

**UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MANOA  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**THE PUBLIC POLICY CENTER**

**“Enhancing the Quality of Community Life”**

**I. THE MISSION AND GOALS**

The mission of the Public Policy Center is to enhance the quality of community life throughout Hawai‘i, the United States, and the Asia Pacific region by educating professionals for careers in public life, conducting non-partisan policy research and promoting civic engagement on issues of local, national, and international significance.

The Center seeks the following outcomes:

○ Our students become effective and reflective practitioners and leaders in public policy and public affairs;

○ Our research is recognized as non-partisan and of the highest quality;

○ We are a major repository and clearinghouse for data bases, information systems, and other references critical to public policy analyses;

○ Our research products and civic programs are valued and used in making sound public policy decisions;

○ Our civic programs result in communities that are well-informed and meaningfully engaged in policy deliberations ; and

○ Our teaching, research, application, and community programs are multidisciplinary and integrated, providing innovative and sensible recommendations on issues of importance to the state and region.

**II. VISION FOR THE CENTER**

The Center will be recognized for enhancing the quality of public life and the well-being of communities across Hawai‘i, the United States, and the Asia Pacific region. It will be an exemplary organization based on collegiality, strong sense of unity and trust, clearly defined mission, and excellence in public policy education, research, and professional practice. Its students and faculty will be known for their expertise in public policy, leadership in public affairs, and responsible involvement in the community, particularly in engaging the community

in civic issues. The Center will be known for its non-partisan and rigorous research on issues of public interest. And it will work in partnership with institutions, agencies and organizations beyond the university.

### **III. GOVERNING PRINCIPLES**

To ensure that the Center achieves its vision and mission in a quality environment, the following principles and values govern the Center and its partnerships:

O *The Center seeks excellence in all its endeavors.* Careful evaluation of our performance and products ensures excellence and responsiveness to the diverse communities served. Building a learning organization committed to continuous improvement enhances the growth of the Center as a collective unit. Responsiveness of the Center is ensured by inclusion of diverse areas of interest among faculty, students, and external partners.

O *The Center fosters collaboration and open communication.* The Center's decision-making is based on clear and open communication; full and continuous sharing of information; and good consultation and planning. Through teamwork, the Center will maximize its use of resources –both human and material. The Center responds to requests and inquiries promptly and strives for timely and fair problem solving.

O *The Center values collegiality.* All Center employees, students, and associates share a commitment to work together with mutual respect, openness, and cooperation. Mutual respect fosters harmony and civility, enabling people to disagree on issues yet maintain their shared commitment to the Center's overall mission and vision.

### **IV. CORE PROGRAMS**

#### **A. Instruction**

*1. Teaching mission and vision:* Teaching is one of the most important ways to engage students in the present body of knowledge, to enhance their spirit of inquiry, and to encourage their continual pursuit of understanding. We want our students to keep an open mind, embrace the joy of discovery, and continuously seek the synthesis of new information. We will foster supportive classroom environments in which instructors facilitate learning and students are active participants in the learning process. We want our students to become life-long learners, and critical and creative thinkers with an appreciation of ethics and values.

Students will be well-grounded in their individual disciplines and receive a multidisciplinary curriculum in the Center, emphasizing public policy theory, methods, knowledge, and practice. For example, our students will acquire a set of methodological and quantitative skills necessary for conducting applied analytical research and develop a set of professional capabilities necessary to lead public and private agencies dedicated to enhancing the public good.

**2. Certificate in Public Policy.** The Center will offer a curriculum that will lead to a graduate Certificate in Public Policy. The curriculum currently consists of 18 to 21 credits.

The curriculum includes public policy theory, methods and practice, with courses covering a variety of policy areas . Elective and practicum courses allow students to pursue an area of specialization in public policy. Policy electives span the various schools and disciplines in the university. The practicum will give students hands-on, practical training, with both a project and research focus, providing an opportunity to apply academic work to applied issues.

**3. Future Programs:** As the Center matures, other curricula will be developed: (1) Undergraduate certificate in Public Policy; (2) Undergraduate minor in Public Policy; (3) Undergraduate major in Public Policy; (4) Masters degree in Public Policy; (5) Ph.D. in Public Policy; (6) Accelerated courses/programs/curricula/workshops for practicing professionals; (7) Web-based courses/curricula; and (8) Colloquium series.

## **B. Public Policy Research**

**1. Research mission and vision:** The Center conducts non-partisan research on issues of public interest to Hawai‘i, the United States, and the Asia Pacific region. There is great diversity in the research subjects and methods; what is common to all these endeavors is a commitment to academic rigor and critical analysis. This means that while we are open to new ideas, we are equally relentless in our scrutiny of all ideas-- even long-held beliefs. Our research strives to be objective and neutral and free from personal ideology, self-interest, politics, and resource availability. Our basic aim is to understand policy issues so that we provide informed options for a better future for our communities.

**2. Research Programs:** The Center welcomes all research related to public policy issues. We currently have several areas of expertise – our signature projects -- that require multidisciplinary collaboration and build upon our faculty strengths. These signature projects are selected through a competitive process that assesses the significance of the contribution to the quality of life in Hawai‘i, the United States, or the Asia-Pacific region.

The Center will consider housing or undertaking contract research that is in keeping with the mission of the Center. In order to meet the demands for this type of research, it is important to build capacity among our faculty and beyond, especially in the areas of needs assessment and evaluation. The Center will support policy research in a variety of ways, including administrative and fiscal support, grant application processing and submittals, funding in certain policy areas, publishing working papers, networking with stakeholder groups, and providing research and training information to faculty associates. In all cases, active student participation in research projects is strongly encouraged.

The Center will house databases, information systems, maps, registries, surveys, digital files, and statistical references. These data sets will be well-documented, carefully maintained, and accessible for policy research, classroom use, and to inform policy and management

decisions.

**3. Future Programs:** As the Center develops and has the necessary infrastructure, we will: (1) publish our own journal, monograph series, and/or edited books (whenever appropriate, electronic publishing will be used) and may start with policy briefs, policy papers, and technical reports; (2) develop a program for visiting scholars in public policy; (3) develop a post-doctoral program for students interested in public policy research and training; (4) develop partnerships with other public policy centers locally, in the United States, and the Asia-Pacific region to conduct collaborative research of national and regional importance.

### **C. Community Programs**

**1. Community mission and vision:** The Center is committed to working in close partnership with the larger community to address current policy issues. We value a mutually beneficial relationship between the people of Hawai'i and the Center for Public Policy because the welfare of Hawai'i's people and the work of the Center are inextricably linked -- each is dependent upon the vitality and vision of the other. We will continuously explore and enhance different and continuing relationships between the community and the Center. The public will recognize the assets and potential of the Center. In turn, the needs and concerns of the community will be understood and appreciated by the Center.

**2. Community Programs:** The Center will use its resources to address interests that are important to the community and to bring better understanding to pressing social issues. The Center sponsors the Hawaii Public Policy Forum Series based on a model established by the National Issues Forum (NIF). The objective is "to help citizens learn how to take responsibility for their community, come together as a public, talk through the issues of concern to them, and act together to address the issue at hand." Center faculty will also disseminate public policy information and address community issues beyond the classroom through the use of newspapers, television, legislative hearings, and public lectures. The Center, in partnership with community entities, will facilitate public deliberation with the use of sound research to illuminate policy problems, alternatives, and priorities.

The Center sponsors a Legislator-In-Residence program to foster ties with decision-makers and to foster the development of a knowledge base for sound public policy decision-making.

Strong partnerships with community agencies, such as the Hawaii Institute for Public Affairs (HIPA), have been established to disseminate research findings and to impact policy decisions.

**3. Future Programs:** The Center will continue to develop programs to encourage and sustain close working relationships with the community. Some of the future developments include: (1) locating, by mutual agreement, certain positions and functions in the state (e.g., demographer) at the Center;(2) developing a Community Scholar-In-Residence program; (3)developing close connections with other Public Policy Centers across the nation; (4) linking

with communities in the Asia-Pacific region through various means (e.g., Peacesat); and (5) connecting faculty and concerned publics who share common areas of policy concern.

## **V. ORGANIZATION**

The Center is a separate academic unit within the College that brings together departments, programs, and faculty committed to public policy research, teaching, and practice. The Center may include existing units and current faculty. Programs will be established within the Center to address specific policy areas and issues of continuing concern. Procedures will be developed for determining how units and individuals will become part of the Center and for establishing Center programs.

### **A. Center Advisory Council**

The Center's Advisory Council will represent a cross-section of government, business, private non-profit organizations and the academic community. It provides advice and consultation to the Center on such matters as the selection of projects and faculty associates and evaluation of Center programs, services, and products in accordance with the standards of excellence and mission of the Center.

### **B. Structure and Staffing**

The Center staff is comprised of a Director/Chair; faculty associates who are engaged in policy projects; and support staff. With the recommendation of the Center's faculty, the Director/Chair will be appointed by and report directly to the Dean. The Director/Chair will provide leadership (i.e., establish academic vision and values, institute a collegial governance system, etc.) and oversee a range of administrative activities (budget, personnel, curriculum, advising, and program development) with appropriate staff assistance. The Director/Chair will also serve as a liaison to the University Administration via the Dean and to other units on campus and to the broader community.

The faculty comprise the core of the Center. They are responsible for educating students, conducting research, and providing service to the Center and the community at large. There are two types of faculty working at the Center: (1) **core faculty** of the Center who are secondarily in a discipline; and (2) **faculty associates** who have a position primarily in a discipline and secondarily in the Center. The Center's core faculty will be responsible for the curriculum (core, elective, and practicum), signature research projects, and community programs. The faculty associates (from both within and outside the College) will contribute to the curriculum, be involved in the signature research projects, and participate in the community programs.

The Center faculty will be hired directly into the Center with joint appointments in disciplinary departments. The Center will seek other faculty to enrich the program from the community and other educational institutions. These will include visiting faculty, affiliate graduate faculty, and adjunct faculty.

The **administrative and support staff** will initially consist of an administrative officer, secretary, and student help. The support staff will provide responsive and prompt administrative

support to further the Center's teaching, research, and practice. Accordingly, the support staff will be involved in record keeping and communication services to ensure that the Center meets its fiscal, personnel, and administrative obligations. This structure will be reviewed annually to assess its effectiveness.

## **VI. FUNDING**

### **A. Permanent budget**

The Center's permanent budget will be developed during Phase I, the development phase, for the period 2002-2003. While initial funding of the Center will come from the College allocation, other sources of support will be sought. These will include monies from research and training grants and contracts; university, state and federal allocations; and private endowment sources. The Center will keep start-up costs at minimum by using existing resources and courses whenever possible.

### **B. Fiscal agreements**

Faculty will be encouraged to bring policy-relevant research into the Center. Overhead returns to the College for funded projects will be shared equally between the department and the Center. The Center will provide fiscal support to principal investigators. Overhead returns to the Center will be used for operations and the expansion of research, teaching and community programs.

### **C. Fundraising**

A fundraising plan will be developed in coordination with the UH systemwide office to raise funds for faculty positions, facilities, and programs. A diversified portfolio of donors who share in the mission and vision of the Center will be developed.

## **VII. ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2002-2003)**

The College of Social Sciences has adopted a plan to formalize the Center and launch its programs. Many of these programs--including numerous funded research projects, public policy forums, legislators-in-residence, and a certificate degree program--are already underway within the purview of various departments. These existing programs will be brought together to form the initial core activities of the Center. When the Center becomes fully operational, it will seek formal recognition and approval from the Administration and Board of Regents (BOR). If approved by the BOR, the full range of programs and activities will be implemented.