January 4, 2016

MEMORANDUM

TO: Reed Dasenbrock, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs  
Krystyna S. Aune, Dean, Office of Graduate Education

FROM: Noreen Mokuau, Dean, Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work  
Paula T. Morelli, Chair, PhD Program in Social Welfare

SUBJECT: Three Year Report – PhD Program in Social Welfare (SWEL), Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work

Our sincere mahalo for your ongoing support and efforts on behalf of the PhD Program in Social Welfare at the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work. This three year report on the PhD Program addresses our progress since the submission of the PhD Program Review Report in December 15, 2011, Review Committee Report in April 9, 2012, and Recommendations from the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs (VCAA) in July 23, 2012. Since the School is currently preparing for Council on Social Work (CSWE) reaffirmation for the BSW and MSW Programs in 2018, the three year report focuses on the PhD Program.

By way of a brief summary, on April 9, 2012, the PhD Program Review Committee determined that SWEL:

1) is organized to meet its objectives;
2) resources are less than adequate in the areas of the facility, number of tenure line faculty, and budget for graduate student assistantships;
3) is efficient in its use of limited resources;
4) provides quality instruction despite limited resources;
5) outcomes seem compatible with the program objectives; and
6) objectives are appropriate and consistent with the mission of the University.

The PhD Review Committee, with concurrence from the VCAA, made the following recommendations:

1. **Enable the School to develop a research infrastructure for pre and post awards.** Since the School is a relatively small unit without a high volume of grant activity, the UH might consider alternatives such as combining smaller academic units under a common research infrastructure.

There are several activities denoting progress.

a. In 2012, the MBTSSW hired a fiscal officer on permanent funds dedicated to strengthening the research infrastructure.
b. In 2014, the Dean of the MBTSSW, with significant support from the Dean of the John A. Burns School of Medicine, became the Multiple Investigator of a research infrastructure grant on health disparities from the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (2014-2019), thereby providing considerable access of resources to the faculty of the MBTSSW.

c. In 2015, the MBTSSW, the Office of Public Health Studies, and the Center on Aging are reorganizing under one dean to enhance the efficiency, productivity, and excellence in research, instruction and community service. Over time, interaction, creativity, and exchange between faculty and students of the three entities are expected to reinvigorate the School’s research infrastructure.

2. **Provide the School with a permanent home.** The School is slated to move into a remodeled Gartley Hall within the next two years. The committee regards this as an important activity that will stabilize the Ph.D. program.

   a. In 2014, MBTSSW moved to its new permanent home in Gartley Hall, a 21st century, energy sustainable building. This long-waited benchmark establishes as commitment to the education of generations of social workers who will fulfill the university’s land grant mission of providing for the people of the state of Hawai‘i. Gartley Hall has proven to be more than a physical plant for social work faculty, staff, students and community partners, but has provided us with the “roots” for identity, belonging, and thriving.

3. **Facilitate the hiring of additional tenure-line faculty.** Some consideration should be given to the hiring of more senior faculty, especially faculty with excellent records of grant success. The importance of developing a research infrastructure, as outlined in item 1 above, is critical to the success of attracting senior faculty. UH and the School should consider the prospects of cluster hires that facilitate the School to immediately build an area of research.

   a. In the last two years, the School has hired two tenure-line instructional faculty at the assistant professor level and one tenure-line specialist faculty who serves as assistant to the Dean. However, hiring more senior faculty continues to be a budgetary challenge, and even with the recent hires, we are potentially facing difficulties in meeting CSWE reaffirmation standards in 2018.

4. **UH should work with the School on its advancement (fund raising) efforts.** Many research universities have advancement teams available to academic units to help facilitate fund raising. One of the priorities for fundraising, in addition to providing student fellowships or stipends, is to develop funds for faculty and students to travel to professional conferences.

   There are multiple activities denoting progress:

   a. In 2014, the MBT SSW provided “Naming Opportunities” in Gartley Hall for potential donors who have interest in naming spaces in the building. To date, we have one donor who has named one of four classrooms after his non-profit organization – Prince of Peace. We also have a pledge from a health care facility to name another classroom after their organization’s founder.
b. In 2015, the Richard and Rose Takasaki Professor in Social Policy was awarded to MBT SSW Professor - Dr. Colette Browne. There is priority in using some funds to support a graduate student to assist in the work of social welfare policy.

c. In 2015, the Barbara Cox Anthony Chair in Aging was awarded to MBT SSW Dean - Dr. Noreen Mokuau and Office of Public Health Studies Director – Dr. Kathryn Braun. We are planning on using funds to support 1-2 graduate students to assist in the agenda on aging, particularly with oversight to the Center on Aging.

d. In 2015, we received a pledge from the Queen Lili`uokalani Children’s Center for an endowment on a distinguished professorship in Native Hawaiian culture. As with other endowments, there will be support for a graduate student to support this work.

e. In 2016, under the leadership of one of two newly hired UHF Vice Presidents, we understand there will be a concerted effort to plan a fund raising platform for the College of Health Sciences and Social Welfare.

Even with such progress, the MBTSSW is looking towards the UHF for more structured, consistent, and visible support for our students and faculty.

5. **The School should examine the availability of courses for Ph.D. students.** Some Ph.D. students noted that a few recommended courses were either unavailable or lacked specialty focus which prevented them from achieving Ph.D. milestones in a timely manner. The School should determine how widespread this problem is and develop means to resolve the problem.

   a. In order to increase our capacity to offer students timely access to required courses and meet the minimum doctoral class size of eight students, SWEL offers its courses to students from the Office of Public Health Studies, Educational Psychology, Sociology, Urban Planning and other departments. SWEL also actively encourages its students to enroll in relevant courses offered in other departments.

   b. According a recent poll of current doctoral students, class availability and scheduling continue to be challenging, however, all students have managed to obtain needed classes. Course availability for students is an area SWEL remains vigilant.

The progress indicated in this three year report reflects the work of many people in the MBT SSW, with special acknowledgement of the doctoral chair, doctoral committee, and specialist faculty dedicated to doctoral education. In addition, the Office of Graduate Education Dean and Associate Dean are partners in our efforts to continually address and achieve the recommendations of the PhD Review Committee and the VCAA..

In the next two years, SWEL anticipates MBTSSW’s reorganization with the Office of Public Health Studies, and the Center on Aging will maximize and increase its ability to recruit and support Pacific Basin doctoral students, who demonstrate strong leadership and research potential.

We look forward to working with both the Office of the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Office of Graduate Education on completing the 2018 PhD program review.