‘What Really Matters at UHH?’
Survey Consultation Report

2010-2018 UHH Strategic Plan: Pre-planning

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this survey consultation was to gain views on UH Hilo (UHH) from a broad range of stakeholders to help inform development of the 2010-2018 Strategic Plan. The survey was essentially a SWOT analysis, asking for views on the University’s Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, as well as key aspects it should prioritize over the coming years. 502 full and partial responses were received with engagement achieved from different groups across and, in some cases, beyond campus. Responses to each open question were analyzed by thematic analysis to identify common themes and issues.

What is evident from the findings is that themes relating to each question do not exist in isolation. Rather, they interrelate and in some cases are dependent on each other, representing the challenging complexities of an institution such as UHH. Different ‘faces’ of the same theme are in some cases identified under different questions. For instance, community engagement is highlighted as a strength of the University, but it is also highlighted as a weakness and an opportunity in terms of improving community partnerships.

Findings indicate three main categories of themes: academic standards and direction, internal functioning and operation, and external engagement and influences.

*Academic standards and direction* includes issues such as teaching quality, course evaluations, admission standards, graduate versus undergraduate education and support for non-traditional students.

*Internal functioning and operation* highlights issues relating to UHH’s identity, infrastructure (physical and technical), internal relationships and communication, strategic planning and crime and security.

*External engagement and influences* covers aspects such as UHH’s location, marketing and branding, community engagement, student recruitment, and partnership working with business.

*Strengths* of UHH centered around its unique location and the diverse cultural and environmental influences that impact positively on the University. This was evident in key academic strengths such as marine science and Hawaiian studies programs. The small size of University also affords relatively small class sizes which were identified as an important factor in developing strong student-faculty relationships and facilitating learning in a personal environment. However, students recommended that this unique aspect of UHH could be further built upon by improving teaching quality through taking more account of and acting upon student course evaluations.

Targeted marketing and branding activities were identified as necessary to better highlight UHH’s unique aspects and fully capitalize on its strengths. Improvement to the University’s infrastructure – e.g. housing, parking, building maintenance – was also noted as a key area requiring attention to enable the University to grow, where such growth would need to be appropriate with a focus on quality not quantity. To support all of these areas, respondents identified a general need to improve strategic planning across UHH to bring students, staff and faculty together to work towards a common vision and goals.

*Weaknesses* of UHH were wide ranging – from significant issues with the existing infrastructure, to criticisms of the current leadership and administration of the University. Poor physical and technical infrastructure was identified as hindering growth,
negatively affecting UHH’s image, and impacting on the University ability to deliver high quality education. Low admission standards were generally viewed as a strong contributing factor to UHH’s low student retention rate, especially with regards to accepting underprepared students to the University. However, this view was not shared by all respondents with others saying that the University is one of access and therefore has an obligation to provide effective remedial support to those who require additional help. Poor academic rigor was also raised and explored through intrinsically linked subthemes of teaching quality and course evaluations.

UHH was identified to have a poor reputation and identity crisis with a lack of unified vision or priorities and lack of school pride. In relation, there were varying views about the academic direction that UHH should take with some arguing that a lack of graduate programs was a key weakness, whereas others argued that development of graduate programs was detrimental to the undergraduate core.

There was widespread criticism of the University’s leadership and administration, particularly with regards to ineffective planning and decision making. Poor internal working relationships within and across campus colleges and units were also highlighted as a significant issue and contributing factor to low staff and faculty morale.

Limited distance learning opportunities and lack of day-care facilities on campus were criticized as making it difficult for some non-traditional students and students from the West-side of the Big Island, to attend UHH. Increased crime and safety concerns were also raised as issues by student respondents in particular.

Opportunities for UHH were wide-ranging. New leadership, through a new Chancellor, was identified as an important opportunity to re-energize the University and develop a shared vision for the future. This was also represented with regards to the majority of respondents recommending that UHH’s traditional undergraduate program be extended to include more targeted graduate programs in areas of specific need and expertise that take full advantage of the University’s unique location. This view was though not shared by all respondents with some highlighting that the University’s existing expansion into the provision of graduate education has come at the expense of the undergraduate core. Development of partnerships with organizations like local High Schools and Hawaii Community College were seen as key to better support UHH’s academic programs and student enrollment and retention. UHH’s proximity the China and Asia was also referenced in this regard with some respondents highlighting given UHH’s position in the Pacific it is an attractive place for international students to come study.

Indigenous culture and language revitalization was referenced by respondents as a growing global interest area and respondents noted that UHH is well placed to respond to and contribute to this interest area given its existing internationally recognized work in Hawaiian language and studies. Opportunities to make the campus environmentally sustainable and provide improved access to non-traditional students and students from the West-side of the Big Island through distance learning and outreach centers were also noted as important opportunities to take advantage of.

Threats to UHH primarily focused on inadequate funding and competition for limited resources with other universities and colleges within the UH System. This was particularly in relation to the impact on infrastructure developments, student recruitment and retention (if tuition fees have to be raised), attracting and retaining faculty and staff due to poor salaries, and ultimately being able to grow as a university. Respondents recommended that to deal with this problem prioritization of resources and activities is required, guided by clear goals and reasons, and alternative revenue streams should be proactively sought.
Other threats related to internal operational issues including the effect of continued ineffective leadership, acceptance of the status quo and unwillingness to change, and a failure to articulate an identity for the university.

Priorities identified for UHH effectively summarize the key issues concerning respondents. First and foremost was a request the UHH urgently seek to reevaluate its identity and vision for the future – without such the University would not be able to address many other of the issues already identified. Improving student success outcomes was highlighted along with focusing on academic excellence and academic program development to capitalize on existing key programs and develop new ones (particularly graduate programs) in areas of opportunity. The importance of working in partnership with the local community and local businesses was also identified as important to enhance the University’s role in supporting community needs. Activity development in these areas should though be done whilst seeking appropriate growth and ensuring that the campus has the infrastructure to support its goals and keep the campus safe and secure.

As can sometimes be the case with surveys of this nature, there is a tendency for respondents to focus on the weaknesses and challenges in an effort to highlight areas that require improvement. It doing so, the positives can sometimes be lost within a myriad of constructive criticism and the challenges ahead can be left looking daunting and unobtainable. However, as respondents were keen to point out under further comments, UHH has enormous potential and dedicated staff, faculty and students who have the skills and desire to support necessary change and make it happen.

This report therefore seeks to reflect the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and priorities of UHH as put forward by its key stakeholders and constituencies. What is set out highlights the significant challenges facing the university as it prepares to enter a new phase under new leadership. It is evident is that the critical issue of the University’s identity and who it serves needs to be resolved before many of the other issues raised can begin to be addressed. Whilst some of those issues may at times make uncomfortable reading, they represent an honest and open constructive criticism of the University from the people who know it most intimately – its students, faculty, staff, alumni and others. Their feedback, as summarised in this report, will to help UHH identify ways to move forward in a unified, effective and successful way.

This task will fall to the UHH Strategic Planning Committee. This Committee (to be formed in fall 2010) will consider this report and other evidence gathered during this ‘pre-planning phase’ to review and redefine the University’s mission, vision, priorities and goals. They will seek to attach appropriate strategies and relevant measurable objectives, to ensure all at UHH knows the steps they need to take to help the University reach its goals. This will be done in collaboration and consultation with UHH’s stakeholder communities so that this planning process and its outcomes will be clear, transparent and owned by all. Publication of a Strategic Plan/Framework document (target date May 2011) will reflect the outcomes of that process, and set the agenda for implementation and monitoring through strategic leadership and management.
2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Purpose of the Survey Consultation

The primary purpose of the survey consultation was to invite stakeholder views on ‘What really matters at UH Hilo?’ (title of the survey) to help inform development of the next 2010-2018 UHH Strategic Plan. Part of a broader ‘pre-planning’ initiative, the survey was designed to gain views on the University’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, as well as key aspects it should prioritize over the coming years. It compliments a face-to-face facilitated ‘listening tour’ with key groups across and beyond campus, which will take place from June through October 2010.

2.2 Context

The current UHH strategic plan expires at the end of 2010. Coupled with this, in 2008, Chancellor Rose Tseng announced her intention to step down from her role as UHH’s senior executive leader at the end of the 2010 academic year. As a change in Chancellor was therefore expected, it was decided by Chancellor Tseng that formal strategic planning should not begin until the arrival of the new Chancellor (Chancellor Don Straney). However, to help prepare the campus for this process, ‘pre-planning’ via this survey was initiated in spring 2010, with the listening tour following over the summer and fall. It is anticipated that development of the next UHH Strategic Plan will begin from fall 2010 with the appointment of a Strategic Planning Committee by Chancellor Straney. This committee will take into account evidence collected from this pre-planning phase as well as other relevant strategic documents in its development of the new plan.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Questionnaire design

The survey was a web-based self-completion questionnaire (see Annex I) issued via ‘Survey Monkey’ and responses were completely anonymous. There were a total of 14 questions in the questionnaire, with a mix of closed and open questions and appropriate routing. Questions one to four were closed questions to determine respondent groupings (e.g. student, faculty, community member) and where they worked or studied (if appropriate). Questions five to 14 were open questions asking for views on UHH’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, priorities and any further comments.

3.2 Timetable and Communication

The survey went live on April 29 2010 and closed on June 10 2010. An initial announcement advertising it was issued on April 29 2010 through the UH Announce listserv distribution list to all UHH faculty, staff and students. An advert was also placed on the UH website under ‘News’, as well as via UHH Twitter, the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs Twitter and the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs facebook page. In addition, some individual groups not on the UH Announce listserv or without regular contact with the UH website were sent the link directly. Such groups include UHH alumni, Hui Ka Ua and the Mauna Kea Management Board. Senior administrators also reminded colleagues at various meetings and encouraged participation.

Two reminders were issued during this period. The first reminder was issued on May 18 2010 and the second on June 7 2010. Both were sent via the UH Announce listserv to all faculty, staff and students.
3.3 Changes to the Questionnaire

Two amendments were made to the survey after it had gone live. The first was made on May 1 2010 and involved the addition of an ‘RCUH employee’ category to question 1 following feedback from a respondent. 12 respondents had completed the survey before this option was added. The second change, made on May 4 2010, was an additional question at the end of the survey asking for ‘any other comments’ to capture any other points respondents may wish to make about the university or about the survey. 60 respondents had already completed the questionnaire before this question was added.

3.4 Analysis

3.4.1 Analytic approach

Analysis of the qualitative responses was undertaken using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a method by which recurring patterns are identified across a dataset. Thematic analysis is a flexible qualitative methodology and can be used in different epistemological frameworks (see Braun & Clarke, 20061 for a discussion). For the purposes of this study, an essentialist approach was taken reflect the respondents’ reality in the themes identified. In that vein, inductive thematic analysis was conducted where there was no preexisting coding framework and essentially the data ‘spoke’ for itself. Six stages of analysis were followed:

1. Familiarization with the entire dataset by repeated reading.
2. Generation of initial codes (e.g. code 1 for lack of housing, code 2 for lack of parking, code 3 for poor building aesthetics).
3. Searching for themes – collating codes into potential themes (e.g. codes 1, 2 and 3 all relate to a broader theme relating to infrastructure).
4. Reviewing themes – checking back to the dataset to see if the themes ‘work’ and reflect the entire dataset.
5. Defining and naming themes – refining, naming and defining themes.
6. Producing the report – production of the report is intrinsic to the qualitative analysis process involving selection of compelling, vivid quotes to support identified themes.

Themes were identified at the semantic, or explicit, level of the data. Interpretation of these largely descriptive themes was then undertaken to summarize the issues raised and highlight the significance of the patterns identified.

3.4.2 Disclosure control

A potential risk of disclosure was identified with regards to reporting the respondent group and associated college or unit in the comments used to support each theme. This was particularly the case where there were potentially only a few people in a particular grouping. For example, if there are only a few people in a particular staff grouping at a particular college or unit then there could be a potential disclosure risk. To guard against any such potential disclosure, all respondents who identified themselves as UHH civil service staff, UHH APT (Administrative, Professional and Technical) staff, and UHH E&M staff do not have their college or unit reported. This is also the case for some faculty where the unit they work in has only a small number of faculty attached to it. Whilst care has been taken to select supporting quotes from across different respondent

groupings and different colleges/units, this disclosure control measure does mean that it is not always possible for the reader to explicitly determine that is the case.

4 OVERVIEW OF RESPONDENTS

502 full and partial responses were received. Of these 326 (65%) were fully completed responses and 176 (35%) were partial responses. Partial responses were defined as those who had completed at least one of the open questions in the survey. *Chart 1* below shows the distribution of respondent groupings for all responses:

*Chart 1: Stakeholder Distribution*

The main respondent groupings were UHH students (43%), followed by UHH faculty (27%), UHH APT (Administrative, Professional and Technical) staff (10%) and UH civil service staff (8%).

Of the student group, *Chart 2* illustrates which college they were studying under:

*Chart 2: College of Study*

The majority of student respondents studied under the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS)(66%), reflecting the largest college on campus. The second highest response rate was from students studying under the College of Business and Economics (CoBE) (13%), followed by the College of Pharmacy (CoP) (7%), Ka HakaʻUla O Kʻelikōlani
College of Hawaiian Language (Ka Haka ‘Ula) (5%), College of Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resource Management (CAFNRM) (5%) and College of Continuing Education and Community Service (CCECS) (1.4%). 4% of respondents classified themselves as ‘other’ and included responses such as ‘University of Hawaii @ Hilo’ and ‘Distance Education Student’.

The spread of faculty respondents by area is represented by Chart 3 below:

**Chart 3: Distribution of Faculty Respondents**

Just over half (53%) of all faculty respondents identified that they worked in CAS, reflecting the size of this College in comparison to the others. 11% of respondents worked in CoBE, with 9% in CoP, CAFNRM, CCECS and Ka Haka ‘Ula each reflected 5% of respondents, with the remainder identifying that they work within administrative divisions or the Edwin Mookini Library. There were no faculty respondents from the Division of Research.

Staff respondents were from a wide variety of areas as illustrated by Chart 4. The Chart indicates an issue with the response categories given that there was a relatively high number of ‘other’ responses (8%). The majority of these were from Library staff indicating that a separate Library category would have been appropriate.

**Chart 4: Distribution of Staff Respondents**
The majority of respondents (23%) were from the Division of Student Affairs, with the second largest group (18%) from the Division of Administrative Affairs. There was a good spread of respondents from the different colleges, and other divisions and units.

The remaining structure of this report follows the order of the questions asked in the survey. Common themes are explored and supported by quotes from respondents to illustrate key points.

5 UHH STRENGTHS

Two questions relating to the strengths of UHH were asked of respondents. The first question asked respondents to identify what they considered to be UHH’s main strengths. 344 (68%) answered this question. The second question asked respondents for their view on how such strengths could be capitalized on. 310 (61%) answered the question. What follows is a summary of the themes identified from both questions

5.1 Diversity

Diversity was a particularly prevalent theme across respondents, both in terms of the different cultures offered by the student body and local community, and in terms of the range of subjects offered by UHH.

5.1.1 Cultural diversity

Respondents commented that there is a ‘Multicultural, international student body’ (UHH civil service staff) at UHH resulting in a ‘wide diversity of different cultures’ (UHH student, CoBE ‘that creates a global perspective within a relatively small community’ (UHH APT staff):

‘diversity of students that give students a greater awareness of global issues and cultural similarities/differences’ UHH faculty, CCECS

‘It’s diversity. There is a wide variety of people from different walks of life that I have encountered here at the school. It is a pleasure to be able to meet them around campus and be given a glimpse of what their culture is and how it functions.’ UHH Student, unknown College

The level of cultural diversity at the University is also seen to highlight UHH as ahead of its peers in promoting appreciation for individual differences:

‘Cultural diversity of the community, and general level of appreciation for differences. No place is perfect but in this regard we are light years ahead of much of the world.’ UHH faculty, CAS

5.1.2 Program diversity

The diversity of subjects offered for study at UHH was noted as a strength by some, particularly given UHH’s small size:

‘diversity of educational opportunities’ UHH civil service staff

‘Diversity and breadth of topics in such a small campus’ UHH faculty, CAS

Note though that lack of graduate programs is referred to as a weakness under Section 6.7 and opportunity under Section 7.3.

5.2 Location of UHH

The geographic location of the University in regards to the environment and culture of the Big Island and broader Pacific region offers a unique opportunity for hands-on
learning – particularly for the natural sciences and the study of indigenous cultures and languages:

‘programs that utilize the natural and cultural environment of the Big Island’ UHH faculty, Division of Academic Affairs (except colleges)

The benefit of the ‘environmental resources such as variety of climate zones, Mauna Kea’ (UHH civil service staff) were particularly identified as important, enabling faculty and students to access a ‘natural laboratory’ (UHH faculty, CAS) ‘that supports and encourages education and research in the natural sciences’ (UHH faculty, CoBE):

‘Access to natural laboratory. Unique location and position to do good science’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘We have in our backyard the best observatory location in the world. We are surrounded by a lot of agricultural land. We have an active volcano. Our environment contains most of the renewable energy resources found around the world’ UHH student, CAS

The ‘small rural community location’ (UHH faculty, Division of Academic Affairs (except colleges)) was seen as positive by some with its ‘fewer distractions than Oahu’ (UHH student, CAS).

5.3 Student-Faculty Interaction

Of key importance to students and faculty alike is the level of student-faculty interaction achieved across campus. Respondents identified that small class sizes enable a low student-teacher ratio meaning that students benefit from greater interaction with their instructor:

‘The student to instructor ratio is small, allowing instructors to help students more and easier’ UHH student, CAS

‘Small class sizes. Close working relationship between faculty and students’ UHH faculty, CAS

As a result, students identified that they can build strong relationships with their fellow classmates and professors which helps to facilitate learning:

‘Small class sizes for most classes, get to know the professor and the class well’ UHH student, CAFNRM

‘The small class sizes allow students to personally communicate with their teachers and build strong bonds that facilitate learning’ UHH student, CAS

‘The small classes –and you get to know your profs and they get to know you; not just a face in the crowd’ UHH student, CoBE

In terms of the quality of the student-faculty interaction, some students commented that their professors were ‘Helpful and flexible’ (UHH student, CAS) and ‘Interactive, intelligent and relaxed’ (UHH student, CoBE):

‘Many knowledgeable, effective professors/instructors’ UHH student, Ka Haka ‘Ula

‘Accessible, friendly and knowledgeable faculty’ UHH student, CAS

However, where the level of student-faculty interaction was viewed as positive and identified as a strength of UHH, it is also evident that some students do not feel fully satisfied with the quality of teaching (see also Section 6.6.1). Students therefore suggested that to fully capitalize on the low student-faculty ratio, more consideration is taken of student evaluations of courses/faculty to help improve teaching standards.
‘Read the reviews that students hand in at the end of the semester!! Some professors have no teaching experience and therefore have no idea how to teach and this frustrates students!.... Many professors continue to be bad teachers semester after semester’ UHH student, CAS

‘Ensure that the comments left on the end of the term teacher evaluations are put into place. Many times students leave comments on how the teacher could improve the course, but seldom do the professors make changes’ UHH student, CoBE

‘Recognize effective teachers (based on student evaluations) Do not reward teachers simply for being at UHH for a long time- some tenured professors are not effective - reward those who are great at engaging students, are effective at getting students to understand course material’ UHH student, Ka Haka ‘Ula

5.4 Academic Strengths

Respondents highlighted key academic strengths of the university; particularly marine science, Hawaiian studies and pharmacy. Examples of highlighted areas include:

‘Marine Science, Agriculture, Geology, Liberal Arts, Counseling Psychology, Pharmacy Program, Education’ UHH faculty, CCECS

‘Programs such as biology, psychology, geography, anthropology, marine sciences, Hawaiian culture’ UHH APT staff

‘Strong and unique programs in a number of core fields, Hawaiian Studies/language revitalization, pharmacy, business, marine science’ UHH faculty, Ka Haka ‘Ula

‘college of pharmacy, Hawaiian Studies and Hawaiian language programs, Marine Science program’ Other, full-time senior citizen student

‘exemplar programs that attract students to this campus from outside Hawaii (e.g. marine science, pharmacy, Hawaiian language) or that meet high demand majors (e.g. business, psychology, teacher ed, nursing) or graduate certifications (e.g. counselling psych, social work)’ UHH E&M staff

The majority of programs mentioned are those that can take advantage of the unique geographical and cultural environment of the Big Island and surrounding region. Indeed, respondents recommended that the University capitalize on these academic strengths by seeking to take full advantage of the local environment and local community – particularly by developing more graduate programs:

‘develop graduate programs for specialized fields that can utilize resources that are unique to the Big Island (i.e. Volcanology, Astronomy, Stream Ecology etc.)’ UHH alumni

‘Continue to offer programs that suit the environment (social and physical). Offer professional and graduate programs that can capitalize on these strengths.’ UHH APT staff

‘Continue to support the development of graduate programs however they also need to build and strengthen the undergraduate programs to support the advanced degrees’ UHH faculty, CoP

However, there were conflicting views on this with not all respondents supporting a shift towards graduate programs amid concerns about the impact on UHH’s traditional undergraduate, liberal arts roots.

‘Focus on undergraduate liberal arts core and on how we can best serve the specific students we have instead of bemoaning that our students aren’t prepared’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘slow overall growth and avoiding the development of new/graduate programs through degrading of “core” liberal arts’ UHH faculty, CAS
5.5 Student Support Services

Students were complimentary about some of the services available to them, particularly on the social side through the Student Life Center:

‘Good financial aid. New facilities such as the student life center’ UHH student, CAS

‘Student Life Center great addition to campus’ UHH student, Ka Haka ‘Ula

‘Student Life Center is FANTASTIC (hours, accessibility to all students, equipment, classes etc)’ UHH student, CoP

However, note that under Section 6.9.3 some students have questioned whether membership of the Student Life Center should be part of their tuition fees as not all utilize it.

Students also identified the financial aid services available as an asset:

‘I feel the Financial Aid staff, with its friendliness and efficiency is a great asset’ UHH student, CAS

‘Online help and financial aid’ UHH students, CAS

‘Amazing student support services’ UHH alumni

Although, there was suggestion that given the difficult financial climate, UHH should do more to help students financially by, for example, funding more scholarships especially those from out-of-state:

‘If there are ways to help students with finances such as lowering tuition or increasing aid and scholarships, now is the time’ UHH student, CAS

‘Have funds or scholarships to help the students afford out-of-state tuition’ UHH student, CAS

5.6 Community Engagement

There was a general perception that UHH’s engagement with the local community is positive and reciprocal in that the university supports the community through providing access to local students and having programs relevant to community needs, and the community supports the university:

‘the community is very supportive of UHH. Businesses seem to really appreciate the contributions that students from Hilo have to offer them’ UHH student, CoBE

‘Determinations to serve our community, by both accepting the students from the community and by interacting in the community’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘good relationship and mutual appreciation with the community (from which we draw our students and which helps sustain us)’ UHH faculty, Office of the Chancellor (including associated units)

However, although the current level community involvement was identified by some as a strength in its own right, respondents suggested greater community engagement is necessary, particularly to ensure the University is integrated within the local Big Island community (see also Section 9.7). This could be achieved by (1) offering more programs that directly relate to community needs:

‘get more involved in community, offer more classes that fit community needs’ UHH student, Other
‘Create mechanism to work with the community to meet community and university needs together. Build trust with the local community by working together to create programs that better the community, state and region.’ UHH faculty, CAFNRM

And (2) working more closely with the community, especially local high schools, to help prepare and recruit local students:

‘Have administrators and faculty even more involved in the community showing that the university is not restricted to only smart, rich people, but is for all the local community.’ UHH civil service staff

‘Making sure that UH-Hilo will always take care of the community that it exists in by supporting and encouraging University attendance by our local population.’ UHH faculty, Ka Haka ‘Ula

‘Really put yourself into the local community more, sure UHH is local but really outside of the classroom and campus I don’t see the effort to bring in more local people. Do more things with the high schools, with this economy kids can’t afford to go out of state, but many don’t know about how great UHH can be. I know when I was in high school, everyone said UHH was a junk college, which now I know is completely not true. You need to push the fact that UHH’s #1 concern is the people of Hawaii and the Big Island as well as exposing them to the rest of the world.’ UHH student, CAS

‘Host local concerts to support local artist and entertain the local community. Host high school support for interested schools (show them classes and different activities at school to gain interest). Engage students in school and other community activities.’ UHH student, CAS

5.7 Improve Marketing

The strongest theme from respondents in terms of capitalizing on the university’s strengths was in relation improving marketing, branding and external communication about UHH:

‘Opposed to advertising the ability for students to surf, go hiking, etc., UHH could advertise the ability to participate in research/projects on geothermal events, rainforests, marine mammals, etc. To my knowledge, no other college/university in the U.S. can offer the ability to take a field trip to an active lava flow...’ UHH student, CAS

‘Stronger marketing specific to living laboratory majors instead of diluted marketing in an effort to try and capture a little bit of everything that UHH has to offer. We do a lot of things, but only a few things exceptionally well.’ UHH E&M staff

‘We need to tell our story - highlight our advantages - to potential students and supporters again and again. I’d like to see some target marketing to see what works best in convincing students to come here.’ UHH APT staff

‘Really pushing the uniqueness is key and it will come at the expense of losing some of our “well-roundedness”. But that’s what modern business and marketing is about--meeting the needs of a niche market.’ UHH APT staff

‘I’d hate to lose the small campus experience by advertising it, but I don’t think too many people realize what an excellent opportunity is right here in Hilo!’ UHH student, CAS

Respondents therefore are keen to see UH Hilo push its unique aspects in marketing and external communications to help ‘tell its story’ and highlight its achievements.

5.8 Improve Infrastructure

A recurrent theme through responses to all questions was the need to improve the university’s infrastructure – physical and technological. Improvement of infrastructure
was identified as key to enable UHH to capitalize on its strengths. Without appropriate infrastructure, respondents stated that the university would be unable to support its continuing growth and therefore be unable to support its students, faculty and staff.

‘Making sure the campus has proper infrastructure support to meet our priorities’ UHH E&M staff

‘Making sure we have the infrastructure for our growth’ UHH faculty, CAS

Suggestions included keeping the campus well maintained, upgrading buildings and classrooms, increasing and improving student housing and increasing parking.

Provide improved and increase infrastructure to accommodate the local potential student and the international students’ RCUH employee

‘Upgrade the building to make it more inviting to students and parents’ UHH civil service staff

‘We need to encourage other modes of transportation, or car pooling in order to solve parking problem’ UHH student, CAS

A fuller exploration of the issues surrounding UH Hilo’s infrastructure is provided under Sections 6.9 (weaknesses), 7.7 (opportunities) and 8.2.2 (threats).

5.9 Appropriate Growth

Linking to the need for improved infrastructure, some respondents identified that growth at UH is required to help the university capitalize on its strengths but that such growth should be appropriate and not detrimental to the overall quality of education provided. As a result, whilst respondents generally accepted the need for growth, they issued caution over how that could be achieved:

‘Realize we cannot be and do everything. We must have priorities. We need to support what we currently do well before we grow’ UHH E&M staff

‘Focus on quality, not on headcount’ UHH faculty, CoBE

‘Although I can appreciate the growth of UHH, I am somewhat concerned at HOW we are constructing our future. It appears to be losing much of the unique UHH flavor that many have come to appreciate. Can we retain this and grow our budgets at the same time? I would think so. But it will take diverse, creative minds to go after diverse, creative funds’ UHH faculty, CoP

‘Do not grow too fast. Improve quality before increasing quantity of students, programs’ UHH student, Other

‘Stop trying to get the instructors to take on larger class sizes just because you want to make more money’ UHH student, CAS

Respondents therefore urged that growth should be sought at a pace that enables the university to improve the quality of its existing programs and infrastructure.

5.10 Improve Strategic Planning

In order to fully capitalize on UHH’s strengths, respondents identified that strong and appropriate strategic planning and strategic engagement is required. This was in terms of improving the framework within which decisions are made and activities are focused:

‘Strategic planning to identify those activities for focused development; Review state workforce needs, paying attention to demographics and avoiding cyclical planning responses; Review global trends in higher education to see how to leverage strengths; Review of appropriate class size to
achieve high level of faculty-student interaction, while covering more ssh with full time qualified faculty’ UHH E&M staff

‘by focusing more, we just are not strategic!’ UHH faculty, CAS

As well as bringing together all who work or study at UHH by creating a unified vision and set of key goals that everyone understands, buys-into and works towards:

‘Let students and faculty feel they are part of a worthwhile institution. Help all of us be able to talk the UHH story well, not just our little dept’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘Take steps necessary to bring us (departments, programs, employees, student, etc.) together and to work together. This should greatly reduce the downtime/overhead produced by UHH’s working family as well as involve more people in UHH’s perpetuation’ UHH APT staff

‘1. Establish a vision of an organization that is agile and adaptable to necessary upcoming infrastructure changes. 2. Do organization reviews, revalidating all current processes. Identify the infrastructure needs of the future. Revamp outdated, inefficient processes, and those that will become ineffective later. 3. Inculcate the workforce with the strategic vision. Gather their input during the organization reviews. Train them in the new processes. 4. Constantly monitor, evaluate, correct, develop and implement improvements. A transformation such as this will create a more fulfilling work environment for the workforce.’ UHH APT staff

6 WEAKNESSES

Two questions relating to the weaknesses of UHH were asked of respondents. The first question asked what respondents considered to be UHH main weaknesses. 320 respondents (63%) answered this question. The second question asked for views on how such weaknesses could be addressed and improved upon. 294 respondents (58%) answered this question.

Overarching all themes was a general sense that lack of appropriate funding in tandem with increased student body growth has led to and or exacerbated many of the weaknesses reported.

‘We need to pause growth so we can attend to those that are already here, and focus on getting them the resources and opportunities they need. Our graduation rate is key indicator of our inability to successfully meet students needs’ UHH APT staff

This was most apparent with regards to the university’s physical and technical infrastructure. Other issues ranged from concerns about academic standards and leadership, to UHH’s identity and crime and security.

6.1 Identity

There was a general sense from respondents (mainly faculty and staff) that the University has an ‘Identity complex’ (UHH APT staff) both of itself and within the broader UH System. More specifically, respondents commented that UHH lacks ‘a coherent vision of what the university is supposed to be and where it is going to go’ (UHH faculty, CAS):

‘We do not presently have a unified vision of our goal’ UHH E&M staff

‘Lack of unified vision about the University’s position re: the community and the UH system’ UHH faculty, Division of Academic Affairs (except colleges)

Respondents acknowledged that the development of a unique identity for UHH would ‘take time and LOTS of conversation’ (UHH E&M staff) and rely on a strong strategic vision and mission that is supported by clear and appropriate strategies:
We need a clear and radiant vision of what we can be over the long term and an understanding of the hard work and specific strategies needed to get there' UHH E&M staff

‘providing many and varied ways for all faculty, staff, etc. to contribute to developing a shared vision, and for owning and feeling clear about whatever the mission is’ UHH faculty, Division of Academic Affairs (except colleges)

Some respondents identified the Chancellor as the key figure for instilling such an identity across the University:

‘Have a Chancellor who is a good leader, who selects a good staff and leads by example in holding people accountable for providing excellence in services and service, and is effective in forming and implementing the right vision for this university. Instill pride in this university as a great alternative to Manoa as well as internationally unique’ UHH APT staff

The university’s position within the broader UH System was also identified as important in terms of determining and clearly articulating UHH’s role and identity within the System:

‘Need to work with the overall University system to develop a clear vision for the role of UHH and how it fits into the larger strategic objectives of the delivery of higher educational opportunities to the State of Hawaii’ UHH APT staff

From a student perspective, the weakness in UHH’s identity centered round a ‘lack of school pride’ (UHH student, CAFNRM):

‘there is no school spirit or community, people tend to identify more with Hilo the town rather than UH-Hilo’ UHH student, Other

‘Lack of spirit, not much cohesion among fellow students’ UHH student, CAS

‘low school spirit, low participation in on-campus events’ UHH student, CAS

Students therefore suggested that UHH ‘have more variety of activities available for students’ (UHH student, CAS), with a particular focus on advertising sporting events and other activities with more energy and effectiveness:

‘Make things more fun, advertise sports more, spirit days, etc. Get a football team’ UHH student, CAS

‘clubs and organizations should create and send out more announcements about events P.A. system on campus to announce things to campus’ UHH student, CAS

Others suggested that the university invest in creating varied hang-outs for students, including varied study areas, other than the library which has limited hours, and different eating places and food options (see also Section 6.9).

6.2 Reputation

Respondents from across different groups stated that UHH has a ‘poor national reputation’ (UHH faculty, CAS):

‘UHH does not have a high reputation or image’ UHH student, CoBE

Several reasons were put forward to explain this weakness. Some suggested that it was affected by a ‘Satisfaction with status quo mediocrity’ (Other) in terms of not driving forward effective change:

‘Advertising that is often poorly done and is not circulated broadly enough’ UHH faculty, CoBE
Whilst others viewed that the school’s admissions criteria harms its reputation and that UHH is potentially seen as a ‘school of last resort for too many’ (UHH faculty, CAFNRM):

‘our lack of selectivity is harming our reputation. HS counselors see us as the place to go for students who can’t get into UH Manoa’ UHH faculty, CoBE

However, the view that UHH has a poor reputation was not a universal view with some respondents commenting that the previous Chancellor, Chancellor Tseng, ‘did a wonderful job of raising the image of the university’ UHH faculty, CAS

Responses varied on how UHH could improve its reputation, reflecting the complexities of ‘reputation’ as a concept rather than a concrete physical, practical or process driven issue. Some respondents suggested that employing ‘Higher admission standards’ (UHH faculty, CAS) and ‘higher expectations for faculty, higher standards for students (selection/grading)’ (UHH faculty, CAS) would, as a consequence, improve the University’s reputation.

However, it could be argued that this would only be achieved in association with appropriate and successful ‘Marketing’ (UHH faculty, CCECS) to better promote UHH (see also Section 5.7). In that sense, UHH students themselves represent a powerful marketing tool:

‘Working on building a better image or making people proud to be A UH student so that they will recommend and share their experiences with other prospective students’ UHH student, CoBE

6.3 Leadership and Administration

A strong theme throughout the survey, faculty and staff respondents were critical of the administration of UHH and its associated leaders and governance bodies. This view was pervasive and not clearly restricted to any particular level of leadership and governance. Different aspects of leadership were criticized, from poor planning and decision making which has a detrimental effect on the university and its units:

‘Lack of effective senior management and leadership. Poor decision making and planning. Inability to make decisions’ UHH APT staff

‘Poor leadership, lack of vision, and little follow through. Units are left to fend for themselves with very little resources’ UHH E&M staff

‘We have a dysfunctional faculty governance situation…[they] are more interested in their own prerogatives than they are in the creating real partnerships on campus. They are agenda driven’ UHH faculty, CAS

To issues around the structure of leadership positions at UHH, with respondents perceiving the current administrative set-up as too complex and top-heavy for a university of this size:

‘Poor leadership…The leaders, or so called leaders, surround themselves with "yes" people. Too many special assistants, asst. deans, asst. vice chancellors, etc. These people are often senior faculty who simply don’t want to teach anymore but who want to tell other faculty members how to teach. It is disheartening and demoralizing to work in this atmosphere’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘A far too complicated administrative hierarchy for an institution this size. Having such a high ratio of administrators to either faculty or students creates an imbalance that results in lots of busy work. With a chancellor, vice chancellors, assistant vice chancellors, deans, associate and assistant deans, division chairs and department chairs. This is way too top heavy for efficiency’ UHH faculty, CAS
Ideas to improve the leadership and administration of UHH were wide-ranging. Some suggested drastic approaches such as ‘A whole sale change in leadership from UH system on down’ (UHH faculty, CAS) and ‘Identifying ineffective personnel and retraining, reassigning or replacing them’ (UHH APT staff). Others recommended that those in leadership positions be held more accountable for their performance:

‘hire administrators, keep them un-tenured, review them regularly, share those reviews with the campus community’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘have administrator’s salaries connected to our graduation and retention rates, not determined by piggy-backing on faculty negotiations (when admin bear no risk of having to go on strike) or determined by ingratiating oneself with higher-ups in the system’ UHH faculty, CoBE

Where responsibility for monitoring the performance of those in leadership positions and acting upon unsatisfactory performance would rest with a Chancellor who should have strong leadership skills:

‘A strong and focused chancellor should empower internal leadership (VCs, Deans) and also hold them accountable, not by micromanaging, not by pulling them off task for tangents, but by keeping the campus’s eyes firmly on a shared vision. (Getting to a shared vision...that’s the hard one)’ UHH faculty, CAS

Respondents also suggested the policies and procedures be reviewed and streamlined (e.g. travel expenses) to provide clear and explicit guidance to empower employees to make decisions and support transparency of process:

‘In terms of administrative infrastructure, it’s nearly impossible for faculty to accomplish anything due to the Weberian beaurocracy that exists here. It sometimes takes 6-8 months for faculty to get reimbursed for travel expenses, and nearly every request gets sent back by some mid level beaurocrat due to a set of non-published rules that they make up as they go along. It’s also ridiculous that a line 3 manager (dean) was required to sign all purchases over $250 at various points this year.’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘There are old and outdated policies that need to be revisited. (In a sense, doing things a certain way because it has “always been done that way” instead of noticing a snag and being proactive to make a positive change)’ UHH APT staff

With regards to improving administrative policies, process and procedures, respondents focused on reviewing and streamlining policies and procedures (travel as an example) and providing clear and explicit guidance to empower employees to make decisions:

‘To be honest, it would be best to start over by re-engineering the entire organization (both personnel and policies). Short of this type of drastic step, it would be good to provide a clear set of procedures for employees and to actually empower them to make decisions. For example, have a clear procedure document telling an employee exactly what they need to do to travel and then don’t deviate from it’ UHH faculty, CAS

One respondent suggested that to do this, UHH should ‘Encourage staff and faculty to find areas for positive change and implement more efficient procedures and practices’ along with encouraging and leading ‘the UH system to streamline and clarify policies and procedures (revisiting and changing those that are no longer working well)’ (UHH APT staff).

6.4 Internal Relationships

Significant issues were raised around poor working relationships and conflicts within and between different groups across campus, and the negative effect this has on morale and the potential for working towards common goals. There was a perception that faculty and staff are ‘Not working together across colleges, departments and divisions’, and are too ‘focused
on how programs and opportunities benefit only themselves or maybe their division, but rarely the university’ (UHH faculty, CAFNRM):

Faculty remain somewhat fractured. There is no central focus for us to meet and exchange ideas on campus’ UHH faculty, Division of Academic Affairs (except colleges)

Faculty fatigue. The same people do much of the committee work and there’s very little sense of collegiality amongst faculty. UHH faculty, CAS

The relationship between faculty and UHH administration was also noted as an issue and contributing factor to low faculty morale, as well as inadequate communication across campus and between units:

The relationship between the faculty and the administration has been a big problem in the past. Faculty would engage more if they were encouraged. UHH faculty, CAS

improve communication all the way around: between departments, to the students, to the community’ UHH faculty, Division of Academic Affairs (except colleges)

Incomplete or inadequate communication between units, causes duplication and often gaps in service. UHH APT staff

We could also find ways to communicate better on all levels and develop a better track record of success for campus-wide collaboration on important initiatives’ UHH faculty, Office of the Chancellor (including associated units)

Similar to student suggestions that more and varied activities may help to improve school spirit and pride (see Section 6.1), faculty respondents recommended that a ‘Campus Pub or, at the very least, weekly pan hana’ (UHH faculty, CAS) as a central meeting or gathering place would help to bridge gaps, improve communication between faculty and staff, and have a positive effect on morale:

By building a central meeting area for faculty, where they can relax, dine and exchange ideas. From this relationships could be formed that could help focus faculty energies towards meeting campus goals’ UHH faculty, Division of Academic Affairs (except colleges)

Faculty morale, interaction, and engagement must be improved. One thing that would help would be a pub/restaurant/bar on campus where faculty and staff could meet and interact. As it is now, if anyone wants to relax and talk over a beer, she/he has to go up to the dorms to get one! If the faculty are more engaged and interactive, the students we be as well. UHH faculty, CAS

Other suggestions were to ‘Give up on the UH vs. RCUH designation and treat the whole university and its accomplishments as a resource to leverage into the future’ and ‘Reconfigure the colleges such that they make sense in today's world and interdisciplinary approaches of teaching and academia’ (UHH faculty, CAFNRM).

6.5 Admission Standards

Generally, respondents perceived that admission standards are too low and that as a result some students are underprepared for University-level work, and those who are prepared are sometimes not challenged enough by the courses. Both of these factors have a potential impact on student retention.

We are completely non-selective, and everyone knows it—parents, potential students, HS counselors. Having completely unprepared students in the classroom doesn't help anyone, least of all those students, who are surprised and disappointed when they fail. UHH faculty, CoBE

‘Academic rigor is non-existent and the barriers to entry with respect to the admissions process leaves much to be desired’ UHH student, CAS
Pursuit of headcount has caused us to lose focus. The "we'll take anyone" message has resulted in a measurable decline of the academic credentials of incoming freshmen over the past 10 years, and an increase in the percentage of truly marginal students. While we're increasing our percentage of less-qualified undergraduates, the state's academically prepared undergrads are choosing to go out of state.'UHH faculty, CoBE

To address this problem, respondents mainly recommended that admission standards be more rigorous:

'Make the admissions process more rigorous. Doing so will increase the level of talent and caliber of student.'UHH student, CAS

However, this perception is challenged by others who, whilst recognizing that some students require additional support to help them with their studies, reference UHH’s responsibility to serve the population and therefore be a University of access to all potential students. Respondents who took this view suggested that more efforts be made to work with underprepared students to help them succeed by, for example, working more closely with Hawaii Community College:

'UH-Hilo tends to follow models from other places rather than build on our own strengths. The current talk of raising entrance standards is an example. We should be leading in showing how to successfully educate under prepared indigenous and other minorities.'UHH faculty, Ka Haka 'Ula

'more close relationship between HCC and UHH to insure that "remedial" courses are taken at HCC prior to entering introductory courses at UHH, if such is necessary (most students could benefit from some English, math, science courses before entering the introductory level at UHH (most high schools, at least in Hawaii, do not seem to prepare most students for college)'UHH faculty, CAS

6.6 Academic Rigor

Academic rigor, particularly in terms of teaching quality and the level at which courses are taught, was identified as a key issue by faculty and student respondents. This issue links closely to the general, though not universal, perception identified in 6.5 above that the admission criteria for the University is too low:

'Our primary weakness is academic excellence-- from the students that are admitted, a select number of faculty and instructors who create the learning environment and in the academic quality of some of the degree programs and certificates offered' UHH APT, Division of Student Affairs

6.6.1 Teaching quality

Both faculty and students commented that teaching quality was poor in some cases:

'More and more instructors who are not good teachers. Brilliant minds, just not good teachers. As a result more and more students are failing. This happens across the board.'UHH faculty, CoP

'Boring professors. Some professors ramble on in class and sometimes they are off subject.'UHH student, CoBE

However, in relation, respondents identified a lack of training and development opportunities for teacher's to help improve teaching skills:

'There is not investment in faculty development programs to improve teaching' UHH faculty, Division of Student Affairs
There was also a perception from some students that those faculty who are not ‘good’ at teaching are unwilling to improve their teaching performance.

‘The constant complaint among students is that faculty are not good at teaching and are not interested in improving their teaching.... Although there are a few good professors, there are so many bad professors who do not care about students or teaching quality that it really decreases the ability of the graduate programs to provide excellence in education’ UHH student, CCECS

Along with suggesting that student evaluations are utilized more effectively by faculty (see section 5.3), student respondents suggested that teaching quality could be improved by ensuring teachers are skilled in teaching practices and methods, and providing greater hands-on learning opportunities by building on UHH’s unique location:

‘Addressing each teacher's weakness in effectively teaching that subject by offering refresher courses on how to teach effectively and not theoretically, and by giving a yearly or bi-annual report based on teacher evaluation forms returned by students’ UHH student, CCECS

‘Make sure professors stimulate their students and keep them engaged. This could be done through group work, hands-on activities, field trips, etc. Students have different learning styles, and professors should have an array of teaching methods to appeal to all students’ UHH student, CoBE

‘provide training in teaching skills to your faculty! This can be done through some sort of center for teaching quality on campus. Many campuses do this and ask that their new faculty attend these sessions which provide training in classroom learning strategies, syllabus construction, transparent grading policies, grading rubrics, effective communication, use of technology in the classroom, and efficient online delivery of educational materials. You can also provide incentives for attending training sessions through some small professional development grant that a new faculty member receives for completion of teaching quality seminars’ UHH student, CAS

Other suggestions included holding departments more accountable for teaching standards, as well as providing dedicated training and development workshops for teaching faculty to help and support them improve their skills:

‘Improve teaching, and hold departments/colleges more accountable to their students from beginning to end’ UHH faculty, Division of Student Affairs

‘Develop a center for teaching excellence that actually conducts workshops for faculty on teaching methods and tools’ UHH faculty, CoBE

6.6.2 Course evaluations

Faculty respondents argued that the University’s ‘focus on teaching evaluations to evaluate teaching’ (UHH faculty, CCECS) is ineffective. Indeed, it was argued by some that the evaluations serve to undermine teaching standards given their link to tenure and promotion decisions:

‘dumbing down (or grade inflation) to get good student evaluations in order to stay hired’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘We don’t hold the bar high enough for our students. We don’t push them to achieve. We don’t make them competitive in the workforce because we accept less than stellar performance in class because we want good teaching evaluations’ UHH faculty, CAS
There was therefore suggestion that faculty tenure and promotion policies be reviewed and changed to ‘Make sure strong teaching is an essential part of the tenure process’ (UHH faculty, Other Division of Academic Affairs).

Both faculty and student respondents suggested changes to the way in which courses and teachers are evaluated to help better monitor and improve teaching quality (see also Section 5.3). Faculty ideas included having ‘senior faculty review classes to ensure that they are holding the bar high enough for good academic achievement’ (UHH faculty, CAS) and ‘Evaluate ourselves on what students know when they graduate’ (UHH faculty, CAS):

‘more systematic mentoring/evaluation system; open communication with students, past, current and future and hear their opinions’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘Modify teaching evaluations, have senior faculty review classes to ensure that they are holding the bar high enough for good academic achievement’ UHH faculty, CAS

6.7 Graduate Programs

There were varying views on the provision of graduate programs. Some respondents said ‘There’s not enough Master’s or Doctoral programs’ (UHH alumni) which makes it difficult for graduate students who wish to stay on the Big Island and continue with further study:

‘There are very few post-bac opportunities for students who wish to study at the graduate level without leaving this island (which is a rich place to conduct research). These graduates could also help us support undergraduates’ UHH APT staff

However, others stated that the recent growth in graduate program provision, whilst positive in some ways, has been achieved without a proper mechanism for supporting graduate students and with detriment of the undergraduate core:

‘Graduate program is good, but tends to leave undergraduates in the cold’ UHH APT staff

‘we have graduate programs but no mechanism to support grad students. What support those programs do get takes away from UG program funding’ UHH faculty, CAS

Those who suggested that UHH’s limited graduate program choices was a weakness, recommended that more be developed, particularly in areas that could capitalize on the unique environment of the Big Island (see also Sections 5.4 and 7.3):

‘Create more graduate/professional programs that will put UHH on the map as one of the best schools (if not, the BEST) for studying biology and related fields’ UHH alumni

‘Develop more programs, particularly graduate level’ UHH APT staff, CCECS

Whereas as those who identified the graduate programs as not being properly supported or negatively impacting on the undergraduate core recommended holding-off on the creation of new programs until the current ones are properly resourced. In that vein, some suggested that the use of teaching assistants, to support faculty and enable teaching experience for graduate students, should be investigated:

‘Put a temporary cap on the proliferation of new programs and shore up what we already have. e.g. -- before we add more graduate programs, we need to address questions like providing TAs’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘Invest in TA’s to help professors in all programs’ UHH student, Other

‘Find the funding for TAs. This will take a load of mental work off of the faculty freeing them up to create better teaching plans, and publish better papers and provide basic teaching experience to students. Win win situation. Well worth the additional funds. This will increase the quality of the university overall and making it more distinguished, attract more students, and
increase the school's chances at getting large research grants from national organizations’ UHH student, CAS

6.8 Support for Non-traditional Students

Comments relating to a lack of support for non-traditional students were made by student respondents in particular. These respondents referenced a lack of resources, including affordable day-care facilities and distance learning opportunities, to enable those with children, those who do not live in or around Hilo, and/or those who are working, to undertake an education at UHH:

‘No option for parents who take care of small children to attend class or take exams. No drop off and pick up style day care center’ UHH student, CAS

‘No assistance for parents who are trying to attend school with children’ UHH student, CAS

‘More resources should be available for nontraditional students. Many students at UHH have children or work or are coming from backgrounds other than high school’ UHH student, CAS

‘Need to provide more on-line and distance learning opportunities. Fewer people have the ability to take a large time out of their life for college. On-line and distance learning is a way to allow students to take classes and work/take care of family/etc.’ UHH APT staff

To improve support for UHH’s non-traditional students, and therefore improve the university’s accessibility to these current and potential students, respondents suggested:

(1) The university invest in an appropriate day-care facility:

‘Open a daily drop-off day care for students to use based on class schedule. I am open to paying a fee for the time my child would be in the day care’ UHH student, CAS

‘Create a drop off day care that will afford students with children the ability to go to class without having to take their kids’ UHH student, CAS

And (2) Invest in and develop a greater selection of on-line, distance learning opportunities to reach a wider potential student base and enable more people on the Big Island, and beyond, to reach their educational aspirations:

‘Integrate on-line and traditional learning. Bring on-line learning into the colleges and not just CCECS. Use technology, video, to record all classes and distance learning can view them on their own. Bring a convenience factor to education to allow for more people to participate.’ UHH APT staff

‘We need to offer fully accredited degrees online, not just a few courses here and there and not just for one or two majors. Students with a busy schedule will be able to continue their education without having to attend on campus classes’ UHH civil service staff

‘We need to pay attention to distance learning…Many of our students work and have families. We need to enable them to reach their educational goals and become higher wage earners’ UHH faculty, CCECS

‘For those of us who have families on the island and are not able to relocate, provide more Master’s degree opportunities, or better inform us on distance learning options’ UHH student, CAS

6.9 Infrastructure

Concerns about the physical and technical infrastructure of UHH and some campus facilities like food services were prevalent across all respondents. Generally comments were made with acknowledgement to a lack of funding and also to a marked growth in the student body over the past years.
‘UHH has a tendency to want to grow faster than it can put down infrastructure, thus causing perpetually growing problems. Examples of lack of infrastructure at UHH could include the student housing shortage, a lack of office space for staff, as well as a gross lack of parking available during peak times’ UHH student, Ka Haka ‘Ula

6.9.1 Physical infrastructure

Lack of parking, dormitory space, classrooms and office space, along with generally poor building conditions (both internally and externally) were cited as the main weaknesses in UHH’s physical infrastructure (see also Section 8.2.2).

Students reported instances of not being able to attend classes of time due to problems finding a parking space:

‘The parking lots are full at times even if you have a parking pass for the zone’ UHH student, CoP

‘The parking situation has also been a main problem. There are many students who simply give up and go home instead of going to class at times when they are unable to find parking. It is one of the most frustrating problems which only seems to be getting worse’ UHH student, CoBE

Classroom and office space was also highlighted as a problem:

‘Not enough classrooms’ UHH civil service staff

‘Space issues for classrooms and offices’ UHH faculty, CAS

Aside from space issues, respondents noted many of the buildings are run-down, externally and internally, and that this can have a negative effect on the image of UHH and its attractiveness to potential students and their families:

‘Some of the classrooms have also been around since the school first began and it is very easy to see that in some buildings. I think the overall look from the age of the buildings sometimes discourages some people’ UHH student, CAS

‘Run down and outdated facilities. There are many places on the campus that are quite frankly an embarrassment. There are locations where vegetation is growing on top of the roof. Some buildings are mold infested to the core of the structure. The K building is infamous on campus for this problem. All in all the campus has a lackluster appearance reminiscent of an aged community college. If UHH wants to attract new students from out of state, it needs to be more presentable’ UHH student, CAS

‘UHH has to improve its accessibility. On the buildings that have automatic doors, a disabled person can get in the hallway, but then cannot open the door to any classrooms. Additionally, the automatic door openers are frequently broken. Many disabled people find the tropical climate of HI to be ideal for them. If the campus would be fully accessible, this could be a way to attract these students.’ UHH student, CAS

That said, respondents did acknowledge that the university has recently built new structures and reference recent refurbishment work that is currently being undertaken. However, they highlighted particular aspects of buildings that should be prioritized for maintenance and/or updating, such as air conditioning units:

‘Smelly moldly EKH building with an inadequate AC system. Not conducive to learning and poses a health risk. Invest money in a new AC system that is suitable for working in a humid environment. The current system never works right. Some classes are way too cold and others are smelly and hot’ UHH student, CoBE
Students in particular highlighted the potential for investing in sustainable sources of energy for building utilities (see Section 7.7), suggesting that UHH seek to capitalize more fully on its unique environmental location in this regard:

‘The buildings constructed on campus should also be built to the highest standards of sustainability and accessibility; not just the minimum. UHH could become known as a very environmentally conscious campus across the nation.’ UHH student, CAS

‘Make the university a campus center for environmental leadership—tangible actions like all new buildings need to be LEED certified, on-campus composting, better recycling, covered bike parking spots, more carpool spots, solar power, etc.’ UHH student, CAS

‘Create more recycling areas and have more solar and wind powered generators on campus! Turn the air conditioning down! If there are budget cuts then why is the A/C on so high that students are going to class in sweat shirts and long pants in the hot climate of Hawaii?’ UHH student, CAS

6.9.2 Technological infrastructure

Weaknesses in UHH’s technological infrastructure were identified as a key issue, primarily by students. Frustrations in relation to slow and/or outdated technology, including broken computers, poor audio during lectures and limited internet/wireless access were reported. Respondents also noted an inconsistency in facilities across campus:

‘UHH technology SUCKS. Classroom UCB 102 has really [expletive] computers. It will not allow us to log on, it will freeze on us. And may I remind you this is a "classroom." And it’s not only UCB, COBE computer lab...OMG, talk about dinosaur aged computers. How come the Geology lab has a HUGE, nice, classroom friendly computer lab and we only get a small 16 (if even) computer lab with a printer that doesn’t even work.’ UHH student, CoBE

‘Limited or no wireless access in the residence halls. Some of the older classrooms still have cat-3 cables which will not allow for faster network connections.’ UHH APT staff

‘Spend more money on technology, PLEASE. I had classrooms where some computers didn’t even work.’ UHH student, CoBE

‘Technologically behind. Crappy computers, internet, lacking technology that should be at such an institution.’ UHH student, CAS

6.9.3 Campus facilities

One of the main weaknesses reported by students related to campus facilities, particularly the cost of and lack of options for food, cost of the Student Life Center, cost of books, and hours of operation and resources available from the Library.

Food

Respondents complained about the provision of food by the sole campus food provider, Sodexho. Lack of food options, places to eat, hours of food availability and food cost were all referenced as issues:

‘Students have been complaining about the lack of affordable food options. I understand Sodexho is in control of the food but the prices are becoming so expensive. With Sodexho being the only provider of food on campus, it becomes frustrating at times for some students who simply choose not to eat because of the prices.’ UHH student, CoBE

‘Food availability. Sodexo too expensive and very limited choices and times.’ UHH civil service staff
Respondent suggestions to improve food services focused mainly on changing the current contractor and instead partnering with local Hilo/Big Island businesses to provide a variety of venues and affordable food options across campus:

‘Cut Sodexo contract and begin working with local cafes and snack shops that they may market to consuming students instead’ UHH student, CAS

‘Give our dining services contract to a Big Island company’ UHH student, CAS

‘Offer more menu choices under $5 to help provide us students who are struggling to pay for these basic necessities. Students would still be spending their money on campus but it wouldn’t force us to have to use so much of it on food’ UHH student, CoBE

‘Lease space for a pizzaria, or have Sodexo manage a pizzaria. Students love pizza, but just as important, they need a hang-out. Do the same thing with a burger joint but in another location. Mix it up. Provide a variety of food options with different atmospheres and venues. At this point in time, I would say the need for food venues IS MORE IMPORTANT to our retention issues than classroom space’ UHH APT staff

Books

Some students stated that books from the UHH bookstore are too expensive:

‘Expensive bookstore materials’ UHH student, CAS

‘Bookstore prices are too high’ UHH student, unspecified

Suggestions to address this issue included lowering book prices, having teachers recommend more readings from online databases where appropriate, and working more closely with the Library to ensure core textbooks are put on reserve:

‘Have more teachers use online databases such as Laulima to get the readings. College students are already broke without having to buy books’ UHH student, CAS

‘Lower textbook prices. Ask teachers to put a set of textbooks on reserve’ UHH student, unspecified

Student Life Center

Although noted as a strength under section 5.5, some commented that inclusion of the Student Life Center fee within the standard tuition fee was unfair to those who do not wish to use the center.

‘Cost of Student Life Center... Why do every students have to pay for the membership of Student Life Center...? If they want to use the facilities, they will buy the membership. UHH does not have to charge EVERY SINGLE STUDENT to get more money from students’ UHH student, CoBE

‘Every student is charged fees for the use of the student life center. Exactly what percent of the student body, faculty and staff utilize the center and actually benefit from the fees that are charged them? And why aren’t more people using the center? Other, UHH student

‘The Student Life Center fee should NOT be included in the fees and tuition’ UHH student, CAS

A few suggestions were made about how to address this issue. Some recommended that the Student Life Center fee be removed from the tuition fee and instead charged on a month by month basis and opened to the public to increase revenue:
‘The Student Life Center should charge by month like a regular gym and be open to the public (the university would receive a lot more money)’ UHH student, CAS

Others recommended that automatic inclusion of the Center fee in the tuition fee be removed, and instead students given the option to include it or not. Or, a refund program be initiated where those people who did not use the Center at the end of a particular period are given a refund:

‘when students pay their tuition, have the option of paying $72 for the use of the student life center, or have a program that keeps track of who uses and does not use the student life center, and at the end of each semester, refund those who do not use it’ UHH student, CAS

Library
Issues raised in relation to the Edwin Mookini Library reflected the effect of budgetary constraints on provision of this university-wide resource. The main complaint was that the Library’s opening hours are too short, meaning that study times are restricted:

‘The Library needs to be open for more hours. I know that UH was trying to cut costs by reducing the library’s hours but it is an essential study resource. I would work in the library late at night if it meant it could be open for longer’ UHH student, CAS

‘Library hours are insufficient. Library is closed weekends and non-instruction days when the most studying could be done’ UHH student, CoP

‘The library is not open long enough ever. I think it should be open 24 hours during the regular school year like all the other schools and definitely later than 4 in the summer. My roommate has classes even longer than the library is open’ UHH student, CoBE

‘More funds should be directed towards extending library hours, especially during finals’ UHH civil service staff

Whilst this was identified as an issue in its own right, the problem with limited Library hours highlighted a related issue of a lack of alternative study areas that students feel safe using:

‘Extend hours at [the Library] at least to midnight or 2am. the longer the better especially close to finals week (at least the week before finals and during finals week). There are no 24 hour places open in Hilo so students are looking for places to study’ UHH student, CoP

‘library hours are not long enough. I know K building is open later but doesn’t feel safe and is not a good studying environment’ UHH student, CoP

‘Could there be an alternate study area that is open for hours later than the library, and is also safe?’ UHH student, CAS

Some respondents also commented that the Library’s current resources are in need of updating, and that there should be greater access to electronic databases:

‘library subscriptions, especially access to electronic databases’ UHH student, CAS

‘Library needs current books’ UHH student, CAS

6.10 Crime and Security
A number of respondents, mainly students, reported a recent rise in crime, specifically thefts and vandalism, and of not feeling safe in and around campus.

‘Security needs to be improved. There is crime happening on campus for example, car thefts yet thieves do not get caught’ UHH student, CAS
‘With all the incidents of cars being stolen and broken into it makes me think the security is not performing as well as they should be. I personally have had someone steal from my car when parked at the dorms and have had my car smashed while it was parked overnight’ UHH student, CoBE

‘A lot of vandalisms and property damages’ UHH student, CoBE

This was perceived by some as UHH demonstrating a ‘lack of care for the students safety’ (UHH student, CAS):

‘The school didn’t really do anything when my friends’ dorm lock broke, and on the 3rd day of doing nothing to help them, they got their [expletive] jacked. then the school pretty much said they had nothing to do with it, so my friends had to go back home in the middle of the semester’ UHH student, CAS

To address the above concerns, respondents recommended that funding be directed to improve campus security:

‘Funding for better campus security. We need it, especially with increased crime happening. Alert others to keep a look out as well, if anything is seen as suspicious’ UHH student, CAS

Such improvements could include installations of additional security cameras to both prevent crime and monitor student safety, and ensuring dorm rooms are safe by changing locks systematically:

‘Install cameras for the students safety (currently the only cameras installed are to prevent theft), but the parking lots are clearly unsafe due to the recent car thefts, and can be intimidating to return to if you have night classes’ UHH student, CAS

‘safer dorming areas (put the students money to work, if you have a lock on a door make sure it is locked and cannot be unlocked) change locks every semester or school year’ UHH student, CAS

And increase the visibility of security guards throughout campus, particularly at entrances:

‘Hire more security guards and require that they are constantly walking around campus. Each should be in charge of patrolling a designated area’ UHH student, CoBE

‘Place security at different posts throughout campus. I have noticed a large amount of security guards at housing and on the upper part of campus but not many on the lower end. Why is a security guard not located in the station which was built on the lower end entrance of campus near the theatre and general parking?’ UHH student, CoBE

However, along with an increase in funding some felt that the University’s security ‘should be more involved with identifying problem areas and take a proactive approach to safety and not wait for problems to be pointed out several times before addressing’ UHH civil service staff. See also Section 9.8.

7 OPPORTUNITIES

Two questions relating to the opportunities that UHH could potentially take advantage of over the next 5-8 years were asked. The first question asked respondents to identify the opportunities that UHH could take advantage of over the coming years. 264 (52%) answered this question. The second questions invited respondents to suggest how the University could capitalize on these opportunities. 221 (44%) respondents answered this question. What follows is a summary of the themes identified from both questions.
7.1 New Leadership

Some respondents identified that renewed leadership for UHH in the form of a new Chancellor offers a unique opportunity to reinvigorate UHH and develop a shared vision and goals for the university:

- "Biggest opportunity: a new chancellor! Let him or her set up his or her organization - get him or her help if needed- and share the vision, mission, and plan. Get everyone on board" UHH APT staff
- "There is an opportunity for the new chancellor to lead a systemic reorganization. She/he should also take the opportunity to bring in new leadership at the vice chancellor and dean levels if the current administrators are not able to adjust to more progressive leadership paradigms" UHH faculty, CAS
- "Perhaps our greatest opportunity is the passing of the torch. Having a new Chancellor gives us every excuse to have discussion and introspection" UHH E&M staff

7.2 New Partnerships

Echoing Section 5.6, respondents also highlighted that UHH could benefit from forming stronger partnerships with organizations such as local high schools and Hawaii Community College to engage in joint projects and or support activities that could, for example, have a positive impact on student admissions:

- "By UH Hilo doing joint projects for the community with HCC, both campuses could gain greater local support. And who knows how far that recognition could spread and result in benefits for our school?" Other, full-time senior citizen student
- "A requirement of the BOE diploma is that students complete a senior project. Offer opportunities for high school students to come to campus and work with faculty in the various fields of study to produce a quality senior project on the topic of their choice. These high school students will build a connection with UHH and will be more likely to attend this institution" UHH APT staff

7.3 Academic Program Development

Relating back to the unique geographical and environmental position of UHH, respondents identified expansion of the university's traditional undergraduate focus into more graduate areas as an opportunity to take advantage of. Reasons for this included (1) offering more choice:

- "Offer more graduate programs here along with engineering and other technical programs" RCUH employee

And (2) retaining more students by becoming more competitive with other universities as many UHH graduates have to go to the mainland to complete a Masters or Doctoral degree:

- "Increase their Masters and Doctorate programs to be competitive with other schools and to retain their undergraduate students" RCUH employee

In recommending this opportunity, respondents stated that development of graduate programs should be done in areas that UHH could excel in:

- "Professional and graduate programming that fit our niche" UHH APT staff
- "New Programs at the graduate level (cultural resource management, astronomy, veterinary medicine, medicine, law, etc.)" UHH APT staff
There were also suggestions that new undergraduate programs that are not currently offered on the island be developed, specifically those that could capitalize on the unique location of UHH:

New programs at the undergraduate level that are not available on this island (engineering, architecture, creative writing, east Asian studies, etc.)’ UHH APT staff

‘Marine Ecology and environmental concerns as we are smack in the middle of the pacific. Agriculture department needs to get more actively involved in the local agricultural issues and help to push sustainable agriculture development on our Hamakua coastal lands.’ Other

Building upon the success of the CoP and continuing to develop the Hawaiian language program were also specifically highlighted and considered as important opportunities to take advantage of:

‘Continue to grow the College of Pharmacy, Hawaiian Language program’ UHH APT staff

‘Look for ways to duplicate the success of the COP. Selectively build a few more like it’ UHH APT staff

‘Take advantage of our unique qualities and settings. Don’t be afraid to really push us forward and focus on such areas as Hawaiian language and culture, marine science, geology and related fields’ UHH APT staff

7.4 Indigenous culture and language revitalization

Given UHH’s location on the Big Island of Hawaii, respondents identified the growing global interest in indigenous culture and language revitalization as a key societal, educational and research opportunity for the University:

‘developing connections with communities to do grants or projects to get Native Hawaiians and locals in college’ UHH APT staff

‘Society, local and global, is rediscovering the benefits and wisdom of indigenous cultures - of all universities in the United States, we may be best situated to capitalize on this shift and simultaneously become a more well-rounded, respectful, and informed community’ UHH APT staff

‘There is a lack of knowledge on the experience of Pacific Islanders in Higher Education. I think UHH could be a leader in educating the higher education community on the experiences of this population of students and what makes them successful in college’ UHH alumni

To take advantage of this opportunity respondents suggested that the university ‘[m]ore fully integrate Hawaiian and Polynesian values, wisdom and knowledge into the curriculum’ (UHH APT staff) and take advantage of developing local initiatives by the Hawaiian community to redefine the practice of science so that we reduce the alienation that some Hawaiians feel from the scientific community, which does not reflect our host community’ (UHH E&M staff). In order to reach different audiences and therefore expand opportunity to learn about the Hawaiian culture and language ‘new and innovative distance learning program should be developed, such as programs in Hawaiian culture, multi-cultural programs [and] local Hawaiian history’ (UHH APT staff).

‘We need Hawaiian specialists in all disciplines. Hawaiian business, Hawaiian science, Hawaiian pharmacy, Hawaiian history, Hawaiian literature. This is what makes us unique, even within the UH System, and provides a niche for our University. It is why many mainland students come here to study’ UHH faculty, CAS
7.5 Proximity to China and Asia

UHH’s ‘closer proximity to China and Asia than other US states’ (UHH APT staff) was considered an opportunity due to ‘growth in China demand for 4 year and executive education’ (UHH E&M staff) and that both Korea and China are requiring students to become proficient in English’ (UHH faculty, CCECS). Given its geographical position in the Pacific, ‘Hawaii is an attractive place for international students to study, which benefits our students and our finances’ (UHH faculty, CCECS).

To capitalize on this opportunity respondents were keen to ‘try to get the china us center going’ (UHH APT staff) and suggested that ‘[c]ontinued interactions with our Pacific neighbors’ is required along with seeking ‘federal support of international programs’ (UHH civil service staff).

7.6 Improving Access

Relating to Section 6.8, taking steps to meet the needs of non-traditional students and those students from the West side of the Big Island was considered a key opportunity by respondents:

‘Non-traditional students, e.g. students with children. Students from different parts of the island need access’ UHH APT staff

‘Develop more programs geared toward non-traditional students. There are more and more these days’ UHH student, CoBE

‘Growing numbers of non-traditionals--working people and retired people in the community and the state who are educated but aspire to more knowledge and additional degrees. We can bring them into our classrooms or offer them learning opportunities in their own communities or online.’ UHH A&M staff

In relation, respondents suggested that the university seek to make better use of its classrooms and implement more distance learning programs:

‘Supporting growth through the development of: 1. Distance learning (online and hybrid courses and programs)… Outreach Centers and satellite courses (off-site courses and programs)’ UHH APT staff

‘We need to begin offering courses on the weekends and do things such as cohorts to use our facilities more during non-traditional UHH classroom times.’ UHH E&M staff

To expand access to all communities and especially support non-traditional students, respondents recommendations included the University providing ‘[d]ay care for [children of] students and staff’ (UHH APT staff), along with:

‘more night classes and/or longer classes that meet only once a week. Offer more online courses. Educator [sp] instructors on the needs of non-traditional students’ UHH student, CoBE

In order to achieve development of more distance learning courses it was suggested that ‘UHH should have a solid plan for the development and implementation of all distance learning programs, rather than having different departments administer their own programs with their own logistics’ (UHH APT staff).

7.7 Sustainable Energy

The global interest and ‘[g]rowth in sustainable energy development’ (Other UH System student) was identified as a particular opportunity for the university to both invest in its own ‘green’ infrastructure, along with responding to the ‘growing number of jobs in green industries and the need to prepare students for careers in those fields’ (UHH alumni). To capitalize on this opportunity, respondents suggested that UHH invest resources into ‘programs and
opportunities for students to prepare for the green industries’ (UHH alumni) by ‘[collaborating] with state industry leaders to find out what the job prospects are in alternative energy development and tailor degree programs to those’ (Other UH System student).

7.8 Opportunities due to the Global Recession

Respondents identified opportunity to encourage greater enrolment at the University given that ‘economic recession may entice more of the local/Hawaii high school students to attend UHH because of its notably lower tuition rates’ (UHH alumni). Along with the potential to encourage and take advantage of higher enrollment, respondents noted that new federal funds to help the USA recover from recession should be investigated:

‘UHH should take advantage of higher enrollment due to the economic downturn, and find non-traditional methods to include these people. Also, actively pursue federal govt funds (ARRA, reinvest America funds) to remodel, expand facilities’ UHH APT staff

‘Funding available from Obama admin’ UHH alumni

‘The increase in Federal fundings available now do the current Obama administration’ UHH APT staff

8 THREATS

Two questions were asked relating to the threats that UHH could potentially face over the next 5-8 years were asked. The purpose of the first question was to ascertain what threats or obstacles respondents thought UHH could face over the next 5-8 years. 264 (52%) answered this question. The second question asked for suggestions on how the university could respond to those threats. 238 (47%) answered this question. What follows is a summary of the themes identified from both questions.

8.1 Unresolved Identity

Some respondents were concerned that if the current ambiguity over UHH’s identity (see Section 6.1) was not resolved it could have a significant bearing on the university:

‘More critical than balancing of budget, is the loss of identity. We need to define us, not by comparing to others, but by understanding what is important to us’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘We need to rediscover who we are as a public liberal arts university in Hilo, Hawaii’. Our academic mission and unique location hold the key to our success, and to avoid mistakes that will undermine this success, we much reorient ourselves to our purpose and identity. The next 5-8 years will be very difficult if we don’t figure that out’ UHH APT staff

Of particular concern was a potential loss of focus on developing quality undergraduate programs, due to pursuance of new graduate and/or research programs:

‘loss of emphasis on quality undergraduate teaching and learning, loss of diversity of programs on campus...we need to continue to excel in the humanities, social sciences and natural science’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘research programs overshadowing graduate programs overshadowing undergrad programs’ UHH faculty, CAS

8.2 Lack of Funding

Lack of funding and competition for resources within the UH System, was considered a threat to UHH and particularly the university’s ability to improve its infrastructure, pay its staff and faculty a competitive wage, and offer affordable tuition to its students. This
theme is therefore explored through several sub-themes that examine the impact of continued and future funding issues for UHH, along with suggestions from respondents about how to address those threats.

### 8.2.1 Competition for resources and students

Significant concern was raised across all respondent groups about the relationship between UHH and the rest of the UH System and its impact on financial resource allocation and student recruitment:

- ‘our biggest threat has always been the manner in which the University of Hawai‘i system operates on a historical budget’ UHH faculty, Ka Haka ‘Ula
- ‘competition for resources (especially research and other grant money) with Manoa and new Maui campus’ UHH student, College of Arts and Sciences
- ‘Competing with other UH institutions for students and their tuition dollars’ UHH faculty, Division of Student Affairs

The growth of the West Oahu campus, development of the Maui campus and the perception of UH Manoa as the System’s ‘flagship’ campus has compounded this threat, along with the presence of other universities and two year courses offered by the Community Colleges:

- ‘Increasing competition with West Oahu, and Manoa for much needed funds will only get more acute’ UHH faculty, Division of Academic Affairs (except colleges)
- ‘With the growth of the West Oahu campus and Manoa being the "flagship" campus, we are going have a tougher time getting funds for UHH’ UHH faculty, Ka Haka ‘Ula
- ‘With Maui going to four years, UH West Oahu offering small class sizes on the island with the bulk of Hawaii’s population, and [Brigham Young University-Hawaii], [Hawaii Pacific University] and Chaminade offering ease, convenience and conviviality for a price, and the [Community College’s] offering practical training in two years for a lower cost than us, what are we there for?’ UHH faculty, CoBE
- ‘Competition with accredited Distance Learning programs that offer Masters and Doctorate degrees. Online schools that provide an Bachelors degree at an accelerated rate’ RCUH employee

### 8.2.2 Infrastructure

Whilst the physical and technical infrastructure of UHH has been identified as a key weakness, the ability of the university to take the measures necessary to improve is reliant on having the funds available to make the changes. As a result of the current economic status, respondents were concerned that infrastructure developments would further suffer in the event of continued financial constraints:

- ‘The economy isn’t doing that well right now – this is an obstacle because renovating or updating the facilities will cost money’ UHH student, College of Pharmacy
- ‘Financial threats (not enough funds to better the campus)’ UHH student, CAS

To address this particular threat, respondents recommended that efforts be made to reduce energy consumption across campus (see also Section 7.7) by maintaining air conditioning units and where possible investing in ‘green’ technologies so that the university may seek to become self-sustaining:

- ‘Reduce energy consumption by maintaining properly regulated air conditioners….Many times the air conditioners are set to 80 degrees, but the actual temperature in the room is in the upper
60’s. It is ridiculous to recreate a continental climate in a tropical climate; year round students need to wear sweaters in the classroom because it is too cold. … Install solar panels on the roofs to generate electricity for the campus/student housing and potentially bringing the total energy bill down to $0’ UHH student, CAS

‘Cut costs by using solar power and look at other ways to “go green.” Investigate ways to streamline procurement and budgeting processes to be more cost effective. Involve students in generating proposals and ideas’ UHH faculty, Division of Academic Affairs (except colleges)

‘more sustainable building plans to reduce energy costs in future’ Community member

8.2.3 Student enrolment and retention

Respondents recognized the effect that a difficult situation is having on the university but identified a particular threat to student enrolment and retention is the possibility of increased tuition to raise funds for other aspects of the university:

‘Budget cuts. Increasing tuition so that students can’t afford college’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘Increased tuition needs could affect enrollment of local students. Financial challenges will be the main threat and obstacle unless or until the economy in general improves, which is a long way away’ UHH student, CAS

‘tuition spikes might deter students from enrolling’ UHH student, Ka Haka ‘Ula

‘Budget cuts and high tuition may lead to lower enrollment’ UHH APT staff, CCECS

However, respondents generally understood that tuition may need to rise but that any increase should not exceed inflation:

‘I know costs of tuition need to continually rise, but with limitations to keep up with inflation’ UHH student, CAS

‘While raising tuition isn’t the best option it might have to happen in order to save classes, positions and even departments. If this does happen it should be in very small degrees’ UHH student, CAS

In seeking to address the potential impact of budgetary constraints on student enrolment and retention, respondents suggested two areas to explore. The first is to prioritize local students by keeping tuition fees as low as possible so that the University remains as affordable as possible to the local population it serves, whilst applying any necessary increases to fees for out-of-state and/or international students:

‘Don’t make it harder for local students to get admitted to UH-Hilo. Raise tuition for non-resident students: limit the number of non-resident students who pay reduced WUE tuition’ UHH faculty, Division of Student Affairs

‘Charge out of state/international students real tuition prices’ UHH student, CAS

This strategy would though only be successful with an improvement in the way UHH markets itself and the quality of education that it provides in order to attract and retain out-of-state/international students:

‘A strategy could be introduced that better "sells" UHH to students around the world. If UHH has a better reputation and becomes one of the top 20 universities in the world then money will not be an issue because tuition could be raised for out-of-state students. More grants and scholarships will also off set the budget crisis’ UHH student, CAS
Outside of tuition fees, some respondents recommended that the university should offer more opportunities for students to work in and around campus so that they can better support themselves and gain important work experience.

‘Offer more work study. Utilize student body in place of general positions’ UHH student, College of Arts and Sciences

However, this view was not shared by all with some saying that students are being forced to work to supplement their income which can have a detrimental effect on their academic attainment:

‘students are being forced to work while in school in order to afford tuition which may cause more students to drop out or poor academic performance’ UHH student, CoBE

8.2.4 Attracting and retaining faculty and staff

Respondents, especially students, were concerned that funding cuts would have a negative impact on the university’s ability to attract and retain quality faculty:

‘rising cost of tuition=less students, more pay cuts for professors=less professors being about to instruct for a reasonable wage’ UHH student, CAS

‘Competitive salaries to attract new faculty and funding to maintain, upgrade and expand our teaching and research facilities’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘not enough money to pay the instructors’ UHH student, CoBE

‘The instructors have been promised their wages back and then some in another year, but who’s to say that there will be money to do that?’ UHH student, CAS

8.2.5 Growth without Adequate Resources

In relation to issues raised under Section 5.9, some respondents were concerned that the university will continue to seek growth without the provision of adequate resources and infrastructure to support that growth:

‘A lack of infrastructure will certainly be a major threat to further growth in UHH’ UHH student, Ka Haka ‘Ula

‘Well, UHH might have to work on expanding its facilities if the enrollment keeps going up, but I think the main obstacle is funding and the cost of operating the school at a level that is professional, and the up-keeping the appearance of the school’ UHH student, CAS

‘Our own ambition. I fear that too much focus on growth will continue to undermine the success of our current students — and may take us away from our mission as a liberal arts university’ UHH APT staff

8.2.6 Addressing funding issues

Prioritization

The main suggestion from respondents to address the funding issues noted above was to prioritize activities and resources more effectively:

‘Don’t spend money on things that is not a priority’ UHH student, CAS

‘cut back on unnecessary things and focus on the most important things’ UHH student, CAS

This was suggested in the context of appropriate goal setting and proactive strategic planning in order to maximize the impact of available resources:
Funding priorities need to be set in order to achieve goals. Otherwise, fundraising efforts are diluted and there will be a little bit of resources to be shared across many programs, instead of having enough $ to achieve a few big goals’

‘Move away from the short term and think long term; Work to be more proactive and less reactive; Set broad but measurable goals for UHH to achieve in the next 5-8 years and resource the activities that are known to support achievement of the goals’

UHH E&M staff

In relation to this, tough decisions may need to be made to withdraw support from some activities that may be underperforming:

‘Make the tough decision to drop failing or under-performing programs or faculty (if that’s even possible)’

UHH APT staff

Alternative/additional revenue streams

As well as seeking to manage budgetary issues internally through clear prioritization and planning, respondents recommended that alternative and or additional funding sources be proactively sought:

‘Time for us to think outside of the box (I hate that expression, but it fits) for funding sources. Get those alums paying back! Partner with industry. Beg. We need a bigger vision of our ability to raise money out there in the big world’

UHH APT staff

One such specific suggestion was to ‘Start collecting lease rent from astronomy companies that use Mauna Kea rather than continue to give them ”free” rent in exchange for viewing time for UHH’

(UHH faculty, CAS). Other suggestions related to seeking funds through, for example, investing in more patent potential research:

‘Push for more patent potential research and research that can generate large grants from federal government and private industry’

UHH student, CoP

And developing public/private partnerships which would both help to enhance the University’s reputation and share costs for certain activities (e.g. building costs):

‘Need to develop strategies on establishing public/private partnership that are compatible with existing laws and policies’

UHH APT staff

‘Form partnerships to help defray costs’

UHH civil service staff, CAS

8.3 Continued Ineffective Leadership

With an incoming Chancellor and existing concerns over the current leadership at UHH, respondents noted that these two factors constituted a threat to the overall direction of the university. Whilst being identified as a key opportunity, the arrival of a new Chancellor also signals some uncertainty as an unknown entity and the impact they may have on the university and broader community:

‘breaking in a new Chancellor’

UHH APT staff

‘There will be a new chancellor. That person will need to be accepted by the local community, and be knowledgeable of the issues that can derail all gains that have been made up to this time’

UHH civil service staff, Office of the Chancellor (including associated units)

‘Being sure we have time and resources to do all the basics to stay accredited (and not just barely) when a new chancellor will probably want to ”make a mark” with new initiatives’

UHH faculty, CAS

To help mitigate this potential threat, respondents highlighted the new Chancellor will need support to help them understand the unique culture of Hawaii and the importance
of that culture on UHH in building partnerships and engaging with the University and wider community:

‘Ensure that the new chancellor is open to and learns about the culture and customs unique to Hawai'i. It is very easy to alienate local people and rebuilding the trust/acceptability is extremely difficult once lost’ UHH civil service staff

‘Choose chancellor who is sensitive to needs of community and can work together to build strong efforts WITHIN the university and with those external to university. Faculty and staff need to be a part of those partnerships, such that is the whole university partnering with the whole community’ UHH faculty, CAFNRM

‘more interaction/communication between administration/faculty/staff – quarterly/semi-annual campus-wide briefings’ UHH civil service staff

In relation to the broader leadership, faculty and staff respondents expressed apprehension about the ability of the current administration/leadership to effectively guide UHH into its next phase (see also Section 6.3). Concern was also noted about the current lack of a unified vision for the university and poor planning that could undermine its future direction and improve academic success:

‘Administrative failure to act to ensure academic excellence’ UHH APT staff,

‘lack of shared vision…lack of strong leadership’ UHH faculty, Division of Academic Affairs (except colleges)

‘lack of change in leadership’ UHH E&M staff

‘lack of focus and strategic thinking’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘It isn’t pleasant to contemplate, but with weak leadership, favoritism, and constantly giving in to those who cry the loudest, people will be pitted against each other’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘Proper decisions are sometimes not made because of political influences’ UHH faculty, CAFNRM

In seeking to address this threat, respondents suggested a variety of strategies from ‘leadership training’ (UHH faculty, CAS) to the more extreme:

‘Replace the leadership’ UHH APT staff

Respondents highlighted the need for those in positions of authority to possess ‘good leadership qualities’ and that these qualities ‘should be paramount or equal to other qualifying factors’ (UHH APT staff).

The role of the Chancellor was noted as important with regards to that person having the fortitude to make tough decisions and lead strongly from the top in order to deal with and address the threat of ineffective leadership across the university:

‘The new chancellor must have the charisma to charm compliance with the needed changes and the fortitude to bypass, overpower or eliminate those who cannot be charmed. He/she will need to be the type of leader who can develop a loyal following among faculty, staff and students in order to confront obstacles presented by stubborn faculty, the legislature, the UH system and current administrators who do not buy into the new chancellor’s vision… I do not see the needed leadership coming from within, so the only hope is new blood. UHH faculty, CAS

‘We need a good Chancellor who will make tough decisions about funding infrastructure support, saying "no" to new programs until we can support what we have. We need to seriously look at campus climate and try to do something about it’ UHH E&M staff
In tandem with a recommended improvement in overall leadership at the University, respondents recommended that the threat of ineffective leadership could be mitigated by improvements in campus-wide planning and decision making. Suggestions included ensuring that strategic planning is based on fact and not influenced by politics:

‘Base our plans and decisions on facts and reality rather than on opinions, beliefs, and protectionism and isolation’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘I think the administration has to set a good example and not show "favors" to certain individuals because they did this or that. The administration and deans should do what is right rather than being influenced by politics’ UHH faculty, CAFNRM

As well as establishing strategic planning as a continuous process of not just creating a plan, but more importantly of communicating, reviewing, updating and evaluating the effectiveness of that plan on a regular basis:

‘don’t just do strategic plan every few years, remember to annually update it and evaluate how well we did’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘develop shared vision and allocate resources in way that best serves that mission, even if the process is painful’ UHH faculty, Division of Academic Affairs (except colleges)

‘We need to define our mission and both articulate it clearly AND provide hard evidence that we are succeeding to discharge that mission. I wish I had confidence that we will get to a shared vision. A strong leader with the skills and will to help us get to a shared vision and then who could stay focused on that mission would help a lot’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘There needs to be a strategic plan, that doesn’t just sit on the shelf, but is communicated to all that we are all in it together to implement the goals set out. Show data that we are doing what we set out to do, stand out from the rest’ UHH faculty, Division of Student Affairs

8.4 Accepting the Status-Quo

Whilst the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities section indicate that respondents believe change and improvement is needed at UHH, some identified that acceptance of the ‘status quo’ may impede that necessary change:

“‘We’ve always done it that way.” “We’ve never done it that way.” To quote Pogo (I think it was Pogo) “I’ve met the enemy and he is me.” Change is hard. It’s scary. It involves risk. We have to get our people ready to make changes, to think of change as exciting, not as a threat to their way of life’ UHH APT staff

‘The new Chancellor needs to send a strong message to everyone else that status quo is not good enough’ UHH faculty, CoBE

‘Most faculty and administrators either are afraid to stick their necks out, or they are just conservative. Many faculty would rather form committees and talk about issues for years rather than try something new’ UHH faculty, CoBE

‘People in the state, local community, the UH system and, most vitally, at UHH who will resist adjustment of the status quo. Current leadership in the colleges (including CCECS) and the vice chancellors may resist changes to their empires’ UHH faculty, CAS

9 PRIORITIES

One question was asked about what respondents thought UHH priorities should be over the next 5-8 years. 268 (53%) respondents answered this question. Responses reflected the issues raised in earlier sections and act to summarize the key issues concerning
respondents. Priorities center around nine core themes of identity, student success, infrastructure, appropriate growth, academic excellence, program development, community engagement and campus safety and security.

9.1 Clarify and Establish UHH's Identity

In direct relation to Sections 5.10, 6.1 and 8.1, respondents stated that clarifying and establishing a strong identity and vision for UHH would be critical to helping the University improve and develop over the next 5-8 years:

'I believe one of our most important tasks in the near future is a more well defined and unified “Mission” for UHH. Everyone should give the same answer when asked’ UHH E&M staff

'Build up spirit and make UHH feel more like a legit 4 year university, where students feel that they belong to UHH and have pride in being a part of this university’ UHH student, CAS

This would be in terms of defining who UHH serves:

'Defining and serving the target population. Currently UHH does not do a good job of defining WHO they serve - what is UHH's strengths? Who can best benefit from the educational experience provided? WHO IS UHH?' UHH alumni

'Realize UHH is not an MIT, that our mission is to the community in which we serve. It is here so that those who otherwise might never go to college, actually can, in as meaningful a way as possible’ UHH APT staff

As well as identifying and promoting how UHH is unique to other Universities and Colleges in the State:

'Develop an identity that helps students find us, separate from Hilo College (a two year school that many on Oahu still think we are)’ UHH APT staff

'Deciding what it means to be a public liberal arts college in Hilo, Hawai'i – and refocus our energy and resources to become the best UHH - not try to mimic or rival other institutions. And nowhere else offers such great access to studying the earth (land, sky and sea) and Hawaiian culture’ UHH APT staff

'Establishing its own identity within the UH system and not being in the shadow of Manoa’ UHH APT staff

In considering the above, one of the key questions that UHH needs to ask is what ‘type’ of institution it wants to be and what direction it wants to take:

'Figuring out what we want to be. We can’t be all things to all people. But neither should be simply be a STEM university’ UHH faculty, CAS

'Definitely seize our opportunities to be a premier science and technology institution in the Pacific, but never lose sight of our liberal arts’ UHH faculty, CoP

In relation to clarifying UHH’s identity, is the issue of clarifying the relationship between the University and Hawaii Community College. Historically, the university and the college were once one entity but in 1990 the UH Board of Regents voted to separate them with the two sharing some facilities and resources.

Some respondents recommend a 'complete separation of UHH and HawCC facilities' (UHH civil service staff, Office of the Chancellor), whilst others advocate a clearer relationship with the college to better support students:

'We should have more cooperative involvement with HawCC and the other CC’s as well as more clear pathways for students from colleges and universities across the pacific (and elsewhere) to UHH (which may include a HawCC stepping stone)’ UHH E&M staff
‘Make it seamless for students to take courses at HCC and UHH at the same time’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘Leverage the relationship with HCC to help people feel like they can attend a university’ UHH student, CAS

‘Get out of the community college business. We are spending too much time teaching students that are not ready for a 4-year school. The community college should be given the task of preparing students’ UHH faculty, CoBE

9.2 Student Success

Respondents identified supporting the success of UHH students and trying to find ways to improve student educational outcome as a key priority. This was evident across a broad range of staff groups, faculty and students themselves. Different aspects of what could be argued to constitute ‘student success’ were referenced by respondents. From being student centered in all aspects of the university’s decision making to create the environment for success:

‘Pay attention to our students. Be student centered in every way. Each decision should ask - Is this good for students?’ UHH faculty, CCECS

To preparing students for work outside of university by increasing opportunity for internships that build upon UHH’s strengths:

‘Increasing degree preparation with internships to give our students an edge in the job market. (Especially in areas like Hawaiian language, culture, science, agriculture) where we can build upon existing strengths’ UHH faculty, Ka Haka ‘Ula

‘ALWAYS…THE STUDENTS’ UHH student, CoBE

Reference was also made to more traditional notions of student success in terms of supporting student educational outcomes:

‘Focus on admitting qualified students and helping them to succeed in unique, high quality programs in a STEM-focused liberal arts environment’ UHH faculty, CoBE

‘The students; being able to pass classes and graduate with the care/help of professors’ UHH student, CAS

As well as in relation to the social outcomes of student success:

‘educating and preparing students: to make positive contributions to society and to the natural environment, to be aware of the current state of the planet, to treat each other respectfully and know themselves better than when they came here’ UHH faculty, Division of Academic Affairs (except colleges)

9.3 Infrastructure

Improvement to UHH infrastructure was identified as a critical priority. As identified in earlier sections (see 5.8 and 6.9) respondents commented that in order for the university to be able to support its current students, faculty and staff, and grow to accommodate future students, faculty and staff, that a major improvement in the physical and technical infrastructure is necessary, along with investment in making UHH an environmental sustainable university. Analysis of this theme therefore revealed several sub-themes given below:

9.3.1 Physical infrastructure

Comments on to UHH’s physical infrastructure related to improvement in public transport links, expansion of car parking, renovations to existing and development of
more classrooms, addition of more student housing, and development of reasonably priced and varied food outlets across campus as well as late night meeting areas. Overarching all these aspects was a sense that ‘renovating and painting and keeping the campus clean and nice’ (UHH civil service staff) along with improving and expanding the facilities available would help retain students and staff by creating an attractive place to work:

‘Adding student housing, retail space, restaurants, a hotel, and performing arts center (the proposed US/China Center) should be a top priority. It will attract students and faculty to Hilo’ UHH faculty, Division of Academic Affairs (except colleges)

‘renovate aesthetically embarrassing parts of campus like EKH and Wentworth’ UHH student, Ka Haka ‘Ula

‘Create food venues around campus….Keep them open on weekends and evenings…..Keep the Campus Center open the same hours as the Library. The cafeteria seating area should remain open, with the lights on, even though there is no food being served. Students can use the area for group meetings and study sessions that can’t be done in the library’ UHH APT staff

Development of the existing infrastructure was noted as a particular priority:

‘Maintain existing facilities. Would rather have all updated facilities rather than outdated facilities and a couple of new buildings’ UHH APT staff

‘filling in the gaps, infrastructure that was never supported as we grew over the last few years’ UHH faculty, CAS

But respondents were also keen to see the new CoP and Ka Haka ‘Ula buildings built and resourced:

‘Continuing building projects like the Pharmacy College should proceed, and upgrading aging facilities on campus should not be ignored’ UHH faculty, Division of Academic Affairs (except colleges)

‘Continue to develop the CHL as the center of UH-Hilo!’ UHH faculty, Ka Haka ‘Ula

‘completion of the new building for the CHL’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘Getting the Ka Haka 'Ula building built, A building for the College of Pharmacy’ UHH student, CAS

In terms of transportation, respondents noted that improved public transport to and from campus would have a significant impact on students’ ability to get to and from class and on their social life:

‘Get the city bus to dissect our campus, in front of the dorms - from Lanikaula St, to Kawili St. This would have an immediate impact on student’s ability to go where they want to go, when they want to go, without having to sign up for a structured activity offered by the university’ UHH APT staff

9.3.2 Technological infrastructure

Improving UHH’s technological infrastructure was also identified as a priority area:

‘keeping the school up to date in the technology world’ UHH student, CAS

‘developing innovative educational technology’ UHH faculty, CCECS

‘Improving facilities by integrating technology’ Other, graduate

‘modernize the campus more technology’ UHH faculty, CoP
9.3.3 Environmental sustainability

Students were keen advocates for improving the environmental sustainability of UHH (see also Section 7.7). This was in terms of being socially responsible for reducing carbon emissions and investing in green technologies to provide cooling/heating, electricity, water and food for the university, leading the way for other universities:

‘Building maintenance, lab supplies and equipment, and computer lab enhancements. Hopefully repair the air conditioning issues that have some of the classrooms and office buildings refrigerated’ UHH student, CAS

‘Increasing a culture of sustainability. Also devoting efforts to help the state reach its sustainability goals’ UHH student, CAS

‘Environmentally Sustainable campus life. Limit use of fossil fuels and cut out the middle man. Let’s lead the way and show other campuses how to be really environmentally friendly’ UHH student, CAS

‘Becoming environmentally friendly should take precedence over all other issues. Without an environment to live with harmoniously then there won’t be any other issues to discuss’ UHH student, CAS

And also as a potential way to reduce costs:

‘Reduced energy costs through green buildings’ Community member

‘Updating and replacing facilities with sustainably built facilities. This way the campus could both improve its appearance and reduce its energy costs. It is imperative that we embrace sustainability and environmental consciousness. In other words: now is the time to start being green’ UHH student, CAS

9.4 Appropriate Growth

As also explored under Section 5.9, well planned and strategic growth of the university was seen as a priority across groups, where such growth is met with a proportionate expansion in resources, facilities, services and other infrastructure:

‘Main priority: Making sure there are sufficient resources to meet the needs of expanding enrollment. We must have sufficient teachers, classrooms and living accommodations for the students we accept’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘UHH is looking to grow in student numbers, but UHH also must be sure that academic and student support services also grow to accommodate the influx of student numbers and their needs’ UHH APT staff

‘Continue growth in student enrollment with corresponding growth in faculty/staff and facilities’ UHH civil service staff

‘As the university grows, to maintain and develop the things that attract students here in the first place, to use those things to attract students, and to ensure that the coming growth will be stable and sustainable for the university itself’ UHH student, Ka Haka ‘Ula

9.5 Academic Excellence

The pursuit of academic excellence reflects comments made in relation to ‘raise standards, reach for excellence’ (UHH faculty, CoBE) in order to ‘benefit our students and the people of the Big Island’ (UHH APT staff). Academic excellence was explicitly referred to in terms of improving teaching quality and the resulting impact that could have on attracting, retaining and graduating more students:
Improve teaching and research facilities to attract higher caliber students that typically go to mainland schools, and to offer those that are here a better education’ UHH faculty, CAS

Focus on changing the curriculum to include more classes which have a more interactive style of teaching. It will help students be better prepared for the real world when they actually apply to jobs….A focus on interactive styles of teaching would definitely be unique and a great reason for students to decide to choose to remain at UHH’ UHH student, CoBE

‘Effective Teaching, resulting in a gradual increase in positive results from students locally and internationally’ UHH student, CCECS

‘Raising our academic standards (will eventually help graduate more students)’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘Continue to promote academic priority- but with a blend of personal attention to the students’ UHH faculty, CAS

As noted under Section 6.6.1, to help improve teaching skills and overall faculty morale, respondents suggested that greater support for the faculty is required in the form of training and development opportunities:

‘support the faculty, encourage them to excel in their areas of expertise and in their teaching, give them opportunities to develop in all ways’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘improve faculty morale offer more faculty development opportunities, i.e. teaching workshops, career building workshops’ UHH faculty, CAS

Strong encouragement of faculty by the broader UHH administration was also identified as important to help faculty ‘give more and venture more under positive guidance’. In order to achieve this it was suggested that ‘administration needs to present a more collaborative attitude’ (UHH faculty, CAS) and that ‘Awards for teaching and research excellence should include a bit of cash (e.g., $500)’ with such awards ‘available for every college’ (UHH faculty, CoBE).

9.6 Academic Program Development

Supporting the theme of academic excellence is that of academic program development. Staff, faculty and students expressed a desire to improve and expand upon the programs offered at UHH, with a caveat that development should ‘strengthen existing undergraduate and graduate programs before adding new ones’ (UHH faculty, CAS).

‘Ensuring that adequate faculty resources are in place or available before approving any further new programs’ UHH faculty, CoBE

The focus was on developing areas of strength in relation to current programs, and developing new programs to capitalize on the university’s unique location:

‘develop areas of excellence such as pharmacy to build a national reputation’ UHH civil service staff

As well as expanding the University’s portfolio of distance learning programs:

‘Expansion of programs should be in distance/ on-line learning’ UHH APT staff

‘Expansion to North Hawaii, West Hawaii, South Hawaii, the State of Hawaii, and the World. The only way to do this is to be open to the idea of distance learning’ UHH E&M staff

Specific suggestions for new/improved programs were primarily, though not exclusively, for STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) subjects and included the following:
Focus on enhancing its Natural Science programs, Hawaiian Studies program and Pharmacy program; Improve enrollment of local students within these programs’ UHH alumni

Bringing in more needed programs such as Veterinary, Alternative Energy, Sustainability’ UHH APT staff

Enhance and enlarge nursing, tropical agriculture, oceanography and aquaculture programs’ UHH civil service staff, Division of Academic Affairs (except colleges)

‘Agriculture, Astronomy, Hawaiian culture, Business’ UHH faculty, CAFNRM

Place a larger emphasis on developing our College of Agriculture to be the premier Agriculture school in the region. This college, on our largely agriculture-based island has great room for expanding’ UHH faculty, CoP

‘Science and Mathematics’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘expand its healthcare programs including Nursing as well as continue to develop the pharmacy program. To have a role in attracting students interested in these fields and professionals to Hilo/Hawaii island to ultimately serve our communities and fill vital spaces in our local healthcare system’ UHH student, CoP

In relation, respondents suggested developing new graduate programs and investing more in research activities:

‘More graduate programs, better incentives for faculty to write grants and do research, fund more solid research office with permanent vice chancellor — specialize in applied research that relates directly to community to set apart from UH Manoa’ UHH alumni

‘Developing more research opportunities for faculty. Reducing teaching loads to 2/3 would go a long way in making this happen. This would help bring in more grant money, aid in developing grad programs, and encourage more involvement from our really good undergraduates’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘Developing more graduate programs and encouraging research’ UHH student, CoP

However, as raised earlier (see Section 6.7) some respondents noted concern about the impact of graduate program development on provision of the university’s core undergraduate education:

‘undergraduate education -- new programs have come on-board without sufficient attention to their affect on undergraduate education’ UHH faculty, CAS

As well as sufficiently resourcing the provision of more graduate education opportunities and consulting appropriately on the development of new programs:

‘If we’re going to offer graduate education, we need to fund it. We need a graduate division, graduate student financial support, and a SHARED responsibility for determining what graduate programs the campus should support’ UHH faculty, CAS

Students in particular suggested that academic programs be expanded to better reflect Hawaiian culture:

‘expanding curriculum to reflect Hawaiian culture’ UHH student, CAS

‘Create a tighter link between our unique situation here in Hawaii and the focus of the academic programs. Once that happens—advertise it to the world’ UHH student, CAS

‘focus on Hawaii in academics; remember to honor Hawaiian culture in all aspects of university culture’ UHH faculty, CAS

And respond to community needs:
Responding to the professional development/job market needs of Hawaii in both education and research’ UHH faculty, CAS
‘Develop programs to workforce needs of the state and can attract students to our campus’ UHH civil service staff
‘Strengthening all the science programs, and ensuring that Hilo graduates are near the top of their fields when they graduate’ UHH student, CAS

9.7 Improve Community Engagement
As identified under both strengths and weaknesses, respondents identified that the university should improve its engagement with the broader community, ‘especially with Native Hawaiian Organizations’ (UHH APT staff). One respondent specifically referred to the issue of keeping local talent local:
‘the local community...they are your greatest resource, and they are being underutilized. Becoming more competitive as far as keeping the local talents. There’s not enough of them coming back and it’s draining the community more with each passing year’ UHH student, CAS
Respondents noted that ‘closer ties with our Hilo and Hawaii island communities’ and local businesses could ‘enhance internship opportunities and improved town/gown relationships’ (UHH APT staff):
‘working with the surrounding community to develop opportunities which link students with the town of Hilo. Try to develop more opportunities for students to be able to intern at places where they are interested in working’ UHH student, CoBE
Some respondents suggested how greater community engagement could be achieved through a regular newspaper article from the Chancellor and greater engagement through entities such as ‘Imiloa’:
‘Have the new Chancellor submit a regular article for the local newspaper (weekly, or bi-weekly, or monthly) to keep the community informed and encourage their participation’ UHH APT staff
‘Developing our outreach to the community through entities like 'Imiloa’ UHH faculty, Ka Haka ‘Ula

9.8 Improve Campus Safety and Security
The issue of campus safety and security was raised under ‘weaknesses’ (Section 6.10) and is reiterated here by students as an area that the university should prioritize for improvement:
‘students=safety’ UHH student, CAS
‘keeping students safe by hiring better security’ UHH student, CAS
‘Hire security guards that actually do their jobs’ UHH student, CAFNRM
‘Improve safety, security’ UHH student, CAS
‘improve security for students including getting cameras to monitor parking lots’ UHH student, CAS

10 FURTHER COMMENTS
Respondents were invited to provide any further comments at the end of the questionnaire about UHH or the survey in general. Here, respondents took the
opportunity to reiterate points they raised in earlier sections (e.g. infrastructure) and which are therefore covered elsewhere in this report. Others wanted to take the opportunity to note their pride in UHH and emphasize the University’s important role within the local Big Island community. As is common with surveys of this kind, it is easy to focus on the negatives whilst overlooking the positives and this question gave respondents the chance to reset the balance:

‘We’re already doing a great job in many ways. These surveys tend to elicit only the “need to improve” areas, or to search for glamorous new areas. Don’t take the solid base for granted. Find ways to acknowledge and take credit for day-in, day-out successes’ UHH faculty, CAS

‘Overall I think that UHH is a great school. It is just important to be critical to improve efficiency and overall experience for students’ UHH student, CAS

‘We are pretty good now, don’t want to give the wrong impression. But we can always be/do better’ UHH APT staff

10.1 Pride in UHH

Others wrote about their pride in UHH, its important role within the local Big Island community and its potential to improve and meet the challenges that it faces:

‘When I speak about UHH or address my duties at work, it is often with a strong sense that this is MY school. I own part of it and it owns part of me, and it always will. I love this place like it was family…” UHH APT staff

‘This campus is a great campus. I love attending this school for various reasons. I’m also very honored to served the university in the form of a student worker. Keep the traditions going’ Other, student and student worker

‘I have not been to UH Hilo in years. Yet, it was one of the greatest places I gained my education. I went to the mainland for my Masters. UH Hilo, has a uniqueness that surpasses other colleges. My instructors took interest in their students and went beyond to give encouragement and when one felt one wanted to drop, the instructor gave such encouragement and support, that it was the best thing that could happen’ UHH alumni

‘I love working here at the University. It’s so diverse and also is the stem of our future students. We should make every day working on campus a happy day, even when things are tough. We are here to service our students, and make their education a memorable one’ UHH civil service staff

‘I’m really glad to have UH Hilo. It’s easy to focus on what its weak sides are, but the fact remains that as a Big Island Resident I’m able to get an affordable education without having to move. Furthermore, after having gone to 3 schools, I really appreciate how much aloha everyone has’ UHH student, CAS

10.2 Potential to Develop into a Top University

Some were also keen to state that despite all of the challenges that UHH faces it has enormous potential to become a leading University:

‘UHH is a great place to be. We have so much potential and people willing to go above and beyond to make things happen. If we could just get all of these folks together to run the University, we might be on to something good. Let’s learn from the past’ UHH E&M staff
‘UH Hilo is well positioned to develop into a top University campus during this decade. Vision and the will to see that vision realized will result in a much more functional campus than it is today’ UHH faculty, Division of Academic Affairs (except colleges)

11 SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS

This report has sought to reflect the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and priorities of UHH as put forward by its key stakeholders and constituencies. What is set out highlights the significant challenges facing the university as it prepares to enter a new phase under new leadership. It is evident is that the critical issue of the University’s identity and who it serves needs to be resolved before many of the other issues raised can begin to be addressed. Whilst some of those issues may at times have made uncomfortable reading, they represent an honest and open constructive criticism of the university from the people who know it most intimately – its students, faculty, staff, alumni and others. Their feedback, as summarised in this report, will help UHH identify ways to move forward in a unified, effective and successful way.

The task of leading the university through this process will fall to the UHH Strategic Planning Committee. This Committee (to be formed in fall 2010) will consider this report and other evidence gathered during this ‘pre-planning phase’ to review and redefine the University’s mission, vision, priorities and goals. They will seek to attach appropriate strategies and relevant measurable objectives, to ensure all at UHH knows the steps they need to take to help the University reach its goals. This will be done in collaboration and consultation with UHH’s stakeholder communities so that this planning process and its outcomes will be clear, transparent and owned by all. Publication of a Strategic Plan/Framework document (target date May 2011) will reflect the outcomes of that process, and set the agenda for implementation and monitoring through strategic leadership and management.

It is all too easy to focus on the negatives but, as respondents were keen to point out, UHH has ‘so much potential! Let’s show it!’ (UHH student, CAS).