











# INTRODUCTION

## BACKGROUND

The State of Hawai'i has gone through much change since the start of the global pandemic. Many feel that Hawai'i must be more sustainable, resilient, and equitable if it is to emerge from this pandemic globally competitive. But Hawai'i will succeed in this mission only if its higher education system can also pivot to support this new future. What role must our University of Hawai'i System play in advancing thriving and sustainable communities throughout our islands while also addressing global and regional challenges and opportunities?

The University of Hawai'i System (UHS) is currently developing a new Strategic Plan 2023-2029 to guide the institution in the right direction. In 2020, the UHS commissioned a "Third Decade Report" prepared by Guild Consulting, a local consultancy group headed by Dr. Peter Adler. The report provided a thorough scan of state, national, and international trends and emerging issues, as well as extensive interviews with campus and community members. The report proposed several strategies for the UHS for this decade. The development of the strategic plan is also grounded in the five priority areas: Hawai'i Graduation Initiative, Hawai'i Innovation Initiative, 21st Century Facilities, High Performance Mission-Driven System, and High Performance System, that were identified in the University of Hawai'i System Strategic Directions, 2015-2021.

The UHS has already started the initial phase of working and consulting with its internal UHS representatives. The UHS is also committed to outreach with the community and its stakeholders. Therefore, the UHS has contracted SMS Research to help engage key members of our community to understand their views of the most important things that the University System can do for Hawai'i.

## OBJECTIVES

The primary goal of the project was to gather community and stakeholder opinions on the direction the University of Hawai'i must undertake for the next six years. The primary objectives of this project were to measure the following:

- Gauge thoughts on the proposed top priorities currently identified
- Support for proposed priorities
- Identify other priorities and that were not detected in the internal scan and data collection
- Understand if opinions differ by demographic differences, geographic difference, or other segments of the population.

## METHOD

This research project utilized three methods to collect opinions from the community and stakeholders:

- Survey of the general public and people who had some affiliation with the University of Hawai'i. This survey was available online at the UH website and people were encouraged to participate via media announcements.

- The Personal Interviews group consisted of critical stakeholders such as key state legislators (higher education, finance, leadership), county council leadership, Congressional delegation, **governors**, mayors, and the UHS Board of Regents. The list was determined by the UHS and the potential participants in the personal interviews were sent an advance letter from President Lassner. The letter advised stakeholders about the current planning process and requested their participation in the input process. SMS followed up with a telephone call to arrange a convenient appointment to undertake the survey. SMS will complete interviews in person between July 15 and August 15, 2022. See the appendix for the discussion guide used in the interviews.
- Comments from other important stakeholders were collected through a questionnaire with the same questions as the personal interviews. This group consisted mainly of the top leadership from community organizations, and State and Federal agencies. This group included a broad range of decision makers at the state and county level, education and social service organizations, Native Hawaiian organizations, business associations, and philanthropic organizations. See the appendix for the questionnaire used for the data collection.

**Table 1: External Stakeholders and Data Collection Methodology - Invited**

Key Stakeholder Groups	Types of Organizations	Methodology
Community	Hawai'i residents and others affiliated with the University	Online survey
Government	State legislators (in higher ed/finance/leadership) County/City Council (leadership) Congressional delegation Governor, Lt. Governor, Mayors	Individual interviews
University of Hawai'i	Board of Regents	Individual interviews
Government	State Departments (DBEDT, DLNR, DOH, DHS)	Questionnaire
Government	U.S. Indo-Pacific Command	Questionnaire
Native Hawaiian organizations	Kamehameha Schools Office of Hawaiian Affairs Native Hawaiian Education Council Office of Native Hawaiian Relations Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement	Questionnaire
Business/industry	Hawai'i Executive Collaborative Hawai'i Business Roundtable Chamber of Commerce of Hawai'i Economic Development Boards (each county)	Questionnaire
Philanthropy	Kamehameha Schools HCF AUW Castle Foundation	Questionnaire
Other educational organizations	DOE (CAS, Assistance Superintendent of Instructional Design) P-20 Council Board of Education HAIS	Questionnaire
Other educational institutions	BYU Chaminade University of Phoenix HPU	Questionnaire





# GENERAL SURVEY RESULTS

## Survey Methodology and Sample Description

The survey questionnaire consisted of eight subject matter questions and six additional demographic questions used for classification. The subject matter section was composed of three parts: 1) top priorities for the UHS campuses; 2) endorsement of the UHS system; and 3) other recommendations.

Respondents were questioned via a web-based survey programmed by SMS in Alchemer. SMS provided the UHS with a survey link (unique URL to the survey platform). That URL was announced through the UHS's communication channels such as a news release, social media and other public communications.

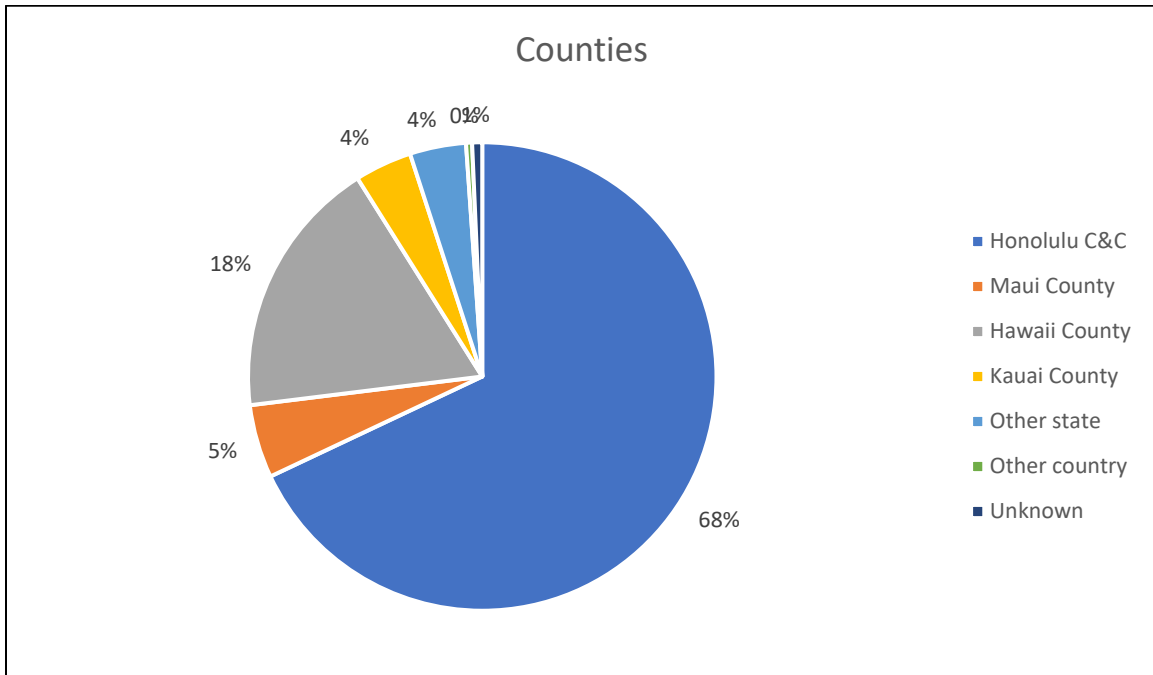
The surveys were conducted between July 11, 2022 and July 24, 2022. A total of 1,441 surveys were completed. Most respondents were Hawai'i residents over the age of 18 years old; no residency or age limitations were in place.

The accuracy of the statistics presented in this report can be characterized as a confidence interval of +/- 2.6 percent at the 95 percent confidence level. For example, if the study reported 50 percent of respondents, then we can be 95 percent certain that the true population proportion falls within the range of 45.2 percent to 54.8 percent.

**Table 2: Distribution of Completed Surveys (Sample)**

Residence	Sample Size	Confidence Interval
<b>Hawai'i Resident</b>		
Kaua'i County	57	
City & County of Honolulu	981	
Maui County	73	
Hawai'i County	260	
Unknown county	10	
<b>Other U.S. state</b>	<b>56</b>	
<b>Other country</b>	<b>6</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,443</b>	<b>+/- 2.6%</b>

**Figure 1: Responses by Geography**



Tables of responses by county were also included in each section as an example of distribution of response. Any statistically significant difference in responses by county were indicated in the report.

Besides county, the survey results were also reviewed for significant differences by other population segments and indicated in the report. Segments included:

- Occupation
- Years lived in Hawai'i
- Age of respondent
- Affiliation with the UHS











**Table 5: Top Priorities for the UHS, by Opinion on College Education**

Please mark which of the following statements is closest to what you think, even if neither one is exactly right	A college education is a smart investment in the future. ←←	←	→	A college education is more of a gamble that may not pay off in the end. →→	Overall
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Provide the scientific and intellectual capacity to address Hawai'i's problems and opportunities, particularly around sustainability, energy, and climate resilience	3.07	3.05	3.35	3.42	3.11
Educate and train Hawai'i residents for Hawai'i's jobs	3.22	3.13	2.89	2.99	3.14
Drive economic diversification and development across the islands through research, innovation, entrepreneurship, and technology	3.15	3.16	3.57	3.29	3.21
Increase the number of Hawai'i residents who have education/training beyond a High School diploma, targeting those who have been under-represented	3.21	3.53	3.56	3.81	3.38
Increase access to more programs for students and communities throughout the state	3.58	3.58	3.53	3.53	3.57
Sustain and support Hawaiian language, culture, and people	4.76	4.56	4.10	3.97	4.58
Unweighted Base	749	455	162	77	1443

## Ranking by Occupation

- Managers were more likely to rank **educate and train residents for Hawai'i's jobs** as their number one top priority (2.51). And they particularly rated it higher than did retirees (3.38) and students (3.64).
- Those in crafts and trades, professionals, and retirees, looked at the future of the UHS as a strong research facility to **provide the scientific and intellectual capacity** which would also **drive economic diversification** for the state.
- Those in the Armed forces, clerical workers, homemakers, managers, and services and sales, looked at the UHS more as an educational institution to **educate and train residents for Hawai'i's jobs**.
- Clerical workers were also more likely to say that the UHS should help **residents have education/training beyond a high school diploma** and the UHS should **increase access to more programs for students and communities**.
- Students felt that the UHS needs to take action to **sustain and support the Hawaiian language, culture, and people** (3.47). And they listed this priority as one of their top three priorities.



**Table 6: Top Priorities for the UHS, by Occupation**

	Occupation												
	Agriculture, forestry	Armed forces	Clerks, clerical	Craft, trade	Home-maker	Manager	Professional	Services and sales	Retired	Student	Other	No Answer	All
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Provide the scientific and intellectual capacity	2.63	3.50	3.56	3.13	3.32	3.68	3.10	3.28	2.91	2.89	4.08	3.16	3.11
Educate and train residents for Hawai'i's jobs	3.06	2.20	3.22	3.31	3.04	2.51	3.13	2.97	3.38	3.64	2.75	2.73	3.14
Drive economic diversification	3.56	4.10	3.53	3.22	3.52	3.23	3.20	3.40	2.92	3.92	4.00	3.49	3.21
Residents have education/training beyond a High School diploma	3.56	4.10	3.13	3.78	3.28	3.25	3.33	3.51	3.43	3.69	3.04	3.49	3.38
Increase access to more programs for students and communities	4.19	3.40	3.16	3.72	3.68	3.54	3.65	3.37	3.47	3.39	3.25	3.80	3.57
Sustain and support Hawaiian language, culture, and people	4.00	3.70	4.41	3.84	4.16	4.80	4.60	4.48	4.88	3.47	3.88	4.33	4.58
Unweighted base	15	10	32	32	25	65	741	65	346	35	24	50	1441

## Ranking by Residency

**Table 7: Top Priorities for the UHS, by Length of Residency**

	How many years have you lived in Hawai'i?					
	Less than 10 years	10 to 30 years	30+ years	My entire life	Prefer not to answer	All
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Provide the scientific and intellectual capacity	2.94	2.92	2.93	3.36	3.18	3.12
Educate and train residents for Hawai'i's jobs	3.42	3.29	3.26	2.91	3.00	3.13
Drive economic diversification	3.38	3.34	2.95	3.30	4.09	3.21
Residents have education/training beyond a High School diploma	3.58	3.28	3.36	3.42	3.27	3.39
Increase access to more programs for students and communities	3.71	3.76	3.62	3.46	4.00	3.59
Sustain and support Hawaiian language, culture, and people	3.97	4.42	4.87	4.54	3.45	4.57
Unweighted base	101	234	444	590	11	1380

- Those who are lifelong Hawai'i residents were most likely to want the UHS to prioritize **educate and train residents for Hawai'i's jobs**.
- Though the recent malihini (those who lived in Hawai'i less than 10 years) rated **sustain and support Hawaiian language, culture, and people** as the lowest of the top priorities; there were still more of them that rated this priority higher than those who lived here 30 or more years or even those who lived here their entire life.

## Ranking by Age

**Table 8: Top Priorities for the UHS, by Age**

	What is your age?					
	Under 25	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+	Prefer not to answer	Total
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Provide the scientific and intellectual capacity	3.28	3.27	3.21	2.85	3.31	3.11
Educate and train residents for Hawai'i's jobs	3.11	3.12	3.03	3.36	2.56	3.14
Drive economic diversification	4.28	3.41	3.27	2.96	2.92	3.21
Residents have education/training beyond a High School diploma	3.64	3.41	3.28	3.41	3.77	3.38
Increase access to more programs for students and communities	3.44	3.66	3.53	3.55	3.74	3.57
Sustain and support Hawaiian language, culture, and people	3.25	4.12	4.67	4.88	4.69	4.58
Unweighted base	36	328	545	471	61	1441

- The few respondents under 25 years of age were less likely to want the UHS to **drive economic diversification** (4.28). They saw the UHS as an institution to **educate and train residents for Hawai'i's jobs** (3.11).
- Those under 25 years of age also felt it was the responsibility of the UHS to **sustain and support the Hawaiian language, culture, and people** (3.25). In fact, it was the only age segment to rate it among their top three priorities.
- Those ages 25 to 44 years old rated **to sustain and support the Hawaiian language, culture, and people** as their lowest priority, the average rating was still statistically a more important priority than what older respondents rated.
- The oldest segment, those 65 years old and older, were the most adamant about the UHS's role to **drive economic diversification** (2.96) and to **provide the scientific and intellectual capacity** (2.85).

## Ranking by Affiliation to the UHS

**Table 9: Top Priorities for the UHS, by Affiliation to UHS**

	What is your affiliation (if any) with any of the 10 campuses of the University of Hawai'i?									
	Former Student	Parent	Former employee	Employ graduates	Donor	Attend UHS sports	Current student or employee	No direct relationship	Other	All
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Provide the scientific and intellectual capacity	3.12	3.24	2.97	2.89	2.80	2.97	3.29	2.79	3.37	3.11
Educate and train residents for Hawai'i's jobs	3.09	2.99	3.24	3.07	3.12	3.22	3.04	3.37	3.26	3.14
Drive economic diversification	3.14	3.28	3.02	2.85	2.79	2.90	3.71	3.30	3.32	3.21
Residents have education/training beyond a High School diploma	3.37	3.37	3.48	3.47	3.42	3.46	3.24	3.48	3.30	3.38
Increase access to more programs for students and communities	3.60	3.45	3.66	3.84	3.93	3.68	3.53	3.40	3.51	3.57
Sustain and support Hawaiian language, culture, and people	4.67	4.67	4.63	4.87	4.93	4.77	4.19	4.65	4.24	4.58
Unweighted base	1037	299	262	108	298	381	263	102	76	1441

- Current students and employees rated **drive economic diversification** as a lower priority compared to the other respondents.
- Current students and employees, on average, rated to **sustain and support Hawaiian language, culture, and people** as the lowest of the top priorities but they still ranked it higher than all other respondents.
- Donors to the UHS did not see the need to **increase access to more programs for students and communities** as high a priority as did other respondents.

- Compared to other respondents, donors were more likely to rate **provide the scientific and intellectual capacity** as a high priority, particularly compared to graduates, parents, and current students.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR OTHER STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Through two additional questions in the survey additional strategic priorities were identified beyond the six top priorities that were rated.

Respondents frequently mentioned keeping education affordable as an important theme. Though one of the six top priorities focus on accessibility of education, respondents did not see that as addressing the costs of an education.

Respondents also felt that the UHS should prioritize the fixing of campus infrastructure, both physical structures and technology capacity in order to bring the UHS to a modern and competitive institution. Though this recommendation may be more of an implementation strategy it appeared to be a foundational issue that would support the success of the six top priorities.

For the UHS to be successful in the future, it must address its administration. The respondents wanted to ensure that leadership made decisions in the open and included the community in the decision making. They also wanted to see leadership to take a strong stand for autonomy and independence from politics.

### Other Priorities

Respondents were given the opportunity to provide additional top priorities beyond the six previously presented. Approximately a third (35%) provided further suggestions. Many of those suggestions (44%) were found to be similar to the previous six top priorities. However, there were some recommendations that were unique.

Ensure access to affordable higher education

- “Keep tuition affordable without decreasing the quality of education”
- “Make education affordable for residents”

Improve the infrastructure and update facilities

- “Update buildings and infrastructure. Improve campus appearance.”
- “Modernize facilities at the UH Manoa and create a safer campus environment in order to attract top students from abroad and keep top Hawai'i students from going elsewhere.”

Address administration, management of the UHS and leadership

- “Administrative team and Regents must become strong and vocal advocates for the University”
- “Ensure that administrators are transparent and willfully share information with their respective campuses whether positive or negative”
- “Remove excessive legislative oversight so that the UH officials can have more control over their own activities and accomplishments”

Support student needs including housing and safety

- “Ensure affordable housing is available to all Hawai‘i residents attending the UH. Housing insecurity is by far the biggest issue facing our students.”
- “Keep the Students Health and Welfare safe, No Rapes or other heinous crimes. Protect the Students and Staff within the UH system.”
- “Develop the total student and help student deal with mental health issues”

Be an international leader particularly because of Hawai‘i’s strategic location in Asia-Pacific

- “Make sure the UHS is recognized globally as a reputable institution for higher education”
- “Lead Pacific Island nations in innovation, sustainability, climate change mitigation. Connect with Asian nations to collaborate on innovation, sustainability, climate change mitigation.”
- “Major focus on areas of study unique to the UH's location and strengths”

Sports

- “Support the UHS Athletics and the new stadium”
- “Increase support for the revenue producing athletic programs to enhance both revenue and non-revenue athletic opportunities”

## Future Action for the UHS

The survey also included another question to identify additional strategic priorities from the public. Respondents were asked, “What is the one thing you’d like the UHS to do in the future?”

Similar to the responses to the question about other priorities, many (30%) of the suggestions could be classified under one of the previously mentioned top priorities.

Respondents recommended that the UHS focus on efforts to keep education affordable through financial assistance and even free tuition.

- “Free college for Hawai‘i residents!”
- “Give free college to all Native Hawaiians and children from poverty”
- “Focus on lowering costs for students.”

Respondents wanted the UHS to address its matters with administration. In particular to provide more leadership that is open and transparent. They also felt that the current structure needs to change to eliminate the bureaucracy.

- “There needs to be accountability with how fees are managed to support student success”
- “Be more transparent and incorporate more voices in decision making”
- “Be more open and accountable to performance, related to operational excellence.”
- “Better oversight and control of wasteful spending”
- “Better guidance and leadership from the top down.”
- “Consolidate administrative offices. Decrease excess faculty.”

Again, respondents wanted the UHS to fix the physical infrastructure and increase application of newer technology. Respondents felt that addressing infrastructure would not only prepare the schools to make modern advancements but would also recruit and retain students who would be proud to attend a contemporary, hip school.

- “Maintain the campus buildings, even if it is just to repaint the exterior walls so it looks ‘spruced up’”
- “Invest in its facilities both upper and lower campus. Something the students and athletics can be proud of.”
- “Continue to upgrade buildings and classrooms to aid students’ educational experience”
- “Invest in up-to-date high technology for our children”
- “Modernize its campus with state-of-the-art facilities”

**Table 10: Changes to the UHS**

What is the one thing you'd like UH to do in the future?	N%
Affordable, Financial Assistance, free tuition	11%
Educate and train Hawai'i residents for Hawai'i's jobs*	10%
Recommended a change, addition or elimination of specific programs or disciplines	7%
Increase access to more programs for students and communities throughout the state*	6%
Address administration issues	6%
Improve physical and technology infrastructure, modernize campuses	5%
Increase the number of Hawai'i residents who have education/training beyond a High School diploma*	5%
Support students including increasing campus housing and dorms, campus safety, mental health	4%
Sustain and support Hawaiian language, culture, and people*	4%
Not be Honolulu-centric, equity for NI, increase UHSWO	4%
Address sustainability, agriculture, climate change	3%
Focus on education; not sports	3%
Support sports	3%
Provide the scientific and intellectual capacity to address Hawai'i's problems and opportunities*	3%
Improve public image with awareness campaigns	3%
Invest in faculty, hire better faculty	3%
Be self-sustaining, politically independent of the Legislature	2%
Continue or increase online and distance learning	2%
Address international issues and international academic reputation	2%
Drive economic diversification and development across the islands*	1%
Other	8%
Don't know / NA	4%
Total	100%

\* Previously mentioned six top priorities

## OVERALL PERCEPTION OF THE UHS

The question of “Would you recommend attending the UHS campuses to a family member?” is a measure of the respondents’ overall perception of the UH system. Respondents were asked if they would recommend attending the UHS (any of the 10 UHS campuses) to a family member. Respondents were then asked to explain their choice. The expectation of these questions would be to understand if respondents had confidence in the UHS in the future.

A clear majority of respondents would recommend attending the UHS (86%) compared to just seven percent who would not recommend the UHS. There was also a similar proportion of those who were undecided or preferred not to answer this question. The level of support did not differ significantly between the islands.

**Table 11: Recommend the UHS**

Would you recommend attending any of the 10 UH campuses to a family member?	O’ahu	Maui	Hawai’i	Kaua’i	Moloka’i	Lāna’i	Unknown Island	Other state	Other country	Total
	Column N %	Column N %	Column N %	Column N %	Column N %	Column N %	Column N %	Column N %	Column N %	Column N %
Yes	86.0%	85.3%	87.7%	91.2%	100.0%	100.0%	90.0%	78.6%	66.7%	86.2%
No	8.2%	2.9%	5.0%	3.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.4%	16.7%	7.0%
Prefer not to answer	5.8%	11.8%	7.3%	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	16.1%	16.7%	6.8%
Total	981	68	260	57	3	2	10	56	6	1443

Of those who would recommend attending the UHS to a family member:

- Many (31%) said “UH is affordable to Hawai’i residents, cost-effective, much cheaper than mainland colleges.”
- Others (17%), felt that the UHS provided “a higher education while allowing students to stay close to family.”
- Residents outside of O’ahu also said that this was the “only higher education institution available on the island.”
- Another group (16%) of respondents touted the overall quality education that the UHS provides.

**Table 12: Reasons Why to Recommend the UHS**

Why would you recommend the UH?	Location							
	Honolulu C&C	Maui County	Hawai'i County	Kaua'i County	Other state	Other country	Unknown	Total
	Column N %	Column N %	Column N %	Column N %	Column N %	Column N %	Column N %	Column N %
Affordable, value	33.2%	26.4%	18.1%	42.2%	29.4%	66.7%	33.3%	30.5%
Based in Hawai'i, local option, keep local students home	15.4%	32.1%	23.3%	17.8%	8.8%	0.0%	0.0%	17.3%
Quality education, quality teacher	16.1%	13.2%	17.1%	4.4%	11.8%	0.0%	33.3%	15.6%
Legacy, alumni	8.1%	3.8%	7.8%	8.9%	11.8%	0.0%	11.1%	8.0%
Leader in field, experts, good reputation	7.6%	1.9%	5.2%	8.9%	5.9%	33.3%	0.0%	6.9%
Local institution, relationship with the community, connections for local jobs	4.5%	7.5%	6.7%	4.4%	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%	4.9%
Diversity of student body	4.2%	1.9%	5.2%	2.2%	17.6%	0.0%	11.1%	4.6%
Caring, supportive learning environment	2.8%	1.9%	3.1%	0.0%	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%	2.7%
Only opportunity for Hawaiian studies programs	1.2%	0.0%	2.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%
Invest in Hawai'i's future	.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	.5%
Other	2.2%	1.9%	6.2%	2.2%	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%
Don't know, NA	4.2%	9.4%	5.2%	8.9%	5.9%	0.0%	11.1%	4.9%

For those who did not recommend the UHS, there were four themes that were mentioned often:

- “Better opportunities on the Mainland and therefore kids should go away to be exposed to these opportunities”
- “The UH lacked leadership, was overly bureaucratic and the administration was bad.”  
“These respondents felt these qualities would impact the quality of education.”
- “Lack of value or too expensive compared to other schools outside of Hawai'i.”
- “The US lacked academic rigor and the quality of education did not meet the standards of these respondents.”

**Table 13: Reasons Why Not to Recommend the UHS**

	Column N %
Better opportunities on the mainland	16.3%
Lack of leadership, bureaucratic, money focused, bad administration	14.1%
Lack of value for the cost, overall too expensive	14.1%
Curriculum is not good, lacks academic rigor	13.0%
UHS graduates are not prepared for workforce, UHS not focusing on jobs for Hawai'i	7.6%
Facilities outdated, behind in technology	6.5%
Doesn't recommend college	5.4%
Not supportive of students' needs	5.4%
Teachers too involved in politics and not education	4.3%
Entire system is not equitable, NI not benefiting	2.2%
Other	7.6%
Don't know / NA	3.3%



# STAKEHOLDERS' OPINIONS

The responses from the critical and important stakeholder groups are presented separately. Their opinions will have a strong influence on the acceptance of the new Strategic Plan since many have an oversight or authority role over various aspects of the University of Hawai'i System.

## VISION FOR THE UHS SYSTEM

As Hawai'i adjusts to the shocks of the past few years, stakeholders have also envisioned a University of Hawai'i System of the future. Most see an institution that is structured differently, serves a different purpose and also judged differently from today.

All stakeholders see the UHS to be the principal institution of higher learning in Hawai'i. As Hawai'i's university, the UHS should remain committed to meeting the current needs of Hawai'i's residents, seeking the future direction of the state and preparing students for that future.

Stakeholders envisioned this principal institutions in various ways. To some, the UHS must be able to provide a post-secondary education for any Hawai'i resident that desires it and cannot go elsewhere or be an opportunity for Hawai'i kids who want to stay close to home. Others foresee the UHS to be on the top list of educational institution for all Hawai'i graduates. Another description of principal institution was the go-to resource for research and development in Hawai'i.

The predominant vision from stakeholders was the UHS as a key to educating and developing Hawai'i's workforce. They desired for the UHS to ensure the future success of its graduates. Students should be prepared to secure a job right out of schooling and more importantly these jobs should be in Hawai'i. The UHS should be a "developer of talent that places young people in family sustaining jobs." To ensure the jobs of the future the stakeholders want the UHS to "assure curricula fit the workforce needs of the next 30 years." Partnering with Hawai'i's employers, the degrees and programs will need to align with professional requirements and provide the "skills, competencies and certifications demanded by employers for their future workforce." Stakeholders noted that Hawai'i continues to have a shortage of teachers and healthcare workers and that they want the UHS to be structured better to resolve this deficiency.

Many also felt that the UHS will also be assessed if it can succeed as a driver of economic growth and diversification for Hawai'i and be a leader to Hawai'i's future. The UHS should act as the accelerator of innovation and entrepreneurship to develop industries that will lead to a more sustainable economy. The UHS will lead through research but also through training and preparing students to support the new economy.

Among the stakeholders, particularly elected officials, were those who felt that the UHS should do more to look beyond Hawai'i's borders. The UHS should be positioned as a thought leader to solve Indo-Pacific issues. They said that Hawai'i's standing as the U.S. in the Pacific and also its strong relationships with the Pacific Island nations and Asia should be used to its fullest advantage. "How do we make UH indispensable for Hawai'i and the Pacific."

Stakeholders also described the future UHS to have an improved connection and smooth transition from K-12 to higher education. They want learners to see "pathways from the public high schools to UH campus programs that lead to industry certifications or degrees in a viable industry in Hawai'i." They would like to see an early college program in every public high school and better alignment with the Department of Education.

The UHS needs to rethink how education is delivered with the student in mind. Many stakeholders recommended that technology could enhance course offering particularly for those in remote rural locations or non-traditional students needing alternative times and schedules. The UHS could even shift to digital first as one stakeholder even remarked to stop building new physical facilities for learning and research environments – focus on digital learning environments. The advances in technology and the adoption of remote learning forced on by the global pandemic have lowered barriers. Stakeholders see a future UHS using technology to have instructors and students to working together. Technology creates a system that delivers just in time learning to meet career changes and lifelong learning and be able to pivot when circumstances change. Technology will allow the UHS to work more closely with business and community, allowing project or problem-based learning instead of just theory.

The UHS should be able to balance between culture, environment and economic advancement. The UHS will be a place that fosters indigenous leadership, and some went on to say that it should “advance a system-wide Hawaiian culture centered approaches to learning.”

Stakeholders want the future UHS to be more independent from the State Legislature. But to do so, the UHS needs to be seen in the highest regards by the Legislature as that can quickly respond to the needs of Hawai'i.

## Top priorities for the stakeholders

The stakeholders had very similar opinions to the general community of the top priorities for the UHS. The most important priority to this group was to **educate and train Hawai'i residents for Hawai'i's jobs**. They also agreed that it was important for the UHS to **drive economic diversification and development**.

Stakeholders felt that a higher trained and educated workforce is how we save Hawai'i. The workforce needs to be well educated to complete anywhere. Also important that a good university will draw other investors and businesses to the islands.

However, differing from the survey respondents, the stakeholders had a slightly lower concern for UHS to **provide the scientific and intellectual capacity to address Hawai'i's problems**. Only one of the stakeholders positioned this as their most important priority; many rated it as their third or fourth most important priority.

Moreover, there were some of the stakeholders that felt to **sustain and support Hawaiian language, culture and people** was very important. These stakeholders represented both organizations that served Native Hawaiians and also some community-based organizations. None of the elected officials placed this priority as their most important though a few elected officials did indicate that placing it within their top three choices. Those who had strong sentiments mentioned that the UHS needs to have an element of sustaining the Hawaiian culture, as this is Hawai'i's institution of higher learning, but felt that other priorities took precedence.

Hawaiian language, culture and people set us apart from everywhere else in the world, just as Hawaiian studies sets the UHS apart from other universities. Hawaiian language and culture are the lens for a differing indigenous world view and mindset, which spurs diverse ideas and leads

to innovation. A stakeholder mentioned that “if the host culture benefits then everyone will benefit” and “UH system can help Native Hawaiians be stronger, which will strengthen all of Hawai‘i”

One stakeholder also mentioned that putting priority to support Native Hawaiians is important due the historical mistreatment that needs correction. However, another stakeholder mentioned that the UHS needs to have an element of sustaining the Hawaiian culture but does not have to be the sole entity; there are other solid institutions.

The UHS must take a system-wide approach and identify what’s broken, what’s working, remove our hubris, and commit to doing what’s best for the whole. Many stakeholders were adamant the UHS must review the majors and programs being offered throughout the system and then to keep only those critical to the mission and vision of the UHS. Some stakeholders mentioned that the “UH guilty for trying to do too much - diluted.” If a program does not produce jobs, protects history and culture, or leverage opportunity. And only after that assessment should the UHS plan programs to grow.

- “Are the current UH programs aligned to programs that recruit/retain students, support the community, and provide the professional opportunity after graduation to economically survive in Hawai‘i”
- “Massive capital investment to revitalize the campuses, in order to recruit and retain the caliber of student, faculty, and administrators that UH needs to take it to the next level.”

A stakeholder voiced that UHS needs to acknowledge that limitations of funding, infrastructure and faculty prevent it from being constantly competitive at the national international research level. Therefore, the UHS should identify and focus its efforts on Hawai‘i’s competitive advantages, natural strengths and needs of this community.

Similar to the results of the public survey, the stakeholders felt that the relationships with the community colleges and the university campuses must also be restructured to support the future direction.

- “Give the community colleges a separate structure and chancellor because now everything is dominated by UH Mānoa.”
- Programs should only be placed where they strategically fit (supported by external resources, markets, synergies with other businesses and organizations)

Most stakeholders felt the community college system worked well, was innovative and flexible to meet changing needs. However, the stakeholders did not agree as to how best to structure the system. Some Neighbor Island stakeholders wanted to ensure a 4-year degree program on their island to meet the needs of residents, particularly non-traditional students. While felt the Neighbor Islands should have resources focus on workforce readiness for their island while degree programs should be concentrated at the universities.

- Cheaper to send every student from [island] to O‘ahu and they get experience of leaving home.

Particularly among the stakeholders that were interviewed, some pointed out that to recruit and retain the caliber of student, faculty, and administrators that UH needs to take it to the next level, there needs to be investment in upgrading facilities. UHS must provide adequate funding for a quality, well-maintained facilities to attract quality professors and to entice local kids to stay home and get their degrees through the UHS.

# OPPORTUNITIES AND OBSTACLES FACING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UHS STRATEGIC PLAN

The data gathered from the general community showed that the six top priorities currently being proposed captured much of sentiment of the respondents. It provided a very good description of the direction that the UHS must undertake for the next six years.

In particular the University of Hawai'i should place the most importance on:

- Providing the scientific and intellectual capacity to address Hawai'i's problems and opportunities, particularly around sustainability, energy, and climate resilience
- Educating and training Hawai'i residents for Hawai'i's jobs
- Driving economic diversification and development across the islands through research, innovation, entrepreneurship, and technology

In the general public's opinion, these were the most important priorities, with at least six out of every 10 respondents ranking these among their top three most important priorities.

However, the planning team should also look at addressing the following concerns as they continue to refine the strategic plan direction and strategies.

- Keeping education affordable. Though one of the six top priorities focused on accessibility of education, respondents did not see that as clearly addressing the costs of an education.
- Improving campus infrastructure, both physical structures and technology capacity in order to bring the UHS to a modern and competitive institution. Though this recommendation may be more of an implementation strategy, it appeared to be a foundational issue that would support the success of the six top priorities.
- For the UHS to be successful in the future, it should address its administration including ensuring leadership make decisions in the open and include the community in decision making. They also wanted to see leadership to take a strong stand for autonomy and independence from politics.

## Challenges and Obstacles

Limited interaction with the stakeholders does not build trust and clear paths of communication. Very few stakeholders mentioned that they have an affiliation with the UHS except to be alumni or family members of alumni. Of all the stakeholders, only two mentioned that they actively sit on any advisory committee associated with the UHS. If the UHS wants to be a driver of Hawai'i's economy, then they must proactively work with those that make change in our society. One of the legislators mentioned that the UHS should be working more closely with the Legislature providing research and insights for economic diversification.

- “UH doesn’t come down to the Leg to help solve problems or provide research capacity”

The top leadership also seems to avoid direct outreach and personal discussions with critical stakeholders. Stakeholders also mentioned that the UHS does not collaborate well, and partnerships have been challenging with slow process to get an agreement, high indirect costs, little contribution of resources, and a lack of urgency to the partnership.

- “An absence of social capital both internally and in the broader community will be a huge challenge for the system to overcome”

Another current concern that will hinder the success of the Strategic Plan is the Maunakea management issue which has caused trauma and distrust among community leaders. The planning group will need to find ways to address this topic with the community in order to proceed with the actual discussions on the Strategic Plan.

The current dynamics between the University and Legislature could detract from the efforts of the strategic plan approval process. Seems like University is begging legislators instead of showcased as our state university system. On the other hand, the Legislature appears to always be meddling with the UHS. This disruption creates a perception of disorganization which weakens the credibility of the final Strategic Plan.

## Success and Support for the Strategic Plan

Support for the new strategic plan will happen when stakeholders have confidence in the institution and its ability to carry out the actions described in the plan. Currently, the public has strong trust in the UHS in the future. And the survey showed that sentiment towards the UHS is favorable as Hawai'i's higher education institution.

The new strategic plan needs to capitalize on the fact that many feel the UHS is Hawai'i's institution of higher education and therefore must remain accessible to Hawai'i's residents. The plan must also address the perception of its administration being overly bureaucratic which does not allow for strong future leadership.

In order for the Strategic Plan to be accepted by stakeholder and the community they must be kept abreast of the progress with the ability to provide feedback throughout the process. The planning process must actively seek input and be a transparent process. Stakeholders should feel that they have co-authored the plan.

The overall tone of the Strategic Plan should be discussed in terms of Hawai'i's unique strengths and weaknesses will help people understand it. The Strategic Plan needs to be relatable instead of too far into the future. The plan should include short and immediate changes that the community can experience while still showing how they lead to longer term goals. The Plan should be clear on the actions needed to be taken and identify the organization that are responsible

The way in which communication about the plan will be critical to its success. Stakeholders stated that communication must be done to address the different demographics in Hawai'i including providing resources for non-native English speakers. The UHS should provide rollout the plan

with a preview and ensure important stakeholders and the Legislature are on board before actively marketing and promoting the final plan.

To garner support for the new strategic plan, stakeholders must have confidence in the institution and its ability to carry out the actions described in the plan. Currently, the general public has strong trust in the UHS in the future. And the survey showed that sentiment towards the UHS is favorable as Hawai'i's higher education institution.