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Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

November 18, 2013

MEMORANDUM

TO: Denise Konan
Dean, Social Sciences

FROM: Reed Dasenbrock 
Vice Chancellor
for Academic Affairs

SUBJECT: Program Review: Three Year Report

Thank you for your memo of October 21, 2013, which constitutes the College's three year progress report after the program review of Spring 2009. A lot has changed since 2009, including your serving as Dean. We think it is important in these documents to strike a balance between focusing on new emerging issues and reporting progress on issues previously identified as needing to be addressed. I am happy to see the College both breaking new ground and making progress on inherited issues.

In what follows, I will only touch lightly on the solid achievements and strengths of the College. CSS plays a central role in the instructional mission of the university, has a solid research portfolio, and is actively involved in the community. As dean, you have made outreach to the community a particular point of focus, as well as internationalization, and it is good to see progress in a number of your initiatives in this regard, including the Inouye Center and the APDR3 initiative.

In your report, space emerges as a major challenge for the College in several respects. You comment on the challenges you face concerning your plans for a student advising and opportunities center. You also discuss the failure to make progress on a one-stop shop for GIS in the college, one of the recommendations of the 2009 Review, as driven in part by a lack of adequate space. And finally, you mention the challenge and opportunity presented by Dean Hall. The good news for the College is that Dean Hall will no longer be shared between the College of Natural Sciences and the College of Social Sciences but will be 100% dedicated to CSS. The bad news is that the building is not in very good shape. The other good news is that the building

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is on our list of buildings to seek renovation funds from the state. The other bad news is that progress up that list is not always rapid. So the opportunity that presents itself is for a plan to emerge from CSS that helps build a case for the importance of the renovation of Dean Hall that also advances the programmatic agenda for the college. I think that such a plan is more likely to address a range of issues successfully if it is a space plan for the college, not just for Dean Hall. It may be that there are functions now in Saunders which might move to Dean, allowing other functions to develop in Saunders. I don't know what the best plan is, but I do hope that dedicating all of Dean Hall to CSS will allow a comprehensive advising center to be adequately housed, possibly in Saunders, and fulfill the need of the College for an up to date GIS lab.

Dean Hall was one of the sites talked about early on as a possible site for what is now the Daniel K. Inouye Institute, an ambitious interdisciplinary undertaking that the College and you personally are closely involved in. Both it and the various discussions around an Obama Center or Institute have the potential to catalyze the developments in the college surrounding public affairs and public policy which you touch on in your response. I am comfortable with your decision not to proceed with the previous plans for a reorganization of the various units in this area into a Department of Public Affairs. What you don't mention in your response but which I hope is still on the table is the plan to seek accreditation for Public Administration, one of the few programs on the campus that does not have the professional accreditation for which it should be eligible. I strongly support your efforts to strengthen the college's capabilities and presence in the arena of public policy, as this is one of the areas in which we can clearly serve the city, state, nation, and indeed the world. Also not mentioned in your response are the conversations underway about developing a degree program in Global Environmental Policy to complement the existing program centered in SOEST on Global Environmental Sciences. This is certainly an important complement to the initiatives already underway, and I encourage you to ensure that this program moves forward under the aegis of CSS, its natural home.

I commend the work and thinking that has gone into advising and student engagement in the college over the past year or so, and I think this is an area where we can make real progress which will benefit our students tremendously. Perfect space for the center may not be immediately available, so I urge you to think both about the best possible long term location for this center and something which is workable over the near term. I am a little worried when I read your description of the full build out of the center, which seems to include 5 directors, APTs for each of the directors, as well as an adequate cadre of advisors. This frankly looks to me a little overbuilt, particularly given the budget situation, so I would suggest a somewhat more parsimonious approach.

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Finally, you identify the issue of resources as a key issue going forward. The call by the 2009 review committee for a more transparent and responsive budget system at the university is one that has been made by others, and there seems an increasing consensus that we need to develop a different system of budget allocation at Manoa. While that is being developed, I would suggest two key areas in which the College needs to focus to help obtain the resources it needs. Development is one mentioned by you in the report. You are obviously a development-oriented dean, and it is great news that you finally have a development officer on board. This will need to be a major focus in the years to come, as your efforts in development will be crucial to the college's pursuit of excellence.

Funding through Outreach College programs is another key funding source, and the College has been aided enormously in recent years by an expansion of online offerings in the College. This effort has been sporadic and unplanned, and I think the next step is making those offerings coherent and moving towards playing a key role in partnership with Outreach in the development of full online programs. I see a real potential here that will also help the efforts of the College to be more visible in the community and to be seen as the enormous public asset it is.

I am quite pleased with the progress the College continues to make in interesting times, and I look forward to progress on all these issues by the time of the next Program Review in 2015.

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