January 14, 2013

To: Deans, Department Chairs

From: Susan Hippensteile
Strategic Planning Coordinator

RE: Faculty Engaged Scholarship Activities

A major area of focus for the Mānoa Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) is enhancing faculty professional development by supporting scholarship of engagement and outreach. This initiative merges core values inherent in Achieving Our Destiny and the Native Hawaiian Advancement Task Force Report in an effort to support and sustain a community of scholars and scholarship imbedded within and integral to Native Hawaiian communities and values.

Toward this end, the Strategic Planning Committee believes it is necessary to 1) identify, support and invest in Native Hawaiian scholars and scholarship to ensure that representation increases and enhance the preservation and generation of Hawaiian knowledge and language, and 2) support the continued development of robust and rigorous faculty scholarship activities across multiple disciplines that involve engagement with Native Hawaiian and other communities.

Many current UHM faculty ground some or all of their scholarship activities (teaching, research and/or service) within these communities. In order to strengthen institutional support for these and other scholars who may wish to expand their efforts in such areas, the Strategic Planning Committee has prepared the following “Engaged Scholarship Activities” template that departments may find useful as they revise criteria and procedures for faculty contract renewal, tenure and promotion. This template is not intended to create a new or additional category of activities for which faculty must be evaluated, nor is it intended to replace or override expectations regarding academic rigor and professional standards for conduct or overall professional productivity. The template is intended only to assist departments wishing to clarify the definition of scholarship activities to ensure that faculty in their units who conduct engaged research, teaching and service receive performance “credit” for such work.

In order to maintain consistency, units that have adopted engaged scholarship language into their criteria, or will be doing so in the future, will need to articulate the form that engaged scholarship takes in their specific field. In addition, if there are specific forms, or mechanisms for dissemination that are more influential within a particular field or fields, departments should articulate this in their criteria. As engaged scholarship is often interdisciplinary in nature, departments should also articulate markers that might indicate the success of the engagement and how its interdisciplinary nature can be accurately and effectively documented.

Engaged Scholarship Activities

(Department) values the UHM land grant and Native Hawaiian serving institution missions, and encourages all faculty to contribute toward fulfilling these missions via engaged community-based endeavors in teaching, research and/or service. Along with more traditional metrics of teaching, research and service, such engaged community-based scholarship activities help to meet the University's core function. Academic excellence and rigor are expected in all community-based activities.

Rate and significance of engaged community based projects are assessed by the DPC. Quality of the work may be assessed based on creativity, difficulty, and importance, while the overall value will necessarily consider the impact, length, and difficulty of the project. The nature of much engaged community-based scholarship renders rates of productivity (i.e., number of publications, publication venue) difficult to evaluate on traditional scales. Although quality work and productivity are hard to define precisely in the area of engaged community based scholarship, their presence is generally recognizable. A faculty member concerned about his/her rating in this area may ask the DPC for preliminary assessments and guidance.

If the DPC is unclear how will others be able to advise others?

This template does not attempt to articulate every scale that might be utilized; each unit should discuss and articulate, if possible, how productivity will be evaluated. If not through the traditional peer reviewed publication, for example, then how will faculty demonstrate productivity? Are there local venues that can/should be expected fora for disseminating the work? Are there non-traditional or emerging peer reviewed journals, conferences or other venues that promote discussion of engaged scholarship in the particular field? If so, are these ranked in some way?

Again, the SPC has provided general language that can serve as a starting point for departments. Each unit is responsible for defining how they will recognize engaged community scholarship.

Can we assume that peers will recognize these metrics...
Engaged Scholarship Activities

(Deartment) values the UHM land grant and Native Hawaiian serving institution missions, and encourages all faculty to contribute toward fulfilling these missions via engaged community-based endeavors in teaching, research and/or service. Along with more traditional metrics of teaching, research and service, such engaged community-based scholarship activities help to meet the University’s core function. Academic excellence and rigor are expected in all community-based activities.

Rate and significance of engaged community based projects are assessed by the DPC. Quality of the work may be assessed based on creativity, difficulty, and importance, while the overall value will necessarily consider the impact, length, and difficulty of the project. The nature of much engaged community-based scholarship renders rates of productivity (i.e., number of publications, publication venue) difficult to evaluate on traditional scales. Although quality work and productivity are hard to define precisely in the area of engaged community based scholarship, their presence is generally recognizable. A faculty member concerned about his/her rating in this area may ask the DPC for preliminary assessments and guidance.

1 This template does not attempt to articulate every scale that might be utilized; each unit should discuss and articulate, if possible, how productivity will be evaluated. If not through the traditional peer reviewed publication, for example, then how will faculty demonstrate productivity? Are there local venues that can/should be expected fora for disseminating the work? Are there non-traditional or emerging peer reviewed journals, conferences or other venues that promote discussion of engaged scholarship in the particular field? If so, are these ranked in some way?

2 Again, the SPC has provided general language that can serve as a starting point for departments. Each unit is responsible for defining how they will recognize engaged community scholarship.