

MINUTES

BOARD OF REGENTS' COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC AFFAIRS MEETING

April 2, 2015

I. CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Chuck Gee called the meeting to order at 10:47 a.m. on Thursday, April 2, 2015, at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, Information Technology Building, 1st Floor Conference Room 105A, 2420 Correa Road, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822.

Committee members in attendance: Committee Chair Chuck Gee; Committee Vice Chair Lee Putnam, Regent Michelle Tagorda, Regent Simeon Acoba.

Others in attendance: Board Chair Randy Moore, Regent Dileep G. Bal (ex officio committee members); President David Lassner; Vice President for Academic Affairs Risa Dickson; Vice President for Legal Affairs and University General Counsel, Darolyn H. Lendio; Vice President for Community Colleges, John Morton; Interim UH Mānoa Chancellor Robert Bley-Vroman; UH Hilo Chancellor, Don Straney; Executive Administrator and Secretary of the Board Cynthia Quinn; and others as noted.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 14, 2015 MEETING

Committee Vice Chair Putnam moved and Regent Tagorda seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the January 14, 2015 meeting, which was unanimously approved.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Executive Administrator and Secretary of the Board Cynthia Quinn announced that the Board Office received no written testimony, and no individuals had signed up to give oral testimony.

IV. AGENDA ITEMS

A. For Action: University of Hawai'i at Hilo Recommendation to Approve Change from Provisional to Established Status for the Bachelor of Science Degree in Environmental Science

Matthew Platz, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at UH Hilo (UHH); Kathryn Besio, Associate Professor of Geography & Environmental Sciences; and Susan Brown, Interim Associate Dean, College of Arts & Sciences, presented the recommendation to the committee. VCAA Platz explained that the plan is to consolidate the two Bachelor of Arts (BA) degrees to a single degree. In result, the department would offer a BS and BA degree in the same discipline but serve different populations with different career aspirations and different needs in terms of mathematical and physical science courses. He noted that the provisional status exceeded the normal timeframe due to staffing gaps from retirement of senior faculty, and transition of key administrators. He credits the

success of the geography department to efficient management of faculty teaching to four populations seeking different degrees, faculty engagement, student-faculty ratio, and higher than average graduation rates. Enrollment grew from 40 to 112, making it the third largest department in the division.

President Lassner added that chancellors have recently provided and he approved 10 to 20 requests for extension for provisional status beyond the five years from all the campuses pursuant to executive policy. Each request had an explanation, and a timeframe for when they expected to seek established status.

VCAA Platz explained that although the report contained ambitious enrollment projections, the enrollment did not decline. There are smooth pathways to bring HawCC students into the program. Graduation rates improved by adding more courses to give students options, and adjusting the upper division credit hours for Science Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) degrees. GES graduates are finding jobs in the industry and getting into graduate school at very good rates.

The committee raised concerns about the uniqueness of the degree and being housed in geography rather than the traditional STEM degree granting schools, such as the natural science department; negative impacts because of the uniqueness in terms of comparison to peers, creating discipline silos, transferability, articulation, academic rigor, duplication of programs on other UH campuses, time to graduate and drop in graduate numbers; and clarity needed in the proposal's appendices to provide actual degree counts.

It was explained that environmental work is increasingly becoming a social science in nature, with growth fields intersecting with public health and safety. Articulation agreements with UHH and HawCC are in place for smoother transitions while maintaining academic rigor to flow students into the STEM fields, through sharing of facilities, labs, and classrooms, diligent scheduling and advising, adding faculty, correcting course alphas to reflect actual major counts, and departments becoming more interdepartmental and multidisciplinary.

Committee Vice Chair Putnam moved to recommend the board approve the change from provision to established status for the UHH Bachelor of Science Degree in Environmental Science, Regent Tagorda seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

B. For Information:

1. Annual Report on New, Provisional to Established, and Program Terminations

VP Dickson noted the report distributed earlier to the committee contains the new, provisional to established, and program terminations for the period July 1, 2014 to December 30, 2014. Stop out and terminations are delegated to Chancellors for periods up to two years, and then delegated to the President beyond two years. For example, the geography program discussed earlier, which was in the process of stop out and

termination would not need board approval, but instead show up in a report as having been terminated.

Upon inquiry by Regent Acoba, President Lassner explained that the MA in China-US Relations at UHH and the AAS in Commercial Aviation at Honolulu Community College (HonCC) programs were terminated due to low enrollment. In addition, the AAS also had high cost and almost no graduates.

2. Update on Policy for Programs with Low Enrollment

VP Dickson reported that the first draft of the policy was being worked on and it would be ready for the May committee meeting.

3. Annual Academic Planning – New Program Review Twice a Year – Once a Semester

AVPAA Itano reported that effective 2015-2016, the campuses will be polled every summer and asked to project new program and Authorizations to Plan (ATP) proposals, provisional to established programs, or program terminations, and bring new program proposals to the committee on a semester basis. The chief academic officers will be polled to have a list by early September to share with the committee. Committee Chair Gee noted that the committee earlier requested for this information in advance to help with budgeting, forecasting, and legislative inquiries.

President Lassner commented that the board has a general responsibility to approve new programs, however, the program or degree view is only one lens when looking at costs. The report is intended to provide the committee the full context and reflect the true value of a program or degree, where it may not pay for itself, but may be part of a larger program or multiple degree programs, such as physics or environmental science. Also, degrees can be added at literally no cost through repackaging existing courses and generate new revenue by creating new options and attracting more students into existing courses. As an example, the aviation program that was just closed had a large number of cost elements unique to that degree and not part of a broader program. The template is intended to do a better job in explaining the larger context of the program or degree when brought to the committee.

V. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon motion by Regent Tagorda and second by Committee Vice Chair Putnam, the committee unanimously approved convening in executive session, pursuant to HRS §92-5(a)(2)). The committee convened in executive session at 12:00 p.m. Following a motion to come out of executive session by Regent Tagorda and seconded by Regent Putnam, which was unanimously approved, executive session was adjourned at 12:03 p.m.

Chair Gee reported that the committee met in Executive Session to discuss confidential matters regarding personnel as indicated on the agenda.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on the motion of Committee Vice Chair Putnam, seconded by Regent Tagorda and with unanimous approval, the meeting was adjourned at 12:04 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

/S/

Cynthia Quinn
Executive Administrator and
Secretary of the Board of Regents