no question that development has to be increasingly important for SOEST in this changed environment, and we strongly support the recommendation for SOEST to develop a fundraising plan and for the UHF to do what it can to help SOEST realize that plan.

We believe that the issues identified within specific departments is more properly the kuleana of the Dean and School, not the central administration, but I would like to make a couple of comments about these. First, the concerns expressed about time to degree, especially in Oceanography, seem serious as the numbers reported are startlingly high. The new Graduate School policy regarding an annual report on progress to degree should help with this issue and should be implemented promptly. The response from Meteorology was startling in one place, where it made it seem as if there was nothing that could be done about poor teaching. This is not the case, and we expect the chair to work with the dean to address these issues within existing university procedures. Beyond that, we expect SOEST to work on addressing the department-specific issues along the lines spelled out in the report.

I look forward to receiving a report in one year discussing progress on all these issues. The report is due **October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014**.