LISTENING TOUR 2010: MEETING WITH THE LONG RANGE BUDGET PLANNING COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 13TH 2010

This note represents a summary of the meeting held with the Long Range Budget Planning Committee on October 13th 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:

- Very productive faculty
  - Professors/PhD’s teach 100 level courses whereas other university’s use TA’s
  - Faculty successful in bringing in high research dollars
  - Faculty productive in producing publications

- High student-faculty engagement
  - Facilitated by small class sizes
  - Enables high interaction between students and professors
  - Particularly good number of undergraduates engaged in faculty-led research
    - Results in high quality undergraduate research papers
    - Represents part of the culture of faculty mentoring students

- Community links/relationships
  - Small, reachable community
  - Strong community and political support

- Location, location, location
  - Island as a living laboratory uniquely supports teaching and learning

- Diversity
  - Particularly in the student body and broader community

- Increase in effective planning at the university (though more needs to be done)
  - Improvement in shared-governance (as evidenced by groups such as the LRBPC)
- Note that the UH System is looking at the LRBPC as a model of how to enact long-term budgetary planning and monitoring
- Opportunities for student involvement in such groups/committees

- Financial management
  - Recently improved transparency of the budgetary process has greatly assisted budget-holders in managing their budgets and being aware of different funding streams.
  - Despite all of the cuts to higher education funding, UH Hilo is still doing ok in comparison to some other institutions.

- Academic programs
  - Good diversity of programs for our size
  - Some very good programs – particularly those that have achieved accreditation such as business and nursing
  - Many programs, particularly those that are ‘strong’ are enhanced by or take into account the geographic and cultural location of the university (e.g. ecology, evolution, anthropology, marine sciences, performing arts, English)
  - Many programs contain elements that take-up Hawaiian and/or pacific issues
    - Specifically, there are powerful programs that help to integrate Hawaiian culture and perspectives into teaching (e.g. Kipuka, Uluakea, Keaholaloa)

- Cultural sensitivity of the university
  - ‘Feel’ of the campus reflects Hawaiian culture
    - But there is more that could be done
  - Faculty, staff and students are culturally sensitive

- Division of Student Affairs
  - Energetically pursue grants to improve student support in order to enhance student experience – have contributed significantly to the overall monies that UHH brings in through grant-funding

- Library
  - Contains a uniquely accessible Hawaiian section
  - Good instructional information literacy program

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

- Vision and mission lack focus
  - We are silo-oriented and lack a university-wide view of issues.

- Reputation
  - UH Hilo’s reputation at local high schools is ‘not great’ – this is perhaps a hang-up from UH Hilo’s history as ‘Hilo college’. It is seen as a school of last resort for many.
  - UH Hilo is currently lacking a college-town feel in its partnership with the town of Hilo
• Academic program planning
  o Too many ‘small’ programs
    ▪ Priorities need to be identified and tough decisions made about which programs
to keep, which to merge and which to sunset.
  o Too many underfunded programs
    ▪ This is perhaps a product of bidding for less funds than necessary from the
System because of a perception that such bids will be more successful than bids
that request the actual cost of a new program.
  o In some cases, we are influenced by external constituencies to develop specific programs
rather than relying on appropriate planning
    ▪ However, it was noted that this is not always a bad thing as we need to be
responsive to external needs (the needs of the community) and be in a position
to respond flexibly to those
  o Planning is too often based on chasing dollars (that usually have ‘strings attached’) rather
than systematic, strategic planning
    ▪ Effective planning should drive the budget

• UH System constraints on our ability to plan

• Academic rigor
  o A member said, NSSE data demonstrates that UH Hilo students do not feel challenged
or engaged by their teachers.
  o Teaching evaluations are not an effective means of evaluating teaching effectiveness.
There is therefore a need to identify better metrics for measuring/identifying effective
teaching.

• Outreach
  o UH Hilo is not as connected to the rest of the Big Island as we should be

• Physical infrastructure
  o Growth for the sake of growing without considering broad infrastructural needs
    ▪ This has changed recently with planning now taking better account of
infrastructural needs pertaining to growth of the student body, but more needs
to be done. We need to grow our infrastructure to meet the needs of our current
student body, as well as building the infrastructure required for future growth.
  o Lack of additional study and eating/gathering places for students
    ▪ Limited hours of library mean that there is a lack of viable alternative study
spaces for students
    ▪ More student gathering places are required to enhance student life
      • Focus on developing community partnerships to increase the variety of
places to eat on and near to campus (walking distance) and things to do.
  o Lack of student housing
  o No building names
• Low morale
  o We are always being compared or comparing ourselves to UH Manoa. We need to empower UH Hilo and develop an identity that we can be proud of in our own right.

• Diversity is not leveraged in a positive way
  o Whilst the diversity of our student body and community within which we are situated is a great strength, it is perhaps used more as a ‘selling point’ rather than truly embracing diversity as a value of UH Hilo. That is, valuing what different people from different backgrounds have to say and can contribute to the university. We need to do better to educate students about diversity to help them develop a global perspective and appreciation for different cultures.
  o We don’t have a clear view of what diversity is composed of

• Conflict management
  o We are not effective in managing conflicts. We seem to try to avoid conflicts by trying to please everyone but this then contributes to a lack of focus.

• Communication
  o There is good communication in particular orbits but it does not permeate beyond those orbits.
    ▪ A campus-wide communications plan should be developed that sets out the types of key messages (e.g., policy, information, decisions) and how they should be communicated (e.g., ‘announce’ email, website, face-to-face)

• Graduation rates and retention

• No financial office
  o System constraints

• Lack of faculty and staff training and development opportunities
  o Including lack of a mentoring scheme for new faculty/staff

• Lack of opportunities for students/faculty/staff to interact socially

• Lack of orientation
  o Lack of orientation for new faculty and staff to help them settle into UH Hilo.
  o Although students have a week-long orientation, they have to pay for it which could be discouraging for some and a disadvantage for low-income students.

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

• Creating a fresh image for UH Hilo
  o Our marketing requires focus
We need to build a greater sense of pride in UH Hilo and what we can offer as a university.

- **Growth**
  - How to plan for growth when we are facing a change in the student demographic
  - How to ensure that our infrastructure catches-up with our current student population

- **Planning (broad)**
  - A number of major planning efforts are underway or will take place shortly (e.g. institutional strategic plan, WASC accreditation) and we are ‘thin on the ground’ on people available to drive things forward (at all staffing levels)
  - How can we encourage greater faculty involvement in such planning activities?
    - Need to better communicate the benefits of taking part in such efforts
  - Budget-linked targets
    - How to respond to the new budget-linked targets E.g. How to increase the number of degrees and certificates awarded

- **Academic planning and policy development**
  - How to develop a fair and transparent process that will enable us to evaluate all programs with a view to determining which to keep, which to merge and which to sunset
  - How to get to grips with graduate program development (in terms of what should be developed and how resourced, whilst taking into account the undergraduate core).
  - Key policy and practice developments (e.g. General Education) should be communicated, consulted on and implemented effectively

- **Organizational structure**
  - Following development of the institutional strategic plan, we should re-look at our organizational structure and determine where resources should be placed to drive forward actions necessary to move towards our strategic goals.

- **Partnerships**
  - It is imperative that UH Hilo builds more effective partnerships with other institutions within the UH System, particularly the Community Colleges (note budget-linked target of transfers from CC’s)

- **Communication**
  - How to ensure effective communication in a ‘blizzard of emails’
  - How to better manage lack of student continuity on key groups so that the student body remains engaged and updated on important policy developments over time

- **Keeping track of graduates**
  - We need to better track our graduates should so that we can identify how well they place in the job market and involve them in alumni activities
• The issue is that we do not keep contact details for graduates after they leave UH Hilo.

• Managing pressures on support services
  o New directions taken by the university, eg. move toward health sciences, is putting greater pressures on support services which need to be taken into account.

• Change
  o How to implement and manage change within the culture of UH Hilo

• WASC reaccreditation

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

• Identity
  o Determine who we are as a university: what defines us, who do we serve, what we do and where we want to be

• Planning
  o Identify our real strengths (existing and new), and build on them to address issues like morale and perceptions of UH Hilo
  o Planning should take place within the context of our identity and needs to be coordinated by strong leadership
  o There needs to be a clear academic program plan and processes to support it – we need to be able to determine what constitutes a ‘quality’ program
  o There should be a set of annual priorities that the university works towards (and which would support the institutional mission and strategic goals)
    ■ Resources (and therefore budget allocation) needs to be linked to these priorities

• Effective communication
  o Develop and implement effective communication mechanisms across the university
    ■ We need to differentiate between ‘need to know’ information and ‘want to know’ information

• Graduation and retention rates
  o Need to develop university-wide strategies to improve graduation and retention rates at UH Hilo

• Partnerships
  o Need to develop and improve partnerships at all levels
    ■ Internally – between faculty, between faculty and the administration
    ■ Externally – between other campuses within the system (including the community colleges), with the local community
Appropriateness of the Current UHH Strategic Goals
This question was not asked of the group due to lack of time but members were invited to submit any comments on the current goals direct to the facilitator, Siân Millard at uuhplan@hawaii.edu, or through the companion survey to the listening tour (www.surveymonkey.com/listening).