To: Don Straney, Chancellor  
    Matthew Platz, VCAA

From: Jean Ippolito, Faculty Congress Chair

Date: December 22, 2015

Subject: Faculty Congress Motions from Advising Task Force

At the December 18, 2015, four motions from the Advising Task Force were discussed, edited (for clarity), and voted on by Faculty Congress. All four of the following motions were approved unanimously by the members of Faculty Congress, and the complete text of each are attached to this memo:

Motion #1: Implementation of a faculty model system of advising that forms a spectrum with consideration of the unique diversity and the differences of academic units at the University of Hawaii at Hilo.

Motion #2: Motion to require that students, especially transfer students, be informed of the name of their advisors BEFORE the first week of classes.

Motion #3: Implementation of policies for Academic Advising on the UHH campus, in addition to other efforts to improve student-faculty advising.

Motion #4: Requirement of an assessment and reevaluation on the Advising Task Force’s motions and recommendations in late Spring of 2016.

All four motions (in the complete text of the attachments) were approved unanimously by the members of Faculty Congress: 20 approved, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

Jean M. Ippolito
Faculty Task Force on Advising Fall 2015

Motion #1: Implementation of a faculty model system of advising that forms a spectrum with consideration of the unique diversity and the differences of academic units at the University of Hawaii at Hilo.

Background: The Faculty Task Force on Advising concluded that the most beneficial approach to advising is the establishment of a faculty system of advising that forms a spectrum given the consideration of the unique diversity and the differences of academic units at the University of Hawaii. The first model, the one end of the spectrum, recommends that each academic unit elect an Advising Point Person (APP) who has familiarity with STAR and both departmental and university-wide requirements to whom advising questions may be directed. APPs of large departments would need a course reassignment. The second model, the other end of the spectrum, embeds a professional advisor in a larger department or school who will attend departmental meetings, and ideally, whose office will be located in the department. Supporting this system will be a campus-wide Point Person (CPP) on the difficult questions of GE, accessible through email or phone for faculty. The CPP on GE would also require a class dispensation.

Whereas, the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, the Interim Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and the Chair of Faculty Congress have charged a Faculty Advising Task Force to recommend the most appropriate advising models for UHH faculty;

Whereas, a wealth of academic literature and data were examined by the Advising Task Force;

Whereas, UH Hilo’s diversity is considered a strength rather than a liability;

Whereas, the models/spectrum must be flexible enough to differentially handle programs with both very large and very small student faculty ratios;

Whereas, one of the largest complaints/“pukas” in our advising structure appears when faculty members do not know the answer to a question and refer students in a general way to the Registrar or the Advising Center who, in turn, do not always satisfactorily answer the student’s questions;

Whereas, academic units need a clearer and tighter decision structure to aid faculty in advising;

Whereas, each academic unit needs to vote on and clearly select where in the spectrum the department or school wishes to conduct advising, thereby “owning” their own model;

Whereas, the second largest complaint about Academic Advising centered on questions concerning GE;

Whereas, the present Academic Center on Advising primarily advises freshmen and first semester transfer students and this spectrum model primarily is to advise majors;

Therefore, be it resolved, that the presented model/spectrum be adopted as a campus-wide Academic Advising process, to be implemented for Fall 2016.
Faculty Task Force on Advising Fall 2015

**Motion #2: Motion to require that students, especially transfer students, be informed of the name of their advisors BEFORE the first week of classes.**

**Background:** Students at UHH do not always learn about their academic advisor and the importance of meeting with them. The Task Force has concluded that students, especially transfer students, be informed who their advisors are BEFORE the first week of classes, that is, by Orientation Week, and have their transfer credits processed by Orientation Week in order to shorten time to graduation. To this end, Division Chairs and/or Deans shall ensure the timely assignment of advisors to all students, and provide a list of advisees to advisors.

**Whereas,** the optimal time to student advising is during Orientation Week when students are not yet caught up in their classes and assignments;

**Whereas,** a significant complaint in the Fall 2015 faculty poll on advising targeted the transfer students’ dilemma of not knowing what credits transferred and what credits they needed to satisfy;

**Whereas,** transfer students whose time to graduation is shorter and whose choice of course sequences must be identified to prevent delay of graduation;

**Whereas,** student attendance during Orientation Week could be improved by knowledge both of their advisors and credit transfers, thereby reducing transfer students’ frustrating experience;

**Whereas,** conditions of understaffing or the use of casual hires in evaluations of credit transfers means that the transfer credits are not always evaluated in a timely manner;

**Therefore,** be it resolved that all students should be informed of the name of their advisor and their transfer records, to the extent that the student has provided such records, by the first day of Orientation Week.
Motion #3: Implementation of policies for Academic Advising on the UHH campus, in addition to other efforts to improve student-faculty advising.

Background: The Faculty Task Force on Advising reviewed several policies that would improve student-faculty advising and recommend that the following policies be adopted to improve Advising Success at UHH.

- Each academic unit should create an Email on Advising which contains 1) the dates for advising 2) the list of students to be advised and their emails 3) attachments for course modifications 4) attachment forms for graduation, and 5) an Advisory Summary Tool Sheet (attached) to be modified to each academic unit.
- Create a mechanism to flag students who change majors and indicate who their new advisor will be.
- Enable a student to choose the course alpha for cross-listed courses for which s/he chooses to enroll.
- Establish a Graduation Advising Week in August and January to ensure seniors have completed all forms for graduation purposes
- Encourage placement assessments to be taken the semester prior to the student’s enrollment in such classes or at matriculation.
- Strongly encourage academic units to create a flyer/booklet on a major’s core requirements, electives, and credit hours needed which also includes the major’s four-year plan for graduation. (attached)

Whereas, advising happens at a very busy time of the semester;

Whereas, students who change majors are a common occurrence;

Whereas, students cannot register for their desired course alpha for cross-listed courses;

Whereas, students often do not take or delay in taking necessary placement assessments for math and natural science courses;

Whereas, printed documents can help clarify curriculum requirements, and students are pushed for time to assess core requirements, electives and credit hours;

Whereas, seniors are often late in pulling together their documents for graduation;

Therefore, be it resolved that the presented policies for Academic Advising be adopted and implemented at UHH for Fall 2016.
Motion #4: Requirement of an assessment and reevaluation on the Advising Task Force’s motions and recommendations in late Spring of 2016.

Background: The Task Force concluded that in order to measure and document the progress and success of the recommended changes that a progress report on the implementation of the Advising Task Force’s motions and recommendations would be essential in late Spring of 2016 in order to promote improvement or modifications on the Advising Task Force’s efforts.

Whereas, no plan of implementation can foresee all circumstances;

Whereas, the Academic body of UHH needs to improve advising for student success, graduation and retention rates;

Whereas, complications could arise from details that could derail the intent of improving Academic Advising;

Whereas, committee work could fail to achieve their goals if not effectively evaluated;

Therefore, be it resolved that an assessment or reevaluation of the Academic Advising Plan for UHH be conducted before the end of the Spring Semester of 2016, and be reported to the UHH Faculty Congress at the end of Spring Semester 2016.