

Public Testimony Form - University of Hawaii Board of Regents

Please provide your testimony on this form for the next University of Hawaii Board of Regents meeting. Make sure you include all the requested information so that the Board of Regents is able to clearly understand the testimony provided.

Your Name (required) *

Christian Fern

Your Organization (optional)

University of Hawaii Professional Assembly

Your e-mail address (in case we need to reach you) *

fern@uhpa.org

Board of Regents Agenda Item (required) *

3/17 BOR VIII. Personnel Actions (A-1 for approval)

Your Position (required) *

Support

Your Testimony/Comments

Your Testimony (pdf or word)

[Debora Halbert BOR Testimony.pdf](#) (85.2 kB)



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII PROFESSIONAL ASSEMBLY

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII
Board of Regents Meeting
Thursday, March 17, 2022
9:00 a.m.

RE: Agenda VIII. Agenda Items, Section A. Personnel Actions - Limited Term Appointment of 2 years and 3 months for Debora Halbert to the position of Vice President for Academic Strategy

ATTENTION: Chair Moore, Vice Chairs Nahale-a and Kudo, and members of the Board of Regents

It is with great distinction and honor that the University of Hawaii Professional Assembly (UHPA) is pleased to submit this written testimony in **support** of Debora Halbert to the position of the University of Hawaii's Vice President for Academic Strategy for a limited period of two years and three months.

The Office of the Vice President for Academic Strategy (OVPAS) is an essential component and primary foundation for UH's leadership since it oversees and facilitates the establishment and continuity of academic programs and majors; develops and aligns policy and procedures related to academic and student support system wide; and promotes the creation of system wide pathways that help students get to college and graduate with degrees and credentials that meet their career and personal goals. This requires an individual who is a well respected academic; who understands the role and intricacies of working with all the constituents in the academic community; a strategic communicator; and is known to be an effective collaborator and visionary leader in order to ensure student success and for campuses to obtain their academic initiatives.

UHPA has had the privilege and opportunity to have directly worked and engaged with Associate Vice President for Debora Halbert since she was appointed to the OVPAS starting in January of 2019. Debora possesses the type of leadership skills, competence, and civility that embodies the attributes of great academic leaders. As a UH Faculty member herself who has risen through the academic ranks at UH Mānoa from Assistant, Associate, and Full Professor, to Department Chair, and later to become the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, it is without a doubt that Debora is one of UH's symbol and brand of creating and developing its own leaders of tomorrow. In addition, she understands and appreciates how a public higher education institution operates, as well as, recognizes and practices key components of academic governance which is a key component of academic leadership.

Over the past three (3) plus years, the UH has encountered and experienced significant and difficult challenges and struggles to which many continue and in which it still hasn't recovered fully both financially and operationally. Despite all of this, the one major highlights and accomplishments by the UH over the past 3 years was that the institution was still able to award 21,610 degrees and certificates during the pandemic, as well as, the UH Mānoa's reaffirmation of its full ten (10) year accreditation by the Senior College & University Commission of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII PROFESSIONAL ASSEMBLY

These significant achievements were still accomplished while the position of the Vice President for OVPAS remained vacant since the retirement of former Vice President Donald Straney beginning in November of 2020. There is no question that many of these highlights and accomplishments were due to significant OVPAS staff involvement and the leadership of its current Associate Vice President Debora Halbert.

Based on the above, the UHPA is in **full support** of Debora Halbert to the position of Vice President for Academic Strategy in the OVPAS.



LATE TESTIMONY

BOR Testimony <bortest2@hawaii.edu>

Mānoa Faculty Senate - BOR Testimony March 2022

UHM Faculty Senate <uhmfs@hawaii.edu>

Thu, Mar 17, 2022 at 9:05 AM

To: BOR Testimony <bor.testimony@hawaii.edu>

Cc: Brent Sipes <sipes@hawaii.edu>, SEC <uhm-mfs-sec@lists.hawaii.edu>

Aloha,

The Senate Executive Committee (SEC) respectfully submits their testimony to the BOR for the March 17 meeting. Please see the attachment below.

Brent S. Sipes, Chair
Senate Executive Committee

John Kinder for Brent S. Sipes
Administrative Officer

Mānoa Faculty Senate Office | [2500 Campus Road](#) | [Hawai'i Hall 208](#) | Honolulu, HI 96822 | Ph: (808) 956-7725 | uhmfs@hawaii.edu | Senate Website: www.hawaii.edu/uhmfs

 **March 2022 MFS Testimony on Personal Appointments.pdf**
197K



March 15, 2022

TO: Randolph Moore
Chair, University of Hawai'i Board of Regents

FROM: Brent S. Sip
Chair, Mānoa Faculty Senate 

RE: Mānoa Faculty Senate Testimony on Personnel Appointments

On behalf of the Mānoa Faculty Senate, I offer testimony regarding the process associated with the personnel appointments you will be acting on today.

The Mānoa Faculty Senate advocates for open recruitment, searching, and hiring for all permanent Executive Managerial positions. Per the 2017-2021 UHPA-BOR Agreement, Faculty Senates or other shared governance entities “participate in recruitment, selection, and evaluation of academic executive leadership at the campus and the system level.” In support of this agreement, the Mānoa Faculty Senate passed a [resolution](#) calling for all permanent executive managerial positions to be subject to an open recruitment, search, and hiring process on February 17, 2021. The resolution was transmitted to the President and Board of Regents soon after the faculty senate vote. The Mānoa Faculty Senate passed a second [resolution](#) on February 16, 2022 reiterating concerns about the executive search processes, including interim EM positions, and calling for more open and transparent searches and inclusion of appropriate consultation with impacted units.

Executive Policy (EP) 9.212 states that all “EM positions shall be filled through an open search process; provided, however, that an EM position may be filled without a search process (1) when reassigning an existing EM employee to a position, (2) when filling a position on an acting or interim basis up to one (1) year, or (3) by written approval from the President, in consultation with the University of Hawai'i System Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)/Affirmative Action (AA) Office and OHR, to waive an external search process. Waiver of recruitment for positions reporting directly to the President shall require approval of the Board.”

The Senate resolution prophetically states “EP 9.212 does not foreclose the possibility where an individual could be appointed as an interim EM, and then reassigned into a permanent EM position, thereby evading a formal search process and faculty participation in recruitment, selection, and evaluation.” This seems to be occurring with the appointments on the Board of Regents March 17, 2022 agenda. The committee formed for the Vice President for Academic Strategy search was disbanded **after** the posting of the Board of Regents agenda naming a limited term appointee for just over two years. The timing of the actions makes it difficult to know if the national search could have been successful and this action may have negative repercussions for future searches. The University gains by a consistently open, transparent, and participatory recruitment of



executive managerial positions because this encourages the best applicants to participate and trust the process. Conversely, a process that lacks clarity and consistency may discourage qualified applicants from seeking University positions in the future. Furthermore, the disbanding of a committee that included faculty has implications for the success of shared governance. The Mānoa Faculty Senate resolutions of February 17, 2021 and February 16, 2022 call for Regents Policy 9.201, 9.212, and other relevant or corresponding Regents Policy or Executive Policies to be amended to reflect that EM position appointments shall only be filled as a result of conducting an open recruitment, search, and hiring process. The Senate believes that qualified candidates – interim, internal, or external – will shine in an open process.

The Mānoa Faculty Senate wishes only to register its concerns about the recruitment **process**, and is not expressing any views on the qualifications of the specific candidates who are under consideration today.