LISTENING TOUR 2010: MEETING FOR THE DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION AFFAIRS
NOVEMBER 1ST 2010

This note represents a summary of the meeting held for the Division of Administrative Affairs on November 1st 2010 as part of the 2010 Listening Tour to prepare for development of the next UH Hilo Strategic Plan. The summary reflects the collection of individual comments made, not necessarily the consensus view of the entire group or the official view of UH Hilo. The order of the note may not necessarily reflect the order of the discussion.

Strengths of UH Hilo
The group identified the following as key strengths of UH Hilo:

- The university offers programs related to the Big Island
  - Marine science
  - Astronomy

- The university represents the only higher education institution on the Big Island
  - As it is accessible, it provides opportunity for people who might not otherwise be able to afford higher education
  - It has a major economic impact on the island and represents a ‘clean’ industry

- Good record of growth
  - This is good for the university and good for the island in terms of job creation and more opportunity for learning

- Small campus
  - Despite the growth noted above, the university is still a small-campus which facilitates a good community feel
  - The campus has a comfortable, relaxed and welcoming feel

- Diversity
  - People from all walks of live are welcomed at the university. There is a good mix of local, mainland and international people which adds to the student learning experience
Weaknesses of UH Hilo
The group identified the following as key weaknesses of UH Hilo:

- Inadequate physical and technical infrastructure
  - Lack of parking
    - This is an increasingly urgent issue due to steadily increasing enrollment
  - Lack of student housing
  - Some existing buildings require improved maintenance and renovation
  - Inadequate technology to support and enhance process/procedures/services
    - All process and procedures should be examined to identify where they could be upgraded to be done electronically
      - E.g., applications for parking permits could be applied for and processed electronically saving time (for all involved) and money (no more printing application forms)

- Lack of accountability systems in place for faculty, staff and administrators
  - Better accountability systems need to be developed so that people are held accountable and improvements can be made

- Lack of clear processes and procedures
  - Ensure that institutional processes and procedures are clearly written-down, effectively communicated and consistently enacted

- Leadership/management
  - There is a general lack of communication between those in leadership/managerial positions and employees
  - There are instances of micro-management which has the effect of making people like they are not trusted or empowered to do their job
    - Those in management positions should be given training to ensure they have the skills required to manage people – from communication to overseeing work
  - Ineffective decision-making
    - Sometimes, personalities/ineffective working relationships, get in the way of effective decision-making and outcomes
    - Decisions are infrequently explained
      - This has a negative impact on morale as people commonly do not understand why particular decisions have been made
      - All actions should be transparent and transparency valued

- Lack of clear identity or shared vision
  - This contributes to a lack of cohesiveness across the board at the university
    - A new vision/identity needs to be developed that everyone buys-into

- Ineffective relationship with the UH System
  - There is a perception that UH Hilo is viewed as UH Manoa’s ‘poor cousin’ by the UH System
• No in-house lawyer
  o At the moment, all legal queries have to be routed through UH Manoa. This has a negative impact on the time it takes queries to be resolved – particularly with regards to contract negotiations.

• Out-date faculty recruitment system
  o At the moment the faculty recruitment system is heavily paper-based
    ▪ The system should be upgraded to an electronic system which would ultimately save time and resources

• No employee assistance program
  o UH Hilo did used to have an Employee Assistance Program but this was cut following budget cuts. It would however be helpful to assist employees with issues.

• The structure of the university does not always facilitate effective working
  o There are some areas where the sheer volume of work involved means that ‘roadblocks’ occur and prevent activities from progressing smoothly.
    ▪ It may be appropriate to review the current structure of the university to ensure that it operates efficiently and effectively.

Challenges for UH Hilo
The group identified the following as challenges for UH Hilo:

• Update/improve/expand our infrastructure
  o This is in terms of personnel, facilities and technology

• Manage increased student enrollment and ensure that the infrastructure is adequate to support such growth

• Continue good leadership to promote UH Hilo to the legislature and rally for funds

• Identity who we are and who we want to be
  o After clarifying our identity, promote it internally and externally to build confidence in the university and dispel current perceptions of UH Hilo as a ‘school of last resort’ or UH Manoa’s ‘poor cousin’

• Improve morale

Priorities for UH Hilo
The group suggested that UH Hilo should focus on the following priorities over the coming years:

• Clarify UH Hilo’s mission, vision and goals
  o In doing so, we need to better understand our organizational structure and perhaps review that structure to maximize support towards the mission, vision, goals
Highlight best practice for processes/activities/teaching within UH Hilo and other institutions and promote it throughout – don’t ‘reinvent the wheel’

Improve communications – internal and external, and both top-down and bottom-up
  o Doing so will have a positive impact on morale and build support for initiatives/activities

Retain people of high value to the university

**Appropriateness of the Current UHH Strategic Goals**
The group discussed the current UHH strategic goals and made the following comments:

**General points:**
- Nothing about preparing students for the workforce
  o Explore more internship opportunities within the university and with local businesses

**Goal specific points:**
- Goal 1 – doesn’t seem to currently reflect the activities of UH Hilo
- Goal 2 – missing reference to graduate programs
- Goals 3, 4, 5 and 6 – just as relevant now as previously