KAPI`OLANI COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Faculty Senate

November 8, 2010

Chancellor Leon Richards
Kapi'olani Community College

Dear Chancellor Richards,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the 8/16/10 DRAFT document, "Participatory Governance at Kapi'olani Community College". After a careful and deliberate review, the Faculty Senate requests the language in red in the text of the attached document be removed and the language in blue inserted in its stead under section II. A. Chartered Governance Groups, Faculty Senate.

You will note that the references to administrative authority have been deleted from this section. It is inappropriate to define the work of the Faculty Senate through a description of administrative responsibilities. The original draft actually starts with a discussion of the role of Administration, and unfortunately can create the false impression that the Administration has primary responsibility for fundamental academic matters.

If the KCC Administration is to be discussed in terms of governance, there can be a 5th section added. Any new section should clearly indicate that in academic matters, the Senate is the primary authority. The BOR has reserved unto itself (and its administrative delegees) the right to overturn decisions of the Senates but that authority “should be exercised adversely only in exceptional circumstances”, and it is the Senate that has “primary responsibility” in “fundamental academic matters”.

The Senate feels strongly that the title of the draft document as well as the text of the introduction and summary should be edited to accurately portray the reality of governance at Kapi'olani Community College.

A. Higher education bodies routinely use the term "shared governance", not "participatory governance". There is no traditional accepted definition of the phrase "participatory governance" in academia. Such a title suggests that Kapi'olani Community College is out of sync with the rest of the academy. It is the sense of the Senate that “Shared Governance” better reflects that authority and responsibility in academic matters is “shared” between Administration and faculty, with faculty having primary authority.
B. The Faculty Senate is a decision making body. Although it has some advisory roles in matters that are not fundamentally academic, to include it with other advisory groups is misleading and understates the fundamental responsibilities of the Senate. The UH Board of Regents language referenced above makes clear that the Faculty Senate is making decisions and those decisions should only be overturned in "exceptional circumstances". The Senate encourages your office to clarify this important difference between the Senate and the other groups referenced. We ask that this clarification be consistent throughout the document.

Although the Senate did not consider it appropriate to edit this document at this point (outside of the Senate section), it is our request that the above suggestions will be carefully considered and implemented with appropriate revisions. As we anticipate the AACJC scrutinizing this document in the near future, it is in the best interest of everyone at the college that it reflect actual practice.

Sincerely,

Dennis Vanairsdale
Faculty Senate Chair

Attachment: Proposed redraft of Participatory Governance Document
11/1/2010