

Academic Reorganization of the College of Arts and Sciences,
University of Hawaii at Hilo

February 21, 2017

Purpose

“UH Hilo has experienced enrollment losses, as has most of the rest of the UH System. Given that a majority of our funding now comes from tuition, stabilizing and rebuilding enrollments is essential to maintaining the comprehensive university we have labored to build over the decades. Reorganization must be viewed as a tactic for rebuilding enrollments and preserving programs and services. This plan was designed to serve three goals (1) foster better management of resources by eliminating administrative layers between deans and the departments, (2) foster effective enrollment management and (3) be minimally disruptive.

“Our proposed reorganization creates college units that will be expected to manage retention and graduation of their students in an effective manner. We will need to evaluate programs, activities and initiatives to assess how they will help us meet specific goals. Our goal is to increase our enrollment and retention rates to those we achieved earlier this decade.”

[from original, September 2016 reorganization proposal]

An initial proposal for reorganizing Academic Affairs at the University of Hawaii at Hilo was circulated to the faculty on 6 September, 2016. The proposal outlined the history of faculty consideration of reorganization, a statement of purpose for the reorganization (quoted above), and a proposal for reorganization. The proposal was to leave in their current configuration four colleges (COBE, CAFNRM, KHUOK, and DKICOP) and to reorganize the College of Arts and Sciences into two colleges, one containing the divisions of Humanities and Social Sciences and the other with the Divisions of Natural Sciences and Nursing. The Department of KES would transfer to the second college under this proposal.

The Chancellor and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs met with faculty in town hall meetings during Fall Semester, 2016. In addition, faculty provided written commentary on the proposal. The proposal was also shared with the University of Hawaii Professional Assembly (UHPA) and the Hawaii Government Employees Association (HGEA) as part of consultation with the affected bargaining units.

The feedback we received covered a number of issues and subjects. The following are the areas where we heard significant concerns about the CAS reorganization proposal, which we have attempted to address in the proposal we present here. These include the following.

1. A proposal to make Humanities a college of its own, not a division in a college with the Division of Social Science, to avoid being dominated by the larger division.
It should be noted that Humanities and Social Sciences currently co-exist as divisions in the same college and one does not currently dominate the other.

2. A proposal to make Nursing a college in its own right.

Adding a third or fourth college to the reorganization of the large College of Arts and Sciences would add additional Executive/Management positions (Deans) to the reorganization. The proposal uses existing E/M positions in the college without creating new ones.

3. Why were the other colleges not reorganized?

COBE, CAFNRM and Ka Haka Ula O Ke'elikolani College of Hawaiian Language are small, homogeneous and nimble units. For example, COBE has responded to enrollment and budget changes by stopping out the Economics degree and merging their departments of Business and Economics, saving the cost of a department chair position.

Should their enrollment of these smaller colleges decline, the decision to leave them as separate colleges will need to be reevaluated.

After considering several models of reorganizing CCECS, it was decided to leave it largely in its current structure, while challenging it to increase revenues from its credit and non-credit programs.

4. The roles and compensation of division and department chairs were unclear and possibly overlapping.

This was a major concern raised by sitting chairs, faculty and UHPA. It is addressed in the next section.

Divisions, Departments and Chairs

The current organization chart for UH Hilo establishes the formally approved administrative units for the campus. For CAS, it recognizes four divisions with division chairs appointed from the teaching faculty following procedures defined in governance documents. Only a single level of chair is recognized; the organization chart lists disciplines within divisions, but without identifying department chairs. Job descriptions of division chairs do not mention how the duties might be parsed if there are department chairs who report through division chairs to their dean.

The decision to establish departments within CAS was a functional decision made at the campus level some years ago. These descriptive units are aids for students to understand how courses and majors are structured and they provide a useful mechanism for the divisions and college to plan and deliver programs. It was a campus decision to treat them also as administrative units requiring a chair at the department level. There is not a job description for department chairs. Some departments lack written procedures for selecting chairs or defining terms of service, a situation that sometimes leads to confusion and concern. Instead

arrangements have evolved over time for department chairs to take on responsibilities that might otherwise be carried out by division chairs. As the responsibilities of the two levels of chairs have blurred over the years, the campus has also increased compensation for both. As a result of this evolution, department chair compensation has become differentiated within CAS, a situation some have described as inequitable.

We need to clarify the role of departments, divisions and their chairs in CAS. This was the main point of UHPA's comments of the first reorganization proposal, and we agree. We discussed with UHPA leadership two possible ways to make clear what the roles of the two types of chairs would be: either parse the responsibilities of the chair defined in the CBA or have chairs at one or the other level but, not both.

We were unable to find a way to divide CBA-defined duties or the compensation of the chair between department and division levels, in part because of inconsistencies among department practices and norms. Selecting which level of chair to assign administrative responsibilities comes down to what it will take to be most effective in managing resources and enrollment.

If implemented at the department level, we would need about 20 additional chairs in CAS who would report directly to their deans. They would handle all personnel, budgetary, curricular, scheduling and student issues for the department. They would be responsible for leading departmental efforts to retain and recruit students. This would require 11 month appointments and (likely) significant course releases for each chair. It would also require support staff in each department. The cost of administration at the department level would be the sum of the cost of the current division chairs, plus about 17 additional ones, plus the costs for increased course releases, plus the cost of increased numbers of support staff.

Alternatively, administrative responsibility can be assigned to the division chairs. They currently provide the bulk of administrative work below the level of the Dean and Associate Dean; assigning them all of it will require assistance. Division chairs currently have clerical support, which increases their effectiveness. Reducing the size of the larger divisions would make the scope of a division chair's administrative responsibility more manageable. We proposed adding fiscal staff to the new colleges in the previous reorganization proposal.

The proposal we present here for reorganizing CAS assigns administrative responsibility to division chairs. Departments will continue to exist, but not as administrative units within the CAS divisions. While chairs will be only at the division level, the Dean or division chair may assign specific tasks to a faculty member within or among departments, compensated by a stipend. These tasks could include coordinating courses schedules within the department, recruiting lecturers, or assisting with solving student problems or concerns. Criteria and guidelines for such extra compensation will be established in each new college, in consultation with UHPA, and posted on college websites. We will consult with a set of current and former division chairs before finalizing the job description for these positions.

We do not propose establishing Associate Dean positions in the new colleges and assign duties currently undertaken by the Associate Dean to the new Deans.

CAS currently has four divisions. The proposal, below, retains two of them unchanged: the Division of Humanities and the Division (School) of Nursing. We propose to divide the other two divisions each into two smaller divisions. This change should permit more agile enrollment management. Dividing two divisions, though, requires some decisions about which departments go where. We have consulted with executives at UH Hilo, including the interim Dean and the former Dean of the College, on how the departments in these two divisions might best be allocated to separate divisions. We appreciate their valuable input. The allocation may not be optimal, and we are willing to discuss alternatives. We plan on maintaining the number of divisions at three per new college.

As stated earlier, reorganization is a tactic to promote better management of resources and improved student success by creating smaller, more cohesive units. We believe this plan, which creates smaller administrative units and reduces levels of bureaucracy, helps achieve that purpose.

Proposal

Organization. The current College of Arts and Sciences will be divided into two colleges: the College of Humanities and Social Sciences and the College of Natural and Health Sciences. There will be six divisions across the two new colleges. The three divisions in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences will be the Division of Humanities, a Division of Social Sciences and a Division of Psychology and Education. The three divisions in the College of Natural and Health Sciences will be the Division of Life and Earth Sciences, the Division of Physical and Computational Sciences and the Division (School) of Nursing. We expect that committees of faculty within divisions will be formed to provide guidance and facilitate departmental collaboration.

Administration. Each of the two new colleges will be led by a Dean and each division will have a division chair appointed from the teaching faculty in accordance with the UHPA contract. While disciplinary units within the divisions will continue to be referred to as departments, these will not be administrative units and will not have department chairs. The Dean or Division Chair may assign tasks to a faculty member within or among departments, compensated by a stipend. These tasks could include coordinating course schedules, recruiting lecturers, or assisting with solving student problems or concerns. Criteria and guidelines for such extra compensation will be established in each new college, in consultation with UHPA, and posted on college websites.

Colleges and divisions will share responsibility for attracting and retaining students in their majors as the campus implements an enrollment management plan. To achieve this, there will need to be more effective interactions between academic programs, advisors and student affairs personnel—and students. How we might adjust our organization to create a more

seamless and effective environment to manage enrollment is a question we will address later this year after this academic reorganization is finalized.

Faculty. Faculty will remain in their current departments and the departments will be part of the six divisions as indicated on the attached organization chart. We will ask faculty in each new division and college to meet to review existing procedures and determine whether to establish new ones or amend existing procedures. UHPA can consult with each unit as they evaluate and prepare procedures.

Staff. Each new college and division will have administrative staff support. Each of the two colleges will be assigned one new fiscal support position to fill by recruitment. Each of the two colleges also will have a Secretary III and an Office Assistant IV position in the Office of the Dean. Each Division will be supported by a clerical position, which in the long term plan will be an Office Assistant IV. Our current clerical positions do not align with the long term plan. We will use current incumbents to fill these positions and re-describe them as appropriate through attrition. This plan conforms to and reinforces our commitment that there will be no loss of positions or base pay for current clerical employees.

Currently, CAS is served by the following clerical staff: one Secretary III, four Secretary IIs, one Office Assistant IV, four Office Assistant IIIs. The current Secretary III will report to one of the new Deans. We will re-describe one of the current Secretary II positions and incumbent to report to the second Dean. The remaining three Secretary II positions and incumbents will be assigned to report to a Division Chair and will remain at the Secretary II level with no change of salary. As each Secretary II position eventually is vacated, the position will be re-described and filled at the Office Assistant IV level. The four current Office Assistant III positions will be assigned to a Dean or Division and re-described to the Office Assistant IV level with incumbents receiving an increase in salary level. The one current Office Assistant IV will remain status quo.

Draft Implementation Schedule.

This draft schedule will be adjusted after consultation with the affected units.

Spring Semester, 2017.

1. Chancellor and VCAA discuss reorganization and receive feedback from affected employees.
2. Consultation with unions concludes and formal approval of reorganization is obtained.
3. Committees of faculty from the new colleges meet to recommend candidates for the interim Dean positions, following procedures recommended by faculty in Natural Science (attached). The interim Deans will serve until permanent Deans are hired in a national search. From August, 2017 during the transition they will serve as interim Dean and Associate Dean of CAS.

4. Faculty in the new divisions begin meeting to reaffirm or modify governance documents related to personnel Committee election procedures and tenure and promotion criteria.
5. Establish search committees for new Deans and fiscal support positions in the new colleges and establish position descriptions
6. Where appropriate, include input from staff and student representatives.

Fall Semester, 2017.

- 1) Interim Deans serve as interim Dean and Associate Dean of CAS until new permanent Deans are hired, tentatively scheduled to occur in Fall, 2017
- 2) Initiate national searches search for new permanent Deans
- 3) Form new college senates
- 4) Faculty recommend new Division Chairs for 2018-19 to the interim Deans

Spring Semester, 2018.

New colleges and divisions fully functional

Attachments

1. Proposed organization chart
2. Natural Science faculty proposal for recommending candidates for interim Deans of new colleges