



February 1, 2021

David Lassner, President
Michael Bruno, Provost
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
2444 Dole Street, Bachman 202
Honolulu, HI 96822

Dear President Lassner and Provost Bruno:

Thank you for allowing the Mānoa Staff Senate (MSS) additional time to consult with staff employees, to gather their feedback, and to compile the following questions, thoughts, and recommendations received. This is the first major reorganization the MSS team is taking an active part in and we have learned how important our role is to provide a safe place for staff to share their views and to collaborate with campus partners in a meaningful way to move the university forward.

With both your support, the MSS team has been able to participate in the academic unit meetings on the budget committee proposals and unit responses. The direct consultation by administration with affected faculty and staff of the various academic units has been productive and inclusive in reaching common understanding and objectives. Although time consuming, this approach has provided valuable insights from those in the field doing the work and has fostered a "one Mānoa" feel which is greatly needed as we transition forward.

We have come to understand there are non-academic units who have not been afforded the same opportunities as the academic units. There are many staff affected by the Phase 2 Administrative Reorganization who have shared that they were not consulted regarding the proposed changes, only informed of the upcoming changes in organizational structure. This includes Title IX, Student Housing Services, and Graduate Division. We humbly include the feedback received by staff and request equitable remedies for these units to

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Staff Senate

Email: uhmstaff@hawaii.edu | Website: manoa.hawaii.edu/staffsenate

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enable effective decisions to be made and to create a campus climate that is inclusive of all.

Please find attached the staff feedback received for the five (5) main areas/departments □ Title IX, Student Housing Services, Academic Advising, Graduate Division, and Enrollment Management. Each section concludes with MSS recommendations. As a priority, the MSS requests for President/Provost + appropriate heads + department staff + MSS representative to meet to share and discuss the proposed changes for each of the units mentioned (with the exception of academic advising), to answer questions staff may have, and to discuss staff recommendations for greater understanding and decision-making going forward. This request is in line with the meetings that have taken place for the academic units. We ask for the same respect and consideration for our staff employees.

Thank you for the opportunity to share the valuable input of our staff employees. We look forward to your response on each of the recommendations so we can connect back and inform staff employees. Please contact me at msschair@hawaii.edu and the MSS Executive Board at uhmstaff@hawaii.edu if there are any questions on the information provided.

Mahalo nui loa,

Jaret KC Leong
Chair

c: Vice Presidents, UH System
Vice Chancellors, UH Mānoa
Debra Ishii, Senior Executive, UH Mānoa

FEEDBACK BY DEPARTMENT/UNIT BASED UPON STAFF RESPONSES RECEIVED

I. TITLE IX

- A. Consultation with staff did not take place on the proposed changes.
- B. The rationale for the proposed changes and personnel moves reflected in the reorganization document is not clear.

MSS RECOMMENDATION: President/Provost + Mānoa Title IX staff + Office of Institutional Equity staff + Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action staff + MSS representative meet to share and understand the proposed changes, to answer questions staff may have, and to review options staff propose.

Note: Some employees have expressed concerns about not being able to openly discuss and share issues with direct supervisors present.

II. STUDENT HOUSING

- A. Consultation with staff did not take place on the proposed changes.
- B. Concerns were raised that decisions are being proposed without the full understanding of the requirements in managing student housing operations vs a faculty and staff housing program and the daily collaboration required between housing administration, residential life, and operations.
- C. The proposed changes are not clearly explained and do not seem to support student success as a priority.
- D. Throughout the proposal, it is stated that “The residential life administration unit will continue to be reviewed to determine appropriate support to residential life operations, residential life programs and residential life administrative programs in areas including human resources, fiscal management and information technology support.” What does this mean? Greater elaboration on this point is needed to understand the vision for Student Housing Services.
- E. Currently, the three (3) units under Student Housing Services are funded and supported each fiscal year by balancing and adjusting priorities. How will funding for housing operations work with the proposed move of the operations function to the Office of Campus Operations under the Vice President of Administration?

MSS RECOMMENDATION: There are other detailed concerns that were brought up in addition to the above which include inquiries on position moves and how future operations in certain areas will be handled. The information will be provided to Debra Ishii for dissemination to the President/Provost and appropriate persons for discussion. We again highly recommend President/Provost + appropriate heads + Student Housing Services staff + MSS representative meet to share and

understand the proposed changes, to answer questions staff may have, and to discuss staff recommendations and feedback.

III. ACADEMIC ADVISING

MSS RECOMMENDATION: The MSS fully supports the creation of an upper-level position to advocate for all academic advising on the Mānoa campus as recommended by the Excellence in Academic Advising (EAA) report dated November 8, 2019. It is important to build the appropriate structure for academic advising with an upper-level position (Assistant or Associate Vice Provost) with authority to execute and implement campus-wide initiatives.

As the EAA report noted, “a campus-wide advising advocate would ensure the best possible student experience by improving campus-wide communication and collaboration between units; managing policies and procedures related to academic advising; ensuring consistency, integration, and quality of advising; ensuring equitable access to advising for all students; and representing academic advisors and their concerns to upper administration and in campus decisions” (page 12).

As mentioned above, the MSS recommends this upper-level position to be an Assistant or Associate Vice Provost with the authority to formulate and execute the above duties and responsibilities. The MSS acknowledges the additional cost this will require and the implications to the budget in our current fiscal environment. Therefore, we ask that this vision be reflected in the proposal. The details on the organizational structure of this function requires the input and involvement of the Mānoa academic advising community, including the Council of Academic Advisors, Mānoa Advising Center, and academic advisors at the respective departments/units.

IV. GRADUATE DIVISION

A. Verbal notification was provided regarding position moves from Graduate Division to Enrollment Management without additional information or consultation. No one explained why the changes are being proposed and how duties and responsibilities may change.

As page 278 of the proposal reflects, “A significant change is to add the graduate enrollment management related functions and operations within the current Office of Admissions to maximize resources, build upon strong, effective practices for undergraduate and graduate students” and “...the relocation of functions primarily between academic excellence and enrollment management will strengthen our expertise and resources, especially in light of the current budget situation.” Please explain how the change will achieve the stated goals.

- B. The objective of most reorganizations is to consolidate and streamline similar functions for greater efficiency. The admissions function also resides under Shidler College of Business, JABSOM and Law School. Please explain why the admissions function in these areas are not affected.
- C. The proposal states that “During the process, several alternatives were explored in terms of placement of units. Various units, such as Graduate Division, Study Abroad, Climate, Compliance, Advising, certain student support offices, etc., were considered for placement in different areas” (Narrative, Section II.C. page 10). What are some of the research done to show that this model of having graduate admissions together with undergraduate admissions is more effective than the current one-stop shop (cradle to grave) model?

MSS RECOMMENDATION: In addition to the above, questions regarding certain positions and details were also raised. We again highly recommend President/Provost + appropriate heads + Graduate Division staff + MSS representative, meet to share and understand the proposed changes, to answer questions staff may have, and to discuss staff recommendations and feedback.

V. ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

- A. Based upon the proposal, the three (3) major roles added to Enrollment Management are graduate recruitment, scholarship oversight, and financial literacy. Concerns were raised because the proposal does not include additional staff to handle the increased responsibilities. This creates anxiety for some, who are already stretched thin, regarding the likelihood of increased workloads without appropriate compensation.

MSS RECOMMENDATION: To address the concerns raised, the MSS proposes two (2) steps. The first is to acknowledge and reflect that appropriate staff support will be established without affecting the workload level of current employees without their consultation. The second is to discuss any additional workload with affected employees up front and to ensure appropriate pay increases are provided in conjunction with their new responsibilities. The MSS clearly understands that the appropriate unions will need to be part of the process.