

MINUTES

BOARD OF REGENTS COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS MEETING

FEBRUARY 2, 2023

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Wilson called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, February 2, 2023, at the University of Hawai'i (UH) at Mānoa, Information Technology Building, 1st Floor Conference Room 105A/B, 2520 Correa Road, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822.

Committee members in attendance: Chair Ernest Wilson; Vice-Chair Laurie Tochiki; Regent Eugene Bal; Regent William Haning; and Regent Abigail Mawae.

Others in attendance: Board Chair Randy Moore; Regent Wayne Higaki; Regent Alapaki Nahale-a; Regent Diane Paloma (ex officio committee members); President David Lassner; Vice President (VP) for Administration Jan Gouveia; VP for Academic Strategy Debora Halbert; VP for Legal Affairs/University General Counsel Carrie Okinaga; VP for Research and Innovation Vassilis Syrmos; VP for Information Technology/Chief Information Officer Garret Yoshimi; UH Hilo Chancellor Bonnie Irwin; UH West O'ahu Chancellor Maenette Benham; Associate VP for Administrative Affairs for the UH Community College System Mike Unebasami; Interim Executive Administrator and Secretary of the Board of Regents (Interim Board Secretary) Jamie Go; and others as noted.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Wilson inquired if there were any corrections to the minutes of the October 6, 2022, committee meeting which had been distributed. Hearing none, the minutes were approved.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Interim Board Secretary Go announced that the Board Office did not receive any written testimony, and that no individuals signed up to provide oral testimony.

IV. AGENDA ITEMS

A. General Education (Gen Ed) Redesign Update

VP Halbert provided a brief history on the administration's efforts to examine and revamp the Gen Ed curriculum stating that this endeavor began in 2021 amid concerns raised regarding issues such as dated content and program structure and governance, as well as transfer and articulation challenges between campuses. She reviewed the processes used to formulate the initial Gen Ed curriculum redesign plan, as well as revisions to this proposal, including the initiation of a Summer Institute to review and discuss Gen Ed matters; the formation of design and revision teams consisting of faculty and undergraduate students representing a broad spectrum of disciplines on all

ten campuses; the pursuit of formal consultation on the proposed academic changes as appropriate; the regular engagement of faculty on this matter through the various faculty senates and the All Campus Council of Faculty Senate Chairs; and the solicitation of input and feedback on the redesign plan via town halls and surveys. She also discussed some of the guiding principles used throughout the curriculum redesign process such as the inclusion of key competencies for all students, at both the 2- and 4-year levels; the development of definitions, hallmarks, and student learning outcomes for these competencies; scaffolded learning; and the institution of a simplified core curriculum that reduces bureaucracy.

Based upon feedback received on the most current Gen Ed redesign plan, VP Halbert stated that a conference committee comprised of a representative from each of the 10 faculty senates has been convened to discuss and resolve any lingering concerns. The conference committee has begun its work and is currently reviewing each element of the proposal. It is anticipated that a final draft of the proposal will be ready for review and approval by the faculty senates before the end of the current academic year at which time the administration would seek approval for the curriculum changes from the board. Once board approval is obtained, the administration will begin the process of implementing any necessary academic changes in accordance with the redesign plan.

Regent Mawae asked whether the issue of accepting transfer credits for Gen Ed courses taken at institutions outside of the university system was addressed by the new redesign proposal. VP Halbert replied that the Gen Ed redesign proposal was primarily focused on addressing credit transfer issues internal to the university system. She also explained the university's external credit transfer process for Gen Ed courses stating that the current redesign proposal does not alter those pathways.

Noting that the work of the conference committee has just begun, Vice-Chair Tochiki inquired as to when the administration anticipates bringing the final Gen Ed redesign proposal to the board for approval. VP Halbert responded that the administration is hopeful that it will bring a final draft of the Gen Ed redesign plan to the board for approval by May or early summer of this year. Given this information, Vice-Chair Tochiki asked if the administration still expects to begin implementation of the redesign plan in summer 2023. VP Halbert replied that the administration continues to remain flexible with the implementation of the Gen Ed redesign plan. However, it has begun planning for the next steps in the process which include the convening of a series of system-wide boards for each of the key components of the proposal in order to consider student learning outcomes and the key hallmarks for these outcomes.

Chair Wilson asked about the relationship between the proposed Gen Ed redesign plan and the recently adopted university strategic plan. VP Halbert stated that the Gen Ed redesign proposal lines up nicely with the imperatives contained within the 2023-2029 Strategic Plan. In particular, the inclusion of foundational courses focused on Hawaii as a Hawaiian place of learning meshes well with the university's imperative to fulfill its kuleana to Hawai'i and Hawaiians. Additionally, revisions to the Gen Ed curriculum have been designed to progressively enhance student skill competencies

across a series of core competencies including writing, oral presentation, critical thinking, and information literacy which aligns with the imperative of supporting overall student success.

Regent Haning requested information about the process used by undergraduate students to select appropriate Gen Ed courses for their field of study and the accessibility of academic advisors to assist them in making these decisions. VP Halbert replied that an undergraduate student's selection of Gen Ed courses can be achieved through technology, as well as person-to-person interaction. The university's STAR GPS Registration System (STAR) provides students with information on Gen Ed courses that must be fulfilled in order to meet general, as well as program specific, graduation requirements. Students are also able to obtain personalized support from academic advisors with respect to their Gen Ed needs, although the ratio of advisors-to-students does vary by campus.

Regent Mawae asked about the point-in-time during a student's academic career where they are provided with an academic advisor. VP Halbert replied that at UH Mānoa, academic advisors are available to assist students during their first few years of study. Once a major is selected, students are provided with program specific academic advising. Students can also seek advising from department faculty. However, VP Halbert stated that the provision of academic advising differs for each campus.

Chair Wilson requested VP Halbert to provide a brief summary of STAR for the edification of members. VP Halbert explained that STAR is an easy-to-navigate registration system that can also be used by academic advisors to assist students in meeting their educational needs. President Lassner added that STAR contains the requirements for every undergraduate degree offered at the university and is able to map the courses taken by a student against those requirements, thus allowing a student to determine if they are on the correct educational path.

Regent Nahale-a asked if STAR was able to assist students in determining the availability and location of a course within the university system. President Lassner replied that STAR currently has the capability of mapping educational pathways from the community colleges to the four-year institutions. VP Halbert added that, while STAR can identify course section availability across the community college system, certain issues such as concurrent enrollment and the imposition of varying fees make it difficult for the system to determine course availability between the 2- and 4-year campuses and is something which the administration is actively working on.

Regent Mawae inquired if a listing of course offerings was integrated into STAR. VP Halbert replied in the affirmative.

Vice-Chair Tochiki questioned whether data from STAR is used to help the administration in determining the need for a particular course offering. VP Halbert responded that data from STAR is used by departments to try to balance course offerings in relation to student scheduling needs. President Lassner stated that use of

the STAR system has resulted in improvements to the availability of courses necessary to meet graduation requirements.

Chair Wilson expressed his belief in the importance of viewing Gen Ed as part of a continuous educational process and asked about the faculty perspective on the administration's Gen Ed redesign efforts. VP Halbert replied that, in general, faculty have been supportive of the elements contained within the Gen Ed curriculum redesign proposal. However, ongoing conversations are occurring on questions raised during discussions on the plan such as impacts on individual classes and the inclusion, or lack thereof, of specific subject matter courses as part of the new Gen Ed curriculum.

B. Small Program Policy Review and Discussion

VP Halbert stated that, under Regents Policy, the administration is required to provide two reports related to academic programs. The first report is the review of programs with a small number of graduates and the second is the overview of academic program reviews conducted at each campus during the prior academic year. She noted that the foundation for these reports is contained within Executive Policy 5.229 and provided a synopsis of this policy highlighting parameters that will prompt a program review, in addition to the elements and potential outcomes of the assessment. She also spoke about the overall impact of these reports on unit level planning for program redesign and collaboration, as well as determining plans for future academic programming, and went over questions that should be considered when contemplating policy revisions.

Vice-Chair Tochiki questioned whether concerns have been raised in the past regarding the degree conferring thresholds that are used to trigger a program review. VP Halbert replied in the affirmative stating that discussions on this issue often revolve around the appropriateness of the thresholds given the multiple factors involved in program enrollment such as campus size and population.

Regent Bal asked if data was readily available on the outcomes of past program reviews. VP Halbert responded that she did not have that information readily available. However, she stated that these reviews do impact perceptions of a program's future. As a result, programs that are placed on the program review list often conduct self-assessments and take actions to improve their viability, such as retooling curricula or merging with other programs.

Regent Nahale-a inquired as to whether cost-benefit analyses are factored into a program's review. VP Halbert replied that the Institutional Research, Analysis and Planning Office has been requested to ponder this question. However, the issue is complex and encompasses a number of assumptions that must be considered to determine the true value of a program. Regent Nahale-a concurred with VP Halbert about the complexity of the situation but stated that progressively elevating this issue will be helpful in obtaining funding both locally and from abroad.

Discussions ensued on the purposes, as well as the usefulness and effectiveness, of academic program reviews.

V. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Wilson adjourned the meeting at 10:51 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

/S/

Jamie Go
Interim Executive Administrator and
Secretary of the Board of Regents