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MINUTES

**BOARD OF REGENTS COMMITTEE ON STUDENT SUCCESS
MEETING**

MAY 1, 2025

A video recording of this meeting may be viewed at the Board of Regents website as follows:

[Meeting Video](#)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Laurie Tochiki called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, May 1, 2025, at the University of Hawai'i (UH) at Mānoa, Bachman Hall, 1st Floor Conference Room 106A/B, 2444 Dole Street, Honolulu, Hawai'i, 96822, with regents participating from various locations.

Committee members in attendance: Chair Laurie Tochiki; Vice-Chair William Haning; Regent Joshua Faumuina; Regent Laurel Loo; and Regent Ernest Wilson.

Others in attendance: Board Chair Gabriel Lee; Regent Neil Abercrombie; Regent Lauren Akitake; Regent Wayne Higaki; and Regent Mike Miyahira (ex officio committee members); President Wendy Hensel; Vice President (VP) for Administration Jan Gouveia; VP for Academic Strategy Debora Halbert; VP for Legal Affairs/University General Counsel Carrie Okinaga; Interim VP for Community Colleges Della Teraoka; UH-Hilo Chancellor Bonnie Irwin; UH-West O'ahu (UHWO) Chancellor Maenette Benham; Executive Administrator and Secretary of the Board of Regents (Board Secretary) Yvonne Lau; and others as noted.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Board Secretary Lau announced the receipt of written comments on the subject of General Education from Edoardo Biagioni, on behalf of the Mānoa Faculty Senate (MFS) as its Chair, Ashley Maynard, Sarah Akina, and Stephen Taylor.

Edoardo Biagioni, Brad Taylor, Ashley Maynard, and Marguerite Butler offered verbal comments on the subject of General Education.

Raymond Sin provided oral commentary on the university in general.

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

[Written Testimony Received](#)

III. AGENDA ITEMS

A. Update on General Education (Gen Ed)

VP Halbert provided a synopsis of the administration's efforts to examine and revamp the Gen Ed curriculum stating this endeavor began in 2021 amid concerns about issues such as dated content and program structure and governance, as well as transfer and articulation challenges between campuses. She briefly spoke about, among other things, the process used to generate, discuss, and refine various Gen Ed redesign proposals put forth; the establishment of guardrails to help frame initial discussions on this matter; faculty consultation efforts; and the existence of a website which contains a plethora of detailed information on this subject. She also drew attention to, and summarized the contents of, policies related to the issue of Gen Ed including, Regents Policy (RP) 5.213, which identifies campus responsibilities in establishing Gen Ed core requirements, articulates what could or should be included in those requirements, and mandates board approval be obtained for each campus' general education core requirements, as well as any significant changes to those requirements; and Executive Policy 5.209, the policy relating to student transfer and articulation, which specifically states Gen Ed should be fully articulated across the university system and requires the seamless transfer of both focus and foundational Gen Ed courses between campuses, along with appropriate consultation.

Over the past academic year, faculty have been working amongst themselves, either independently at the campus level, such as was described in testimony submitted by members of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) faculty, or through the All Campus Council of Faculty Senate Chairs (ACCFSC), to develop a variety of different permutations for the Gen Ed requirements. Additionally, the community colleges (CCs) have been collaborating with both UHH and UHWO on a similar effort. As university faculty desired to pursue these efforts without any sort of systemwide level of support, VP Halbert stated the Office of the Vice President for Academic Strategy was not involved in this endeavor. As such, she was not fully aware of all of the internal conversations that took place on this issue. However, from what she has garnered through memos, UHM faculty have voted on a curricular proposal for Gen Ed at UHM; the CCs have indicated some concerns about the consultation process used in developing the proposal; and a response to the points raised by the CCs was recently issued by UHM faculty. The CCs have also been conducting a systemwide survey of all of the campuses and faculty on a range of potential proposals and different dimensions of Gen Ed, as well as the kinds of Gen Ed permutations contained within the UHM faculty's curricular proposal. While the results of the survey have not yet been officially verified or published, initial results appear to suggest a plurality in favor of one proposal which is not quite aligned by what is being proposed by the faculty at UHM.

Given all of this, and in light of the university's articulation requirements, VP Halbert expressed her belief in the need for a unified, systemwide, Gen Ed proposal to be brought to the board for approval at some point. She then called upon President Hensel to provide some remarks on this matter.

President Hensel began by complimenting everyone involved in these efforts stating it was critically important to continuously evaluate whether Gen Ed is meeting the needs of today's students. While she appreciated and respected the time faculty have spent

thinking about how to move forward on the Gen Ed issue, she stated that, from a foundational standpoint, she could not advocate for any Gen Ed curriculum which did not fully articulate across the university system, emphasizing the significant costs in time and money faced by students and the administrative burden of having to do one-on-one curriculum adjustments when clear and seamless articulation does not exist.

Based upon conversations she has had with, and information she has received from, different experts and different stakeholders at the CCs, UHM, UHH, and UHWO, President Hensel stated there was clearly a difference of opinion about how to address Gen Ed. She offered her perspectives on what has transpired with Gen Ed at the university to date; stressed the need to move forward on this issue as a system; and talked about shifting from a consultative approach when discussing the Gen Ed curriculum to more of a collaborative model where the stakeholders are in the same place, having the same conversation, with the expectation of finding solutions to Gen Ed challenges in advance of a curriculum proposal being brought to the board for approval. She also announced her intent to launch a systemwide transfer initiative noting conversations have taken place with the campus chancellors and UHM Provost about this action. Although finding solutions to transfer challenges within a major may be difficult, doing so with respect to Gen Ed should not as these requirements should be a foundational component of a student's education and thus, transfer automatically.

Chair Tochiki conveyed her appreciation for the hard work done by the MFS on the issue of Gen Ed and the passionate discussion about the educational needs and future of UHM students both she and Regent Wilson were privy to during ACCFSC and MFS meetings at which they were in attendance. She also thanked the CCs for their comments and the work they have done on this matter.

Stating the Gen Ed curriculum situation seems to have taken a 180-degree turn since this item was last discussed by the committee in April 2024, Chair Tochiki shared her understanding about the origins of the conversations on Gen Ed; celebrated the growth of all parties involved during the struggle to find some sort of resolution to this situation; and verbalized her hopefulness that a fully articulated, fully transferable, systemwide Gen Ed curriculum will be developed and implemented in the near future. With that, Chair Tochiki opened the floor for discussion, questions, and thoughts on what direction future conversations on Gen Ed may need to take going forward.

While he offered his congratulations to UHM faculty for reaching an agreement on a curricular proposal for Gen Ed, Regent Faumuina voiced his strong belief in seamless articulation and full transferability across the university system as being essential components of any Gen Ed curriculum proposal brought to the board for approval. Hence, he encouraged all stakeholders involved to keep this in mind as conversations about, and the development of curricular proposals regarding, Gen Ed move forward.

Mentioning the nearly 20 percent of MFS members who voted against adoption of the Gen Ed curriculum resolution, as was noted in written testimony, Regent Abercrombie asked if the reasons for their objections were fully understood. MFS Chair Biagioni stated the main point of contention for those opposed to the resolution was whether the addition of new Gen Ed requirements, as proposed, would require an

increase in the number of credits students must take or necessitate the elimination of existing credit requirements in order to maintain the status quo with respect to Gen Ed credit hours. Taking this response into account, Regent Abercrombie inquired as to whether the matter was satisfactorily resolved. MFS Chair Biagioni replied that some compromises were made to address the concerns raised by those in opposition to the resolution.

A discussion then took place between Regent Abercrombie, Chair Biagioni, and Brad Taylor, a UHM faculty member, on, among other things, the compromise made to address the abovementioned concerns, which included the lessening, rather than elimination, of existing Gen Ed requirements; the specific reductions in Gen Ed course requirements encompassed by the compromise; the rationale behind structuring the compromise in the manner it was; and the inclusion of a foundational requirement in Hawaiian knowledge within UHM's proposed Gen Ed curriculum.

President Hensel pointed out the complexity of the Gen Ed issue as illustrated by the aforementioned conversation. She believes faculty have a right to determine the content of curriculum. However, what must be understood is if you change the mix of what counts as Gen Ed at one campus, it affects students at every other campus in the system. Gen Ed curriculum development must take into account the university's existence as a system and consider the potential for students to be negatively impacted by curriculum changes where articulation and transferability of credits are either limited or non-existent.

Chair Tochiki invited VP Halbert to share her thoughts on what she feels the next steps in the process should be. VP Halbert offered comments on the multilayered intricacies of the Gen Ed issue, especially given the diversity of academic viewpoints on this matter across the university system. She then proceeded to give her personal assessment of the situation summarizing a few of the bigger issues she believed were sticking points between and among the two- and four-year institutions within the system. Among some of the issues mentioned were the complexity of developing and determining hallmarks and learning objectives for a Foundations Hawai'i course, even though there is system-wide agreement on establishing such a Gen Ed requirement; concerns specific to the UHM Gen Ed curriculum proposal raised by faculty at other campuses, such as whether or not there was a need to add, reduce, or eliminate credits to meet the Gen Ed core requirements; questions related to what constituted focus requirements and graduation requirements from both the two-year and four-year campus perspectives; and the desire for more inclusivity in the process, especially from the standpoint of CC faculty. Additionally, the potential impacts of the proposed changes on the university's STAR-GPS registration system and how to adapt the system to most effectively meet the needs of students in determining their articulated pathway to graduation have yet to be considered.

Taking into consideration VP Halbert's insights on this matter, Chair Tochiki asked when it might be reasonable to expect a finalized, systemwide Gen Ed plan from the administration. President Hensel stressed the need for the development of a holistic, simple Gen Ed curriculum which is understandable and consistent for students across the 10-campus system while at the same time respecting faculty governance. From a

larger perspective, it would be extremely helpful to the administration if the board made clear its expectations for the creation of a Gen Ed curriculum which can be reliably applied across the 10-campus system. By doing so, it will compel stakeholders to come to the table and work in a consultative and collaborative way to move to a conclusion on this issue. Additionally, it will allow for a more student-centered refocusing as to the intent of Gen Ed curriculum revisions and give direction as to how to navigate this situation. If the board takes this action, President Hensel expressed her confidence in the ability to develop a Gen Ed plan within the next year. She also reassured stakeholders that all the work already done on this matter will not be disregarded but rather will serve as the foundation for discussions going forward.

VP Halbert agreed with President Hensel's comments stating she believed a resolution to this issue was close.

Regent Wilson concurred with the need to use a more student-focused approach to developing a Gen Ed curriculum and shared his thoughts on how this curriculum sets the foundation for student success in the future.

Vice-Chair Haning presented his views on the Gen Ed curriculum matter emphasizing the need for simplicity, as well as understandability, of any proposal put forth.

Given all of the foregoing conversations, Chair Tochiki inquired as to whether a committee member would like to make a motion to craft a board resolution, with the help of the administration, stating the board's desire for a student-centered, consistently applied, comprehensively simple, Gen Ed curriculum plan be articulated and completed by the end of May 2026. The resolution would then be presented to the board for adoption at its meeting on May 15, 2025.

Regent Wilson moved to recommend the crafting of a board resolution as was proposed by Chair Tochiki. The motion was seconded by Regent Faumuina and the motion carried with all members present voting in the affirmative.

B. Workload Assignment Report (Workload Report)

1. Overview of the Process, Reporting, and Policies

a. UH System Policies

2. Definitions (Based on Legacy Classifications)

a. System – Headcount for Tenured/Tenure-Track by Faculty Type

b. Instructional Faculty with Complete Workload Assignments

i. University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

ii. University of Hawai'i at Hilo

iii. University of Hawai'i at West O'ahu

iv. University of Hawai'i Community Colleges

In the interest of time, VP Halbert succinctly reviewed the purpose and objectives of the Workload Report, a document which is required to be furnished annually to the board under RP 9.214, and stated more detailed information on the Report's contents is contained within the committee materials packet.

Chair Tochiki voiced her appreciation for the amount of effort put into generating the Workload Report and stated it serves as a valuable tool for the board. VP Halbert thanked Chair Tochiki for her comment and mentioned the Workload Report serves a beneficial purpose for university administrators and faculty as well.

C. Small Programs and Program Review Report

- 1. Program Review Update**
- 2. Programs with a Small Number of Graduates**
- 3. Analysis of Findings**
- 4. Overview: Examples of Actions Taken to Address Small Programs**

Alan Rosenfeld, Associate VP for Academic Programs and Policy, explained this was one of two reports related to academic programs which are required to be furnished to the board under RP 5.201, the other being an overview of academic program reviews conducted at each campus during the prior academic year. He stated both reports demonstrate the administration's continuous scrutiny of its educational programming in order to improve upon them, as needed, and when necessary, make the difficult decision to stop out or terminate a program. He referenced the report included in the materials packet and asked regents if they had any questions.

President Hensel thanked Associate VP Rosenfeld and his team for all of the work put in to generating the Small Programs and Program Review Report pointing out the critical role played by this data in aiding the university with its plans and courses of action for the numerous academic programs available at the institution. She also noted the administration's intention to constantly review information within the report and search for ways to either improve upon the success of a program, or, in the case of programs with low enrollment, determine if actions can be taken to preserve them.

Regent Abercrombie spoke about the importance of some of the programs listed in the report stating just because a program is small in terms of enrollment numbers does not mean it is not vital. Associate VP Rosenfeld thanked Regent Abercrombie for taking the time to go through the report's appendix which contains a listing of the small programs. He also gave examples of small programs that were of vital importance including the Mobile Intensive Care Technician, also known as the paramedic program, at Kapi'olani Community College. Regent Abercrombie added the Veterinary Technician Program was another small program of vital importance.

D. Committee Annual Review

Chair Tochiki referenced and went over the committee annual review matrix provided in the materials packet stating that it sets forth the actions carried out by the committee throughout the year relative to its goals and objectives. She called attention to the apparent lack of action relating to receiving updates on the Hawai'i P-20 initiative but stated this matter was addressed during State Board for Career and Technical Education meetings. She then asked committee members if they had any questions or comments about the activities of the committee over the past year. None were raised.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Tochiki adjourned the meeting at 11:34 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Yvonne Lau
Executive Administrator and Secretary
of the Board of Regents