

MINUTES
BOARD OF REGENTS MEETING
JANUARY 7, 2021

Note: On January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization declared the outbreak of COVID-19 a public health emergency of international concern, subsequently declaring it a pandemic on March 11, 2020. On March 16, 2020, Governor David Y. Ige issued a supplementary proclamation that temporarily suspended Chapter 92, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, relating to public meetings and records, "to the extent necessary to enable boards to conduct business in person or through remote technology without holding meetings open to the public."

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Benjamin Kudo called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m. on Thursday, January 7, 2021. The meeting was conducted with regents participating from various locations.

Quorum (11): Chair Benjamin Kudo; Vice-Chair Randy Moore; Vice-Chair Alapaki Nahale-a; Regent Simeon Acoba; Regent Kelli Acopan; Regent Eugene Bal; Regent Wayne Higaki; Regent Jan Sullivan; Regent Michelle Tagorda; Regent Robert Westerman; and Regent Ernest Wilson.

Others in attendance: President David Lassner; Vice President (VP) for Administration Jan Gouveia; VP for Community Colleges Erika Lacro; 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; VP for Budget and Finance/Chief Financial Officer Kalbert Young; UH Mānoa (UHM) Provost Michael Bruno; UH Hilo (UHH) Chancellor Bonnie Irwin; UH West O'ahu (UHWO) Chancellor Maenette Benham; Executive Administrator and Secretary of the Board of Regents (Board Secretary) Kendra Oishi; and others as noted.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Regent Wilson moved to approve the minutes of the November 19, 2020, meeting, seconded by Regent Moore, and the motion carried, with all members present voting in the affirmative.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Board Secretary Oishi announced that the Board Office received written comments as follows:

Written comments regarding solar panels and security at Leeward Community College was received from Joseph Keliikuli.

Written comments related to proposed budget reductions at UHH were received from the UHH Faculty Congress Budget Crisis Committee, Jean Ippolito, and Paulla Speegle.

Written comments regarding the PhD program in pharmaceutical sciences at UHH were received from Susan Jarvi, Kathleen Howe, Margaret Farias, Thomas Burton, Noelle Rodriguez, Paul Dolnick, Shawzy Cann, Rachel Laderman, Marion Nipper, Thomas Lee Travis, Laura Landry, and Barbara Black.

Late written comments regarding the PhD program in pharmaceutical sciences at UHH were received from Jane Panek.

Late written comments in support of the Art Department at UHH were received from Jennifer Ko and Chayna Yoshida.

Late written comments in opposition to the closure of the aquaponics program at UHH were received from Larry Kawaahau.

Late written comments and oral testimony in opposition to the university budget were received from Jessica Hamad.

Resolutions to approve a graduate certificate in clinical research and endorse with reservations the reorganization of library services was received from the UHM Faculty Senate.

Written testimony and comments may be viewed at the Board of Regents website as follows:

[Written Testimony Comment Received](#)

[Late Written Testimony Comment Received](#)

Oral testimony in opposition to the closure of the aquaponics program at UHH was received from Larry Kawaauhau.

IV. REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT AND COVID-19 UPDATE

President Lassner provided an update on the university's current state of affairs noting that the spring semester is scheduled to begin on January 11, 2021, and will be conducted in a manner similar to the 2020 fall semester with course instruction expected to occur in a mainly online modality, with the exception of courses requiring in-person, classroom-based instruction, such as laboratory courses, clinical instruction, studios, and shops for courses in the trades.

As of today, both UHM and UHH are showing slight decreases in headcount enrollment as compared to the same day last year. UHWO is up and the overall spring headcount enrollment as of today at the university's three four-year campuses is better than anticipated. Community colleges are currently showing a decrease in headcount enrollment as compared to the same day last year. President Lassner noted that community colleges across the nation are experiencing declines in enrollment much larger than ours. It is unclear as to why this decrease is occurring since we often experience upticks in enrollment, especially in community colleges during difficult economic conditions. One hypothesis is that the numerous familial, economic, and employment uncertainties and personal pressures associated with this health crisis and

economic downturn are unlike issues faced during the last recession which was fiscal only. In addition, individuals may now be questioning whether enrolling in college to increase or improve upon their job qualifications is a worthwhile endeavor.

While the university anticipates that it will see significant declines in State appropriations (general fund revenues), other elements of the university's financial picture do not appear as grim. Extramural funding for research continues to witness steady growth with over \$300 million in extramural funds being awarded to date. Increases in funding from philanthropic sources have also surpassed expectations with the University of Hawai'i Foundation realizing over \$56 million in donations as of December 31, 2020.

Administration of COVID-19 vaccines, one of the key factors in controlling the pandemic, has begun, and President Lassner stated that the university continues to engage the Department of Health (DOH) with regard to the university's role in the implementation of Hawai'i's vaccination plan. The university has entered into a comprehensive memorandum of agreement with DOH that will allow up to 1,000 volunteers primarily from the university's nursing programs, the University of Hawai'i John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM), and the Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy at UHH, to participate in vaccination efforts at university facilities throughout the state. He also stated that the university has been in discussions to determine how it can assist major healthcare facilities statewide with their vaccination efforts and that vaccination plans are being developed for university personnel that conform to the State's overall plan.

Campus Report

President Lassner stated that while the board would normally be conducting its meetings at various campuses of the university system which would allow the board to receive reports from the host-campus and faculty of the host-campus, as well as engage with student representatives in person, the uncertainty and impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the temporary suspension of these activities. However, both the Board Office and administration have been able to adapt to an everchanging situation that has allowed for the resumption of the campus and faculty reports, as well as the receipt of a student representative report, during board meetings. He noted that this meeting's host campus was UHWO and introduced Chancellor Benham.

Chancellor Benham provided an overview of trend data, current and anticipated challenges, and future plans for UHWO and highlighted UHWO's interactive quick-facts dashboard which visually tracks and displays key performance data and allows users to instantly garner more detailed statistics on topics such as student demographics, enrollment, graduation rates, tuition revenues, and chosen academic programs of study. She stated that many of UHWO's actions are data-driven and that analyses of trend data in areas such as enrollment projections, numbers of first-time freshmen, and new transfer students are regularly performed and serves as a valuable tool in formulating both short- and long-term strategic action plans.

Analyses of trend data also assists UHWO in identifying its strengths and areas in which it needs to improve, such as increasing the enrollment of community college transfer students. To this end, data analysis assisted UHWO in identifying new clusters of potential community college transfer students, including individuals seeking to change careers, veterans, and active military personnel, and modifying academic programming to include relevant courses of study in a format that enables the engagement of these individuals.

Despite a steady increase in overall headcount enrollment, including an increase of 3.9 percent for the fall semester of 2020 and an increase of 0.7 percent being projected for the fall semester of 2021, overall tuition revenues have been decreasing since 2018. Chancellor Benham explained that the decrease in tuition revenues reflects the dynamic student demographics of UHWO. Data analysis indicates that increasing numbers of part-time students and students enrolling at UHWO through the early college program impacts the overall headcount enrollment of full-time students, which in turn affects the actual amount of revenues collected by the institution. This is an important and crucial point of information that is given consideration when UHWO conducts its budget and academic program planning.

UHWO has consistently met the majority of its performance measures, awarding an increased number of degrees and certificates of achievement overall, as well as to Native Hawaiian and Pell Grant students, and experiencing an increase in the six-year graduation rate, which it considers metrics of its success. However, Chancellor Benham noted that UHWO failed to meet its goal of increasing the enrollment numbers for community college transfer students but anticipates that with continued recruitment and articulation efforts this goal will be surpassed in the next three to four years.

Data on retention rates, six-year graduation rates, average time-to-degree, median earnings after graduation, and median total student debt after graduation was also reviewed with Chancellor Benham noting that it was important to analyze this data in order to gain a better understanding of the student collegiate experience and make improvements to address the barriers students may be facing to attain a post-secondary education. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the need for this analysis as, for the past year, both high school and college students have faced social isolation and a number of factors, including health, family, and financial issues, that have fueled anxiety about post-secondary education and impacted the persistence to graduate. She reported that UHWO's analysis of these various data points have indicated that a wide range of individuals throughout the campus community are facing multiple challenges, including mental health and wellness issues. As a result, UHWO has used Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) funding to prioritize and increase mental health and wellness outreach efforts and support for students, faculty, and staff including the expansion of tele-counseling endeavors and the embedding of mental health modules and resources into curricula by faculty members and academic advising staff. UHWO also continues its support of efforts undertaken by its Student Life Unit, the Associated Students of the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu (ASUH-WO), and various alumni organizations to maintain connections

and communication with current students and graduates, particularly those in need of assistance.

Chancellor Benham also reviewed historical financial trend data for UHWO stating that a detailed and frequently updated financial cost-study presenting both revenues and expenses from 2013 to the present fiscal year, including payroll costs, is regularly provided to the campus community. The availability of this information on the UHWO website, as well as the provision of this information through regular communications with the campus community, is crucial to the process of shared governance and the collective responsibility to be good financial stewards. She also stated that having this accounting data readily available has assisted UHWO in its academic planning and budgeting efforts, particularly during the past year.

Similar to other campuses within the University of Hawai'i System, UHWO has faced numerous challenges during the last three quarters of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Chancellor Benham summarized the efforts to address these challenges through an approach that focused on ensuring the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff; rapidly pivoting from in-person instruction to a mainly online, distance-learning format, with a hybrid form of instruction occurring for courses requiring some classroom-based instruction, such as laboratory and clinical courses; and maximizing opportunities to ensure that UHWO would be able to carry out its educational mission and meet its goals and objectives of generating a vibrant learning environment. It was noted that UHWO has experienced success in its efforts to meet student needs during these challenging times as a result of the engagement and participation of, as well as regular communication with and receipt of feedback from, all campus community stakeholders.

Efforts have been initiated to visualize and develop a stronger, more effective, and more efficient UHWO for 2021 and beyond. Campus working groups tasked with shifting attention to various campus priorities such as the re-envisioning of UHWO's business model to incorporate a revised budgeting mindset that encompasses both cost containment and revenue enhancement measures; the initiation of a renewed focus on student recruitment, retention, and innovative learning that addresses the varying needs of the community served by UHWO; and increasing campus efficiencies while continuing to maintain the educational mission of UHWO have been formed and will begin their work in the near future.

Faculty Report

Edward Keaunui, UHWO Faculty Senate Chair, stated that over the past year the faculty engaged the campus community, as well as the broader community served by UHWO, in formulating several significant initiatives, some of which were related directly to COVID-19 pandemic response efforts. He highlighted several of these initiatives, as well as various other achievement and accolades received by UHWO faculty members, including the development of a new synchronous online studio in an effort to develop positive learning experiences as course instruction quickly pivoted to an online modality; work of the Veterans Empowered Through Science Technology Engineering and Math lab to create personal protective equipment for Hawai'i's first responders using 3D

printing capabilities housed at UHWO; and receipt of a \$50,000 grant from The Spencer Foundation for COVID-19-related research.

An overview of actions taken by the UHWO Faculty Senate regarding the future of the campus was also provided with Dr. Keaunui stating that, given the State's economic downturn due to the COVID-19 pandemic, campus leadership began involving stakeholders in preliminary discussions regarding the future of UHWO in September of 2020. These discussions have been thought-provoking and at times challenging but were critical in collecting concerns, ideas, and strategies that would guide the next steps to ensure the future viability and sustainability of UHWO. Over a five-week period, members of the UHWO Faculty Senate, along with other campus community stakeholders, participated in a campus task force to, among other things, answer questions on, and develop recommendations for, the fiscal future of UHWO, particularly with regard to what must be done to adjust to expected lower general fund appropriations because of projected lower State revenues for the next four fiscal years; enrollment growth; and enhancement of academic programs that would significantly impact a healthy, post-pandemic Hawai'i. Dr. Keaunui also noted that campus leadership consulted with the various public employee unions to seek meaningful, solution-focused ideas for addressing these issues.

Dr. Keaunui reviewed the next steps that the UHWO Faculty Senate believed would be necessary to sustain UHWO through these difficult times. He stated that continued communication, engagement, and collaboration among the administration, faculty, and staff of UHWO, as well as the community-at-large, is key to assembling the right mix of cost-reductions, revenue enhancements, and development of programmatic initiatives to offset the projected decline in general fund revenues, ensure campus viability, and ultimately benefit UHWO's 21st century learners and the community-at-large.

Student Report

Caton Liang, President of ASUH-WO, gave a presentation on the work and achievements of ASUH-WO, as well as its future endeavors, stating that the chartered student organization is comprised of students from O'ahu, Maui, and Kaua'i, and continues to strive to serve all students of the campus community. The organizational structure of ASUH-WO was also reviewed with Mr. Liang noting that the ASUH-WO senate consisted of 16 senators, one of the largest senates in the history of ASUH-WO.

Mr. Liang highlighted a number of accomplishments of ASUH-WO over the past year, including the hosting of a number of interactive and engaging virtual events such as a financial literacy seminar which was attended by over 50 students, and the successful funding of a virtual commencement experience that honored all graduates of UHWO. ASUH-WO has also recently appointed a social media coordinator to improve communications with its constituency over a variety of media platforms and is hopeful that ongoing efforts to connect with the community it serves through the effective use of technology will allow even greater accomplishments to be realized in 2021.

The COVID-19 pandemic has not impacted the student advocacy role of ASUH-WO with representatives continuing to serve in various capacities within UHWO's campus-

wide committees and task forces to allow for student input to be included in institutional decisions. ASUH-WO also continues to promote institutional change through legislation and has passed a number of resolutions in an effort to achieve this goal including resolutions that denounce systemic racism; advocate for the improvement of, and increased support for, student mental health services; request faculty to institute course requirement flexibility in light of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic; and endorse the creation and addition of an African-American history course to UHWO's course catalog.

ASUH-WO looks forward to continuing its progress in meeting established goals for 2021 including maintaining continued engagement with students and the community, creating a safe environment for students to voice their opinions regarding the university experience, and exploring the creation of a Law Schools Admissions Test program at UHWO.

Regent Acoba stated that he was very impressed with UHWO's presentation and dashboard, the information provided by UHWO leadership, and the collaborative work on the presentation between UHWO leadership, the UHWO Faculty Senate, and ASUH-WO. Chancellor Benham thanked Regent Acoba and also noted that this was the first instance in which a student report was incorporated into a campus presentation at a board meeting.

Vice-Chair Nahale-a noted that he was very appreciative of UHWO's efforts to support student health and well-being, particularly with regard to mental health support, and inquired as to whether the health needs being expressed by students have changed as instruction and campus interaction has shifted to a more virtual environment. Chancellor Benham responded that while she would have to defer to counselors for specific answer as to the changing mental health needs of UHWO students, it was her understanding that more students were seeking mental health services over the past year and that the issues being addressed were much more complex than in the past. She noted, however, that UHWO faculty and staff have had to be more cognizant in meeting the needs of students with disabilities who, depending on their capabilities, have faced challenges to the new online learning environment.

Vice-Chair Moore questioned whether CARES Act funds were included in the financial trend data contained in the presentation. Chancellor Benham replied that extramural CARES Act funds were not included in the financial trend data provided. However, it will be included in UHWO's fiscal year report on extramural funding.

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Report from the Committee on Academic and Student Affairs

Committee Chair Wilson provided a brief report on the joint meeting of the Committee on Academic and Student Affairs and Committee on Personnel Affairs and Board Governance which was held immediately prior to the board meeting stating that the committees received a report on university faculty workload assignments. He noted that the administration provided the committees with information on efforts to improve data quality to more accurately reflect and identify faculty workloads across the four-

year campuses and community colleges; faculty workload policies for both the four-year campuses and the community colleges; current faculty workload data by major academic unit; issues and challenges currently facing the university with regard to the collection of data regarding faculty workload assignments, as well as the quality of this data; and efforts the administration is undertaking to address data collection issues and challenges. The administration also reviewed the next steps it will take with regard to the use of the data already collected as well as improving data collection in the future. He noted that the review of faculty workload assignments is a work-in-progress and that initial data presented only included information received from the four-year campuses and two of the community college campuses. Work on obtaining, compiling, and reviewing data from the remaining campus units is expected to be completed in the near future.

Regent Westerman, Chair of the Committee on Personnel Affairs and Board Governance, concurred with Committee Chair Wilson's report.

B. Report from the Committee on Independent Audit

Committee Chair Moore summarized the committee report.

C. Report from the Committee on Personnel Affairs and Board Governance

Board Chair Kudo stated that this report was provided under the joint report of the Committee on Academic and Student Affairs and Committee on Personnel Affairs and Board Governance report summarized by Committee Chair Wilson.

D. Affiliate Reports

UH Student Caucus: Regent Acopan reported that the UH Student Caucus will be conducting its first meeting of 2021 on Saturday, January 9, 2021.

VI. AGENDA ITEMS

A. Review of Graduate Medical Education Programs at JABSOM Annual Report for Academic Year 2019-2020

President Lassner stated that the Graduate Medical Education Program (GME Program) at JABSOM references the medical residency program which is associated with graduate medical education received after the completion of medical school. He noted that one requirement of the accreditation process for the GME Program is the provision of an annual report to a university's governing body, as was included in the board packet of materials. Although the board is required to review the executive summary of the report and any associated materials, no action by the board is necessary. President Lassner indicated that Dr. Lee Buencosejo-Lum, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at JABSOM and designated institutional officer for the GME Program, was available should Regents have any questions concerning the report.

Chair Kudo inquired if Regents had any questions for Dr. Buencosejo-Lum regarding the report. Noting the absence of questions, he stated that the report on the executive

summary of the annual institutional review of the GME Program for the 2019-2020 academic year would be considered as reviewed by the board and that he would sign the statement of institutional commitment to the GME Program on its behalf.

B. Update on Financial Status and Reshaping the University of Hawai'i for the Future

President Lassner updated Regents on the financial status of the university, as well as efforts to reshape the university for the future. Although State tax revenue projections have slightly improved, economic forecasts for the next several fiscal years remain grim. Hawai'i's economic climate is not expected to return to fiscal year 2019 revenue levels for at least another four to five years, if not longer, and is highly dependent on the economic recovery of Hawai'i's tourism sector.

The COVID-19 pandemic has financially impacted the university and it continues to experience declining revenues, although the decreases have been less than anticipated. President Lassner stated that the immediate goal of the university is to maintain expenditure controls and cash preservation strategies initiated during the spring of 2020 to meet its financial needs for the remainder of the current fiscal year while preserving budget reserve fund balances so that these funds will be available for fiscal years beyond 2021 when the greatest economic impacts of COVID-19 are expected to be realized. While the administration is considering a number of options to reshape the university and maintain its future viability on both budgetary and programmatic levels for fiscal year 2022 and beyond, President Lassner emphasized that final decisions have not been made on issues affecting programs or personnel.

A review of the university's budget planning timeline was provided with President Lassner highlighting various actions regarding the university's budget that have been taken by both the board and the administration since August of 2020. It was noted that in November 2020, the board approved a flat general fund budget request for the 2021-2023 fiscal biennium, which has been submitted to the Governor and Legislature. The university's budget request consists mainly of position transfers between campuses; inclusion of \$4 million in revenues to support athletics programs that were appropriated by the Legislature in the 2019 base budget; a non-general fund ceiling transfer to reflect the reorganization of the Office of Research Compliance; and an increase in the expenditure ceiling for the Research and Training Revolving Fund (RTRF) to accommodate the projected increase in RTRF spending as a result of an increase in research awards, but does not contain any new requests for additional general fund appropriations. Subsequently, the Governor formulated and submitted an executive biennium budget request to the Legislature for consideration that includes an across-the-board reduction in general fund appropriations for the university of 15 percent which equates to approximately \$78 million for each of the next two fiscal years.

Over the next several months, the Legislature will review, analyze, and take into consideration both the executive and university budget requests when formulating the State's biennium budget. It is anticipated that the biennium budget will be finalized and passed by the Legislature prior to its adjournment. Once the budget is enacted, the administration will have a more definitive indication of the university's fiscal picture and

expects to return to the board to report on the university's operating plan based on this budget. However, President Lassner cautioned that, if enacted, the 15 percent budget reduction for the university proposed by the Governor would be a permanent reduction to its base budget for the foreseeable future.

President Lassner reported that the university is expected to receive additional federal funds due to the passage of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 (Supplemental Relief Act) the financial structure of which is modeled after the CARES Act. He stated that, similar to the CARES Act, the Supplemental Relief Act provides economic relief to institutions of higher education (IHE) primarily through the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) but noted that it remains unclear as to the flexibility that will be afforded to IHEs on the use of the additional HEERF funding. He noted that the formulas used to calculate the amount of funds that will be received by each IHE has been amended to increase the influence of part-time student enrollment, which favors campuses like the community colleges and UHWO that have larger enrollment numbers for part-time students. A portion of HEERF funds has also been dedicated to assisting IHEs that are considered to be minority-serving institutions, including all ten University of Hawai'i campuses. Although IHEs are expecting to receive approximately \$22.9 billion in HEERF monies which is greater than that received under the CARES Act, the exact amount of funds to be received by each IHE and the date of the release of these funds is still being determined by the United States Department of Education. At a minimum, the university anticipates it will receive funding relief equivalent to that received under the CARES Act.

Chair Kudo inquired as to when the university expects to receive federal relief funds from the Supplemental Relief Act, what the amount of the funds received will be, and whether this financial relief will be affected by the transition to a new presidential administration. President Lassner stated that the Supplemental Relief Act requires relief funds to be distributed in a timely manner and the university expects that funds will be received in a matter of weeks, though the exact amount of funds that will be received is not yet known. Although issues may arise in the delivery of federal relief funding due to the transition to a new presidential administration, major impact to the amount of funding provided by the Supplemental Relief Act is not anticipated.

Noting that similar relief funding for institutions of higher education was provided through the CARES Act, Chair Kudo questioned what the timeframe was between passage of the CARES Act and actual receipt of federal funds by the university. President Lassner responded that it took approximately 60 days for the university to receive CARES Act funding after passage of the legislation.

Chair Kudo asked whether the amount of federal relief funds the university anticipates it will receive from the Supplemental Relief Act will be sufficient to address the fiscal crisis the university is expecting to face in the near future as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. President Lassner replied that the dollar amount the university is projecting it will receive from the Supplemental Relief Act will not be sufficient to address the shortfall expected as a result of the significant reductions in the amount of general fund revenues appropriated to the university that are contained in the executive

budget. Additionally, while it remains unclear as to what, if any, restrictions will be placed on the use of Supplemental Relief Act funds, the expectation is that the use of these funds for general operational expenses will be disallowed as was the case with CARES Act funds. He also reiterated that all indications are that the Governor's reduction in general fund revenues for the university is an annual reduction that will be recurring for the long-term and that federal relief funding is a one-time infusion of funds.

Chair Kudo remarked that, although philanthropic funding has increased, it is his understanding that donors often restrict the use of the donated funds for specific purposes and thus, cannot be used to address operational budget shortfalls.

President Lassner stated that the university is essential to the economic recovery of the State and will play a vital role in promoting a positive vision for a vibrant, sustainable, and globally competitive Hawai'i. In order to focus on what the State needs, it is imperative that the university recognize that it can no longer be all things to all people, cannot continue to simply work to preserve the status quo, and must pivot and make strategic investments in areas that will allow the university to advance its mission. He highlighted and discussed four priorities which can be addressed by the university and which are critical to achieving the economic recovery goals of both the State and the university. The priorities include engaging more Hawaii residents in post-secondary education; educating Hawaii residents for living wage jobs; helping to produce and develop new economic sectors through strategic investments in high-need academic programming and areas of economic diversification opportunities such as aquaculture and the health sciences; and strengthening the research enterprise as a major economic driver and driver of intellectual innovation.

The administration continues to work on repositioning the university for fiscal year 2022 and beyond through an integrated approach that focuses on reimagining and reshaping the university through structural rebalancing and programmatic changes that will allow it to continue to carry out its core educational mission while confronting long-term fiscal challenges through strategic reductions and investments, the leveraging of the university's strengths, and increasing and diversifying the university's revenue streams to improve resiliency in the face of economic fluctuations. It was emphasized that these efforts are not being undertaken as an exercise to return to the way the university operated in the past but rather, it is an attempt to implement long-term plans that differ from the past so as to ensure the university's future viability and success. President Lassner highlighted some of the steps the university must take to achieve these long-term plans including the establishment of a hybridized environment in which work and learning occur both online and in person; implementation of innovative instructional approaches that include increased use of distance learning, non-credit, and micro-credentialing courses that will allow the university to reach more students and maximize student retention; gaining a greater awareness of university facilities to determine necessary improvements or elimination of outdated structures so that utilization of higher-quality square-footage can be maximized; and attainment of a better understanding of the mission of each of the university's major units that will allow for improvement of mission differentiation and collaboration between these units and lead

to greater realignment and sharing of resources which will enhance operational effectiveness and efficiency.

President Lassner briefly reviewed the administration's preliminary path forward towards meeting its post-pandemic planning goals stating that many of the strategies, ideas, and decisions being contemplated are driven by data analysis. He reiterated that the university must take a comprehensive approach to meet its future needs, as well as the future needs of the State, and provided an overview of work that has and continues to be done by the administration to achieve these goals. Details of the planning process used by each major unit of the university to identify and recommend strategic changes, investments, and other actions that will support a thriving and sustainable future for the university were summarized with President Lassner underscoring that the process involved intensive campus conversations, planning meetings, open forums, and strategic discussions involving all university stakeholders.

The next steps and anticipated future actions for implementation of the university's long-term plans, as well as a planning timeline, were also presented by President Lassner. Although the work ahead remains challenging, the administration is upbeat and optimistic about the future of the university moving forward due in part to the proactive approach taken to address the issues facing the university as well as the many new and promising programmatic and structural ideas that arose during conversations on campuses systemwide.

Regent Acopan asked whether the administration planned to continue to collaborate and consult with the various stakeholders of the university, including campus governance groups, with regard to the systemic changes being considered, particularly with regard to changes involving academic programs and structure. President Lassner replied in the affirmative stating that work begun in the fall of 2020 is ongoing and will continue to involve all university stakeholders, including campus governance groups.

Commending the university's strategic action plan, Regent Westerman noted that these types of plans are often developed but never implemented and inquired as to when the administration will start taking actions to implement its proposed plan. President Lassner responded that implementation of actions is dependent upon a number of factors. Certain actions such as integrating programs into more cohesive units or schools to increase program effectiveness and efficiency can be implemented immediately so long as the change does not involve the elimination of personnel, while other actions will require time because they involve more of a consultative process. Regent Westerman stated that it would be helpful if, in the future, the administration could provide the board with information on successful actions taken to implement its strategic plan in a concise and easily understandable format.

Regent Wilson asked about the status of efforts by the university to acquire information from various agencies and organizations that would provide it with a clearer idea of the higher educational needs that will be most essential to Hawai'i's recovery in the future. President Lassner responded that, other than a few ideas focused on very specific issues, it does not appear that any organization or agency other than the

university has been articulating this idea. It will be up to the university to take the lead and use the resources at its disposal to address this issue.

Noting that the administration is in the midst of planning for a structural rebalancing of the university that may involve academic changes that include the elimination or downsizing of programs, Regent Sullivan questioned whether any serious discussions have taken place regarding the possible imposition of a freeze on the tenure process until a better understanding of reorganization is achieved. President Lassner replied that serious discussions involving tenure have not taken place and is an issue that would require negotiations involving collective bargaining agreements. He believed that if such a conversation were to take place, it would not involve the wholesale freezing of tenure but would take a more prudent and focused approach centered on programs for which resources were not being invested. Chair Sullivan opined that perhaps this is an issue that should be given consideration especially during future collective bargaining agreement negotiations. Chair Kudo added that perhaps a more creative and practical approach to this issue would not be the complete elimination of tenure but instead redefining tenure to include circumstances where tenure employment security would not apply.

Regent Sullivan opined that there were additional issues that both the board and the administration needed to consider to continue moving the university in a positive direction and strengthen it for the future. First, the board should delve deeper into programmatic areas that have remained challenging for the university including student housing, athletics, and auxiliary services, to determine the long-term goals of these programs and the development of strategic plans to achieve these goals. Second, the administration should determine what it wants to achieve through the use of remote learning as an instructional modality and develop a strategy and guidelines to attain these goals, particularly given that HEERF money may be available for this purpose. She noted that this could also assist the university in determining its future facility needs which could have budget implications. Finally, noting that the university is the most qualified to address the issue of broadband in a strategic manner, the administration needs to consider taking the lead on this issue which is critical to the development of the university and the modernization of the State.

Referencing the federal funds being provided for education through the Supplemental Relief Act, Regent Acoba requested clarification on whether the funds allocated to IHEs was in addition to funding allocated for general educational purposes. President Lassner replied that the funds appropriated for general educational purposes contained within the Supplemental Relief Act included allocations for both K-12 and post-secondary education and that relief funding for IHEs was contained within this amount.

Regent Acoba questioned whether the university had remaining CARES Act funds that have not yet been spent. President Lassner replied in the affirmative stating that while almost all of the CARES Act funds required to be disbursed as direct student aid has been distributed, funds allocated and available for the prevention, preparation, and response to the COVID-19 crisis, as well as funds to assist with significant unmet needs, are still available. He explained that the administration was not anticipating the

receipt of additional federal funding relief and was prudent in using CARES Act funds in order to preserve funds for use on COVID-19 related expenses through the spring of 2021.

Stating that the university is anticipating the receipt of funds from the Supplemental Relief Act, Regent Acoba asked whether the administration knew the exact amount it would receive and if this amount would relieve some of the general fund revenue shortfall the university is projecting it will face. President Lassner replied that questions remain on the formulas being used to determine the amount of funds which will be distributed to IHEs and the administration does not know the exact amount the university will receive. However, based on information available, all indications are that relief funding for IHEs provided under the Supplemental Relief Act will be at least as much as that received under the CARES Act. As such, the administration is estimating that the university will receive at least \$42 million. While this amount may provide some fiscal relief to the university, it will not relieve the budget pressures being faced by the university as a result of general fund revenue reductions imposed mainly because of the restrictions anticipated to be placed on the use of the relief funds.

Regent Acoba asked whether the administration has projected the impact relief funding will have on the university and its budget. President Lassner responded that the administration has not made concrete projections as to the impact relief funding will have on the university or its budget since the exact amount of funds allocated remains unclear. It is anticipated that the allocation will allow the university to provide greater, direct financial aid to its students; provide funds to address all of the university's direct COVID-19 related expenses which will impact the university's overall expenditures; and assist the university in effectuating changes that will prepare it to enhance its core academic mission to meet future educational needs. He reiterated, however, that some of these impacts are dependent upon the discretion provided to the university in the use of funds received under the Supplemental Relief Act.

Regent Acoba asked whether the Legislature will consider additional federal funding when determining the allocation of revenues for the university. President Lassner responded that the Legislature will likely question the administration on the amount of relief funding it has received and take this amount under consideration when addressing the university's budget.

Referencing remarks regarding systemic changes being considered by the administration, particularly with regard to changes involving the downsizing or elimination of academic programs or personnel, Regent Acoba questioned whether ample notification would be provided to the board and affected university stakeholders prior to any of these actions being taken and asked if the purpose of the recently-formed Prioritization Indicators Committee (PIC) at UHM was to screen programs at UHM for elimination. President Lassner replied that ample notification regarding the elimination of academic programs or personnel will be provided by the administration. Provost Bruno indicated that the purpose of the PIC was to establish values and goals, as well as associated metrics and indicators for the achievement of these goals, for the assessment of programs at UHM and will not be making any recommendation or decisions on the elimination or modification of units or programs.

Noting that one of the strategies for the reduction of expenses mentioned was the use of faculty workload templates to implement collective bargaining agreements, Regent Acoba asked how this strategy would result in decreased expenses for the university. President Lassner stated that the faculty workload templates will allow the administration to more effectively manage faculty workloads thereby allowing available faculty to be utilized in a more efficient manner.

Vice-Chair Moore commented that there have been numerous discussions held on the national level on various long-term issues impacting the future of universities and suggested that the board hold a retreat to review these larger and longer-term issues.

Regent Wilson questioned whether the administration is reviewing and analyzing its general education curriculum and requirements so that better coordination regarding these requirements occurs across all of the campuses of the university system and meets the current needs of the university students. President Lassner stated that he understood the concerns raised and that this was something that could be accomplished although changes will not immediately occur.

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION (closed to the public)

Vice-Chair Nahalea made a motion to convene in executive session, seconded by Regent Higaki, and with all members present voting in the affirmative, the board approved convening in executive session to carry out deliberations concerning the authority of persons designated by the board to conduct labor negotiations or to negotiate the acquisition of public property, or during the conduct of such negotiations pursuant to Section 92-5(a)(3), Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) and to consult with the board's attorneys on questions and issues pertaining to the board's powers, duties, privileges, immunities, and liabilities, pursuant to Sections 92-5(a)(4), HRS.

The meeting recessed at 12:03 p.m.

Regents Acoba and Tagorda left at 12:58 p.m.

Chair Kudo called the meeting back to order at 1:00 p.m. and announced that the board met in executive session to discuss litigation and collective bargaining issues as stated on the agenda.

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Kudo announced that the next board meeting was scheduled for February 18, 2021, at a location to be determined.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Regent Wilson moved to adjourn, seconded by Vice-Chair Nahale-a and, noting the excused absences of Regents Acoba and Tagorda, and with all members present voting in the affirmative, the motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 1:02 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

/S/

Kendra Oishi
Executive Administrator and Secretary
of the Board of Regents