

# 2015 Report to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i System

April 30, 2015

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In January 2015, the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents sought to explore and analyze the current structure of the University of Hawai'i system. Specifically, they wanted to address whether the Board of Regents should reconsider the 2001 separation of roles of the president of the University of Hawai'i system and the chancellor of the University of Hawai'i at Manoa or seek other changes in the management and leadership structure of the system in order to better serve the state and its citizens. To accomplish this, the Board of Regents engaged the services of Dr. David Longanecker, president of WICHE, and Dr. Demarée Michelau, director of policy analysis for WICHE, to lead a research effort that included reviewing historical documentation; reviewing relevant literature and research; and conducting interviews with past and present stakeholders, national experts on leadership and governance, and leaders in other state higher education systems similar to that of Hawai'i. This report outlines the findings and recommendations of that research effort.

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## David A. Longanecker and Demarée K. Michelau

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This analysis was conducted by Dr. David Longanecker, president of WICHE, and Dr. Demarée Michelau, director of policy analysis for WICHE (biographies for both of these individuals are available at [www.wiche.edu](http://www.wiche.edu)). With an organizational mission of expanding educational access and excellence for all citizens of the West, the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) is a federal compact of the 16 Western states and U.S. territories and freely-associated states. Members include Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Hawai'i, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. Hawai'i joined the compact in 1959.

We were selected to provide this analysis of the current management and leadership structure for the University of Hawai'i system because our long relationship with the university and the state of Hawai'i provides us with an appreciation for the culture, traditions, and accomplishments of the past, as well as for the outside perspective we could bring to the circumstances facing the state.

To perform this research, we engaged in the following activities:

- ▶ Reviewed historical documentation about what led to the past changes in management structure and the reasons for those changes.
- ▶ Reviewed relevant literature and research available on governance structures, accreditation requirements, and leadership that was applicable to the University of Hawai'i system.
- ▶ Conducted interviews with key stakeholders at the time of the change to confirm, further explore the rationale, and understand their perspectives on the strengths and weaknesses of the change.
- ▶ Conducted interviews with key stakeholders and leaders in place today to gather their viewpoints and perspectives on the strengths

and weaknesses of the current model and hear their views on their preferred structure.

- ▶ Reviewed the governance structures of similar higher education systems to garner intelligence from those systems on strengths and weaknesses of alternative approaches. Specific systems that were examined included:
  - ▶ The University of Alaska system, which is organized much like the University of Hawai'i system is today with a system head and chancellors of the three campuses.
  - ▶ The Colorado State University system, which had the same organization that the University of Hawai'i system used to have, in which the system leader and campus leader were one in the same, but recently moved to a system chancellor/campus president model for its three campuses.
  - ▶ The University of Minnesota system, which is organized much as the University of Hawai'i used to be with a president who presides over both the flagship campus and the system, and with chancellors for each of the three other campuses who report to the president.
  - ▶ The Nevada System of Higher Education, which is organized much like the University of Hawai'i is organized today and includes the full array of types of public institutions within its purview, including research universities, an undergraduate college, and a number of community colleges.
  - ▶ New structures in Oregon, which recently established multiple boards to oversee their system of public higher education.

## The Context

The University of Hawai'i system, which is the exclusive provider of public higher education in the state, is unique in many ways. Certainly the remote, multi-island, multicultural, and tropical paradise nature of the state presents distinctive challenges and opportunities for the university in serving not only the state of Hawai'i, but

Polynesia writ large. This aspect of the University of Hawai'i system's mission is clearly outlined in Board of Regents' policy: "As the only provider of public higher education in Hawai'i, the university embraces its unique responsibilities to the indigenous people of Hawai'i and to Hawai'i's indigenous language and culture. To fulfill this responsibility, the university ensures active support for the participation of Native Hawaiians at the university and support vigorous programs of study and support for the Hawaiian language, history, and culture."

Hawai'i's location at about 2,400 miles from the west coast of the U.S. mainland has traditionally made full inclusion into American higher education and culture difficult and expensive. Rapid transportation and technology connectivity have substantially reduced this exclusion, though not necessarily the expenses of engagement from afar. Serving remote areas is not unique to many of the Western states though doing so to seven islands separated by substantial ocean distance is entirely unique.

As one of the first majority-minority states in the U.S., Hawai'i has achieved a higher degree of comfort with multiculturalism than is appreciated in most other portions of the U.S., but this comes with substantial cultural connections that, on balance, enhance the state, but that also occasionally confound the pursuit of a statewide public agenda for Hawai'i. Furthermore, the distinctive role that Hawai'i plays as a Polynesian leader adds additional unique responsibilities to the university's role and mission.

While the University of Hawai'i system is unique in many ways, it is less distinctive than many perceive. For instance, some aspects of the state that many hold to be unique are not so unusual, including the size of the state, its current governance and leadership structure for higher education, and its financial resources. While the state is no longer a small state, with a population of 1.6 million, it remains comparatively small, ranking 11th nationally in the size of its higher education system, with 40,417 full-time equivalent students in 2014, as reported in the State Higher Education Finance (SHEF) report released by the State Higher Education

Executive Officers (SHEEO) organization. This means that it will be challenged financially by the lack of certain economies of scale that larger states can appreciate. And with respect to the governance and management of the University of Hawai'i system, the state faces a rather unusual circumstance of not being small, but also not being big. This is not exclusive to Hawai'i. Most of the Western frontier states (Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Montana, and the Dakotas) are quite similar. Almost all of these states govern their higher education systems in a fashion similar to Hawai'i, with a single statewide governing board headed by a system leader and separate campus leaders.

External circumstances of demography and finances suggest that this examination of the leadership and governance of the University of Hawai'i system is timely because the university faces challenging, but manageable, circumstances ahead. Demographic changes within the state will place additional demands on the university. WICHE's *Knocking at the College Door* report projects that the number of high school graduates will rise by more than 10 percent over the next decade. Moreover, the system will need to attract or attract back to higher education increasing numbers of older adults in order to reach the number of college-educated individuals necessary to meet projected demand for such individuals in Hawai'i's workforce. Circumstances are also challenging because financing for higher education has faced difficulties in recent years. According to the SHEF report, overall funding per full-time equivalent student was \$11,550 in fiscal year 2014 ranking Hawai'i 34th nationally, 5.8 percent below the national average, which makes it particularly difficult to manage in a comparatively small state that lacks the economies of scale that larger states experience. These challenges, however, will certainly be manageable, as demonstrated both by recent success within Hawai'i in responding positively to these circumstances and by the substantial progress achieved in other states with similar challenges. Nonetheless, these challenges cannot be overcome without a change management strategy.

An area in which Hawai'i is quite different from other states in the West is the autonomy and jurisdictional control over the university explicitly laid out in the state's constitution. Article X, Section VI of the Hawai'i Constitution states:

The board shall have the power to formulate policy, and to exercise control over the university through its executive officer, the president of the university, who shall be appointed by the board. The board shall also have exclusive jurisdiction over the internal structure, management, and operation of the university. This section shall not limit the power of the legislature to enact laws of statewide concern. The legislature shall have the exclusive jurisdiction to identify laws of statewide concern.

While in 2000, the voters of the state overwhelmingly passed a constitutional amendment giving the board "exclusive jurisdiction over the internal structure, management, and operation of the university," the constitution does not limit the power of the legislature to "enact laws of statewide concern." Further, the constitution explicitly grants to the legislature the authority to identify what constitutes a matter of statewide concern. As a result of this arguably conflicting language, the Hawai'i legislature tends to involve itself in matters that are in other states typically left to the system or to the campuses. This involvement affects both the culture and policy surrounding the University of Hawai'i.

### ***Leadership at the University of Hawai'i***

The governance structure of the University of Hawai'i system has a history in which the position of the president oscillated between one in which the presidency and the position of the chancellor of the Manoa campus were combined and one in which the two positions were distinct and separate. Prior to President Al Simone's tenure, which began in 1984, there had been a separate chancellor for the Manoa campus. President Simone led the reorganization that combined those two positions, a structure that continued through President Ken Mortimer's tenure. The

positions were then separated in 2001, under President Evan Dobbelle. At that time, President Dobbelle also changed the structure so that each community college had its own chancellor.

The rationale for the separation in 2001 centered on a few key points. First, it was perceived as an opportunity for the Manoa campus to have autonomy from the rest of the system. The Manoa Faculty Senate argued that the problems that needed to be addressed by the reorganization included: random damage, low faculty morale, lack of undergraduate education leadership, weakened graduate and professional programs, too many acting deans, low overhead due to failure to repair and maintain facilities, need to shift to a tuition-driven fiscal strategy, neglect of enrollment management, need to generate new revenue, and the lack of an advocate dedicated solely to the campus.

Originally, we had anticipated laying out the advantages and disadvantages of both maintaining the University of Hawai'i system's current leadership structure (which includes a president of the system and chancellors for each of the baccalaureate campuses) and the option of returning to the system's former arrangement (which combined the Manoa chancellor's position and system president position into one). Based on current leadership and conditions within the university and the state, as well as the knowledge gained from those who were interviewed, however, **we strongly recommend maintaining the current structure in which the president of the University of Hawai'i system is a distinct and separate position from the chancellor of the University of Hawai'i at Manoa.** There are several reasons for this recommendation.

The context of public higher education in Hawai'i has changed dramatically since 2001, when those two positions were last held by one person. While still not considered a large state, Hawai'i is no longer a small state, and the scope of the system has grown considerably and will continue to do so. The community colleges in Hawai'i have grown in size and significance, as have the baccalaureate colleges, and the flagship campus' research activities continue to expand.

Perhaps most importantly, the roles and responsibilities of the two positions are sufficiently different and demanding that serving the university and the state of Hawai'i well requires two individuals with different but complementary skills and interests. Also worth noting, virtually none of the national experts or former or current stakeholders we talked to felt it would be wise to revert back to a blended position.

While there may be cost savings associated with consolidating these leadership positions, these savings would be fairly small, and the negative consequences for the effective functioning of the university would certainly not be worth the modest financial benefit.

So, what are the distinctions in roles and responsibilities that suggest the necessity of two positions and individuals, rather than one? These distinctions derive from the different roles and responsibilities of the system as a whole, as compared to the individual campuses. One of the national experts with whom we conferred captured this difference concisely and cogently, describing the system's responsibilities as dealing with matters between and among the institutions and outside partners, and each institution's responsibilities as dealing with matters within the institution.

### *Role of the System Leader Versus the Role of the Campus Leader*

Within this construct, the role of the president includes both leading and managing "the between and among" activities of the system.

- ▶ The president, working with the Board of Regents, leads those activities that provide and sustain the strategic direction of the system in serving the state of Hawai'i's public agenda for higher education. This includes working with the Board of Regents to establish and assure allegiance to the system's planning and policy development, including differentiating the respective individual missions of all institutions within the system. Also, if the budget process changes during the 2015 legislative session

so that budgeted funds for all campuses are consolidated and the system office allocates funds to the campuses, this responsibility would fall here.

- ▶ The president, working with senior staff, must manage all those system-level tasks where system-level collaboration and management make sense given economies of scale. These include IT infrastructure management, human relations, labor relations, budget and finance, legal affairs, sponsored projects, and various administrative services. These are all services that every institution needs access to, but that make sense for a system to provide because working together can provide better service at lower cost. With this responsibility must come a clear understanding that these are indeed services provided to the campuses. Therefore, system-level staff in charge of the various functions should adopt a service-minded approach.
- ▶ The president also leads the system's activities with state-level entities external to the system. He or she leads the system's consultation and engagement with Hawai'i state government, including the governor and legislature. Also included in this responsibility are relations and collaborative efforts with other state agencies, including those engaged in education, workforce development, economic development, and improving the efficiency of state government.
- ▶ The president also leads efforts to work with the private and non-profit sectors within Hawai'i, including business and industry, cultural organizations, and others with a stake in the activities of the university.
- ▶ Last, but not least, the president is integrally involved in the system's various fundraising efforts.

Virtually all of this presidential leadership is done in concert with the Board of Regents, which has fiduciary responsibility for the University of Hawai'i, has responsibility for selecting the president, and helps to both direct and support the efforts of its president.

The role of each university chancellor is quite different, but must complement the role of the president.

Chancellors are responsible for leading and managing their institutions. Chancellors lead their institutions by establishing and assuring allegiance to strategic institutional efforts aligned with the system defined mission for the institution and in concert with the systemwide established plans and policies. A significant component of this leadership is to provide advice and counsel to the president on the direction of the system as a whole.

Chancellors manage the operations of their campuses, including all academic programs; all ancillary programs, including athletics; and all campus budgeting. Where the system has determined that management operations do not benefit from economies of scale and should be managed by individual institutions rather than at the system level, chancellors have responsibility for managing these activities as well. Finally, chancellors need to be the last, and not the first, stop in the chain of command for campus-based faculty, administrative, and student issues.

The distinctly different roles of the president and university chancellors logically require different skills and interests from the individuals that fill these positions. The president must be a person who is both skilled and interested in leading and managing a diverse set of enterprises and in working with a wide set of stakeholders, both within and outside the system to achieve the enterprise's overall goals. He or she must be an individual who enjoys and is comfortable with conflict resolution, staff management, public speaking, public engagement, and fundraising. Most importantly, he or she must be a person who wants to do the president's job and not run the campuses. He or she must also be a person who both understands and appreciates the uniqueness of Hawai'i.

The university chancellor, on the other hand, must be a person who is well prepared to lead an academic institution. He or she must understand and appreciate academe, particularly within the mission of the individual institution he or she heads. He or she must understand both



the academics and finance of higher education. Most importantly, he or she must be a person who wants to do the chancellor's job for the institution with the mission for which he or she was hired. A chancellor should wish neither for the president's job, nor to lead a different institution from that for which he or she was hired. Finally, he or she must recognize that the institution is part of a system and that he or she ultimately serves the president, and through him or her, the Board of Regents.

Importantly, within the current structure, the chancellors of the community colleges report to the Vice President for Community Colleges and not directly to the President. Overwhelmingly, stakeholders suggested that this "system within a system" is working effectively and efficiently.

Our work has suggested that, in general, there is quite consistent understanding and agreement on the distinct roles between the president and the chancellors at the present time. It is our observation, however, that this has not always been the case. In the past, some of these roles and responsibilities have been confused, misinterpreted, or simply violated, most often between the four-year campuses and the system.

On occasion, the president has engaged in more campus-level leadership or management than the division of labor described above would suggest was appropriate. For example, too often, the president has been engaged in resolving issues regarding athletics, when this should be the responsibility of the university chancellor, not the president. The president has not been alone in this transgression, because often he or she has been encouraged to intervene by the Board of Regents. Such assumption of the duties of the university chancellor has two negative and related consequences. First, it very visibly undercuts the authority of the university chancellor, leading to a diminution of his or her effectiveness both externally to the public and internally to the campus. Second, it encourages the university chancellor to shuck tough decisions off to the president, thus diminishing the efficacy of both individuals' roles.

On occasion, university chancellors have also circumvented the president on system-level

issues. This has included working around the president and Board of Regents on legislative issues or bypassing the president to develop privileged relationships with individual regents. Such actions both harm the system as a whole and the effectiveness of the president.

These issues do not appear to be prevalent today, but are mentioned because they must be avoided going forward to ensure the integrity of the University of Hawai'i system and of its president and university chancellors. At least some of the blame for the issues of the past rested with the Board of Regents, which hired individuals for the president's job who were more enamored with the university chancellor position (in particular on the Manoa campus), and thus confounded the roles. Fortunately that is not the case today.

## Principles and Recommendations

In this context, our research has led to three guiding principles and several recommendations.

### **Principle 1: The roles and responsibilities of the system staff and the campus staff must be clear and understood by all.**

While general agreement exists on role differentiation between the president and university chancellors, much less agreement exists on how these different roles and responsibilities should be actualized by the staff who work for the president and those who work for the university chancellors, particularly between the functions of the vice presidents of the system and the vice chancellors at the Manoa campus. Today considerable confusion and angst exists about who is responsible for what. And, it is quite clear why this is so.

While the responsibilities of the president of the system and the chancellor of the Manoa campus were officially split in 2001, this split was more philosophical than practical at that time, which has left a legacy of confused roles and responsibilities that continues to this day. When the split occurred, instead of creating separate and distinct positions with clearly differentiated roles and responsibilities at the system vice presidential level and at the campus vice chancellor level, those individuals who had served in that blended position simply assumed

two titles. Eventually those positions separated, but the distinctions between positions have to date not been clearly articulated and in several cases, not clearly implemented. It has also led to a situation where 14 years later, many of the problems that the Manoa faculty outlined in 2001 as the rationale for the split still exist today.

One area repeatedly mentioned in the stakeholder interviews as a source of confusion and possible duplication of efforts is academic affairs. In great part this is because of the title of the vice president for academic affairs position. We heard over and over, from predictable sources, that “the system has no faculty, so why does it have a vice president for academic affairs?” While this can be dismissed as a misperception between faculty affairs and academic affairs, it could easily be addressed by using a title for this vice presidential position more directly associated with the system’s unique academic responsibilities. A title such as vice president for system academic planning, policy, and innovation would be more representative of system-level functions such as academic articulation, program assessment, and innovative activities like 15 to Finish and guided pathways.

Perceptions of possible redundancy or of centralization where decentralization would make more sense were also raised with regard to human resources, labor relations, research, and legal affairs. Three circumstances contributed to these perceptions. First, in many cases the people raising these concerns were unaware of what economies of scale in these various areas add in value to the system. For example, there was little appreciation for the value of standard procedures in staff recruitment, evaluation, and termination processes, or in the high level of expertise required in compliance with regard to sponsored programs or labor relations. We even heard a number of references to perverse system policies that upon investigation we discovered did not exist. Yet, reasonably connected individuals sure thought they did. Second, there were too many easily articulated examples of bureaucratization that made the consolidated activities inefficient. For example, we heard cases

of procurement policies that required ridiculous numbers of signatures (not only inefficient but a strong signal of lack of trust) and of service from legal counsel that was slow, expensive, and ineffective. Third, there were convincing cases presented for decentralizing certain activities to the campus level. For example, should the system be second guessing the research priorities and efforts at the Manoa campus?

Both the perceptions and realities of duplication between the system and campuses, particularly between the system-level officers and Manoa officers, are impeding the efficiency of the University of Hawai’i writ large, and we offer the following recommendations as a way of beginning to address this general issue.

**Recommendation: Establish a working group to help define roles and responsibilities for the system and for the campuses.** To address both the perceived and real issues regarding potential duplication and misalignment of responsibilities, ***we recommend that the president convene a working group to recommend to him a clear differentiation of roles and responsibilities for the system and for the campuses.*** The charge to this group should not be driven by individual or institutional druthers, but ***should distinguish between: those roles and responsibilities that belong primarily at the system level (systemwide planning and policy); those operational services that operate more cost effectively at a larger scale; those operational services that logically operate more cost effectively at a larger scale but currently are not, thus requiring change; and those operational services that operate more cost effectively at the institutional level.*** This working group should be headed by one of the vice presidents, perhaps the vice president for administration, and should include representatives of Manoa, the baccalaureate colleges, and the community colleges.

**Recommendation: Review and adjust where appropriate the titles of senior staff.** We also ***suggest that the president review and adjust where appropriate the titles of his senior staff.*** Titles send signals and some of those existing today send confusing signals. We addressed

earlier the possible value of renaming the vice president for academic affairs position. The vice president for research and innovation's title also creates both confusion and angst. Perhaps altering that from research and innovation to sponsored projects would eliminate some of Manoa's anxiety about second guessing their research agenda; would more accurately reflect the service to all campuses for sponsored projects, many of which are not research; and would not isolate the responsibility for innovation solely to the research arena, when in the modern university system it needs to be embedded in almost everyone's job.

**Recommendation: Consider whether any of the existing system-level units could be reconstituted or consolidated to achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness.**

In addition to considering the recommendations made by this working group, **the president should consider whether any of the existing system-level units could be reconstituted or consolidated to achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness.** Determining which system-level units might be legitimate candidates for reconstitution or consolidation is beyond the scope of this research, but a thorough examination of the organizational make up would be beneficial in the context of defining roles and responsibilities. To a great extent President Lassner has already begun to address this need by forming four working groups to develop recommendations for improvement in four areas — communications, public relations, and governmental relations; human resources; facilities and construction; and research, innovation, and compliance. The working groups are charged with identifying current functions, challenges, and opportunities in their areas of responsibility; evaluating organizational and operational structures of current units; and providing recommendations for improved organizational and operating approaches that will result in improved efficiency, effectiveness, accountability, and transparency. Efforts like these are a critical first step in achieving the necessary distinctions for more effective leadership and functioning of the university.

**Recommendation: Prepare a manual that clearly articulates the roles and responsibilities of the senior officers.** We also recommend **that once the working group completes its charge and the president has benefited from its recommendations, that he have a manual prepared that clearly articulates the roles and responsibilities of his various offices, including the rationale for these assignments of responsibility**, so that current employees of the University of Hawai'i more clearly understand roles and responsibilities and so that new employees, including new senior officers at the campus and system levels, can better understand the rules of engagement.

**Recommendation: Implement leadership training at various levels within the University.** Beginning at the very top, **we recommend that the Board of Regents, because of the relative newness of its members, consider securing training for itself.** Should the board accept this challenge, we would encourage the board to secure a trainer who understands the distinction between the role of a board that oversees a system and the role of a board that oversees only a single institution. We were amazed in our review of the literature and research on higher education governance, leadership, and management how little of the research addressed the significant differences between system governance and leadership and individual board governance and leadership. This was particularly apparent with respect to the outward looking responsibilities of both a system leader and the governing board.

**Leadership training should be provided within the system for all staff interested in engaging in campus or system leadership, be they faculty, administrators, or institutional leaders.** We were impressed by a strategy employed by the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, by which they engaged the services of the Center for Creative Leadership, to provide concise leadership training for any professional staff who desire it (and a few for whom it is "suggested"). Such training would help develop staff capabilities and talent and promote leadership skills necessary to manage the



operations of a successful university system. In addition, it could help new faculty and managers better understand and appreciate the unique nature of the University of Hawai'i, from the culture of the Islands to labor relations, etc.

**Principle 2: There must be transparency in decision making and clear communications.**

It also became apparent in our review of the system that serious issues exist with respect to transparency in decision making, what those decisions are, and who is responsible for enacting the actions required by those decisions. Similarly and related, there is confusion, inconsistent messaging, and sometimes contradictory information provided via the formal communications to both those within the University of Hawai'i system and to external constituencies. Formal and informal communication processes help establish a sense of engagement among all members of the university community and require transparency, currency, and consistency in messaging. Absence of effective communications breeds distrust, the spread of misinformation, rumor, and innuendo. All of these exist within the University of Hawai'i system at the present time, particularly with respect to communications between the system and the Manoa campus. While some of these communications challenges reflect more on issues within individual institutions, particularly with respect to the Manoa campus, they are generally perceived to be the fault of the system. For example, the deans on the Manoa campus feel estranged from decision making because their previous direct access to the president under the prior governance structure is now limited to reporting through the vice chancellor. While the current reporting and communications structure makes sense within the existing management structure, it has left them feeling out of the loop; a problem compounded by the perceived lack of transparency in how policies and procedures made "at the top" are translated to those who must implement them. Furthermore, these deans believe the true consequences of some decisions are not fully appreciated by those making the decisions, and they feel they do not have adequate channels

for communicating their concerns to those who could benefit from their counsel. In our conversations with other systems of higher education around the country, we learned of various strategies used to provide avenues for the exchange of view and ideas. Those ranged from simply improving protocols for the exchange of information up and down the communication channels, to collaborative discussions with the president and selected chancellor(s) discussing issues with the Board of Regents, to presidential/chancellor listening tours of the campuses beyond the standard occasional regents meetings held in those venues. In Nevada, for example, the layout of the Board of Regents meetings intentionally engages the chancellors, but as critical listeners, not necessarily discussants. This is achieved by having the regents seated in a format so that the president is seated to the right of the chair and the chancellors are seated directly in front of the Regents. The Montana University system has a similar protocol.

These issues of communication extend well beyond the campus level, however. Higher education is front-page news in Hawai'i more than any other state in which we work. The University of Hawai'i is obviously very important to the state. We were surprised, however, by how little many outside the university, and even to some extent within the university, know about the numerous innovative educational and research activities of the University of Hawai'i. While many are aware of 15 to Finish, far fewer are aware of the university's pioneering efforts in providing guided pathways for students, its seminal work in predictive analytics, or Hawai'i's collaboration with other states in the multi-state longitudinal student data exchange in collaboration with the state's Departments of Education and Workforce Development. Nor do many realize how substantial the University of Hawai'i is in garnering sponsored research, ranking 71st nationally in total academic research funding among the 108 research intensive universities in the U.S. as shown in the National Science Foundation (NSF) National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES) Academic Institution Profiles Rankings. The

University of Hawaii ranks sixth among the 15 flagship universities in the WICHE region. Though higher education in Hawai'i clearly garners substantial attention, this attention too often focuses on the problems and challenges within the University of Hawai'i and not often enough on positive performance within the university and its exceptional contribution to the economy, culture, and social life of the state.

**Recommendation: Consider establishing a clear protocol for communications, both within the university and externally.**

To address this ***we recommend that the president consider establishing a clear protocol for communications, both within the university and externally.*** While some such efforts exist today, they are clearly not producing the desired transparency and communication channels that a complex university needs and deserves. In making this recommendation, we do not suggest that any new efforts focus on better cheerleading for the university or for the president's office; rather, that it be a way to assure more accurate, sensitive, and transparent sharing of the system's perspective and actions, whether addressing positive or not so positive news.

### **Principle 3: All actors must be disciplined.**

For lack of a better word, we now address what we call discipline within the University of Hawai'i system. What we have observed is a lack of discipline in the operations of the University of Hawai'i. We witnessed this in a variety of ways, a number of which have been touched on previously, but that we believe warrant special attention. First, it is important that the president and university chancellors demonstrate discipline in attending to their respective areas of responsibility and not each other's. In the past, it is clear that the president too often crept into the affairs of the Manoa campus that should rightly have been the responsibility of the chancellor. It appears that the current president is much less inclined to do this and is working hard to more clearly differentiate roles. This is both positive and essential. The Board of Regents has responsibilities in maintaining discipline, as well. The Board must focus on its fiduciary responsibilities and avoid intruding into

or second guessing the university chancellors' roles and responsibilities. If questions arise about a chancellor's performance, those concerns should be addressed to the president. Similarly, the chancellors must respect the role of the president and recognize that they work for the president.

**Recommendation: Work with the university chancellors to find ways to reward participatory and respectful engagement and establish consequences for the lack thereof.**

Throughout the system, channels of communication and reporting must be respected. We heard of many instances where folks skipped sharing an idea or concern with their supervisor and took it directly to the next level or even higher "to get some action." And in general we heard "that worked." This lack of discipline often leads to short term satisfaction, but it contributes to chaos and confusion within the system and campuses, a legitimate perception among the legislature and the public that things are not being handled properly, and it encourages end runs. Although our charge has been to focus on the University of Hawai'i system, we noticed this lack of discipline was even more pronounced within the Manoa campus than at either the system level or the other campuses.

It is important, therefore, to clearly break out the lines of authority so that end runs are neither encouraged nor possible. ***Therefore, we recommend that the president work with the university chancellors to find ways to reward participatory and respectful engagement and establish consequences for the lack thereof.***

We intentionally did not include reference to the community college chancellors. The community college component of the system, operating through the Vice President's position appears to be working extremely well and does not need further work in this area.

**Acknowledge and understand that symbolism matters.** As in all organizations, symbols provide witness to what is valued and what is not in the University of Hawai'i system. Three current symbolic acts contribute to the confusion of the roles between the University of Hawai'i system and particularly the University of Hawai'i, Manoa.

First, the location of the system offices on the Manoa campus clearly complicates the differentiation of roles and responsibilities. It does so in two ways. First, it visibly signals to many that the president remains in control of the Manoa campus. Second, it structurally contributes to the confusion, both because it is so easy physically for system staff to meddle in campus activities and for campus folk to take campus business to the system.

Second, the infatuation of the president's office in the past, as well as the Board of Regents, in athletics confounds and diminishes the chancellor's rightful role in and responsibility for campus athletics. This is obviously a tough area in which to find the right balance. Because of the high profile of athletics and the substantial interest from outside the university (for many in Hawai'i, athletics is the University of Hawai'i), it is hard, and occasionally inappropriate for the Board of Regents to be entirely hands-off. Athletics is, nonetheless, essentially a campus activity, not a system activity, and thus must be directed by the chancellor.

Third, maintaining the president's residence adjacent to the campus and not providing the chancellor with a residence symbolizes Manoa as the president's domain. President Lassner's decision not to live in the mansion but to use it for ceremonial purposes certainly reduces this perception. Yet, retaining it for "the system" still maintains much of the symbolism. The home is a magnificent structure, perhaps one of the finest president's mansions in the country, and should be maintained as a treasure for the university. Shifting its association from the system to the campus would be a powerful and positive symbolic statement.

**Recommendation: Adopt a long-term plan for moving the system offices to a site that is not on the Manoa campus and is ideally close to the state capitol, and consider shifting the association of the President's Mansion from the system to the University of Hawai'i at Manoa.**

Acknowledging and understanding that these symbols do matter and making efforts to reduce confusion stemming from these symbols would go a long way toward making important

changes in perception and reality. Therefore, ***we recommend adopting a long-term plan for moving the system offices to a site that is not on the Manoa campus and is ideally close to the state capitol, and consider shifting association of the President's Mansion from the system to the University of Hawai'i at Manoa.***

## Summary

In this document we have provided our analysis of both the strengths and weaknesses of the current state of leadership and management in the University of Hawai'i system and reasoning that has informed our perceptions. Based on our conclusions, we also offer a number of recommendations with respect to how the leadership and management structures of the system could be improved and enhanced. These conclusions and recommendations have been greatly informed by many people, both within and outside of the University of Hawai'i community, and we greatly appreciate the candor and passion with which information has been provided to us. Our conclusions and recommendations, however, are not solely the result of synthesizing those insights. Findings are based upon a combination of:

- ▶ our knowledge of organizational behavior, including the unique nature of higher education organizations,
- ▶ our examination of the research and literature on leadership and management within higher education,
- ▶ our substantial knowledge of Hawai'i and the university system, built up over many years of working with both,
- ▶ and, indeed, the shared wisdom of the many people with whom we interviewed.

Perhaps the most significant finding is that the University of Hawai'i system should retain its current leadership structure, with the president of the system being a distinctly different position than that of the chancellor of the Manoa campus. As we describe in the report, these are two distinctly different jobs, requiring different skills and abilities. And as one of our interviewees so aptly and simply stated, "there is plenty of valuable work for each to do." In fact, if one

unusually gifted person possessed the skills and abilities to do both jobs, it would simply be too overwhelming a workload for that person.

We did find, however, that there is plenty of room for improvement in the way in which the system is managed. Much of the reason for the discontent and dysfunctionality in the current management structure remains a legacy of ineffective differentiation of roles and responsibilities when the system functions were separated from the Manoa campus at the turn of the century. To remedy this lack of clarity of roles and responsibilities and resulting redundancies, complexities of bureaucracy, tensions, and lack of trust, we suggest three guiding principles and a number of recommendations:

**Principle 1: The roles and responsibilities of the system staff and the campus staff must be clear and understood by all.**

- ▶ Establish a working group to help define roles and responsibilities for the system and for the campuses.
- ▶ Review and adjust where appropriate the titles of senior staff.
- ▶ Consider whether any of the existing system-level units could be reconstituted or consolidated to achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness.
- ▶ Prepare a manual that clearly articulates the roles and responsibilities of the senior officers.
- ▶ Implement leadership training at various levels within the university.

**Principle 2: There must be transparency in decision making and clear communications.**

- ▶ Consider establishing a clear protocol for communications, both within the university and externally.

**Principle 3: All actors must be disciplined.**

- ▶ Work with the university chancellors to find ways to reward participatory and respectful engagement and establish consequences for the lack thereof.
- ▶ Adopt a long-term plan for moving the system offices to a site that is not on the Manoa campus and ideally close to the state

capitol, and consider shifting the association of the president's mansion from the system to the University at Manoa.

We have one final summary recommendation, as well. We believe that all of the stakeholders within (and to the extent possible outside) the University of Hawai'i should accept a **reset**. Too much of today's efforts to look to the future are predicated on looking backwards, not forward. This **reset** must begin with the Board of Regents and the president, but it is actually more critical within the campuses. This includes the faculty, which can focus excessively on times gone by, to the administration within the Manoa campus where we found substantial dysfunctional activity generally blamed on others, to the president's senior officers who too often impose their perspectives on the institutions rather than serve them. And though it will be difficult to exact, it would be beneficial if the legislature and executive branches of government would enter the **reset** as well. No single organization will be as critical to the future economic, social, and cultural vitality of the state of Hawai'i as the University of Hawai'i. Its 10 campuses will make or break the future vitality of the state, preparing the workforce of the future, providing the quality of life the people of Hawai'i deserve, and preserving and enhancing the culture of the Island state. Maximizing these opportunities, however, will take all possible effort to plan for the future. That does not mean that the past should be ignored, for history informs progress, but it does mean moving forward and not dwelling on the past. Our advice: Do not let the anger, angst, and antagonism of the past diminish the bright potential for the future.

## Appendix: Individuals Interviewed for this Research

We thank the following individuals who spent time with us to share their views, expertise, and perspectives.

- ▶ Peter Arnade, Dean, College of Arts and Humanities, *University of Hawai'i - Manoa*
- ▶ Eugene Bal, Vice Chair, *University of Hawai'i Board of Regents*
- ▶ Diane Barrans, Executive Director, *Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education*
- ▶ Christine Beaulé, Secretary, All-Campus Council of Faculty Senate Chairs, *University of Hawai'i - Manoa*
- ▶ Robert Bley-Vroman, Interim Chancellor, *University of Hawai'i - Manoa*
- ▶ Mary Boland, Dean and Professor, School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene, *University of Hawai'i - Manoa*
- ▶ Ron Bontekoe, Co-Chair, All-Campus Council of Faculty Senate Chairs, *University of Hawai'i - Manoa*
- ▶ Doris Ching, Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, *University of Hawai'i - West Oahu*
- ▶ William Chismar, Dean, Outreach College and Professor, Information Technology Management, *University of Hawai'i - Manoa*
- ▶ Representative Isaac Choy, *Hawai'i House of Representatives*
- ▶ Robert Cooney, Vice Chair, Manoa Faculty Senate and Associate Professor, Epidemiology & Environmental Sciences, *University of Hawai'i - Manoa*
- ▶ Peter Crouch, Dean, College of Engineering, *University of Hawai'i - Manoa*
- ▶ Kathy Cutshaw, Vice Chancellor for Administration, Finance, and Operations, *University of Hawai'i - Manoa*
- ▶ Reed Dasenbrock, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, *University of Hawai'i - Manoa*
- ▶ Risa Dickson, Vice President for Academic Affairs, *University of Hawai'i System*
- ▶ Douglas Dykstra, Chancellor, *Windward Community College*
- ▶ Patrick Gamble, President, *University of Alaska*
- ▶ Joe Garcia, Lieutenant Governor of Colorado and Executive Director, *Colorado Department of Higher Education*
- ▶ Peter Garrod, Professor, Agricultural Economics, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, *University of Hawai'i - Manoa*
- ▶ Jan Gouveia, Vice President for Administration, *University of Hawai'i System*
- ▶ Lori Ideta, Interim Vice Chancellor for Students, *University of Hawai'i - Manoa*
- ▶ Linda Johnsrud, Former Executive Vice President/Provost for Academic Affairs, *University of Hawai'i System* and Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, *University of Texas System*
- ▶ Dennis Jones, President, *National Center for Higher Education Management Systems*
- ▶ Eric Kaler, President, *University of Minnesota*
- ▶ Daniel Klaich, Chancellor, *Nevada System of Higher Education*
- ▶ Denise Eby Konan, Dean, College of Social Sciences and Professor of Economics, *University of Hawai'i - Manoa*
- ▶ David Lassner, President, *University of Hawai'i System*
- ▶ Karen Lee, Executive Director, Hawai'i P-20 Partnerships for Education, *University of Hawai'i System*
- ▶ Rick Legon, President, *Association of Governing Boards*



- ▶ Darolyn Lendio, Vice President for Legal Affairs and University General Counsel, *University of Hawai'i System*
- ▶ Theresa Lubbers, Commissioner, *Indiana Commission for Higher Education*
- ▶ Michael Martin, Chancellor, *Colorado State University System*
- ▶ David McClain, President Emeritus, *University of Hawai'i System*
- ▶ Aims McGuinness, Senior Associate, *National Center for Higher Education Management Systems*
- ▶ Randolph Moore, Chair, *University of Hawai'i Board of Regents*
- ▶ Ken Mortimer, President Emeritus, *University of Hawai'i System* and Chancellor, *University of Hawai'i - Manoa*
- ▶ John Morton, Vice President for Community Colleges, *University of Hawai'i System*
- ▶ J.N. Musto, Executive Director, *University of Hawai'i Professional Assembly*
- ▶ Deane Neubauer, Former Chancellor, *University of Hawai'i - Manoa* and Co-Director, *Asian Pacific Higher Education Research Partnership*
- ▶ Jane Nichols, Vice President of Academic Affairs, *Truckee Meadows Community College*
- ▶ Stephen Nishihara, President, *Associated Students of University of Hawai'i*
- ▶ Larry Pogemiller, Commissioner, *Minnesota Office of Higher Education*
- ▶ Steven Rosenstone, Chancellor, *Minnesota State Colleges and Universities*
- ▶ Colleen Sathre, Vice President Emeritus, Planning and Policy, *University of Hawai'i System*
- ▶ Avi Soifer, Dean, William S. Richardson School of Law, *University of Hawai'i - Manoa*
- ▶ Duane Stevens, Professor, Atmospheric Dynamics, School of Ocean and Earth Sciences and Technology, *University of Hawai'i - Manoa*
- ▶ Donald Straney, Chancellor, *University of Hawai'i - Hilo*
- ▶ Jan Naoe Sullivan, Vice Chair, *University of Hawai'i Board of Regents*
- ▶ R. Anderson Sutton, Dean and Assistant Vice Chancellor for International and Exchange Programs, School of Pacific and Asian Studies, *University of Hawai'i - Manoa*
- ▶ Vassilis Syrmos, Vice President for Research and Innovation, *University of Hawai'i System*
- ▶ Michelle Tagorda, Student Regent, *University of Hawai'i Board of Regents*
- ▶ Senator Brian Taniguchi, *Hawai'i State Senate*
- ▶ Brian Taylor, Interim Vice Chancellor for Research, *University of Hawai'i - Manoa*
- ▶ Michelle Tigchelaar, *University of Hawai'i Graduate Student Organization*
- ▶ Douglas Vincent, Senate Executive Committee Secretary, Manoa Faculty Senate, and Animal Scientist and Department Chair, Department of Human Nutrition, Food and Animal Sciences, *University of Hawai'i - Manoa*
- ▶ Donna Vuchinich, President, *University of Hawai'i Foundation*
- ▶ Noreen Yamane, Chancellor, *Hawai'i Community College*
- ▶ Garret Yoshimi, Vice President for Information Technology/Chief Information Officer, *University of Hawai'i System*
- ▶ Kalbert Young, Vice President for Budget and Finance/Chief Financial Officer, *University of Hawai'i System*