

## EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

Bachelor of Arts Philosophy Program, University of Hawai'i Hilo

Spring Semester 2019

## Summary of Evaluation Report

PROGRAM AND INSTITUTION: BA Philosophy Program, University of Hawai'i Hilo

DATES OF VISIT: April 1-4, 2019

Program Reviewer: David Jones, PhD and Professor of Philosophy

A single reviewer visited the Philosophy Department at the University of Hawai'i Hilo (UHH) from April 1-4, 2018 for the purpose of providing an evaluation of the philosophy program leading to a BA in philosophy. The focus of this review is to determine whether the program meets its objectives and fulfills its mission. The reviewer evaluated how well the Program and its faculty are achieving stated purposes and is providing recommendations for quality assurance, institutional support, and submitting recommendations to the Program regarding assessments and improvements for future success.

In preparation for the evaluation, the reviewer attempted to gather as much information as possible about the philosophy program, its faculty, and students. During the visit, the reviewer met with pertinent campus leadership and key personnel that included the philosophy chair, division chair, dean, and vice president concerning the role of philosophy in the Humanities Division, College of Arts and Sciences, University, its place in society, and any other discussions about the program that arose. The philosophy chair attended all these meetings with the exception of the meeting with the division chair. In addition, the reviewer met with each philosophy professor and a number of students, as well as observing four classes. The reviewer received requested syllabi from some of the faculty to provide a sense of the scope of the major.

During the visit, the reviewer met with approximately 60 students, the entire philosophy faculty comprised of two tenured faculty members and one tenure track faculty member, classified staff, and administrators in formal meetings, classroom situations, a public talk, group and individual conversations, and several other informal venues. Perspectives were shared about the Program, Department, College, and University community with the program reviewer.

Prior to arriving, the reviewer was familiar with the University of Hawai'i System, the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, most of the community colleges on Oahu, and was generally familiar with the University of Hawai'i at Hilo.

Given the nature of the UHH philosophy program, the reviewer was well-positioned to conduct the evaluation with his PhD in comparative philosophy from UHM and professional roles in Asian and comparative philosophy. Additionally, the reviewer has published a number of books and articles in Asian and comparative philosophy and is editor of a leading comparative philosophy journal. With 30+ years of teaching experience at several student-oriented schools

and for the last 25 years as the faculty advisor/mentor of an award-winning philosophy student association, the reviewer also brought a seasoned perspective on faculty-student interaction.

The reviewer found the Chair of the Philosophy Department was well-prepared for the evaluation visit and felt welcomed by the entire campus community. Such preparation and welcoming spirit were also apparent from the other philosophy faculty members and students. The evaluator was impressed by the Department's swift responsiveness to requests for additional information, the depth of engagement of all groups he interacted with, and the widespread demonstration of the philosophy faculty's deep commitment to serving their students and the UHH community at large.

The reviewer found that the Program satisfies all standards of a successful undergraduate philosophy program, notwithstanding its lean number of faculty members needed to accomplish the fulfillment of the requisite standards to:

- teach students to think critically,
- develop an understanding how the history of philosophy and its ideas contribute to the creation and assessment of the sciences and social sciences,
- appreciate and realize the epistemic and ontic roles how culture manifests conceptions of self, society, and nature
- and cultivate an appreciation of the aesthetic dimensions of life

Except where noted in the recommendations section, the evaluator also identified a number of practices in which the Program excels in meeting the Standards that are documented in 10 Commendations for the UHH Philosophy Program.

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## Major Findings and Recommendations of the 2019 External Evaluator

### **Commendation 1 – Hawaiian Culture Commitment**

The Evaluator commends the Philosophy Department and its faculty, students, and the Humanities Division for their commitments to respecting and celebrating the indigenous culture of Hawai'i and for ensuring that it is embedded in college life and practices. This commitment will no doubt be enthusiastically continued and the Evaluator recommends that the Department in coordination with the Division engage in the co-sponsoring of as many on and off campus events as possible. It was no surprise the Evaluator observed classroom interactions included examples of and references to Hawaiian culture that were used to illustrate discussion points and create an environment of inclusion and respect.

## **Commendation 2 – Student Engagement**

The Evaluator commends the Department and Division for their commitment to engaging all student populations including indigenous and international students through the development and maintenance of meaningful support structures that include robust student organizations, such as the Philosophy Club (advised and mentored by Dr. Celia Bardwell-Jones), and the identification and apportionment of available resources for targeted populations.

Clearly, more resources are needed for these kinds of activities and the Program Faculty is encouraged to make concerted and dedicated efforts to promote the relevance of the discipline for social and planetary justice throughout campus and island communities. Additionally, the Program Faculty are urged to engage in further grant-writing and other fundraising efforts to achieve measured exposure in visibility. Although presently supportive, it would be perceptive on the part of the College of Arts and Sciences and Humanities Division to further appreciate the personal, social, and environmental value of philosophical training for students. The special nature of philosophy makes it an ideal candidate for collaborative projects and relationships. No other discipline has the range in this regard as does the Mother Discipline. With the talented and student-oriented faculty already working in the program, phenomenal prospects await realization.

## **Commendation 3 – Comprehensive Major**

The Evaluator commends the Philosophy Program for its design of a considerable and comprehensive major in philosophy. Its inclusive scope of course offerings span the reaches of traditional Western philosophy and the major is comprehensive in its inclusion of most Asian philosophies (Indian, Chinese, Buddhist [including Zen and Mahayana], Daoist, as well as more topical courses, such as Environmental Philosophy, Science, Technology and Values, Bioethics, Ethics and Cultural Diversity, and Environmental Ethics. Such expansive course offerings in a program are truly extraordinary, especially for a three-person faculty to deliver (and the above list is not exhaustive of offerings). This model of learning and achievement is an exemplary structure that incorporates student engagement throughout the system of Department, Division, College, and institutional effectiveness measures.

## **Commendation 4 – Inclusivity Commitment**

The Evaluator commends the faculty and Department Chair for creating opportunities for students to engage in meaningful, respectful, and effective dialogue regarding the Program's operations, goals, and plans. Classroom visits yielded a strong commitment to inclusive language use that incorporated cultural, gender, racial, and sexual orientation sensitivity, respect, and acceptance. This observation was evident in all four classes observed and exemplified by all three faculty members. The steadfastness for the inclusion of everyone is manifested in a programmatic way as well. For example, there are courses in Feminist Philosophy, Ethics and Cultural Diversity, and others covering topics that include: health and illness, disability, gender,

and sexual orientation, cultural differences, human relations, indigenous groups (comprising African, Native American, Latin American, and Polynesian).

### **Commendation 5 – Classroom Observations**

Having visited four classes, the Evaluator found all faculty members in the Department to be dedicated, student-centered, well-trained, prepared to deliver their classes, and display a variety of effective pedagogical techniques and styles. Students were engaged in each of the classes observed and it was noticeable they viewed themselves as being part of a learning community comprised of fellow students and their professors. All members of the faculty were, nevertheless, fully in charge of the learning environment. Distinct styles of teaching to accommodate a variety of types of learners are individually used by each instructor. These pedagogical styles range from informal lecture to group learning.

Observing the teaching quality of faculty and the openness and engagement of learning displayed by students were the highlights of the evaluation process.

The Evaluator has never seen group work handled as effectively as in Celia Bardwell-Jones' class on the Philosophy of Nature. Her movement from informal lecture to group work and the presentation of the group's findings was seamless conducted without any wasted time in transitioning. Her enthusiasm for the material inspired students while maintaining seriousness of purpose she methodically moved to accomplishing the objectives the class. It is unmistakable that her effervescent demeanor occasions openness for learning in her students. Hers is a class that students look forward to the next one.

The integration of art into Timothy Freeman's two observed courses yielded appropriate illustrations of the material in Buddhist Philosophy and Nietzsche's philosophy. This pedagogical strategy allowed him to draw out insights from students that otherwise would either have taken far more time to attain or would have never been realized. The inclusion of artistic images prompted enthused participation from students. Both of his classes were taught in a conversational and interactive style that was most effective. Classroom participation and interaction were exceptional in large part to the way both observed classes were managed.

The same high standard held true for the observation of Chris Lauer's class where a different and complementary teaching style vis-à-vis the others was represented. Although informally presented in conversational format, this class moved systematically through some very difficult material. The material was carefully articulated with precision and rhetorical questioning was used to further engage students. Before moving to the next level of understanding, students were always prompted for questions and remained engaged throughout. Sometimes they were asked questions directly, which displayed a close familiarity with students' work and how the day's topics related to papers they were working on. This was a cerebral class with students being challenged and led to participate in meaningful ways of learning—it clearly had a beginning with necessary steps in place that moved to the professor's logical and desired conclusion at the end of the period. Socrates would have been proud! Students seemed to achieve critical understanding of some of the most challenging material.

The best of what teaching and learning is all about was witnessed in all three professors' classes and their various pedagogical styles are complementary to each other and likely melding in the minds of students as an organic whole. All faculty members in the Philosophy Program have much to convey to students based on their apparent excellent philosophical training; they have combined that training with reflection on the strengths of their pedagogical styles and methods to provide a unique learning experience for students.

### **Commendation 6 – Student Enrollments**

Upon request, the Philosophy Department Chair provided enrollment statistics for majors, minors, and the general population of students taking philosophy courses. The data tell a story how the Department remains consistent over the years in steadily contributing to the delivery of General Education and throughout the College. Even though fuller staffing in philosophy will have a direct correlation in increasing the number of majors/minors, it is apparent the Department remains committed to its programs by showing maintenance of enrollments in light of some serious personnel challenges. To place the Department's enrollment figures into perspective, the number of UHH's philosophy majors is twice the amount as the Evaluator's institution that has a student population of 35,000+ and six full-time faculty members in philosophy.

Although enrollments in general are challenged in philosophy and the Humanities, declines are not because of the irrelevance of the subject matter or attributable to the needs in the marketplace. When an institution supports philosophy, amazing things can happen because its subject matter speaks to our time. For example, at Harvard University a course titled "Classical Chinese Ethical and Political Theory" is the third most popular course exceeded in enrollments only by Introduction to Economics and Introduction to Computer Science (Christine Gross-Loh, *The Atlantic*, Oct 8, 2013 and more recently in 2017: <http://harvardchina.org/2017/02/why-are-hundreds-of-harvard-students-studying-chinese-philosophy/>). Few higher educational institutions are comparable to Harvard, but nonetheless all Humanities' courses across the educational spectrum have the same enrollment challenges in 2019.

### **Commendation 7**

The Philosophy Club is off to a strong start! The procurement of a space for students to maintain as their own is commendable. A place for students to call "home" promotes a sense of community where students are able to convene for conversation, meetings, or to quietly study, read, think, and write. Such a creation of identity through acquiring and fostering this space, club tee-shirts, and events, such as lectures, is an invaluable experience for students and community building. The Philosophy Club advisor, Celia Bardwell-Jones, seems to have endless energy for these extra-curricular options for students and she has the perfect outgoing personality for positive outcomes.

### **Commendation 8**

The Chair of the Program, Chris Lauer, currently teaches a course at a local correctional facility. This type of community outreach shows not only the good will of faculty members and illustrates the need and relevancy of the Program, it also expresses the value of philosophy for the outside world. The Evaluator is also aware that Drs. Bardwell-Jones and Freeman provide learning opportunities outside the classroom for students and the community. These efforts are commendable. More types of these of outreach engagements will make the program even stronger.

### **Commendation 9**

Writing is at the core of all the Humanities and it has significant roles in the sciences and social sciences as well. All philosophy courses in the Program require a range of frequent writing assignments. Moreover, the Department's offerings are often designated as Writing Intensive courses.

The Evaluator observed professor-student paper consultations on drafts in preparation for submission. Such mentoring is vital for educating students to learn to think for themselves and develop the requisite skills to articulate their findings and ideas, argue effectively, and come to clear and meaningful conclusions. The Evaluator observed all faculty members—Chris Lauer, Celia Bardwell-Jones, and Tim Freeman—engaging their students regarding preparation for the completion of assignments. Placing an emphasis on the final product is an irreplaceable lesson for students and it also conveys that achieving desired results requires a systematic step-by-step process.

Conveying a commitment to excellence through the requisite hard work to achieve that result is a time-consuming process and is indicative of a caring and devoted faculty.

### **Commendation 10**

The inclusion of technology in the classroom was used effectively by several of the philosophy faculty in the classes observed. In all instances, it was used as an enhancement to student learning, intellectual development, and for effective teaching and was never employed as an end in itself. Technology is not the new pedagogy that replaces the old; it is rather another tool in the kit for effective teaching that enhances established pedagogy. What is of special note is that PowerPoint presentations were not used as fluff at the expense of content.

### **Conclusions**

Nationwide, philosophy majors consistently score in the highest ranks on the LSAT, MCAT, and GMAT exams and produce a number of influential leaders in the professions: business (John Mackey [Whole Foods], George Soros, and Peter Thiel [PayPal]); government (John Lewis and Emmanuel Macron); journalism (Katy Tur and Chris Hayes); authors (Miguel de Unamuno and

Umberto Eco); composers (Phillip Glass); and entertainers (Stephen Colbert and Steve Martin). And the list goes on. It could be persuasively argued that philosophy unlocks potential.

Given the quality of the UHH Philosophy Program, students will not be exceptions in achieving lives beyond their expectations. The Department offers a comprehensive major with its inclusive scope of traditionally overlooked cultural regions of the world. This unique philosophy program exceeds the guidelines of the American Philosophical Association's recommendations for a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy.

Such expansive course offerings are truly extraordinary, especially when delivered by a three-person faculty. Given its range of offerings, the Program reaches out to a variety of students and provides the strong teaching requisite for improving critical listening, reading, writing, thinking, and other skill acquisitions essential for successful careers in the marketplace, non-profit sector, and government service. It is of special note the Philosophy Department aims to make their students recipients of these skills and creates an enthusiastic community of majors, minors, and any student benefitting from taking a philosophy class.

The overall instruction observed was impressive and this impression extended outside the classroom: with interactions on campus, at a non-credit lecture and reception, and during office consultations. Serving the needs of students is the primary objective of all three professors in the Department. This is also indicated through their special commitment for inclusion of all the students they serve, including native Hawaiian students and other local students. Hawaiian and local culture is honored, celebrated, and has been realized as a significant part of each faculty member's personal identity.

The Evaluator was most impressed with the quality of teaching by all the faculty members in the Department. Their various teaching styles, areas of expertise, and classroom strategies complement each other and provide a rich and robust learning experience for UHH students that extends to the larger community off campus, reaching so far as to be inclusive of the incarcerated.

### **Evaluator Recommendations**

Recommendations to meet standards of an effective philosophy major:

#### **Recommendation 1 – Program Evaluation**

In order to meet the standards for an effective philosophy major, the Evaluator recommends the Program regularly evaluate its philosophy major and minor plans, governance, and decision-making policies, procedures, and processes to ensure effectiveness. This is a general recommendation not based on any observation of lack. Such a recommendation is made only as a

precautionary measure to ensure constant and consistent evaluations of the evolution of the Program.

### **Recommendation 2 – Personnel (Department Retirements)**

The UHH Philosophy Program is on the verge of a metamorphosis to become something greater than what it is. With more resources, the Program, which is one of the best kept secrets in higher education, could clearly attain national recognition if resources are allocated and faculty efforts supported in enhancement of student learning and professional development. Such support would contribute not only to classroom effectiveness, but also to the profession, State, and Big Island communities.

With several past faculty retirements, it would be beneficial to fill those positions to ensure program quality and alleviate some burden placed on an already taxed faculty. It is the Evaluator's perspective that it is absolutely vital to fill at least the most recent retirement with a tenure-track line. Such action would free the philosophy faculty from consistently preparing and delivering three courses a semester (six a year) and free them to conduct more research—scholarly and pedagogical—and enhance present service and community building efforts. The outcomes of research will always find their ways into classrooms.

The commitment to the Program and its students was clearly recognized by the Evaluator and the willingness of the faculty to teach sundry preparations is truly commendable. Nevertheless, the addition of at least one tenure-track line would benefit UHH students, majors, and minors.

Specifically, the recommendation is to add an entry level tenure-track line in Asian philosophies. Typically, candidates will possess a regional expertise and other proficiencies, such as Chinese philosophy with a specialty in Confucianism. It is the recommendation not to hire just a specialist, but rather a generalist (or a specialist with wide-ranging interests, preparation, and/or experience) who is competent and comfortable teaching a variety of regions, such as East Asian and South Asian philosophies, including pan-Buddhist philosophy. The suggestion is to keep the duties of the new hire directed in such a way as to alleviate the burden now placed on one faculty member who is delivering a wide range of Asian related courses, each with very specific foci.

### **Recommendation 3 – Personnel (Logic Courses)**

It is also necessary to hire someone to teach logic courses in the program. This goal could be achieved by hiring at the lecturer level, even though hiring a full-time instructor is always more beneficial for students and contributes to program viability and coverage of other courses. Logic is a necessary skill for students to succeed in all walks of life and it is at the foundation of all disciplines. Moreover, Phil 345 meets the UHH Quantitative Reasoning Requirement and needs to be supported.

Hiring someone to deliver informal and formal logic will free faculty members to better meet the challenges of delivering other courses in their specialties and competencies.

#### **Recommendation 4 – Teaching Loads**

As eluded to in Recommendation 3, the philosophy faculty typically has six course preparations per academic year. This is far too much and exceeds guidelines established by the American Philosophical Association. Although teaching outside one's specialty can be restorative of the enthusiasm that drove us to philosophy, it is a cautionary note that instructors are duty-bound to teach primarily in those subject areas where they have familiarity and training. Such a practice offers assurances instructors will be keep abreast of new discoveries and outcomes in current scholarly research.

Hence, reducing teaching loads from six to five courses per academic year will not only increase levels of instructional excellence, it will provide faculty more time for other necessary activities, such as maintaining awareness of current advances in their fields, conducting research, and engaging in student-oriented service activities and community building.

No instructor should consistently teach six different course preparations per academic. Although UHH dedicates itself to teaching and learning, this excessive demand placed on the philosophy faculty even exceeds the high demand placed on community college instructors who have no research expectations and obligations. Moreover, community college instructors rarely have more than one or two course preparations in any term.

#### **Recommendation 5 – Marketing**

The Philosophy Program's web site needs updating with:

- an accessible course forecast for student planning and improving of graduation rates
- elimination from the curriculum of non-viable courses no longer taught (there are other reasons for doing this as well)
- current standard of romanization, such as Tao changed to Dao, made in course titles and descriptions
- the development of a special page for the Philosophy Club to advertise its events, meetings, and so forth
- philosophy faculty current web sites with bios and up to date curriculum vitae; this will serve several functions, including recruitment
- a news section celebrating student and faculty accomplishments; this will assist in community building
- the role and significance of a philosophy major in the 21<sup>st</sup> century should be included somewhere on the web site—again, this will help market the major

Additionally, creating a Facebook page (or some other form of social media) may be an idea to consider. In general, getting on the map throughout the State and beyond by increasing

marketing the value of doing philosophy in general and at UHH in particular is of value. Raising the public profile of the Department will likely attract and retain more students.

The web site does need to be more functional, informative, and attractive. Web sites are faces to the world and can serve as recruiting tools and mediums of marketing. Again, the Philosophy Program is one of education's best kept secrets and the Evaluator urges the Department and Division to invest in some time and energy to raise its profile.

### **Recommendation 6 – Philosophy Club and Student Success**

The Philosophy Club is off to such a good start! With a dedicated faculty and engaged student body, more formalized activities, such as a lecture series, film groups, student run activities in the community, and the like, would contribute not only to program vitality, but also assist in retention efforts. Some of these activities are already in place, but it is still recommended they grow in quantity, frequency, and visibility on and off campus, at least as much as possible. In this light, it is suggested creating a Big Island undergraduate philosophy conference that invites students from all over. Promoting activities that encourage student scholars will be realized in student success across the board and create a learning space for Big Island students.

### **Recommendation 7 – Academic Pathways for Student Success**

Given the high quality of instruction and the potential of the Program necessitates some focused strategies to meet future demands, needs, and the realization of that potential. Planning and tracking student academic pathways will require some strategizing for realizing an even more effective program.

It is recommended to pursue coordination with other programs—keeping in mind how such interaction will advance the philosophy major, serve students, be beneficial to UHH students, and fulfill the mission of the Department. The development of an Ethics and Social Justice Track in the major is an example of how this outcome can be advanced. In general, coordination with other programs is seen as being a plus.

One concern, however, is making sure this track does not take away from developing other possible tracks in the major and that it does not give the impression this track is the program's primary focus, unless this is the intent. If other tracks are planned (one track might encourage others), then they need to be designed to cover other areas or regions of philosophy. And if other tracks are added, can this type of expansion be sustained without harming something else? Although the Evaluator realizes any track creation will be performed carefully by the Department, his concern is about ensuring the track is complementary to the major and does not dilute the major's mission.

This, however, is just a concern of caution given the Evaluator's experience with four tracks in his program's major and how they at times confused students, slowed graduation rates, and

created imbalances in course enrollments. As a result, tracks in the major are being phased out. This, though, may in no way be the experience at UHH.

### **Recommendation 8 – Access and Research Support**

Good scholarship translates directly into the classroom. The philosophy faculty is comprised of a committed group of scholars and it deserves all resources available for the UHM philosophy faculty, such as library access for inter-library loans and data bases. The most authoritative online bibliography in philosophy is the *Philosopher's Index* and this should be made available to students and faculty. The Evaluator was surprised to receive a response that the *Index* was not freely available at UHH.

### **Recommendation 9 – Professional Organization Profile**

Continuing the Department's vital membership in the *Pacific Association of Continental Thought*, hosting its conferences on a regular rotation, and housing its journal (this too needs to be on the web site and institutionally supported) is a model for even more relationships with other professional societies.

It is noteworthy Department members have organized and co-organized meetings for the *Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy*, *Association for Feminist Ethics and Social Theory*, and the *North American Schelling Society*. These efforts should continue and the hosting of meetings whenever viable. Additionally, given the Department's focus on teaching, it may be worth considering membership in the *Society for the Teaching of Comparative Philosophy*. Generally, not only are meetings a boon for the Hilo and Big Island economy, they bring prestige to the University, Division, and Department.

### **Recommendation 10 – Oahu and Big Island Collaboration**

The philosophy faculty has published books and articles in top peer-reviewed presses and journals and this practice should continue as much as possible. Although it is noted that informal colloquia do occur where the faculty shares its work with the community, it is suggested a regular Philosophy Colloquium be established and meet at least once a semester where faculty work is presented and highlighted. A desirable mix might be the establishment of a joint Philosophy Colloquium Series with UHM's Department alternating between islands for a colloquium each semester. Even without UHM's participation, sharing work regularly on campus and off-campus is a good idea.

### **Recommendation 11 – Program Review at UHH**

Commendation 5 shares positive observations of classroom visits. It is evident the core strength of the Philosophy Program is the quality of its faculty. Although the Evaluator has not reviewed any student evaluations and all understanding of teaching quality was attained through classroom observations and student/faculty interactions, it can only be imagined teaching evaluations in courses are outstanding. It is recommended that such conclusions be made a part of the program review if they support the Department's goals. In general, the Evaluator mentions this from a concern about future system and institutional support.

## **Conclusion**

The greatest burden facing the UHH philosophy program is its potential. Already possessing an excellent faculty and engaged students, the situation cries out for an organized effort to nurture this potential. The setting of the Big Island is perfect, the faculty well-equipped, and students are hungry for what is being offered.

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The Evaluator is thankful for the opportunity to observe and evaluate the University of Hawai'i Hilo Philosophy Program and most grateful for being treated so kindly and respectfully by Ken Hon, Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs; Michael Bitter, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences; Rodney Jubilado, Chair, Division of Humanities, and Carole C. Kuba, Secretary, Humanities Division.

My foremost gratitude goes to Chris Lauer, Chair of the Philosophy Department, and his colleagues Celia Bardwell-Jones and Tim Freeman for making my stay meaningful and most pleasurable. And to the many students I met in the Philosophy Club and classes, thank you for such an enjoyable time. Watching you blossom under the sunlight of a caring faculty was the unexpected gift of the visit.

Respectfully Submitted by

David Jones

The Recommendation addendum

### **Recommendation 12 – In the Best of Possible Worlds – From an Island to the World**

The conservative approach elicits being reactive to budgetary challenges—to fight for losing as little as possible. An active approach looks differently.

Times of short supply are often times to make serious investments of growth. With so much core potential residing within the philosophy faculty, student interest, and the Big Island location, developing a specifically focused and/or interdisciplinary based M.A. program in either comparative and/or environmental philosophy might well be worth considering. The faculty would need to grow from its present state, but retirements need to be refilled regardless.

With climate change and its cascading social, political, and economic problems, students need trained to solve these problems and meet future challenges. An M.A. program addressing this and related environmental problems might be a meaningful enterprise with the Department taking the lead.

Could there be a better discipline than philosophy where the primary questions of the good life, social justice, value creation, and so forth are asked?

As Alfred North Whitehead reminded us, “Philosophy is an attitude of mind towards doctrines ignorantly entertained. By the phrase ‘ignorantly entertained’ I mean that the full meaning of the doctrine in respect to the infinitude of circumstances to which it is relevant, is not understood” (*Modes of Thought*, Lecture 9).

As we moved from the “Information Age” to the new “Disinformation Age,” willful ignorance has supplanted the will to understanding. And what better living laboratory could there be than the Big Island to offer a new way forward?

### **Recommendation 13 – A Pedestrian Crossing**

This recommendation will seem a bit pedestrian, but it is included nevertheless. UHH students seem to be rather casual about classroom punctuality and leaving class midway for bathroom breaks (and often doing so a tad disruptively). Although much of this has to do with prevailing casualness (the Evaluator has the same challenges to a degree with his students), some decorum for classroom behavior can be set and done so in a non-threatening and non-offensive way. Again, this is a small matter, but affecting a classroom culture will have its benefits for the classroom experience and set the tone for others.

And when recommendations take this turn, it’s time to end.