College of Social Sciences
Update to Recommendations of the Mānoa Budget Team

Submitted by: Denise Eby Konan, Dean, College of Social Sciences

Submitted to: David Lassner, UH President
               Michael Bruno, UH Mānoa Provost

Date: Monday, December 14, 2020

On behalf of the College of Social Sciences (CSS), I share this update to the recommendations of the Mānoa Budget Team (MBT) on planning for a post-pandemic Hawai‘i.

MERGERS AND CONSOLIDATIONS

CSS is open to the MBT’s suggestions for mergers and consolidations. The College has held Zoom meetings with the units under consideration for mergers or consolidations, and will continue to explore these options with the common goal of maximizing efficiencies. As there will be an impact to academic and administrative services due to mergers and consolidations, there is a need to augment staff support.

- The School of Communications is welcoming the Department of Communicology (College of Arts, Languages & Letters) and absorbing the Matsunaga Institute for Peace (formerly a unit in the CSS Public Policy Center). The school is also redesigning its journalism program to add applied media fields such as the media arts. There is continuing strong interest from the Master of Library & Information Science program and faculty from Information & Computer Sciences (College of Natural Sciences) to move to CSS, and meetings continue with the relevant parties. A task force inclusive of faculty from all impacted programs and degree offerings is in the process of consultation with faculty, staff and students. The goal is to launch a newly designed school (yet to be named) by the Fall 2021 semester. Cost savings would include elimination of a department chair position and associated administrative stipend.

- The chairs of Geography & Environment and the Department of Earth Sciences (School of Ocean & Earth Science & Technology) are discussing ways to maintain their collaboration.

- Sociology faculty members have reached out to faculty from other units, such as Family & Consumer Sciences (College of Tropical Agriculture & Human Resources), Public Health (School of Social Work) and Educational Psychology (College of Education) to seek research and teaching collaborations. At this point, no academic reorganizations are planned involving Sociology.
Faculty within the Center on the Family (College of Tropical Agriculture & Human Resources) are interested in merging with the **Social Science Research Institute**, the research arm of CSS. Preliminary review by SSRI indicates support for this proposed reorganization. Collaborations with CSS faculty has the potential to spur extramural funding for UH. COF currently manages over $2 million in grants and contracts serving the State of Hawai‘i. With new CSS collaborations it is anticipated that revenue could increase by $500,000 or more within a few years.

The Provost, MBT members, CSS associate dean and **Department of Urban & Regional Planning** (DURP) faculty met with School of Architecture faculty to discuss the MBT’s proposed reorganization of DURP into a possible School of Architecture & Planning in CSS. Among various factors, including different accreditation requirements for both, the option has shifted to possibly bringing the School of Architecture into CSS as a separate department or school.

**COST SAVINGS**

The College’s focus on operational efficiencies has allowed it to continue to meet growing student demand while remaining fiscally responsive within these austere budgetary times. It is also undertaking additional measures to pursue further cost savings.

- Significant savings are anticipated due to projected faculty and staff retirements over FY 2021 and 2022, the freeze on filling vacant positions, continuing travel restrictions, and implementation of faculty and staff furloughs. While there has been talk of an early retirement incentive package program, no formal proposal has materialized. Should such a program be implemented, the College anticipates additional faculty and staff retirements.

- Faculty in the **Public Policy Center** (PPC) have been consulted and agree that the PPC will be eliminated. Cost savings: 2-month salary for an 11-month director position, one faculty specialist position (resignation) and one secretarial position (reassignment). The director’s 0.5 FTE and a faculty member’s 0.25 FTE will be moved to the UH Economic Research Organization. Cost savings: At least $245,000.

- The MBT recognized the need to augment faculty positions in the **Department of Psychology** due to very high student demand and recent resignations and contract non-renewals. With additional retirements anticipated, teaching is currently being replaced by additional lecturers, particularly in the field of Cognition, Neuroscience and Social Programs.

- CSS also projects administrative cost savings through reduced utility demands, as well as cuts for furniture, fixtures and equipment. The College is also looking to defer maintenance and upgrades to its facilities and labs; while not ideal as its buildings and infrastructure are aging, the College believes that these upgrades can be deferred in the short-term without extreme impact to its student base until the state’s budget picture improves. Total cost savings from MBT recommendations (reorganization/anticipated retirements and
resignations/administrative): At least $1.85 million. Projected FY21 and FY22 total department savings: $2.7 million.

**REVENUE INCREASES**

CSS is particularly proud of its track record in increasing revenue through fundraising, grants and attracting more students.

- Successful fundraising efforts continue. Noteworthy examples: Through the pioneering work of Polynesian archaeologist Patrick V. Kirch, Anthropology has benefited from a newly established Debra and Arlen Prentice Research Fund, which pays for graduate assistant support and discretionary research expenses for five years. In addition, the UH Economic Research Organization, housed in Economics, recently concluded a massive fundraising campaign that resulted in $1.2 million in private support to help the state on its path to economic recovery from COVID-19.

- All departments are actively seeking grants and outside funding. For example, Ethnic Studies was recently named a participant in a $77,000 pilot subcontract from various partners, including the federal government, to teach high school students the craft of biographical storytelling in relation to those interred at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific. This may expand to a fully independent contract in 2021-22.

- Geography & Environment recently added a Certificate in Geospatial Information Science (GIS) and a 5-year BA/MA degree option. Both are drawing tuition-paying students to the program and are poised to grow. Geography is considering a proposal for an online certificate in GIS that could be available through Outreach College.

- Economics is proposing a professional MA program, with a target of 30 professional MA students per year, representing a conservative profit of over $100,000 annually.

- Political Science has launched conversations with Women’s Studies (which may be renamed Gender, Sexuality and Women’s Studies) and Ethnic Studies to strengthen cross-disciplinary pathways and promote double majoring among programs. In addition, informal conversations are occurring on long-term collaborations for strategic hires to replace gaps left by retirements in multiple department, thereby recruiting more majors to multiple departments and increasing tuition revenues.

- Sociology is addressing several ways to increase revenue, including developing both a 5-year BA/MA degree option and an online MA program to attract professionals who are unable to attend day classes, and developing a criminology minor/track/certificate program.

- Urban & Regional Planning is exploring a fully online version of its 15-credit professional certificate through Outreach College.
In summary, CSS is making strides in implementing and responding to MBT proposals. In addition, multiple CSS departments are working with the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program to expand opportunities for undergraduate research. They understand the importance of the MBT’s recommendation to develop 2+2 articulation agreements with the UH Community Colleges to increase transfers, and are actively pursuing this.

We thank the MBT for its continued efforts to increase undergraduate enrollment, reorganize programs, resize graduate programs and expand collaborative opportunities during this challenging time. Updates will be submitted on a timely basis.

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