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To: Daniel White, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Research
From: Nate Bauer, Chair, Staff Alliance *NB*
Date: March 27, 2017
Re: Summary of Staff Feedback on Strategic Pathways Phase 2 Options
Cc: James R. Johnsen, President

UA Staff Alliance, including wide expertise and experience in all Strategic Pathways Phase 2 areas, offers the following recommendations and responses to the Options reports release on behalf of the Phase 2 review teams.

Beginning in January, Staff Alliance has collected feedback from Staff Alliance, MAU staff governance groups, and constituents regarding [Strategic Pathways Phase 2 options](#). This process began with detailed investigation and discussion at the full Alliance in-person winter retreat, and continued through collaborative solicitation of feedback from broader staff groups affected.

Staff Alliance input is summarized as:

U	Unclear regarding some significant details or implications. Would require substantial and/or particular revisions/clarifications to attain staff support.
P	Potential for success. Some responses indicated enthusiasm for pursuing these options for change.
D	Dubious. Very clear potential for negative and problematic results. Of all individual and group feedback discussions, there was no clear support for this option.

Area Option	Summary Opinion	Selected Comments
<p><u>e-Learning</u></p> <p><i>Based on the review team's report and staff governance input, it seems clear to our group that, like in some other Pathways review areas, the report includes a truly innovative and collaborative option (Option 5) that provides the best chance of successful change. It is very clear e-learning should not be treated as a purely administrative function eligible for consolidation, as fully embedded and autonomous relationships with academic departments and faculty will produce the best opportunities for effective, successful e-learning environments.</i></p>		
Cooperative Decentralization	U	
Complete Outsourcing	D	<i>E-learning very clearly/strongly tied to academic dept's and faculty.</i>
Consolidate to one University	D	<i>Should not be consolidated/pulled out of disciplines/depts any further.</i>
Centralize at Statewide	D	
Inter-University Consortium	P	<p><i>Shows clear positive energy/innovation/confidence on the part of the review team (made up of many of the same people who will be needed to ensure model's success</i></p> <p><i>O5 has the potential to create a cohesive and collaborative e-learning experience for students and faculty facilitated by uniform policies that support accessibility and quality.</i></p> <p><i>O5 could strengthen academic programs and student enrollment by integrating courses and degrees across campuses.</i></p>
<p><u>Fisheries</u></p> <p><i>Based on the options available, staff governance reps have identified Options 1, 3, and 6 as most likely to succeed, though they've also acknowledged the "status quo" option 1 may not meet the charge of a substantial change.</i></p>		
Status Quo	P	<i>Likely doesn't meet charge.</i>
Strengthened Status Quo	U	
Joint UAF/UAS	P	<i>CFOS strongly supports Opt3 and had already been working with UAS on a joint program.</i>

		<i>Avoids disruption; targets industry needs.</i>
Joint UAF/UAS/UAA	D	<i>Building a new program at UAA would require a significant investment, would not generate significantly increased enrollments, rather it would increase competition between campuses for an already small pool of students.</i>
Consolidate at UAS	D	
Consolidate at UAF	P	
Consolidate at UAA	D	
<p><u>Community Campuses</u></p> <p><i>Governance reps rightly identify particular difficulties and sensitivities in this review area, as many potential decisions can have large-scale effects in regard to federal funding partnerships, rural community development and sustainability, and UA's commitments to support the entirety of the state. This review team put substantial innovative, creative thought into Options 5 and 6, which seem to have the potential for positive change and success.</i></p>		
Consolidation under new separate Administration	D	
Consolidation under single Administration at a University	D	
Increased integration with Universities	U	
Become Learning Centers	D	
Establish Tribal Colleges	P	<p><i>Likely to be accreditation issues</i></p> <p><i>Potential to increase competition w/UA for student enrollment</i></p>
Collaborate among Community Campuses	P	<p><i>How can UA ensure equitably distribute resources?</i></p> <p><i>Rural campuses already at minimum levels of FTEs</i></p> <p><i>Option 6 would require buy-in from all stakeholders and requires a high-end investment of time and financial</i></p>

		<i>resources, but in the end could increase efficiency, reduce redundancy, and strengthen the community campuses.</i>
<p><u>Health</u></p> <p><i>Staff have been particularly conscious of this review area's ambitious goals. It seems clear from much of staff feedback and from the review team's report that the only clear option for the fundamental growth and increased strength necessary for meeting is the establishment/consolidation into a single College of Health.</i></p>		
Expand current model	U	<i>Would clearly require increase in faculty and resources.</i>
Add Vice President of Health	D	<i>Though it provides leadership necessary for planned improvements/scaling, there is very little appetite for additional senior administration and the kind of message it sends.</i>
Matrix Organization	P	<i>Seems the clear option for the fundamental growth and increased strength necessary for meeting the charge is the establishment/consolidation into a single College of Health.</i>
<p><u>Human Resources</u></p> <p><i>Staff reps in affected units have noted transformative change to system-wide HR has been attempted recently, in the form of the recently established Human Resources Council (HRC). There is worry amongst affected staff that further large-scale revision will produce fatigue and skepticism, perhaps making change more difficult. There also remains optimism about the positive potential for the HRC model, leading some to suggest moving away from this approach at this time is premature.</i></p>		
Establish Human Resources Council (HRC)	P	<p><i>Moving forward with existing HRC process is the only option that might avoid some level of serious change fatigue.</i></p> <p><i>HR personnel feel that Option 1 is the most realistic at this time. In addition to the details given, we have made a case for establishing a plan to move away from heavily paper-based and overly-manual processes (primarily job forms and manual payroll processes) and improving the electronic processes we have. Additionally, we have discussed allotments needed to make changes to our existing systems, which are only partially up and running, to allow us to properly integrate them (example: PageUp, Banner, and OnBase should all communicate with one another but do not, causing much frustration for us and all the units we serve). Providing for this change will allow us to continue moving forward, and will permit us to work more efficiently given the workloads we have as a unit.</i></p>

Consolidated Administration	D	
Direct Oversight of Campus HR	D	
Autonomous Regional Offices	U	

University Relations

Staff governance recognizes the wide variety of functions staff positions considered “university relations” actually serve across the university--in some cases, very distinct and different from those performed by any central UR office. In particular, unit-based research and disciplinary communications staff were not represented on the review team, and receive little focus or attention in the general report or the options outlined. Staff and administrators have made it clear these positions and functions are necessary for the proper and baseline operations of unit-based communication. As such, the majority of staff governance and constituent feedback has focused on the severe limitations (deficiencies) of the options as presented.

Units and departments know their specific audiences in such a way that allows them to have the specialized knowledge and correct voice to engage the public and funding agencies in an effective manner with their message. The goals for public outreach and depth of subject knowledge that unit and departmental public relations staff hold is unique and essential to effectively communicating with their stakeholders. Developing this requires them to be allowed to function as separate entities, housed within the unit or department.

Conversely, the university-wide public relations staff have a very different focus and audience. Their goals are to tell the story of their university to the campus-wide community, our legislators, and also to the public. Their strength is in being able to have a wider, more generalized focus rather than specialized, unit-specific knowledge. Thus, it would be inappropriate to centralize all unit public relations staff within each university or at Statewide. However, there must be increased collaboration, coordination, and sharing of stories and events across all PR staff to maximize the impact of PR efforts and resources.

Hybrid - Decentralized	U	<p><i>Option 1 is named “hybrid decentralization,” and may have received some support or misunderstanding on this account. But it could actually be another option for increasing centralization, compared to the current situation. Depending on how this option’s language is interpreted as a framework, the name could be misleading.</i></p> <p><i>It’s possible that too much attention has been paid to how these solid and dotted lines are described in the options report, but the review team made efforts to include specific reporting structure language. From an organizational perspective, these lines (dotted or solid) mean very specific things with regard to unit-based communications and who’s in charge of who.</i></p>
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		<p><i>Staff has indeed highlighted the needs and benefits for greater collaboration between communications resources across campuses and universities. However, it's hard to imagine stakeholder staff being committed to this kind of model succeeding without the removal of specific revisions to reporting lines.</i></p>
Consolidation at Statewide	D	
Centralized at Each University	D	
<p><u>Student Services</u></p> <p><i>Of the options available, staff governance discussions so far have focused on which method of consolidation of student services tasks across all MAUs and statewide offices will be most effective, most likely to succeed, and will produce the most meaningful change.</i></p>		
Per-function Lead Campus	D	
Consolidate at One Campus	D	
Consolidate at Statewide	D	
Consolidation of Tasks at Universities or Statewide	P	<p><i>Each service should be present at each campus.</i></p> <p><i>Option presents least disruption for services to students.</i></p> <p><i>Most realistic, would reduce duplications of effort on backend.</i></p> <p><i>Must retain admissions processing at each campus, as an open enrollment institution, requires on-site, responsive processing. Other systems that have been held up as models (e.g., University of California), allow each campus to make the admission decision, as each school has different objectives and admission requirements. Some suggested processes that could be consolidated: test scores, transcripts, residency.</i></p> <p><i>Admissions and Financial Aid are linked to the mission of the university, per Chancellor Thomas's accreditation report.</i></p>

Decentralize SIS (no single Banner)	D	<i>Seem to require further high costs, without much justification.</i>
<p><u>Institutional Research</u></p> <p><i>Staff governance recognizes the clear and general need for improved coordination and standards regarding institutional research (IR) made clear by the review team. Notably, it seems clear that better system-wide IR from the beginning of the Pathways review process could have made for a stronger, clearer, more transparent set of system-wide program reviews. Based on staff governance feedback, whatever option is chosen should be based on positive support from review team members and other functional stakeholders, as this support will be essential to ensuring a system-wide solution is carried out successfully.</i></p>		
Full Decentralization	D	<i>IR is too decentralized already, a primary concern of the committee.</i>
Consolidation at one Campus	D	<i>Has already been attempted at UAF, and didn't go particularly well.</i>
Consolidation at Statewide	D	<i>Risk of developing "shadow" IR efforts.</i>
Collaborative Knowledge Network	P	<p><i>Would seem to require increased staffing levels (data mgmt).</i></p> <p><i>Seems to have clear preference from review team, who deemed it the one "transformative option."</i></p>