Budget Committee Meeting
Department of Social Work
October 9, 2020 @ 4pm

ATTENDEES:
Provost Michael Bruno, Interim Dean Bill Chismar, Aimee Chung, Amanda Yoshioka-Maxwell, Bernadette Todd, Chelsea Cagaoan, December Maxwell, Francie Julien-Chinn, Katie Caldwell, Jane Lee, Jennifer Kishida, Jill Sur, Jing Guo, Laura Lyons, Meripa Godinet, Michael DeMattos, Rachel Burrage, Rebecca Stotzer, Robin Arndt, Seunghye Hong, Sophia Kim, Theresa Kreif, Wendy Lum, Wendy Pearson

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION:

Budget Situation
We are facing a short-term and long-term budget crisis in the State and at the university. The Governor intends to borrow $750 million from the federal reserve in the current fiscal year 2020-2021 (FY21) to address the State’s current budget shortfall; this loan must be repaid by the State within 3 years beginning July 1, 2021.

The State and unions are currently in discussions related to possible furloughs (two days per month = 9.23% pay cut) for State employees over the course of the next four years. All University E/M employees will receive a pay cut beginning November 1, 2020.

While the University has not yet received its budget allocation from the State, we are confident that we will be in a good budget position for FY21 due to the current freeze on hiring, travel freeze and strong restrictions on equipment and other expenditures. However, we must plan now to position the University to withstand the future budget cuts and move away from furloughs and the painful cuts currently in place.

Process
The University cannot continue as a premiere R1 research university with four years of pay cuts and freezes; this is not sustainable. We must start now to identify cost-saving efficiencies and increase revenue, primarily through enrollment growth.

Cost savings measures will not come on the backs solely of the academic side of the University. On the administrative end, Phase 2 of the Mānoa reorg is currently under development and identifies for elimination approximately 12 E/M positions that will result in significant cost savings for the Mānoa campus. Additionally, a blue ribbon committee is currently reviewing the Athletics program to assess the current program and identify a sustainable future. We are also looking for efficiencies in other programs such as student housing, facilities, auxiliary services, and other areas of administration.

The Mānoa Budget Committee suggestions to academic units are not intended to be top-down mandates. The suggestions were based on external reports, information and data on hand, and are intended to be provocative and provoke conversations. The Committee is committed to meeting with highly impacted departments, listening to their thoughts/feedback, and working collaboratively to best position programs, departments and the University for success.

Review, approval and consultation with unions and affected stakeholders will continue through Spring 2021. The aim is to be transparent and collaborative throughout the process as we continue to work to identify cost-saving efficiencies and increase enrollment revenue. Mānoa Staff Senate representatives will participate in these meetings as staff are also affected.

Details
The Committee is very supportive of the School of Social Work and agrees that it is important to have a strong leader that can support the different missions of public health and social work, and build upon the
important work of the units. Given the hiring freeze and fiscal uncertainty, the Committee does not anticipate conducting the search for a new Dean until we have clarity on plans from the Governor and Legislature on how we will get through this crisis. We hope to have a better idea of our financial standing by next summer.

The Department of Social Work is relatively small but faculty are capable of delivering their program efficiently and are prepared for expansion and innovation to meet the needs of the community. Position counts have been consistent over the past few years, but falls short on the faculty to student ratio for accreditation. The Department has built upon its connections with community lecturers to deliver its programs. Social work is a workforce development area in high demand and is one of the faster growing careers in Hawai‘i. With the pandemic, social workers are needed more than ever.

The programs provide support for the University’s strategic initiative to be an indigenous serving institution. A Hawaiian place of learning is built into the curriculum and drives how faculty do their research and work with the community. In any given year, 15%-30% of the program’s student population is native Hawaiian.

The Department implemented a two-year stop out of the PhD program in 2015 and 2016 and it demonstrated how detrimental a stop out can be to the program. While it can be difficult to bounce back from a stop out, the Department was able to build back the program, graduate its students and build on the cohort.

In 2019, the Department went through a program review and data shows that admissions and applications into the PhD program have been steadily increasing since Fall 2017. The program brought in five new students in Fall 2020, its largest incoming cohort to date. Enrollment numbers are also above the threshold for small programs. The Department expects continued growth in the upcoming years and is happy to provide the Committee with recent admissions and student retention data. The Committee is appreciative of the Department’s work and recommends that the Department continue its work to meet the threshold to graduate at least three PhD students per year.

The Department is looking at alternatives to broaden its reach in the community and throughout the Pacific region. Options including expanding the distance education and offering continuing education and certificate programs as non-degree programs that may benefit students and working professionals.

The breadth and depth of what the Department does goes well beyond health sciences; the Department asks the Committee for assistance in communicating this message.

**Outcomes:**

- The Committee developed suggestions based on available data. The suggestions are not meant to provide distraction, but instead prompt conversations to preserve programs and strengthen the Department. The Committee looks forward to hearing ideas from the Department on how to further its priorities in programs, scholarship and service to the community.

- The recommendation to stop out admission to the PhD program has been removed. The Department should graduate a minimum of three PhD students per year to satisfy the small program threshold.