



UNIVERSITY
of ALASKA
Many Traditions One Alaska

Minutes
Faculty Alliance
Friday, March 10, 2017
Google Hangouts
2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order

Voting Members:

Megan Buzby, President-Elect, UAS Faculty Senate
Sharon Chamard, 1st Vice President, UAA Faculty Senate
Chris Fallen, President-Elect, UAF Faculty Senate *joined at 3:15 p.m.*
David Fitzgerald, President, UAA Faculty Senate *joined at 2:55 p.m.*
Maren Haavig, Past President, UAS Faculty Senate
Lisa Hoferkamp, President, UAS Faculty Senate
Orion Lawlor, President, UAF Faculty Senate
Debu Misra, Past President, UAF Faculty Senate
Tara Smith, Past President, UAA Faculty Senate; Chair, Faculty Alliance

Staff:

Morgan Dufseth, Executive Officer, System Governance

Guests:

James R. Johnsen, President, University of Alaska
Jeff Benowitz, Research Assistant Professor, UAF

2. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was amended to include a discussion of a faculty regent under new business.

3. Approval of February Minutes

Sharon moved to approve the Feb. 10 minutes, seconded by Maren. There were none opposed.

Sharon moved to approve the Feb. 24 minutes, seconded by Orion. There were none opposed.

4. Public or Guest Comments

Jeff noted he keeps hearing SW has seen significant cuts in recent years but can't find documentation to support that. Debu noted positions had been reduced from 280 to 194, which includes some transfer of positions to UAF. Senior administration positions have

been combined rather than filled with new employees. Tara noted, however, that for FY13-15 funding the overall budget for SW remained the same.

President Johnsen joined at 3:45 p.m.

He noted he would like to provide updates on FY18 budget and Strategic Pathways issues.

FY18 Budget – The president report the amendment sponsored by Rep. Wool (which would have brought the House budget proposal for the University back up to the Regents’ original request of \$341M) was not allowed to be voted on, so \$325M went to the House Finance Committee. Rep. Guttenberg was persuaded to submit an amendment to bring funding back to the Regents’ request, which he rescinded during session; Rep. Wilson’s amendment for \$309M was rejected, and House closed out at \$325M. Senate Finance will likely close out next week at around \$309M. This is concerning because the University could then end somewhere between \$325M and \$309M. Also troubling that several the House representatives are new heading into the Conference Committee (Seaton and Foster, and maybe Pruitt), whereas the Senate side has more experience (Hoffman, MacKinnon, and maybe Olson). There has been no support for the capital request from the Regents (\$25M). One-time expenses, such as automation, are being discussed for inclusion. Also being discussed (but not yet analyzed) is a retirement incentive. Also considering paying down debt as part of the one-time expenditures. The president will meet with the Board in mid-April to discuss the budget and contingency planning. Tara asked about short-term cost cutting—getting out of leases, selling buildings? The president indicated both are options; UAF is looking at three buildings they could possibly sell, UAS has one on the market; SW is doing analysis on selling the Bragaw Office Buildings in Anchorage. They will also look at tuition, however, the president noted he was hesitant to request more than a five percent increase.

Strategic Pathways – Phase 1 is in implementation or implementation planning mode for the COE—which they are committed to not implementing until they have accreditation approval—expecting to begin implementation in Fall 2018. Engineering is working on implementation now as well. The president noted he is keeping an eye on Procurement and IT and how those decisions will be implemented; he noted a review of decisions in both areas is planned for next year. Phase 2 – The president thanked the Alliance for its initial thoughts on the options. He noted he is working on a summary for the Regents on his initial thoughts of the options. There is an RFI out for proposals to give analysis of the financial aspects of the options. The president noted he had seen increased collaboration as a positive outcome of the review teams, which helps to break down silos. He noted they are looking to find out what “backroom” functions can be automated so that there can be personalized/customized service in the service areas. Phase 2 options will be reviewed on April 11 by the Summit Team.

Tara asked about the timeline for the College of Education accreditation and if NWCCU had given administration an idea of how much time they will need to review the proposal. The president noted Rick Caulfield has met with the Commission and he is confident the objective can be met in the timeline given.

Jeff asked if there were any plans to do a cost-benefit analysis of the Phase 1 decisions. The president noted there definitely would be. For IT they have a charge for reduction by 20% and they will be held accountable to that. The same can be said for Procurement. There may also be decisions to invest more funding in some areas, like Health. Tara asked specifically about Athletics at UA. The president noted there will likely be a re-examination of Athletics.

Maren asked about the elimination of the School of Management at UAS and if there will be a cost-benefit analysis of that decision. The president noted he would be happy to talk to the chancellor regarding the SOM decision.

Tara asked if UA would pursue outsourcing programs, for example with Pearson. The president noted he wanted to explore a few programs for e-Learning. He noted he would like to experiment and talk through and see if UA has programs that could compete nationally and internationally (thinking mostly about small, niche programs). Tara noted that it is concerning when new options were added after the review had left the team. She also noted that (at least at UAA) there had been inappropriate pressures to use Pearson services and she had heard faculty were not excited about hearing about them as a vendor. Regarding outsourcing, Tara noted there are many (unintended) consequences and offered to consult on ways to avoid those pitfalls. Chris noted his experience with outsourcing is that as instructor he feels more like tech support; also noted he has found Pearson to be expensive. The president noted that Pearson wasn't the final option, and he was open to exploring other vendors, but feels that it is something to pursue in helping get UA programs out nationally or internationally.

Chris also noted that cutting academic programs is a multi-year process and doesn't meet cost-cutting requirements. The president agreed.

Silos that are holding us back? Where are they? The president noted there were silos holding UA back, starting with the different administrative and backroom processes at each university, which create barriers because each require their own customizations and are expensive/time consuming to change. And, in the end, they don't affect student experience and teaching effectiveness. The president noted he thought the Strategic Pathways process was helping breakdown those barriers and encouraging collaboration.

Debu asked if UA has a limit of 30,000 students and that the state doesn't have more students to offer. The president noted we have had more students before (there has been a decline of 16% from 2011) but that there were still issues with UA's education effectiveness. The president noted he did not think 30,000 was the limit for UA.

Orion asked if the president would provide a list of options that will not be considered. The president indicated he plans on preparing that and will share with the Alliance.

Tara asked if the president had any comments on the discussion on shared governance. The president noted he thought it was a useful discussion, the content and the fact that it was even held. He is still working on a plan to increase the Summit Team to include

governance representatives (among others). He said he looked forward to the continued discussion at the June Board meeting.

Members also discussed the merits of a faculty regent. The president noted it would take a constitutional amendment to create a seat for a faculty member on the Board. Alliance asked if it would be easier to have a non-voting member, however, they would not be an actual member.

5. Report from Chair

Tara noted she attended the March Board of Regents' meeting and participated in a discussion of shared governance, along with Lisa, Chris and the chair of the Staff Alliance (Nate Bauer) and the chair of the Coalition of Student Leaders (Colby Freel). President Johnsen and GC Mike Hostina gave a brief presentation on shared governance at UA, including policy and regulation and NWCCU accreditation standards.

Tara also noted her written governance report focused on the lack of response from administration regarding their formal actions and that a regent asked her about it. Following the Board meeting, there has been increased interest by UA administrators in responding to actions and recommendations.

Tara noted that in her report she also brought up the perspective that faculty are opposed to change, and she pointed out that all the things the teaching, research, and service entails are essentially about change.

The chair of the Board asked that, at future meetings, an hour be dedicated to the governance report in order to create a richer dialogue between the Board, the administration and governance groups. The chair also asked the governance groups to provide answers to the three questions included in the presentation: 1. What about UA governance is going well; 2. What can the administration do better? 3. What can the governance groups do better?

Tara reported that, all in all, it seemed to go well. Tara noted she hoped one of the outcomes of the meeting would be that the Board not see the faculty as adversaries.

Jeff noted he was disappointed about the lack of support on the Board for a Faculty Regent, and that during the Senate Finance Subcommittee meeting there still seemed to be an adversarial relationship between administration and faculty.

6. Report from Faculty Senates (current Presidents): Items under consideration/discussion; motions/actions taken; questions or comments to Faculty Alliance
- UAS – The UAS Faculty Senate discussed the morale survey and approaches to handling the results. There was also discussion on the Protection of Minors draft regulation—there is new interest in it from faculty and they have indicated they want the Senate to respond to this issue. The UAS Senate also resolved an issue with finals week scheduling and is working on spring elections.
- UAF – Orion reported the UAF Faculty Senate held a discussion of what is a program and what is a unit and how each should be reviewed, especially in light of CES research and

the decision regarding its elimination. CES Research had been on the BOR agenda for elimination but was removed from the consent agenda after Orion noted concern about the review process being followed. Debu noted the faculty need to focus on eliminating administrative positions before any faculty positions should be reduced. Sharon also reported UNAC has noted concern with units forming review committees and deciding to eliminate certain parts of the unit without Senate review, and that it would be particularly troubling if it became common practice.

UAA – Dave asked if the other campuses hold faculty convocation, and both UAF and UAS noted they did. Dave noted that it used to be just for faculty and would include recognition of promotion and tenure but that in recent years it has grown and moved further away from faculty; he noted at UAA the Senate is exploring ways to bring the convocation back more toward the faculty. Dave also reported that faculty discussed feedback reviews on the deans at UAA. The Senate also discussed deadlines for ordering textbooks and will conduct a review of federal guidelines for ordering textbooks.

7. Ongoing Business

7.1. Membership for CCC

Members discussed possible faculty members for the Common Calendar Committee; there was currently one willing faculty member from each university. Alliance members will continue to solicit for additional members to serve on the committee.

7.2. Statewide Reductions/Public Opinion Piece

Members discussed the proposed resolution on reduction recommendations for the university's statewide office. Members agreed to review at their next meeting. Members expressed general support for developing an opinion piece. Chris agreed to draft.

7.3. Enrollment Plan Response

Postponed to the next meeting.

8. New Business

8.1. Faculty Regent

Members agreed to research faculty regents at other institutions and discuss the topic further at their next meeting.

8.2. Protection of Minors Regulation draft

Tara asked members to share with the Senates for feedback on the new draft that splits classroom instruction from programs designed for minors.

8.3. Coordinated motion for Faculty Senates

Tara asked if there was any issue that would be worth coordinating a resolution between the Faculty Senates. One idea brought up was a resolution to support institutional autonomy. There was general support for developing a resolution on this issue.

9. Agenda Items for March 24 Meeting

9.1. Revised Phase 2 Options, if available

10. Agenda Items for April 14 Meeting

11. Comments, concerns, and announcements

12. Adjourn

Debu moved to adjourn, seconded by Orion. The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.