



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Higher Education
March 27, 2018 at 1:20 p.m.

by
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SCR 166/SR 125 – URGING THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM TO UTILIZE AND EXPAND EXISTING CURRICULUM AND PROGRAMS ACROSS THE VARIOUS CAMPUSES RATHER THAN ALLOW EACH CAMPUS TO CREATE ITS OWN CURRICULUM AND PROGRAMS

Chair Kahele, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on SCR 166/SR 125. These resolutions would urge the University of Hawai'i to utilize existing curricula and courses rather than allow each campus to create their own.

Interpreted strictly, this would result in freezing the university's curriculum as it is now, using only the courses and programs that exist in 2018 as a basis for higher education in the State of Hawai'i for the future. The university will, however, need to develop new courses and programs as workforce needs and our understanding of the world change. New courses and programs generally are developed on a single campus and then spread to other campuses as demand dictates. In some cases, such as the development of cybersecurity courses and programs, there is a coordination among campuses in developing new elements of the curriculum.

The university welcomes and fosters collaboration among campuses in developing new courses and programs and we require consultation across campuses during the development of new programs. Recently, the university has moved to a common general education curricular structure. This will improve transfer of general education courses among campuses and represents perhaps the most significant way the university is using coordination and joint planning in developing its curriculum. Similarly, several disciplines (e.g., physics) have been working across campuses to align their curricula to better serve the needs of transfer students. Every program is subject to periodic, external peer review to ensure that it continues to meet the outcomes it is designed to deliver.

While there are reasons that curricula in a discipline may be similar across campuses, there are also reasons they should differ. Each campus has a different mission and serves students in the state in different ways. A mathematics program at a community college differs from one at a flagship campus such as UH Mānoa, because of the different programs and student goals each campus serves. Moreover, while we already

allow for students to take courses from multiple campuses, we also hire faculty with specialized expertise, meaning that beyond the basic general education courses, faculty teach within their disciplines as subject matter experts. Offering the same program at different campuses can and does vary based upon faculty expertise. The Doctor of Nursing Practice is an excellent example. Offered at both UH Mānoa and UH Hilo, they may look similar based on title, but the subject matter, focus and faculty expertise is different in each program. Nevertheless, programs serving such different goals must be able to articulate, allowing students who start mathematics at a community college the ability to transfer to a four-year university when they wish in a seamless and supportive manner.

The challenge of curriculum planning at a university system requires a balance between 1) an individual campus's ability to serve the immediate needs of its students, 2) a student's ability to start on one campus and transfer to another campus with a different focus and mission, and 3) the evolving needs of the workforce and the advance of knowledge. Making matters more complex, a modern university program's curriculum is itself a complex mix of general education, prerequisite, required and elective courses. Many courses required by a single major are drawn from the curricula of different departments. Even individual courses often depend on prerequisites or co-requisites from different disciplines. The modern university curriculum is a complex partnership among many disciplines within the campus and any new program will necessarily be a partnership of collaborating faculty and departments.

Due to the aforementioned comments, the University would recommend that these resolutions are not necessary and be deferred.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

SCR-166

Submitted on: 3/26/2018 8:45:16 AM

Testimony for HRE on 3/27/2018 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for Oahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i	Support	No

Comments:

To the Honorable Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair; the Honorable Donna Mercado Kim, Vice-Chair and the Members of the Committee on Higher Education:

Good afternoon, my name is Melodie Aduja. I serve as Chair of the Oahu County Committee ("OCC") on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawaii. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on **SCR166 / SR 125** relating to the University of Hawaii System; Curriculum; and Programs.

The OCC Legislative Priorities Committee is in favor of **SCR166 / SR 125** and supports its passage.

SCR166 / SR 125 is in alignment with the Platform of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i ("DPH"), 2016, as it urges the University of Hawai'i System to utilize and expand existing curriculum and programs across the various campuses rather than allow each campus to create its own curriculum and programs.

Specifically, the Platform of the DPH provides that "We believe that the future of our state, as well as our country, depends upon an educated and knowledgeable citizenry. We support the prioritization of our resources toward providing quality public education and library services to every student, regardless of learning capacity or ability to pay, in an environment conducive to the learning process. These resources shall be made available at every level, from pre-school through higher education, including life-long learning. Educational facilities must be maintained, renovated and built to 21st-century innovations so that our students learn in well-designed, safe environments.

We believe a major role of education is to develop critical and creative thinkers who are knowledgeable about issues and able to evaluate and solve real-world problems. The curriculum also should emphasize cultural learning, the arts, career and trade skills, and physical education so that we may preserve our health and rich cultural history. A variety of learning strategies should be used, including group projects, cooperative learning, discussion, games and technological innovations. We view

standardized tests as just one way of evaluating learning and support multiple measures, including performance assessments such as portfolios and observations.

Consistent with these goals we seek to make public college, public university, trade, mentorship and apprenticeship programs available to all seeking further education tuition-free." (Platform of the DPH, P. 6, Lines 296-302, 310-319 (2016)).

Given that **SCR166 / SR 125** urges the University of Hawai'i System to utilize and expand existing curriculum and programs across the various campuses rather than allow each campus to create its own curriculum and programs, it is the position of the OCC Legislative Priorities Committee to support this measure.

Thank you very much for your kind consideration.

Sincerely yours,
/s/ Melodie Aduja

Melodie Aduja, Chair, OCC on Legislative Priorities of the DPH

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