

# Leeward Community College Faculty Senate

## Legislative Relations Committee Report

February, 2021

Sixth Meeting of academic year 2020-2021 held Feb. 2, 2021

### Members

Erika Molyneux, Naiad Wong, Weirong Cai, Faustino Dagdag, Cara Chang, Didier Langlare & Reina Ojiri, & Fa'amaile (Betty) Ickes

### Visitors

Michael Oishi, Gregg Longanecker

### Topics

- Motion for Faculty Senate to approve [Legislative Relations Priorities Document](#)
  - Express our solidarity as faculty
  - Ask for solidarity from legislators
  - Express list of general concerns as faculty to legislators
- [Legislative Timetable](#)
- [Insights](#). PBS Hawaii. Jan. 21, 2021
  - Topic: COVID 19 impacts
  - Participants: UH President David Lassner, Chaminade University President Lynn Babington, Konawaena High School counselor Travis Nakayama, & a Senior at Maui High School
  - Summary:
    - Chaminade is small & has maintained sports, in-person activities, & ALL classes; faculty all trained in online education
    - Lassner claims faculty are more comfortable teaching online now & side-stepped question about whether all classes were still offered
    - UH is honoring all sports scholarships and offering seniors an extra year to play
    - COVID-19 & online schooling has forced high schoolers to learn time management
    - Students don't feel they're getting the college experience (is it okay to charge as much?)
    - Students value interaction & responsiveness
    - Cost to schools is higher (wi-fi & tools/prep for different modality; space goes unused).
- Stephanie Kim, Director of [UH Government Relations](#)
  - Presentation on the Legislative process was held Thursday, January 14 from 4-5
  - We are the first faculty group to request this type of presentation
  - Associate Vice President Mike Unebasami (point person with Legislature for all CCs) attended & can help us contact appropriate legislators if the need arises.
    - Explained his and legislators' role in dealing with the current deficit
- [Ways & Means Meeting Summary](#) (Jan. 12, 2021)
- Bills to watch:
  - Retirement:
    - [SB590](#) - faculty retirement...
  - Tenure:

- [SB1328](#) - Bill that possibly denies tenure to non-instructional staff/faculty. (What does "with a commitment to student achievement and success." mean?)
  - [SB1394](#) - Affecting Tenure-track researchers
    - Top research universities require researchers paid salary through competitive grants (moves UH in this direction)
- Use of University lands
  - [SB247](#) - Establish pilot program to use unused library lands to meet mission of public libraries?!
- Student Financials
  - [SB245](#) - Make FAFSA (or FAFSA waiver) mandatory for graduating high school seniors (Much Pell grant \$ historically go unclaimed)
  - [SB358](#) - Establishes a state income tax deduction for eligible contributions made to any college savings program under section 529 of the Internal Revenue Code. Applies to taxable years beginning after 12/31/2020. (common in many other states).
  - [SB342](#) & [HB211](#) - Provides a tuition waiver from the University of Hawaii and its associated community colleges for the surviving spouse and dependent children of a fire fighter who dies in the line of duty or who is permanently and totally disabled as a direct result of a traumatic injury sustained in the line of duty.
  - [HB1291](#) - Specifies qualifications for student scholarships
- Other Student Issues:
  - [SB214](#) & [HB781](#) - Freedom of speech for student journalists
  - [SB461](#) - Require compliance with the Military Selective Service Act to be eligible for enrollment in a state-supported post-secondary educational institution or qualify for state financial assistance for post-secondary education, or to be eligible for state or county employment or service.
  - [SB730](#) - Free tuition at UHCCs for Hawaii residents
- Miscellaneous:
  - [HB569](#) - Expands the victim-counselor privilege under Rule 505.5 of the Hawaii Rules of Evidence to include confidential advocates employed by the university of Hawaii.
  - [SB1220](#) - Add UH as an authorized group to do criminal history checks on employees (ties in with early college/high school classes?!)
- [UHPA Tracked Bills](#) (includes some of these and more)

## UHPA

- On [SB1328](#) - Tenure safeguards academic freedom, ensures quality of university, & prevents brain drain; attack on tenure = attack on democracy
  - Divide & Conquer strategy to take away benefits?! Same strategy with state workers.
- UH faculty Furloughs on hold until at least July 1.
- Feb. 20, Faculty Reps attend UHPA meeting (with breakout session)

## Action steps for next meeting

1. Follow-up with Chairs of EDU & HRE for priorities/background on key legislation
2. Await Senate Approval of Legislative Priorities Letter for further action
3. Members tracking bills in COVID-19 Special Committees, Education & Higher Education Committees

4. Discuss idea of lecturers working for DOE with Education Division (certification/fill teacher shortage in secondary schools with those at risk of losing work in UHCCs)

Next Meeting

Tuesday, March 2, 2-3pm