SUMMARY NOTE OF TOWN HALL SESSION 1 FOR THE DRAFT MISSION AND VISION CONSULTATION

January 24th 2011

1. Overview

Attendees = 4

Attendee stakeholder groups: 1 x community member, 1 x faculty, 1 x other UH System employee, 1 x E&M staff

This note is a summary of the first open town-hall session held for UH Hilo stakeholders on January 24th 2011 in relation to the draft mission and vision statements. The summary reflects individual comments made and not necessarily the consensus of all present or the official view of UH Hilo.

2. Introduction

Attendees received an introduction to the strategic planning process and were then shown the draft mission and vision statements. Participants were then asked for their feedback on these draft statements by responding to two questions for each one – what, if anything, they liked about the draft mission/vision, and what, if anything, they would like to change/amend in the draft statements. The resulting summary is organized around these two questions for both the draft mission and the draft vision.


'A'ohe pau ka 'ike i ka hālau ho'okahi

One learns from many sources

UH Hilo is committed to interactive learning, discovery, and creativity to benefit our increasingly intercultural communities.

3.1 What, if anything, do you like about this draft mission statement?

The Hawaiian wise-saying at the start

It is concise and therefore easy to remember

3.2 What, if anything, do you think should be changed/added to the draft mission?

'Interactive learning'
This phrase seems to imply that all learning should be interactive but that doesn’t necessarily reflect the self-directed learning that students undertake. An alternative could be ‘deep learning’.

*increasingly intercultural communities*

Does the word ‘increasingly’ need to be there? It implies change in our population but what happens if the population doesn’t change or remains the same. Increasingly therefore seems to be extraneous in this context.

This section of the statement identifies ‘increasingly intercultural communities’ as the beneficiaries of UH Hilo. It is not clear though whether ‘intercultural communities’ refers just to the university’s internal community (faculty, staff, students) or whether it refers to external communities or both. As it stands, the phrase seems too narrow and could more explicitly reference Hawaii, the Pacific region and broader world communities.

*Other comments*

Distinguish: The draft statement is a bit too generic and as a result does not fulfill the charge of distinguishing us within the UH System

Excellence/quality: The draft statement does not reference high quality education or include words like excellence or excel. By default this implies mediocrity.

Who we serve: It is not clear from the draft statement who UH Hilo serves. Students are not explicitly mentioned.


UH Hilo is a community of scholars working together across disciplines and differences to address real world issues. Every student engages in practical experiences connected to the people and environment of Hawaii, preparing them to compete, innovate, and lead in their professional and personal lives.

4.1 What, if anything, do you like about this draft vision statement?

‘connected to the people and environment of Hawaï’i’

This clearly reflects the university’s, and therefore our students, connection to Hawaii. It grounds student experiences in Hawaii’s culture and geography and reflects the island as a ‘learning laboratory’.

‘preparing them to compete, innovate, and lead in their professional and personal lives’

This last part of the draft statement that focuses on preparing students for the workforce and their lives is clear and a good focus for the vision. It is clear that the focus is on the students in this phrase. The word ‘innovate’ particularly resonates with the skills/abilities that people need today to succeed in the workforce.
4.2 What, if anything, do you think should be changed/added to the draft vision?

‘community of scholars’

This could be narrowly interpreted as just relating to the faculty whereas all faculty, staff, students and the broader community form the community of UH Hilo. Alternatives could be ‘community of learners’ or, reverse the phrase and have ‘scholarly community’ or ‘learning community’.

‘working together across disciplines and differences to address real world issues’

The working together part is clear, but ‘to address real world issues’ seems to just refer to the dollars and cents business. It doesn’t clearly reflect theoretical debate or inquiry with no obvious application to ‘real world’.

‘Every student engages in practical experiences’

‘Every’: The word ‘every’ implies a mandate that may not be achievable. Alternatives are ‘student’s experience’ or students have to the opportunity to experience’.

‘Practical’: Do the experiences only need to be practical? Is there a more encompassing word like ‘applied’, or do we need to specify what type of ‘experiences’ at all? Could they just be ‘experiences’?

It is not clear how the ‘practical experiences’ will prepare students for their professional and personal lives. It needs something about what the students go through to become prepared e.g. discovery and experiences as a portal to preparing students for their professional and personal lives.

Other comments

Vibrancy: We need to pursue a lush and vibrant academic community

Broader community: The statement, particularly the second sentence, is internally focused on student outcomes but it also should look outside of the UH Hilo ‘box’ to the positive impacts that could reverberate to the broader community. That it, the draft vision statement needs to paint a broader picture of what UH Hilo will be in 2020, in terms of what it will be known for.