LISTENING TOUR 2010: MEETING WITH HANAKAHI COUNCIL
OCTOBER 14TH 2010

This note represents a summary of the meeting held with Hanakahi Council on October 14th 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:

- Support for Native Hawaiians
  - Ka Haka ‘Ula represents a landmark national program
    - spanning Native Hawaiian P-20 education
  - Keaholoa- mentoring program for STEM disciplines
  - UH Hilo offers good academic programs for Native Hawaiian’s and provides support necessary to succeed
    - Although more needs to be done
  - Retention of Native Hawaiian and first generation students is good

- University’s small size
  - Engenders a sense of community

- Location
  - Natural location affords a good setting for learning
  - Cultural value and diversity of the local community

- Strive to be reflective of the local population in our student body – particularly Native Hawaiians
  - The Kīpuka program is excellent, but more needs to be done

- Positive relationships between faculty and students
  - Particularly at the undergraduate level, students are able to engage in faculty-led research and have opportunities for internships
  - Atmosphere of openness by the faculty helps make them accessible to students
  - Faculty have a strong commitment to teaching (as opposed to focusing on research) which ultimately benefits the students
• Professors teaching 100-level courses
  o Students benefit from senior faculty teaching introductory-level courses

Weaknesses of UH Hilo
The group identified the following as key weaknesses of UH Hilo:

• Infrastructure
  o General lack of infrastructure to support current use and anticipated growth
    ▪ Lack of sufficient housing, classrooms, laboratories, offices
    ▪ Lack of sufficient human resources (i.e. positions) to support growth
    ▪ Native Hawaiian language not visible, not used in signage around campus or names of buildings (and generally lack of signage around campus)

• Vision and mission
  o Does not commit to a strong Native Hawaiian foundations

• Lack of diversity
  o Native Hawaiians are underrepresented in the faculty and staff at all levels
  o Lack of integration of Native Hawaiian values, perspectives and context in academic programs throughout the general curriculum (with the exception of Hawaiian language and Hawaiian studies courses)

• Financial resources
  o Lack of sufficient financial support to students to address the rising cost of education
  o Lack of money to build the infrastructure required to support growth

• Lack of engagement
  o Historically UH Hilo has failed to effectively engage the Native Hawaiian population on Native Hawaiian issues relevant to the running or activities of the university (e.g. Mauna Kea)
    ▪ However, it was noted that this has recently improved and that Hanakahi Council is taking more of an active advisory role to the Chancellor and administration on issues relevant to Native Hawaiians and Hawaiian culture.

• Bureaucracy
  o Students have to do a lot of running around to sort out issues. There is too much ‘I can’t help you, go see XYZ’ rather than a focus on ‘customer service’. Some services would benefit from streamlining to make them less complex (e.g. admission, registration, financial aid)
  o There are also high-levels of bureaucracy faced by faculty and staff (e.g. through procurement)
  o The Hawaiian language is not an available option on official UH/UHH forms and is treated differently for diploma

• Number of students transferring from community colleges
- Relationship with Hawaii CC needs to be fostered
  - Student transfers should be seamless and as easy as possible
  - Articulation needs to be strengthened

- Marketing
  - One of UH Hilo’s marketing strengths is in promoting the university, because of its unique location, as a ‘living learning laboratory’ – this is good way to promote STEM fields but the statement needs to be considered and defined more broadly to include cultural and language perspectives.

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

- Identity
  - Who are we as an institution?
    - We need a cohesive focus to be able to identify ourselves
    - We are currently trying to be all things to all people
    - There is a growing tension between the development of graduate programs and the consequential impact on the undergraduate core
    - Where does the increasing focus on STEM programs (nationally as well as locally) leave us given our ‘liberal arts’ education mission?
    - We need to find a niche for UH Hilo within the UH System – we have competition so we need to be fresh

- How to market ourselves/outreach effectively

- Infrastructure
  - How to address the housing problem
  - How to create new programs when there is a lack of classrooms, offices and laboratory facilities

- Increased enrollment
  - Increasing enrollment could have a negative impact on the quality of interaction between faculty and students. Given one of UH Hilo’s key attributes is its generally small class sizes, this needs to be addressed. The issue is therefore one of having larger class sizes to account for increased enrollment, versus offering more classes to try to keep class sizes ‘small’.

- Decisions on academic programming
  - Difficult decisions may need to be made about which programs to sunset, downsize or merge.

- Tuition
  - In a difficult financial situation, how can we increase revenue without increasing tuition for our resident population?
• Native Hawaiian retention and graduation
  o Work as a UH System to raise Native Hawaiian graduation/retention rates

• Increasing STEM focus
  o How can we improve Native Hawaiian retention in STEM programs?
    ▪ Part of this is knowing what job opportunities there are for holders of STEM degrees

• Tension in potential strategies to raise retention and graduation rates
  o While some advocate for increasing admission standards, we strongly believe that we need to focus on the students we have and better support them to succeed

• Tensions between resident and non-resident caps
  o Mustn’t lose focus that our resident population should be our primary concern

• Make summer school more affordable for students

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 and vision
  o Develop an identity for the campus that incorporates Hawaiian perspectives and promotes UH Hilo as a first choice

• Encourage greater diversity
  o Increase Native Hawaiian representation at all staffing levels, particularly the faculty and administration

• Address needs of residents – including Native Hawaiians
  o Ensure that UH Hilo academic programs meet community needs and reflect what the community wants
    ▪ Particularly ensure that STEM workforce needs are met

• Keep tuition affordable for students
  o The administration needs to seek sufficient, consistent and sustainable funding for the university

• Develop better partnerships
  o With the Community Colleges – especially Hawai‘i Community College
  o With the local community

• Ensure that curricula infuse Native Hawaiian ways of knowing
  o Ask, ‘what does a UH Hilo graduate need to know’ and ‘what does a UH Hilo degree look like’. What makes a UH Hilo degree unique and what skills, values and world view will our graduates leave with?
**Appropriateness of the Current UHH Strategic Goals**
The group discussed the current UHH strategic goals and made the following comments:

**General points:**
- Vague
  - There is nothing to disagree with in the current goals, but they are too vague
  - They need to be more specific
  - Some goals are reflective of our current priorities, but some are not – we need to ensure that our main priorities are reflected in our goals.
- A new goal could be to ensure Hawaiian perspectives/Hawaiian ways of knowing are infused into all UH Hilo activities and programs.

**Goal specific**
- Goal 1: ‘Liberal arts and professional programs’ is too narrow for what we are now doing – i.e. graduate programs and push towards STEM. We need to ensure that the new goals are reflective of our current offerings.