MEMORANDUM

July 10, 2009

TO: Linda K. Johnsrud
Vice President for Academic Planning and Policy

VIA: Reed Dasenbrock
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

FROM: Ronald E. Cambra
Assistant Vice Chancellor

SUBJECT: Articulation Issues

As you know, UH campuses and UCA have been discussing ways to smooth the articulation process for years. Most of our campuses are now signatories on multi-campus articulation agreements, and we have made significant progress. But one important goal remains elusive: translating cross-campus articulation decisions into accurate information for students, academic advisors, and administrators.

We basically face two problems:

1. Articulation decisions are tied to campus, class, instructor, and calendar. This makes publication of accurate information difficult, since end-users are unlikely to be aware of these delimiters and are unlikely to read all the “fine print” on official websites.

2. Students know “UH is a system.” Using common sense, they assume that “since UH is a system, courses with the same alpha and number meet the same requirements on all campuses.” However, individual-campus decisions don’t necessarily reflect this kind common sense. Thus, students are misled.

Over the last several months, there have been many discussions about the alpha site drafted by Joanne Itano and Joseph Dane. Efforts to make that site 99.9% accurate have provoked impassioned email and in-person discussions. Improvements will be made. And we will make progress, albeit slowly.

Those same discussions leave me convinced that, for the next year, our focus ought to be on the 20 or so courses involved in 95% of the articulation problems. If we can “fix” them, we will have dealt with 90% of our students’ problems.
The following is a list of courses that we know are offered on multiple UH campuses with different General Education designations:

ANTH 151* (FGA/none)
ANTH 152 (FGB/none)
BOT 105 (FGC/DS/none)
BUS 100 (FS/none)
ENG 100 (UHWO course hasn’t been officially articulated to UHM)
GEOG 102 (FGB/DS/W/none)
GEOG 151 (FGC/DS/none)
HIST 151 (FGA/W)
ICS 141 (FS/none)
ICS 241 (FS/none)
LING 102 (DH/DS)
MATH 103 (FS/none)
MATH 111 (FS/none)
MATH 112 (FS/none)
MATH 115 (FS/none)
MATH 135 (FS/none)
MATH 140 (FS/none)
MATH 205 (FS/none)
MATH 206 (FS/none)
MUS 107* (MUS 170 for Hilo) (FGC/DH/none)
REL 150 (FGC/DH/none)

* does not appear to be a prerequisite for any other course

The main problem is the fact that courses with the same subject and course number are NOT fulfilling the same requirements across the UH System. Students and their advisors find this to be confusing at best (and more often, frustrating or discouraging).

I request that, during the next academic year, you convene meetings with the system faculties that offer each one of these courses. The charge for each meeting would involve “fixing” the problem and be along these lines:

Your discipline offers at least one course that is causing problems for transfer students. The course most likely has the same alpha and number on several campuses. But because of campus differences, the course meets different requirements on one or more system campuses. This creates articulation problems, since UH students expect system courses with the same alpha and number to meet the same requirements across the system.

Your group is convened to eliminate the problem in either of these ways:

- agree on ways to align the course so that common sense (same alpha + number meets same requirement) prevails.
• agree to new and different numbers for courses that fulfill different requirements on one or more campuses.

From UHM’s perspective, this approach is likely to benefit our students more quickly and efficiently than changing Banner, STAR, or “the way things are done” on individual campuses.

Similar problems sometimes result from departments’ changing course numbers on one or two but not all campuses. I will be sending you a separate memo on developing a common system policy for departmental/campus changes in course numbering.

Thank you. I look forward to working with you to move our campuses into calmer articulation waters.