

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Phase II of Strategic Pathways Underway

FAIRBANKS – Phase II of Strategic Pathways, the review of academic and administrative programs at the University of Alaska, commenced Oct. 4 with teams assembling in Fairbanks to begin the examination of four academic areas — fisheries, health, community campuses and e-learning. Today, four additional teams began the evaluation of administrative programs – institutional research, university relations, student affairs and human resources.

Strategic Pathways is designed to develop ways for UA to focus its efforts and allocate resources in the years ahead. The process involves teams including students, faculty, staff, alumni, university administrators and community members from across the state who review each of the eight areas and provide options for creating efficiencies, increasing enrollment and maintaining quality for UA students.

At the Tuesday and Thursday morning gatherings, UA President Jim Johnsen laid out the rationale for the work ahead. “The important body of work you’re going to be doing for the next 10 weeks is being driven by three converging forces: the very tough budget climate we face, huge unmet needs for higher education across the State of Alaska that we must meet, and opportunities for investment in areas of growth and excellence,” Johnsen said. “As the pressure to diversify our economy increases, we know that our state will need an educated workforce.”

Johnsen said the eight teams will each work toward specific goals with attention paid to cost effectiveness, sustainability, minimizing community impact and increasing quality and access.

“The idea here is to open up our minds, bring good ideas to the table and lead in preparation of the university’s fiscal future and the state’s workforce future,” he said.

Phase II review teams will present options, with pros and cons, at a Dec. 9 presentation to the university’s leadership team. President Johnsen will then present recommended directions to the Board of Regents in March 2017. Phase III will begin early next year.

As Phase II gets underway, Phase I has moved to the implementation stage. Phase I academic areas included teacher education, engineering and business & management. The four administrative programs reviewed in Phase I included intercollegiate athletics, procurement, research administration and information technology. The university’s Board of Regents expressed support for President Johnsen’s recommended directions for change during its September meeting.

Information about strategic pathways is posted at www.alaska.edu/pathways/.

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