

# Legislation that affects on the school funding



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Executive Summary A serious problem facing the at the of Hawaii at Manoa is the shortage incurred each semester. Under a careful analysis and research, it is determined that the sources of the problem are due to two main factors: funding and an inefficient system.

Issues pertaining to the lack of funding rooted from the low tuition and a complicated budget requesting process from the state government.

Prompted with an inefficient system, three issues are needed to be looked into. These issues are unknowledgeable advisors, seniors holding classes, and a weak infrastructure. In the paper, each issue of the main factor will be briefly discussed, then a solution is proposed after the issue to allow improvement within the university in the long term.

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Introduction

In Fall 2004, when Vice Chancellor Neal Smatresk transferred to the UHM from the University of Texas at Arlington where he served as a dean of science department for the past 20 years, he immediately noticed of the <https://assignbuster.com/legislation-that-affects-on-the-school-funding/>

severity of the class shortage problem at UHM. Since then, he had been activity involved in designing an information system that would increase the efficiency and searched for cause of the problem. He noted that UHM is a traditional university where changes to the infrastructure are frequently faced with administrators' resilient. This made chancellor position more difficult since he is always on a crusade to convince the university to place student needs as the top priority. Through a transparency in administration and high emphasis on student needs, he stated, it would create more trust in the system and shed more lights on the values UHM is projecting.

Many of the Smatresk's solutions were partially implemented in the system, and the statistic and student feedbacks provided him the confidence to continue the direction he is at. Thanks to the help of STAR correspondent, a system that supplies real-time class availability and enrollment, general classes designed for students to enroll during the freshman and sophomore year are beginning to show improvement with registration.

The solutions proposed in this paper are similar to those by the chancellor, however, they are envisioned to bring the biggest impact in the long term. This paper is intended for all students in order to understand the factors of the problem and failures of actions from the administration. At the end of the discussion will be the solutions from the students to yield the greatest outcome.

Funding

Legislation

Issues

While the University of Hawaii at Manoa finds that its funding falls short of the expected level, Florida state institutions benefit from funding that

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exceeds the anticipated level by 70% (Lee and Bonham). To secure funding from the legislative body, the elected officials in Hawaii's state legislature require that UHM present itself as a trustworthy investment in Hawaii's cultural and economic future before they increase funding.

The University's current budgeting process leaves necessary projects, such as the Research and Training Revolving Fund under funded while millions of dollars (Higa, 17) go unaccounted for (short of facilities and professors). The public's mistrust will not allow the school to increase funding. This mistrust will be eliminated when UHM revamps its budgeting and accounting practices.

#### Solution

Although program cutting is short-term remedy to avoid financial disaster, this approach results in an irreversible downward trend. Indeed, quality academic programs draw in federal and state government and private research grants. Research based on Hawaii's strategic location as in International Business can be used to create commercially viable products. Successful programs are a sound investment in Hawaii's economic future because they generate revenue and garner support from the legislative body.

Capitalizing on unique research that has commercial value assures the legislative body that the taxpayer's money is a solid investment. Proper accounting practices will instill the confidence needed for such assurance.

#### Inefficient System

#### Class Advisors

#### Issues

One other form of inefficiency is when advisors come through short in

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understanding students' interests and in assisting with their college or career planning. While seeking for professional academic advice, students would be told by advisors exactly what classes to take that may not be guaranteed and on the registration day become burdened with the hectic task of rescheduling. Another issue occurs to students is the inconsistent advice and information provided to them. The lack of sufficient knowledge not only makes a student's life harder, but also questions the competency of the advisor.

### Solution

One proposed solution is to first create the right job description for advisors and mandate training programs for them each year, gearing advisors towards a real academic advising instead on recruiting and marketing the university to prospective students as specified in their current job duties. After the training program, advisors will become more knowledgeable with the colleges and departments in order to better assist the students. This will also assure that all advisors have the same information and students will not need to bear the inconsistencies in advising. By having this continuous training, advisors will be kept updated on changes to the curriculum and requirements.

Another solution that can allow advisors to focus more on academic advising and career planning is through a full implementation of the Student STAR system. With it, students can gain access to their academic journey and thus a better understanding of their classes and major requirements. In the process, students will be more aware of the graduation curriculum. Armed with the available information, advisors will be able to assist students in class scheduling for the next semester.

With the students' best interest in mind, advisors should be granted the right to add a class for a student based on each circumstance. Ideally, students should have the ability to petition to join a class that is required for graduation. Advisors can have the authority to recognize the necessity of the class and consider approving the petition. An advisor's job to truly advance students forward and towards the right direction makes them valuable to the university and students certainly would appreciate it.

### UH Banner

#### Issues

The second inefficiency is the UH banner system and its failure to remove lower level classmen from those classes which are critical for senior graduation requirements. This problem is rampant throughout the university due to upper classmen with a high number of credits saving classes for their friends with a low number of credits and a later registration time, often for mere scheduling convenience or some other arbitrary reason. UH banner also fails in denying access to courses to students who lack the pre-requisites needed for the course. Professors are told to manually screen the class list for individuals not meeting the requirements, often times ignoring this obligation altogether or permitting the student to take the course regardless. Many times this leads to students withdrawing from or failing the course, wasting a seat that could have gone to someone more prepared with the appropriate pre-requisites. Another similar shortcoming of UH banner is that it will allow students who have not declared a major to register for major restricted courses.

#### Solution

According to Barbara Yee, Department Chair of FAMR, universities she has

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worked at on the mainland including the Universities of South Florida, Oklahoma, and Texas all have a registration program that actively safeguards against the problems which plague the UH banner system. " These systems are blind, fair, and they have been in place for years," Yee said, expressing her much warranted frustration. " A simple solution would be to implement the appropriate software utilization on banner, which would be relatively simple because banner has the capability to perform the desired features; they just are not utilized at the present moment. Until banner is fully functional, the university should launch a PR campaign to discourage students from holding classes for each other, and encourage professors to be proactive about which students are registering for their classes."

#### Infrastructure

#### Issue

Not only does the university suffer from an inadequate registration system, general infrastructure is extremely outdated. For example, Yee has to manually pencil in the schedule for all of the different classes that are offered by FAMR and then fax it to a different department for approval. Another example is the UH parking office and the mountains of paperwork they have to process in order to issue parking passes every semester.

#### Solution

The simple solution is to convert to paperless procedures all throughout the university. It will cost money upfront to implement but the long term cost savings in relation to time and paper resources will be significant. A paperless system also preserves precious environmental resources which we should care about as a progressive university.

## Funding

### Issue

Yee also expressed her concern over how requests for funding, additional professors, classrooms, and other general needs are approved. " We put all of our requests into a package which is sent to the Dean, followed by the Vice Chancellor, Chancellor, President, and finally Board of Regents who make the final approval. At each stage of the approval process, requests for funding are removed or modified until very little of the original package remains."

### Solution

A solution for this problem is to bring in a third party arbitrator to take a neutral look at the situation and help those involved in the decision making process come to an agreement through compromise.

### Conclusion

Many of the solutions in this paper have been suggested by Vice Chancellor and this validates that his solutions are indeed the first start for improve the overall efficiency of the university. Since Smatresk took the chancellor's position at UHM, many students could already feel the effort his administration makes to create a better an academic experience for students. He believes that the administration will need to align its value to create this value. While these solutions are ideal for his administration, they do not come without many struggles and conflicts within the system, especially with people who do not have to worry about their job security. Nonetheless, the university must take in account for a long term goal and reconstruct an infrastructure that will support it.

### Works Cited

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A reduction in the quality of the research programs offered at UHM will make it more difficult to attract and retain qualified faculty. With fewer programs offered, students who may wish to attend UHM may be forced to look elsewhere. The long term effect would be a dwindling student body with fewer distinguished programs. State appropriation, based on enrollment and cost-per-student, would experience a gradual decline.