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Agreement helps KCC culinary arts students toward UH Mānoa degree

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After two years of planning, an agreement was reached between the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and Kapi'olani Community College (KCC) to aid their culinary arts students in transferring into the UH Mānoa Food Science and Human Nutrition (FSHN) undergraduate program.

The agreement guides KCC students with an Associate of Science (AS) in culinary arts degree and a concentration in institutional food service management toward a culinology option in UH Mānoa's FSHN program.

"The new program is a blend of culinary arts and science, with general education and culinary competency covered at KKC," said Ron Takahashi, KCC professor and culinary department chair.

Lauren Tamamoto, research chef at KCC's culinary arts program, said in an email interview that the Research Chefs Association (RCA), the pioneer of "culinology," has tentatively approved the program and confirmation is expected within a few weeks.

Program requirements

Takahashi said the new coursework takes advantage of the each school's strengths; the majority of the culinary lab work is completed at KCC and the "more technical side" of the degree's science and food chemistry lab work is completed at UH Mānoa.

"KCC curriculum's emphasis is on fundamentals and hands-on. At Mānoa, there will be hands-on opportunities, but more towards science, technology, and chemistry. The food science of culinology will be a more science-based program, while KCC is more practice-based," said Charles Kinoshita, associate dean and professor for UH Mānoa's Molecular Bioscience and Bioengineering department, in a phone interview.

UH Mānoa impact

Based on current enrollment at KCC, Takahashi projects that six students are eligible to complete the culinology program at UH Mānoa in its first year.

The program's initiation is not expected to put a strain on the Mānoa campus.

"Initially, [the program] shouldn't require any new resources when Mānoa is adequately staffed, and it shouldn't require any new resources for adding the culinology option for food science degree," Kinoshita said. "But as with any program, if the number of students increases, then we'll have to monitor and add resources to accommodate the growth."