

UH may merge TIM school into Shidler

BY NANEAL KALANI
PACIFIC BUSINESS NEWS

The University of Hawaii at Manoa may bring its school of travel industry management under its business college to expand the number of faculty members and classes available to students.

The proposed merger would not dissolve the TIM school, but would end its 18 years of autonomy as a standalone school. Its faculty and curriculum would become part of the Shidler College of Business.

The merger is still being discussed and many details haven't been worked out. The plan is already meeting some resistance from students, faculty and alumni in the Hawaii tourism industry.

While the move is expected to save money at a time UH is under enormous financial pressure, Manoa Chancellor Virginia Hinshaw said strengthening the TIM school is the main goal of the proposed merger.

"One of the concerns when you have a small school is that it doesn't have capacity — access to faculty for students, a broad range of courses, internships,"

OCTOBER 9, 2009

FROM PAGE ONE

pacificbusinessnews.com | PACIFIC BUSINESS NEWS 41

MERGE: 'A good brand that wasn't built up overnight'

FROM PAGE ONE

Hinshaw said.

"Given how important tourism is to Hawaii and what a large industry it is, we began thinking about the student experience on the Manoa campus and whether TIM students are being prepared for the jobs that are up and coming in the industry. The idea of a merger with the business college has come up when looking at what would position the TIM school in the best way to serve the needs of the state while strengthening their capacity."

Hinshaw said there is no deadline for making a decision. Depending on the scope of what is proposed, Hinshaw or the Board of Regents would give final approval. The regents would have to vote if the proposal required "significant" expenses or if academic programs require new credentialing or accreditation.

The TIM school, which is physically next to the business college on the Manoa campus, has 400 students enrolled and 30 faculty and staff. Enrollment is stable.

Juanita Liu, a professor and the school's interim dean, says the school is financially self-sufficient because of its large student body.

"We really are one of the most efficiently run units at Manoa, so it's not clear where any cost savings would come from," Liu said.

She said the school's faculty and stu-

School of Travel Industry Management

Founded: 1966

Students: 400

Faculty and staff: 30

Degrees offered: Bachelor's and master's degrees in travel industry management, and an undergraduate certificate in sustainable tourism.

Accreditation: Accreditation Commission for Programs in Hospitality Administration.

Shidler College of Business

Founded: 1949

Students: 1,200

Faculty and staff: 111

Degrees offered: Bachelor of business administration in eight concentrations (including accounting, finance, marketing and human resource management); master of business administration; specialized MBA programs with joint focuses in nursing, law, financial engineering and Asian cultures; executive MBA programs; and a doctoral degree in international management.

Accreditation: The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International.

dents oppose the idea of a merger with the business college, noting that the UH Manoa Faculty Senate has written a resolution opposing the merger, and students have collected more than 200 signatures

on an anti-merger petition.

Johnson Choi, who graduated from the TIM school in 1977 and is a former president of its alumni association, also opposes the move.

"The TIM school has a good brand that wasn't built up overnight; it took more than 35 years," said Choi, vice president of CMC Consulting, a Honolulu-based firm that helps promote Hawaii businesses on the Mainland and in Asia. "Specialized industries need independent professional schools, and tourism is the largest industry in the state. I don't have anything against the college of business, but we are a different school, and a merger would be like a forced marriage asking for disaster."

The travel industry program had been a department within the business college until 1966, when it became a separate school, though its students still graduated with a bachelor's degree in business administration.

In 1991, after being separately accredited, the school gained autonomy and began offering degrees in travel industry management.

Both Choi and Liu noted that a single dean would have difficulty raising money for both the business college and travel industry programs.

"The TIM school has thrived to become one of the leading institutions in the tourism and travel field nationally and

internationally," Liu said. "To move us back would be a huge step backward."

The TIM school has been roiled by administrative turmoil and disagreements over the school's direction and priorities in recent years.

The school's former dean, Walter Jamieson, stepped down last summer after a five-year term. He had been the main force behind the school's efforts to open an undergraduate campus in Singapore.

That initiative has since stalled with Jamieson's departure and the budget restrictions across the UH system.

Liu was named interim dean for a one-year term that ends next month.

Accreditation changes would be required if the degree offerings were changed, but Hinshaw said it would be possible to maintain the current degrees each school offers.

"We can keep degrees and admissions separate to see what works best and what would serve everyone's needs — the industries' needs and how to best prepare students to have the best jobs in those industries," Hinshaw said.

"The Shidler College is doing extremely well, and while this is not a move by the business college, we think other units at Manoa can benefit from the progress they're making."

nkalan@bizjournals.com | 956-8001