Dear Faculty Congress,

As Chair of your General Education Committee, I submit the following report:

**Addressing Ongoing GE Concerns**
We are a little over a year into our new GE program. This year, a major concern for the committee is to gauge problems with implementation and to address the issues that arise. Sources of information have included feedback from applicants, and meetings with faculty and staff. This semester, the chair has undertaken a listening tour to discuss GE concerns with departments across the university. The concerns brought up by departments are addressed first, and details regarding modification to the certification process follow.

**Listening Tour**
To date, the chair has met with two departments: KES and Sociology. A main concern for KES was the appearance of favoritism towards transfer students. Students transferring to UH Hilo were given greater latitude than students who had attended only UH Hilo in terms of substituting courses to satisfy GE requirements. This issue is being taken up by the GE Implementation Committee.

Sociology brought up the issue that our new GE program sacrifices knowledge for skill. Since reducing our area requirements, our students now have less basic knowledge across the Humanities, Social Sciences and Natural Sciences, thus limiting their knowledge of the “language” of these areas of study. The courses were reduced to add a Language Arts class, a Quantitative Reasoning class, and a Global and Community Citizenship class. The Sociology Department notes that while the skills offered by the new courses may be laudable, we need to evaluate the impact that the loss of breadth is having on students and departments (possibly compounded by the pre-built schedules). The Sociology department recommended that our new institutional researcher model how student flows have changed before and after the implementation of the new GE program.

The chair will be reaching out to departments to schedule meetings in the weeks to come. Any department with immediate concerns should contact the chair.

**New Application Document & Lab Criteria**
Based on comments received from applicants and numerous problematic applications, the committee decided to produce a revised and more user-friendly application document. The form will be much more explicit about matching CLOs to GE ILOs in the matrix. Alternatively, applicants will be able to submit a
narrative statement instead of the matrix in order to discuss how their CLOs match the GE ILOs. Lastly, the new application document will contain descriptions of ILOs for natural science labs, which were missing from the original application document. Jon Price and Vera Parham formed a subcommittee to last year to redesign the document and it will be completed by this year’s committee. Last year, Sue Jarvi and Jon Price began crafting GE ILOs for certification of natural science labs, and these will also be completed in time to be added to the new application document.

**Preparation of Recertification Document**
Last year, Seri Luangphinith and Todd Belt formed a Recertification Subcommittee to design a recertification document that fast-tracks recertification for courses that plan to implement an ILO assessment strategy as part of the course. This document is near completion, although it will not be needed until Fall 2014, when courses certified for GE beginning Fall 2011 will need to be re-certified for Fall 2016 to avoid a lapse in certification.

**GE Supply-Demand Modeling**
Noticing that there was no empirical evidence regarding whether our GE course offerings were sufficient to accommodate student demand, last year the committee chair approached Institutional Researcher Brendan Hennessey regarding the existence of data. Brendan Hennessey computed a model of supply and demand of GE SSHs. The results indicated that for Fall 2011, only the GCC and Language Arts subcategories of GE were under-served by course offerings. The chair will continue to work with the new institutional researcher to ascertain GE course availability.

**ALEX**
One commonly cited problem with the new GE is the lack of GCC certified courses. Over the past two years, GE committees have made a big push to augment offerings, but none are yet in the system due to the time lag between application and the beginning of the certification period. In order to continue to augment these offerings, the chair is working with Tom DeWitt’s new office of Applied Learning Experiences (ALEX) in order to identify additional potential courses for certification.

**WASC Re-Accreditation**
The chair is co-chairing the university’s institutional re-accreditation efforts through the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). This year, the GE Committee will be tasked with preparing the first essay in the university’s institutional self-study: “The Meaning, Quality and Integrity of the Degree.” The chair will be surveying faculty, staff, and administrators for input.

**Revision of Congress ByLaws Regarding the Committee**
A revision of the ByLaws as pertain to the GE Committee has been submitted to the Congress for consideration.

**The Chair thanks the following members for their service on the 2012-2013 committee:**
Thora Abarca, Library
Norman Anarcon, CAFNRM
Karla Hayashi, CAS-Humanities, Kilohana
Sue Jarvi, Pharmacy
Keisuke Nakao, CoBE
Yumiko Ohara, CHL
Vera Parham, CAS-Social Sciences
Michael Sado, UHSHA