Key Points of the Chancellor’s Spring Gathering Speech

Action required: SPC members are asked to:

- Note the key points of the Chancellor’s speech as another form of evidence to inform strategic planning

1. Introduction

On January 26th 2011, Chancellor Straney hosted a ‘Spring Gathering’ to report on the university and welcome new faculty and staff. The Chancellor made a speech at this gathering, providing his thought on a few of the attributes that he’s discovered about UH Hilo that give us a competitive edge in the higher education marketplace. The committee may wish to consider these points as a further form of evidence during its discussions.

2. Speech Key Points

- UH Hilo is a strong university with excellent faculty and dedicated staff
- Graduation rates can be significantly improved. We need to graduate more than one in three students but we need to do it in ways that maintain the quality and standards of our programs
- We need to develop a 2+2 approach to curriculum development, together with Hawaii Community College to help prepare students for university level education
- UH Hilo’s comparative advantages:
  - Small class sizes that allow students to have the personal attention of PhD faculty who are active scholars in their fields
  - Integration of teaching and scholarship where faculty regularly collaborate with students on research and service projects
  - Practical experiences where UH Hilo prepares students well for meaningful and productive careers that will help build our island economy and strengthen our island communities
• Our island is the best place in the world to study:
  o Environmental and marine science
  o Astronomy
  o Volcanoes
  o Sustainable agriculture
  o Hawaiian studies and indigenous language revitalization
  o Conservation biology, and many other subjects
There is a strong ‘sense of place’ in these fields, and they all present opportunities for our graduates to make lifelong contributions to their own communities and help build a prosperous future.

• We are grounded in a strong sense of place where the culture and language permeate and strengthen everything about the way we live, teach and learn. We are building a vision that will not only be Hawaiian in name, but in the context of how things are done on campus.

• Our greatest areas of potential are: Rural health, environment, energy and agriculture

• UH Hilo is committed to having economic impact on the island economy. UH Hilo is the only university within the University of Hawaii System with a Science and Technology Park. This offers tremendous opportunity for more public/private partnerships.

• The state’s budget is challenging and we have not seen as big a rebound in the economy as we had hoped for. In addition, all state programs are stretched and under-resourced. As our economy recovers, we should see an increase in revenues to the university, but we will be in this situation for a while.

• We are dealing with a 22% reduction over the last two years to the general fund budget. We are trying to protect our instructional core, offer needed classes, keep class sizes small and support our students and faculty as best we can.

• We need to take advantage of every means at our disposal to generate revenue: extramural grants, fundraising, and working with the system to maximize income.

• As such, we need to make sure we achieve benchmarks proposed by the UH System to the legislature. Under this model, enrollment growth in undergraduates who are residents of Hawaii will increase revenue. Such growth should fund increased instruction. We also need to achieve the system’s targets for the number of degrees and certificates we award. We need to go about meeting these targets without compromising academic quality.