

## Student Government and Student Activities Update

Aloha!

As many of you know, the last few years have been challenging for student government and activities. This past spring is a culmination of many different issues and many different factions that hindered the program. However I am committed and will continue to find solutions and the best format to deal with and eliminate long standing issues to ensure that fees are being used in an appropriately and timely manner. In the big picture, the goal is also to ensure that students have a quality experience serving in these positions and that the students at large benefit from these activities to support their success. The current processes are iterations of the same model that has not proven successful over a long period of time. This fall, a different format for Student Activities will be piloted to ensure that fees can fund activities benefiting students from all aspects of the campus – RIOS, campus-based requests, including those from classes and projects, and Kau Wa'a Center in a more timely manner. A revised bylaw and constitution with new advising for Student Government are also in the works.

In addition, I wanted to take this opportunity to share with you that I am aware of different student groups, including those who are not currently Hawai'iCC students who have interests in forming their own movement or those supporting various community causes. I welcome these discussions, activities, and energies so long as they are not disruptive or destructive because colleges and universities have always been safe bastions of ideas, free speech, and innovative thinking. It's an opportunity to help develop students become new models of effective leaders who can build consensus rather than discord.

Lastly, I also want to update you on the pending litigation against UH and Hawai'i Community College. The allegations of missing funds and mistreatment of students filed by three students from a previous council/taskforce are unequivocally false. These students were given every bit of dialogue and forum to resolve their concerns. Those of you who are familiar with our procurement process know that funds just don't go missing. Student funds follow same procurement and accounting guidelines. There are no shortcuts to access these funds and all account activities require my approval. The University is working on defending the College. I am in the impression that unlike other student litigations at other campuses, we are not looking to settle. I am not sure what the media coverage will be like if any, but we will have a point of contact just in case anyone has a question.

Here's a timeline of what has transpired in Spring 2015 and plans for 2015-16.

### Spring 2015

- Faction internally within Student Council among members and between advisor: issues seem to stem from personality, business process, roles, and approvals.
- Student Council met with Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs in January and various more times along with the Chancellor to clarify role of advisor and to allow for activities to continue.
- Advisor continued to attempt to find solution and provide support.
- Chancellor and VCSA approved advisor's request for reassignment.
- Student Council worked directly under VCSA Office to continue with select activities. Student Council also worked on a draft of bylaws that was presented to John Morton for his feedback with the direction that procedures must be followed.

Summer 2015

- A student task force was called in the summer to work through bylaws and review of council. This group included recent council members, past council members, RISO members, and Phi Theta Kappa scholar. These students will receive a one-time stipend for their work.
- Group was led by Kamaka Gundersen to identify roles, parameters, and challenges in Student Government and Student Activities.
- Planners were funded with Publication Fees.

Fall 2015

- An updated bylaws and constitution for Student Government focusing on advocacy and leadership are in final draft forms to be posted for comment and ratification in the next coming weeks.
- Faculty and Staff who signed up for Student Government Committee will be contacted about advising and guidance role for Student Government.
- Election for Student Government will start via online voting once bylaws and constitution are ratified.
- Training to follow.
- New format for student activities and publication will be piloted. New process will enable RISO's and campus-based activities for students to directly request funds without having to go through extensive approval processes. Student activity planners will be student employees and will operate Kau Wa'a Center under the supervision of a Center Coordinator to assist Student Government leaders and activity planners with requisitions and planning. These personnel will be funded through student fees. Announcement will be sent campus wide on how to access funds in the next week or so and the form to use. Requestors will be responsible for procurement process. Format to be evaluated at the end Spring 2016.
- A reduced, one-fee structure was implemented campus-wide that lowered student fees in general by 50%.

Student Activity Fee*	\$1.50/credit up to a max of 10 credits or \$15
Student Government Fee*	\$1/credit up to a max of 10 credits or \$10
Publications Fee*	\$5

I will continue to monitor these changes to assess for effectiveness. I hope that the collaboration with faculty and staff in advising and supporting Student Government and the new format of funding activities will help improve the student engagement on our campus here on Manono and at Pāalamanui.