Summary of SPC’s Email Exchange on Mission (December 2010) and Summary of SPC’s December 7th Mission Discussion

Action required:  SPC members are asked to:

- **Note** the summary of discussions so far
- **Utilize** the summary to determine the framework through which the mission should be developed
- **Agree** key content for the statement

1. Initial Mission Discussion Summary – December 7th SPC meeting outcomes

1.1 Who we are – key elements

- Public university serving the communities of the Island and State of Hawaii, broader Pacific region and beyond
- Strong undergraduate base in the arts and sciences – many offered in a natural cultural and scientific learning environment
- Select professional and graduate programs in particular areas of expertise or community need
- Focus on teaching and research, and integrating the two

1.2 What we offer – key elements

UH Hilo as a ‘gateway’/’doorway’/’portal’ to:

- **Community stewardship**
- **Cultural knowledge, appreciation and awareness**
Hawaiian experience and broader cultural diversity.
A global experience on one small/intimate campus.

- **Personable and interactive campus**
  - Includes interaction with faculty, staff and fellow students
  - Small class sizes, enabling high level of student-faculty interaction. Not just a number.

- **Practical, active and individual learning opportunities**
  - That is, learning outside of the classroom experiencing the island’s natural and cultural resources
  - Opportunity to engage in research at the undergraduate-level

- **Engaging and challenging academic opportunities**
  - Scholarship and research quality and rigor
  - Good variety of undergraduate programs (esp as a small campus) provides solid liberal arts base, enhanced by select professional and graduate programs in fields of expertise

1.3 Summary of summary

- We educate in a unique **multi-cultural environment**
- We are a **personable and interactive** campus
- We pursue **teaching and research excellence** – and the integration of the two
- We offer **natural cultural and scientific learning opportunities**

2. Email Exchange Summary

This section attempts to summarize the key points raised during the email discussion SPC members had about UH Hilo’s mission. The comments general related to two aspects: Format of the mission ‘statement’ and its content. The statements suggested by some members are also replicated here.

2.1 Format

Options:

- Short and snappy statement, period.
- Short and snappy statement, followed by an explanatory narrative
2.2 Content

- Recognizing contribution of research/creativity as well as teaching/student learning
- Thinking about what we ‘produce’ – a ‘product-focused’ approach
- Thinking about what impact we want our graduates to have in the world
- If referencing diversity, recognizing that is broader than ethnicity
- Guarding against explicitly referencing one stakeholder group – ensuring the mission statement reflects all at UH Hilo
- Being cautious about the use of labels like ‘liberal arts’, ‘comprehensive’ etc. Focus on what we do, not what label may be applied to us
- Possibility of splitting out ‘who we are’ (e.g. provide broad undergraduate base and targeted grad programs, personable and interactive campus etc) versus ‘what we do’

2.3 Early Draft Suggested Statements

UH Hilo is the gateway to active learning, guided exploration, and academic excellence in the heart of Hawaii. Students are trained by faculty who believe that discovery and creativity are key elements for both teaching and learning.

The primary mission of UH Hilo is to produce graduates who have the interest, expertise and ability to make a meaningful impact in our global society.

A student of the University of Hawaii at Hilo will be exposed to an organization dedicated to the accumulation, application and dissemination of knowledge in traditional liberal arts, vocational and professional fields. The faculty who will instruct our students believe that the research and creative endeavors in which they are engaged are central to their ability to train, to the highest quality, undergraduate and graduate students.