1. Overview

Attendees = 7

Attendee stakeholder groups: 2x E&M staff, 1x faculty, 4x staff, 1x student

This note is a summary of the first town-hall session held for UH Hilo stakeholders on April 12th 2011, in relation to the draft strategic plan. 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 referred to the draft strategic plan. Participants were then asked for their feedback on the plan, split into two sections. Section 1 covered the mission, vision, who we are, and what we stand for parts, and Section 2 the goals and actions. Each section was taken at a time and participants asked for their feedback – particularly in terms of what they liked, and what they recommend changing or clarifying. The resulting summary is organized around these two questions for both Sections.

3. Summary Comments – Section 1: Mission, vision, who we are, and what we stand for

3.1 What, if anything, do you like about this section?

Mission and vision statements

That both statements now lead with a Hawaiian wise-saying (‘Olelo No‘eau)

Vision

That the vision stated focuses on an application of learning

The reference to working together across disciplines

3.2 What, if anything, do you think should be changed/added to this section?

Although the reference to working together across disciplines is good, this doesn’t currently happen a lot at UH Hilo so there is a challenge for implementation. Also, the term ‘disciplines’ implies only academic partnerships, not necessarily partnerships involving other areas of the university (e.g. student services).
To resonate with the UH System goals, UH Hilo’s service to Native Hawaiian populations could be explicitly referenced here. The mention at the moment is only in respect to the Native Hawaiian culture and values, not service to the people.

4. Summary Comments – Section 2: Goals and Actions

Participants were asked for their comments on each of the goals and their supporting actions.

4.1 Goal 1 – Provide every student with applied scholarship experiences that prepare them to thrive, compete, innovate and lead in their professional and personal lives

Goal supporting text – what are ‘out-of-class experiences’? This term needs to be clarified.

Action 1.1 – the word ‘instigate’ has a slightly negative connotation. Perhaps ‘initiate’, ‘commence’ or ‘commit’ would be better alternatives.

Action 1.3 and goal description – does the term ‘applied scholarship’ inadvertently exclude other forms of scholarships? Should the draft plan just refer to student scholarship rather than applied scholarship?

Action 1.7 (and throughout draft plan) – what does the term ‘recognize’ mean in terms of how faculty would be recognized for mentoring students? Does it mean through the tenure process? It needs to be further defined to be more meaningful and implementable.

4.2 Goal 2: Inspire academic excellence through scholarship in teaching and research

Goal heading – suggested amendment to refer to the application of the outcomes of teaching and research scholarship and their benefit to students and the broader community. Suggested rewording: ‘Inspire academic excellence through scholarship in teaching, research, and application that benefits student and community need’

Goal supporting text – insert the word ‘local’ into the last sentence so that it reads ‘…creative analysis presented at local and national conferences’ so that it is clear the local community also benefits from the outcomes of the university’s scholarship activities.

Action 2.5 – this action doesn’t seem to sit with this goal. It is an important action but either needs to be moved to a different goal (e.g. Goal 1) or the heading and text of this goal needs to be amended to refer to interdisciplinary opportunities. It was also noted that the term ‘disciplines’ in this action seems to limit interdisciplinary partnerships to the academic side of the university, where it could be broadened to include other areas of the institution (e.g. partnership between colleges and student services, collaborations between different parts of student support services etc). As such, the phrase ‘interdisciplinary cooperation/coordination that benefits community and student need’ may be better (i.e. remove the term disciplines).

4.3 Goal 3: Foster a greater sense of campus community through a vibrant, sustainable, and well-maintained environment within which to study, work and live
Goal heading and supporting text – the term ‘campus ecology’ is an alternative suggestion to ‘campus environment’. A campus ecology would focus on a warm and friendly campus with less walk-up windows, covered walkways to shelter people from Hilo rains, and giving buildings ‘proper’ names instead of, for example, PB or UCB.

Action 3.4 – a new campus pub and/or café could serve as a good piko for the university. In relation to gathering places, the university has recently reissued its smoking policy to all faculty, staff and students, and this policy sets out where people cannot smoke, but does not seem to make provision for where people can smoke. It would be helpful to identify specific, covered smoking areas for those who choose to smoke, that will not create conflict with those who choose not to.

Action 3.6 – the focus on sustainability is good. We could perhaps aim higher to be a leader in campus sustainability.

4.4 Goal 4: Build and sustain a distinctive identity that cultivates and celebrates our diverse, multicultural university, and radiates out from the unique core of our officially bilingual state

Goal supporting text – the emphasis on Native Hawaiian values and perspectives gets a little lost in the first sentence. It could be brought out more. The wording could also be strengthen to say how the Native Hawaiian culture shares with and embraces other cultures.

Action 4.3. – it isn’t clear what this ‘education incubator’ structure is or what its intended outcome is. It’s unclear to how the incubator is different to what U Hilo already has now through Ka Haka ‘Ula. The action should focus on what the intended outcome is, rather than the building of an infrastructure (incubator).

Missing – an action in this goal could be dedicated to UH Hilo’s commitment to serve the Native Hawaiian population (as set out by the UH System).

4.5 Goal 5: Strengthen UH Hilo’s impact on the community, Island and state of Hawai‘i through responsive higher education, community partnerships, and knowledge and technology transfer.

Action 5.5 and goal supporting text – there is an implied hierarchy in ‘technology and knowledge’ transfer in terms of the focus being on science. It may be more appropriate to list ‘knowledge’ first as this is broader, then ‘transfer’ so the phrase would be ‘knowledge and technology transfer’.

Action 5.6 – the focus on working with community partners to spark the development of a college-town is good.

4.6 Goal 6: Facilitate organizational excellence by fostering a culture of continuous innovation, responsible resource development, and effective communications

Action 6.4 – whose job is it to determine the funding priorities based on the strategic plan? This needs to be clear – not necessarily in the plan document, but for implementation.

5. General Comments

Participants raised the following general comments about the draft strategic plan:
• There could be a greater emphasis on the university experience for students and the ways in which that experience has a positive impact on their personal, as well as academic, growth.

• How will the plan help to set priorities? At the moment, although all areas and goals are important, is it too ambitious given the current budget situation? Perhaps less actions, or greater specificity in the goals or actions would help.

• When published, the strategic plan should be in English and Hawaiian, reflecting the bilingual nature of the state. That then raises the question about whether the plan should be made available in other languages spoken on the Island.