



Coalition of Student Leaders

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, October 15, 2015

6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Voting Members Present:

Shannon Cefalu, Kachemak Bay Branch Student Association (Homer)
Jayce Robertson, Kenai River Campus Student Union (Kenai)
Jeff Woods for Brittany Patterson, Kodiak College Student Association (Kodiak)
Arina Filipenko, Union of Students at UAA (Anchorage)
Mathew Carrick, Associated Students of UAF (Fairbanks)
Callie Conerton, United Students of UAS (Juneau)
Samantha Weaver for Destony Rosas, United Student of UAS (Sitka)

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Stacey Lucason, Student Regent, UA Board of Regents

Guests Present:

James R. Johnsen, President, University of Alaska
Saichi Oba, Associate Vice President, Student and Enrollment Services
Jonathan (JT) Taylor, President, USUAA

Staff Present:

Morgan Dufseth, Executive Officer, System Governance

Members Absent:

Everret Hamilton, Matanuska-Susitna Student Government Council (Palmer)
Junaid Khan, Prince William Sound College Student Association (Valdez)
Delegate TBD, Bristol Bay Campus (Dillingham)
Delegate TBD, Kuskokwim Campus Student Government (Bethel)
Delegate TBD, Northwest Campus (Nome)
Krystalee Gabbard, United Students of UAS (Ketchikan)

Ex-Officio Members Absent:

Colby Freel, Commissioner, Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Callie called for an amendment to add Legislative Retreat under New Business.

Jayce moved to adopt with the above amendment. No objections. The agenda was adopted with the noted amendment.

3. Approval of October 1 meeting minutes

Jayce moved to adopt, seconded by Callie. No objections. Oct. 1 minutes were approved.

4. President Johnsen's Remarks on Tuition and Q & A

President Johnsen joined the meeting and reviewed his perspectives on tuition with the group first and then opened the floor for questions.

Opening remarks:

The President noted, looking at our current situation, one of the main questions being asked is what part should tuition play in meeting the university's budget gap? Implicit in this question is that we will have a budget gap. He plans on proposing a modest increase to the budget (a needs-based budget) for FY17. However, he believes the governor will cut UA's initial budget request. After recent discussion with Senate and House Finance committee, the budget will likely be reduced again after the governor's first cut. But right now we don't know how much. The worst case scenario: \$15M cut from the budget request and then also not getting funded for \$25M in fixed cost increases – a total gap of \$40M. There are some mid-case scenarios where they don't fund the fixed cost increase but don't cut the \$15M from the budget request. Or they might cut the \$15M but then fund the \$25M. Realistically, the reduction will be between \$15M and \$40M. That is the projected budget FY17 gap.

UA needs to look at how much tuition is already supported by the state/federal government. We also need to review other ways to increase revenue and reduce costs. He is hoping in the next year to pull two percent out of operating costs through continuous process improvement (roughly \$5M). The Board has charged UA with looking at four program areas across the system and ways to increase efficacy but reduce costs/waste/redundancies: teacher education, developmental education, GERs, distance education. President Johnsen noted he believes a tuition increase is necessary to maintain quality at UA and an appropriate move to make at this time.

Q & A

Jayce: What is your target percentage tuition increase?

President Johnsen: From a purely financial standpoint, he would like to say 20 percent, because that would bring UA to the target national average. However, that won't be his recommendation. He is looking at high single digit or even perhaps 10 percent. In that case, the students would share 25 percent of the budget gap (which would be worst case scenario).

Arina: How does athletics figure in the system currently?

President Johnsen: Following regent request, UA is looking at the cost of things, including athletics. At present, athletics has a net cost (general funds + student fees – revenue from ticket sales) of roughly \$12M.

Mathew: Are you looking at reducing tuition waivers?

President Johnsen: No, not at this time. A lot of the waivers go to needs-based scholarships. They are looking at all of those things to see what is legally required, what is athletics, what is needs-based—he would be happy to share those numbers with the Coalition when known.

Jayce: What is your first choice in cost reduction or revenue increases?

President Johnsen: Revenue increases – fundraising campaign being planned; not a big one but we currently have low alumni giving rates; so we need to build that alumni-base before we can go after bigger fish. Also looking at corporate giving (Alaska has a tax incentive structure that benefits companies who donate). On the federal level, UA generates \$125M in research revenue. He wants to compete for more Title III funding (other federal dollars). Regarding reductions, the president is looking at outsourcing in some areas (as long as it won't impact quality)—parking and payroll, for example, might do better if outsourced.

Mathew: Can you speak to the criteria that will be looked at?

President Johnsen: We are looking at internal costs data at the department level; mission and centrality are important to the issues at hand; working to balance access, cost and quality.

JT: Where is the point of diminishing return with regard to tuition increases? When do students decide UA is no longer a good value?

President Johnsen: The president deferred to AVP Oba for additional analysis on that issue.

Jeff Woods: Currently, the only carrot inducing students to stay in Kodiak is the low tuition cost. With increases each year, the incentive is less and less. How do you plan to address this?

President Johnsen: Because of our organizational structure we charge the same tuition across the board – but this is a problem that we have – our university tuition is low but our community college tuition is HIGH (almost double the market). However, that comparison (UA's community college tuition v. national average) is difficult because most of our community sites do not receive any support from the local community (which is the opposite of outside community colleges). So if tuition was lowered, the colleges wouldn't have the funds to operate.

President Johnsen noted he would be happy, over the next six to eight months, to continue this discussion with the Coalition. He thanked the Coalition for their thoughtful questions.

5. Ongoing Business

- A. Tuition response – Mathew noted he feels strongly about giving the president a response regarding tuition before the November budget meeting. He would like to write a resolution, and offered to create a draft and share it with the group as a Google Doc.
- B. Monthly Meeting Schedule – Mathew proposed meeting every other week; one idea to have one regular meeting and then one informational meeting w/presenters. There was general discussion.

Arina moved for a roll call vote to determine if the group would meet every other week, seconded by Shannon. There were no objections to a roll call vote.

By a roll call, with six voting yes and one voting no, the motion passed.

Yes: Shannon, Jayce, Jeff, Mathew, Callie, Samantha

No: Arina

Abstained: none

6. New Business

- A. Resolution of Condolences to the Associated Students of Umpqua Community College
Jeff moved to postpone, Jayce seconded. No objections. Postponed to next meeting.
- B. Retreat Agenda – Mathew has made some changes to the draft agenda previously posted by JT and Stacey. He asked Coalition members to please send suggested agenda items to Morgan and him in order to finalize the agenda at the next meeting.
- C. Document access – Mathew has set up a file in Google Drive to store docs and will share it with Coalition members.
- D. Juneau legislative advocacy trip – Schedule proposed by Callie following discussions with Regent Lucason, Mathew, and campus alumni: Sat. and Sun., Feb. 27-28 – Coalition meetings; Mon. and Tues., Feb. 29-March 1 – Legislative advocacy visits

Callie also posed the question on whether to have alums in the meeting with legislators. Regent Lucason noted it might be worthwhile to have alums at the Coalition meetings but not in the legislative meetings. There was general consensus on this position from the group.

Callie moved to approve the above listed dates for the 2016 legislative visit. Jeff seconded.

By a roll call, with five voting yes, and two abstaining, the motion passed.

Yes: Jayce, Jeff, Mathew, Callie, Samantha

No: none

Abstained: Shannon, Arina

7. Campus Reports

None.

8. Comments and Special Orders

None.

9. Adjourn

Jayce moved to adjourn, Callie seconded. No objections. Mathew adjourned the meeting at 7:41 p.m.