February 13, 2012

TO:  Robert Cooney, Chair
    Manoa Faculty Senate

FROM: Reed Dasenbrock, Co-Chair
      Sarita Rai, Co-Chair
      Strategic Plan Implementation Committee

RE:  2012-2013 SPIC Implementation Initiatives

Strategic Plan Implementation Committee (SPIC) has voted unanimously to approve two broad initiatives to guide the campus in addressing key progress indicators identified in Achieving Our Destiny. Each was developed by the SPIC in response to Chancellor Hinshaw’s Spring 2011 announcement of the three strategic priorities for this year: retention and graduation, graduate education, and Native Hawaiian scholarship. This past summer the Chancellor appointed the Native Hawaiian Advancement Task Force to conduct a thorough review of Native Hawaiian advancement issues at Manoa. The Task Force submitted its report at the end of January and SPIC will identify a broad implementation initiative for the Native Hawaiian scholarship goal soon.

We hope to finalize the process and begin the implementation discussions before the end of the semester. With that goal in mind we are transmitting the first two initiatives to the Manoa Faculty Senate (Senate) for endorsement in principle with hope that they can be reviewed and discussed at the March meeting of the Senate.

Both of us, as well as Susan Hippensteele who is serving as Strategic Plan Coordinator, are available to meet with CoRGE, CAPP and/or any other standing committees of the Senate reviewing these initiatives to answer questions or discuss the process through which they were developed.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions.

C:  Susan Hippensteele, Coordinator, SPIC

w/ attachment
Achieving Our Destiny: 2012-2013 Priority Implementation Progress Initiatives

In Spring 2011 Chancellor Hinshaw announced three strategic priority areas for the campus to focus on this year: undergraduate retention and graduation rates, the quality of graduate programs, and Native Hawaiian advancement. The Strategic Planning Implementation Committee has been charged by the Chancellor with identifying ways that the entire campus can contribute to these overarching goals. The following initiatives were selected to help the campus address key progress indicators identified in Achieving Our Destiny and will be benchmarked to assist the campus community in measuring success in meeting objectives.

Retention and Graduation

While much has been done during the past several years to improve undergraduate retention and graduation, one of the central goals of Achieving Our Destiny (2010-2015) is to increase undergraduate student opportunities for engaged learning. We believe this goal shows real potential to further improve these rates. As discussed in the 2011 UH Mānoa WASC Educational Effectiveness Report, students who engage in ways and sites of learning outside of their formal curriculum do better than other students and are far more likely to stay in school, graduate, and go on to advanced study. We therefore propose development of a comprehensive plan for strengthening and assessing different forms of engaged learning which we believe can, and should, take different forms in different disciplines including undergraduate research (paid and unpaid), service learning, internships (paid and unpaid), clinical practica, capstone courses, study abroad, international exchange, etc.

The retention and graduation focus of the SPIC this year will be to strengthen engaged learning campus-wide, both by strengthening campus-wide initiatives and by strengthening individual college initiatives in this direction. We need to develop more effective metrics and systems of data collection to better define the parameters of engaged learning at UH Mānoa and then measure progress towards meeting this overarching goal in the Strategic Plan.

Graduate Education

One of the goals of Achieving Our Destiny (2010-2015) is to enhance graduate education and stimulate and support individual and group research and scholarly activities. To help address this goal we propose that graduate programs offering Ph.D. degrees admit only students for whom UH Mānoa can offer 5 years of funding (non-sequential). We believe this goal shows real potential for increasing graduate student acceptance, retention, and graduation rates. Given the high cost of living in Hawai‘i, this revised Ph.D. support structure will allow UH Mānoa Ph.D. programs to be competitive when recruiting top students, will increase the acceptance rate among top students, will enable students to move from enrollment to candidacy within the time horizon established by Graduate Division, and will increase
graduation rates as well as placement after graduation. The cumulative effect will be an increase in the overall national ranking of UH Mānoa as individual graduate program rankings improve which has potential to increase extramural funding and further expand research infrastructure.

This is an ambitious goal. And we recognize it will pose challenges. Attention will be paid to ensure that the funding system is not detrimental to non-terminal graduate degree programs. A comprehensive cost analysis will be conducted before proceeding to implementation; this analysis will include identification of additional funding and new sources of revenue. Application and admission decisions will continue to reside with the faculty of graduate programs. To accommodate the logistics of implementation, we recommend a 5-7 year timeline for full implementation of this initiative. In the short term, the focus for the SPIC will be to: (1) construct baseline metrics that reflect the status of graduate lifecycle for each graduate program. These data will include number of applicants, number who accept, number who enroll, years to candidacy, number of graduates per year, and total years to graduation. These data are currently captured by graduate division and can be compiled allowing SPIC to compare metrics across disciplines and college; and (2) create metrics that capture the types of support currently available to Ph.D. students. This will include percentage of students funded by UH Programs (RA, GA/TA, other), percentage of students funded by extramural money, and percentage of students not funded by UH Mānoa. These data are not currently captured and will require the development of a new data collection system.

Native Hawaiian Scholarship

Initiative TBD