Enrollment management presents continuing challenge

by Ken Hupp

The decline has slowed, but another academic year has begun with enrollment at the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo lower than it was a year ago. With final numbers yet to be determined at press time, preliminary figures from the University of Hawai‘i’s Institutional Research Office showed Fall 2015 enrollment totaling 3,829 students compared to the final, official count of 3,924 for Fall 2014.

This marks the third year in a row that enrollment has dropped after eight consecutive years of gains, and a 16-year span in which enrollment grew in all but one of those years. The decline is the smallest of the three, but that doesn’t alter the fundamental challenge that Chancellor Don Straney laid out during last month’s Fall Welcome.

“What we need to do is find ways to recruit more students, retain more of our existing students, and help them graduate in a timely manner,” Straney told assembled faculty and staff.

The decline, while small, spans most categories. Among undergraduates:

• Incoming freshman are down 11.1% with 386 vs 434
• Transfer students are off by a smaller 7.2% with 570 vs 614
• Undergraduate enrollment is down among all Colleges, except Ka Haka ‘Ula O Ke‘elikōlani, which is up 6.3% with 135 vs 127
• Unclassified student enrollment is up over 119.2% with 114 vs 52
• School of Nursing enrollment is up 23.3% with 111 vs 90

Graduate numbers paint a slightly more positive picture with enrollment at Ka Haka ‘Ula O Ke‘elikōlani up 15.6% with 37 vs 32, while the College of Arts and Sciences, driven by a 36.6% gain in the Social Sciences, is up 10.9% with 173 vs 156.

Developing a successful strategy to reverse the trend will require addressing certain demographic and economic factors that have emerged in Hawai‘i and beyond since the steady growth years. The combination of declining high school graduations and an improved outlook in local and nationwide employment has changed the landscape as well as the approach that must be taken.

The high school graduation decline is now projected to continue through the 2016-2017 school year. So growing or even maintaining enrollment will require a larger slice from a smaller pie. The percentage of Hawai‘i high school graduates from private schools entering UH campuses declined from 33.5% in Fall 2010 to 27.2% in Fall 2014, while public school percentages fell from 40.6% in Fall 2011 to 36.5% in Fall 2014.

Interim Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs Gail Makuakane-Lundin said the decline in UH Hilo’s in-state freshmen enrollment can be traced to fewer incoming students from Hawai‘i Island, which outnumber the gains recorded statewide. She says the key to improving recruitment of first-time, in-state freshmen is to get more up-close and personal.

“We believe that by developing better relationships...
with students, their families and their schools, more Hawai‘i-resident students will see why UH Hilo is an ideal community in which to pursue their education,” she said.

There are several strategies and adjustments currently being implemented. Interim Admissions Director Zach Street is optimistic that those changes will lead to significant improvement in future enrollment.

“For starters, our recruitment process will be more regionally designed to link our Admissions counselors with students and high schools, especially in Hawai‘i,” Street explained. “Developing these authentic relationships should give students a better understanding of UH Hilo and why it is such a powerful and dynamic place for them to pursue their education.”

The effort to boost direct and personal interaction with students will be reinforced by an enhanced digital and technology presence. Makuakane-Lundin said that will be critical to helping the University extend its reach.

“Although most of our efforts to connect with students will focus on Hawai‘i, our counselors are traveling this fall to regions in the United States that show promise for students interested in Hawai‘i that are also ideal matches for what our campus community, natural setting, and academic programs have to offer,” Makuakane-Lundin noted. “That includes increasing our efforts in California and re-establishing them in the Pacific Northwest.”

But getting students to enroll at UH Hilo is just the beginning of the educational process. Retaining them until they receive their degrees represents an altogether different challenge.

An estimated 80% of students who complete the spring semester return in the fall. Administrators want to see that retention figure improve to 90%, and have designed a series of strategies targeting various areas of concern.

Freshmen and undeclared students are typically among the most difficult categories to retain. To help ensure a successful first-year experience, new freshmen are being enrolled in the University 101 course, designed to facilitate the transition from high school to college, connect freshmen to faculty, staff and library resources, deal with homesickness, navigate time management issues, and help guide career exploration.

But there is also concern about the retention rates for Pre-Nursing students and the absolute number of students retained in large majors, such as Biology, Psychology, and Kinesiology. Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Dr. Matt Platz says specialized, stepped-up advising has been developed to help those students chart their career paths.

“In Pre-Nursing, for example, we’ve created separate liberal study tracks in Community Health and Health Administration that we believe will lead to health-related careers,” Platz said. “We’ve also created a Health Professions Advising Center to support our Biology, Kinesiology, and Psychology majors who aspire to health careers.”

While transfer numbers remain strong, administrators see room to boost retention among those coming to the University from Hawai‘i Community College.

Academic maps are being created, which spell out an eight-semester plan of course requirements and electives to help students graduate on time. And new software features are being employed to speed up intrusive advising by facilitating communication between faculty and advisors to monitor their progress, offer assistance, and remind them of important, upcoming deadlines.

Another initiative that will benefit all students is a new financial aid package being implemented by the Division of Student Affairs. The new packaging includes spreading out campus-base aid equitably to more students.

“Financial concerns seem paramount in the minds of many non-returning students,” Platz said. “Many of those students who disclose their reasons for not returning tell us they need to take a semester or entire year off to make money and pay down debt.”

But financial aid packages, enhanced advising, and academic maps notwithstanding, the ultimate success of the University’s retention effort will come down to something more basic: student engagement with faculty, staff and the campus community in meeting their career goals.

“There is no substitute for personal attention and making students feel welcome, valued and supported,” Platz said. “The UH Hilo brand is small classes and small student/faculty ratios so by properly fine-tuning our efforts, we are optimistic that we can make a difference.”

For the latest, up-to-date information on UH Hilo enrollment, visit https://www.hawaii.edu/institutionalresearch/enrReport.action?reportId=ENRT00.

(Ken Hupp is a public information officer.)
UH awarded $31M in grants for Native Hawaiian programs statewide

Campuses across the University of Hawai‘i System will receive grants for the Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions Program totaling roughly $6 million a year from the U.S. Department of Education for an anticipated five years. The five-year total for the eight grants is more than $31 million.

These funds will be used for priority projects that fit within UH’s Strategic Directions and individual campus mission goals. Federal legislation mandates that these grants must be specific to campuses.

“These awards are a credit to our hard working, dedicated faculty and staff across the UH System who are working collaboratively to advance the University of Hawai‘i’s goal of becoming a model indigenous serving institution. We also thank our congressional delegation for their critical support of Native Hawaiian education,” UH President David Lassner noted.

UH Hilo, in a cooperative award with Hawai‘i Community College, receives $3,984,894 over five years for the UH Hilo and Hawai‘i Community College Cooperative Arrangement Development Grant.

Chancellor Don Straney serves as principal investigator, with Kekuhi Kealiikanakaoleohaililani, assistant professor and coordinator, HawCC, as co-investigator.

The grant will be used to promote and sustain a Hawaiian worldview in the UH Hilo and Hawai‘i Community College campuses’ environments, programs, services and leadership to increase the success of Native Hawaiian students. Faculty will be the focus of this cooperative arrangement development grant.

The three grant activities proposed include:
- Building capacity through leadership development
- Strengthening campus and community engagement
- Facilitating Hawaiian language, culture and knowledge learning pathways


Ippolito continues UH Hilo Faculty Lecture Series Oct. 21

The UH Hilo Faculty Congress and the College of Continuing Education and Community Service (CCECS) invite the public to a presentation on “Electronic Media and its Impact on the Visual Arts” on Wednesday, October 21, 6:30 – 7:30 p.m., in UCB Room 100.

Jean Ippolito, associate professor of art, will give examples of artists and artwork of the late 20th century and the turn of the new millennium that utilize digital and electronic media. She will also discuss recent changes in the international art world, particularly in the visual arts, resulting from creative artists having access to new technologies, including digital media and the Internet.

Ippolito is an Asian art specialist and focuses her research on contemporary digital and electronic media art. Her book, published in 2012 through Common Ground press, is entitled The Search for New Media: Late 20th Century Art and Technology in Japan. It is a monograph that documents the pioneers of digital media art from Japan. Recently, Ippolito has been researching contemporary artists of China who use digital media in their work, including Xu Bing, Hu Jiemin, Miao Xiaochun, and others.

For disability accommodation, call 974-7664 (V) or 974-7002 (TTY) by October 9.
Hats off to...


Jon Goebel, Assistant Professor, Art, was recently invited to participate in two international exhibitions: *The 2nd Global Print 2015* shown in Alijo, Portugal, and *The Printing Marks and Codes/Printing Design International Invitation Exhibition*, showing at the Sichuan Fine Arts Institute, Chongqing, China. Goebel also recently concluded a three-person museum exhibition, *Master Teachers*, shown at the Evansville Museum in Indiana.

Jiren Feng, Assistant Professor, Chinese, was invited to participate in the “Senior Academics Forum on Traditional Chinese Architectural History” hosted by Northeastern Federal University, Russia, in July 2017. Roughly 25 established scholars worldwide who have been actively engaging in traditional Chinese architecture research have been invited to the biennial meeting, which is by invitation only.

Elizabeth Ackerman, Assistant Professor, Pharmacy Practice, co-wrote “Development of a Virtual Pharmacy Resident Conference” published in the peer-reviewed journal *Federal Practitioner*. She also co-presented a research poster with Patricia Juscak, Clinical Coordinator, Pharmacy Practice, and Paula Zeszotarski.

Judi Steinman, MSCP Program Coordinator, Pharmaceutical Sciences, presented “Hawai‘iMSCP Training and Legislative Efforts for Prescriptive Authority – 2015” at the American Psychological Association annual convention held in August in Toronto. She also co-wrote “Legislative Update with Aloha 2015,” published in the APA’s Division 55 newsletter, *The Tablet*.

Karen Pellegrin, Director, Strategic Planning/Continuing Education, DKICP, co-wrote “Using ICD codes to track medication-related hospitalizations among older adults” accepted for publication in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*.

UH Hilo gears up for Filipino American Heritage Month

UH Hilo marks October’s observance of Filipino American Heritage Month with its biggest celebration ever. Organizing committee members have planned a wide range of activities open to the public beginning with the traditional Barrio Fiesta scheduled for 9 a.m. on October 3 on the UH Hilo Campus Center Plaza.

The event captures the atmosphere of a traditional Filipino fiesta in a festive gathering of special guests, administration, politicians, community members, students, faculty and staff, who will take part in the opening ceremonies featuring a parade of colorful Filipino costumes and entertainment. Festivities following the opening ceremony includes performances from bands, plus traditional Filipino folk games and contests, including the famous ‘balut’ (unhatched fertilized duck egg) eating contest. Participants can also enjoy a jeepney ride while touring the landmarks of the UH Hilo campus.

The month-long calendar of Filipino American Heritage events includes:

- **Barrio Fiesta**, featuring Mr. and Mrs. Heritage Pageant
  October 3, 9 am - 2:30 pm, Campus Center Plaza

- **Manny Paquiao** film
  October 7, 5:30 – 8 pm, UCB Room 100

- **Gala Night and Chorale Showcase**
  October 23, 6 – 10 pm, Campus Dining Center Room

- **Filipino Tattoos** public lecture by Lane Wilcken
  October 28, 5 pm, UCB 127

- **Drizzle** by Bayanihan Club
  October 30, 6 pm, Hale Kehau Turnaround

Filipino American Heritage month activities are made possible through financial support from the County of Hawai‘i Department of Research and Development along with council members Valerie Poindexter and Greggor Ilagan.

For more information, contact Dr. Rodney Jubilado (rodneycj@hawaii.edu) or Dr. Norman Q. Arancon (normanq@hawaii.edu).

McDermott named new head coach of Vulcan tennis

Tina McDermott joins UH Hilo as the new head coach of men’s and women’s tennis.

Athletics Director Patrick Guillen commented that, “Her playing, coaching and teaching experiences will assist her in building and leading a program that we can all be proud of. As a former top-ranked player, NCAA Division I student-athlete and coach last year at Whittier College, Coach McDermott understands what it takes to be successful. But most importantly, she is committed to providing the best student experience possible and developing the whole person through academics and the sport of tennis.”

McDermott was the head women’s coach at NCAA Division III Whittier (CA) since 2014. Her 2015 squad finished 5-19 overall and 3-8 in the Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

“I am looking forward to helping the tennis program go to the next level,” McDermott said. “I have an incredible amount of respect for the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo and I am so excited to be a Vulcan. There is an unbelievable commitment to excellence and it all starts with Chancellor Donald Straney and Patrick Guillen. I look forward to years of success and a lot of great memories.”

Ranked 25th as an 18-year-old in Southern California, McDermott was a four-year player at NCAA Division I University of California-Irvine. She received her USPTA professional certification in 2014 and was an instructor at the Billie Jean King tennis Center in Long Beach, CA.

Sodexo’s annual Food Festival is Oct. 29

Sodexo Dining Services invites the UH Hilo community to its 2015 Food Festival on Thursday, October 29, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., to say “mahalo” to all of its loyal customers. Everyone is encouraged to stop by the Campus Center Plaza and enjoy food samplings from Suisan Fish, Rainbow Foods, LH Gamble, Eisenberg, and Suisan Produce.

Also in October, Sodexo will conduct its bi-annual customer survey. Survey participants will automatically be placed in a drawing to win an adventure for two at Umauma Falls Zipline. The survey is available at [http://vcil.cc/87qacgn](http://vcil.cc/87qacgn) October 19 - November 4, 2015.

And don’t forget to mark your calendar for October’s Local First Wednesday, offered on October 7 in the Campus Center Dining Room. All stations will offer a 100% locally sourced meal featuring homegrown foods like Big Island grass fed beef, Kea‘au Natural Pacific tofu, Waimea grown vegetables, fresh fish, and more. Local First hours of operation are 7 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. View [https://www.facebook.com/UHH-Campus-Dining-139135939903621/timeline/](https://www.facebook.com/UHH-Campus-Dining-139135939903621/timeline/) for the Local First menu.
The UH Hilo International Student Services and Intercultural Education program invite the UH Hilo community to its Global Lens International Film Festival October 19, 20 and 22 in UCB Room 127. Admission is free.

In recognition of United Nations Day, the focus of this year’s film festival is on Asian and Pacific nations that may not be well known in the United States: Mynamar (Burma), West Papua, Indonesia and Timor-Leste. Each film will be introduced by a student who is either from the nation being featured or is knowledgeable about the topic exposed in the film.

On October 19, the festival opens at 7 p.m. with They Call It Myanmar: Lifting the Curtain. Shot over a two-year period by best-selling novelist and filmmaker Robert H. Lieberman, the film provides a rare look at the second-most isolated country on the planet. The Hollywood Reporter wrote that the film “defies the odds of creating a travelogue and, instead, delivers a compelling portrait…the definitive film on a country.”

The festival continues on October 20 with films focusing on West Papua and Indonesia. Starting at 5:30 p.m., Forgotten Bird of Paradise provides a rare and moving insight into the forgotten struggle for independence that has gripped West Papua for over 50 years. The Road to Home, shown at 6 p.m., follows Benny Wenda, the Nobel Peace Prize-nominated West Papuan independence leader in his ongoing struggle to free his people from Indonesian colonial rule.

Turning to Indonesia, The Act of Killing will be featured at 7:30 p.m. on October 20. Filmmaker Joshua Oppenheimer exposes the mass executions of accused communists in Indonesia and those who are celebrated in their country for perpetrating the crime. The film is a 2014 Academy Award nominee for Best Documentary Feature and won numerous international awards.

The festival concludes with A Guerra de Beatriz on October 22 at 7 p.m. The film is the first feature film made in Timor-Leste (formerly known as East Timor) and has had only limited distribution in the United States. Set in 1975 during the Indonesian invasion of Timor, it is the story of one woman’s conviction to remain true to the man she loves and the country for which she fought.

The film festival is made possible through a grant from the UH SEED Initiatives for Diversity, Equity, Access and Success.

For more information, visit http://hilo.hawaii.edu/international or call 932-7467.
The UH Hilo Alumni & Friends Association invites the University community to participate in the 2nd Annual 5K Holiday Lava Run/Walk on Saturday, December 5, beginning at 8 a.m. The 5K course is designed to give participants of all ages the opportunity to explore the UH Hilo campus in a family-friendly, festive run/walk.

Proceeds from this year’s event will benefit Special Olympics East Hawai‘i High School Delegations and the UH Hilo Alumni & Friends Association’s outreach activities.

“Flaco Jiménez and Max Baca are pillars of the past and forgers of the future,” said PAC Manager Lee Dombroski. “Their playing captures the essential sounds of conjunto tradition with Flaco’s three-row button accordion and Max’s deep-pitched bajo sexto.”

Admission is reserved seating and priced at $25 General, $20 Discount, and $12 UH Hilo/Hawai‘i CC students (with a valid student ID) and children, up to age 17, presale, or $30, $25 and $17 at the door.

To purchase tickets, call the PAC Box Office at 932-7490 or order online at artscenter.uhh.hawaii.edu.

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“The Special Olympics East Hawai‘i High School Delegations are so fortunate to be a part of this wonderful community event. What a perfect way for UH Hilo to show their support and welcome students with and without intellectual disabilities onto their campus,” said Special Olympics Hawai‘i Development Manager Tracey Bender.

The run/walk will also feature Zumba by instructor Carissa Pajao and a Health & Fitness Fair with music and booths from various vendors.

“As a proud alumnus and board member, we are honored and inspired to be partnering with Special Olympics for the 2nd Annual Holiday Lava Run,” said 5K Chair Adams Agtarap. “We are diligently working with an amazing planning team and anticipating a record turnout to join us in this joyful and festive event.”

Early registration is $30, students are $15 (valid student I.D. required), and children age 6 and under are free (t-shirt not included). Race-day registration is $35; students are $20. The fee includes a dri-fit t-shirt, water, snacks and a race bag. Teams must have four participants. Register online at https://register.chronotrack.com/r/16074 (additional $3.03 fee applies; $2.01 for students) or visit http://hilo.hawaii.edu/alumni/funrun.html to download a runner entry and/or event contribution form.

The event sponsored by the Hilo Naniloa Hotel.

For more information, call 932-7670 or 932-7671.

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**Flaco Jimenez and Max Baca perform at PAC**

The UH Hilo Performing Arts Center presents Grammy® Award winning artists Flaco Jiménez and Max Baca in concert on Thursday, October 22, at 7:30 p.m.

Jiménez, a 2015 Grammy® Lifetime Achievement Award winner, is considered one of the world’s premiere conjunto musicians for almost singlehandedly exporting the style beyond its original base in the tejano community. The 73-year-old accordionist has brought Tex-Mex flavor to the music of Bob Dylan, the Rolling Stones, Ry Cooder, and others.

Grammy® Award winner Baca was seven-years-old when Jiménez met him at a concert. Twenty years later, Jimenez brought Baca into the Texas Tornados, whose combination of country, rock and conjunto inspired Max’s Los Texmaniacs.

“Flaco Jiménez and Max Baca are pillars of the past and forgers of the future,” said PAC Manager Lee Dombroski. “Their playing captures the essential sounds of conjunto tradition with Flaco’s three-row button accordion and Max’s deep-pitched bajo sexto.”

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**Sign up for 2nd Annual UH Hilo 5K Holiday Lava Run/Walk**

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Campus Events

October

1  Priority deadline to apply for spring 2016 graduation
2  Barrio Fiesta, 9 a.m., CC Plaza
7  Manny Paquiao, 5:30 p.m., UCB 100
16 Last day to drop a class with “W”
19  They Call it Myanmar, Global Lens International Film Festival, 7 p.m., UCB 127
20  Forgotten Bird of Paradise, Global Lens International Film Festival, 5:30 p.m., UCB 127
   The Road to Home, Global Lens International Film Festival, 6 p.m., UCB 127
   The Act of Killing, Global Lens International Film Festival, 7:30 p.m., UCB 127
21 Jean Ippolito, UH Hilo Faculty Lecture Series, 6:30 p.m., UCB 100
22  A Guerra de Beatriz, Global Lens International Film Festival, 7 p.m., UCB 127
   Flaco Jimenez and Max Baca, 7:30 p.m., PAC, Admission
23  Gala Night and Chorale Showcase, Filipino American Heritage Month, 6 p.m., CCDR
28  Filipino Tattoos public lecture, 5 p.m., UCB 127
29  Sodexo Food Festival, 11 a.m., CC Plaza
30  Drizzle by Bayanihan Club, 6 p.m., Hale Kehau turnaround