

necessarily means reduction of faculty, or perhaps reclassifying research, clinical, and extension faculty as non-faculty. Given that many faculty at UA, especially at UAF, are largely supported by external grants and contracts so do not have teaching as part of their workload, Faculty Alliance encourages clear and transparent disclosure of how the student-to-faculty ratio is calculated before pursuing major initiatives to "improve" this ratio by the stated goal of six students per faculty member in three years. The Alliance does not currently accept at face value the quoted figure of approximately 11 students per faculty at UA which presumably includes all faculty, including research faculty and adjuncts. Another question raised by the Alliance is whether or not teaching assistants and postdoctoral researchers also included?

The recent loss of education program accreditation at UAA is obviously disappointing and concerning, if not surprising given the CAEP "response to the self-study" report delivered in 2018 and program disorder extending many months prior. Faculty Alliance recognizes that the accreditation failure ultimately resulted from failures at multiple levels of UA including faculty, executive leadership, and board oversight of executive leadership. In addition to immediate corrective actions currently underway to serve current and future education students at UAA, Faculty Alliance suggests root cause analysis to identify the factors leading to the loss of program accreditation to prevent similar issues with program or even institutional accreditation throughout UA in the future. It is thought-provoking to note that both UAA and UAF education programs underwent the CAEP accreditation process at approximately the same time but the UAF program earned accreditation with strong marks

Faculty Alliance is coordinating surveys of faculty and students at the three universities, conducted by the respective faculty senates, to explore options to facilitate inter-university course sharing through synchronous and asynchronous distance teaching technology in ways that include but are not restricted to alignment of course blocks as part of the aligned common calendar. The three universities each have unique identities that are shaped by their student demographics and spatial locations. Forcing a one-size-fits-all alignment would erode these unique identities in addition to creating unnecessary strife when a focus on the core university mission is more important than ever.

This specific effort by Faculty Alliance is in part inspired by President Johnsen's challenge to the Alliance during its fall 2018 retreat to present options for an "80% solution" to inter-university course sharing. (Faculty Alliance proposed and is looking forward to a response to a corresponding counter challenge to President Johnsen and the UA Statewide Administration to present options for an "80% solution" to the tuition revenue sharing and distance technology problems that together also pose substantial barriers to course sharing that are perhaps even more formidable than non-alignment of course blocks.)

The UAF Faculty Senate defined operational goals for President Johnsen's "80% solution" to be:

- initial goal: 80% of University of Alaska students will have the opportunity to take synchronous courses within their program of study at more than one of the three universities during their academic career
- long term goal: expand this vision as allowed by funding, enhanced technological resources, and faculty resources

UAF faculty suggest a suite of options to expand opportunities for the three universities to share courses and faculty. As a research intensive, doctoral-granting university, UAF faculty are strongly resistant to shortening class periods to match UAA's class times (72% opposed). Instead, UAF faculty suggested a suite of options to facilitate inter-university course sharing for consideration by the systemwide Academic Council. Some highlights of those options include

- sharing synchronous once-per-week three-hour evening classes; this model would require minimal time changes at UAA and none for UAS and UAF
- expand course sharing options outside of the regular academic year, e.g. Summer

The UAA and UAS Faculty Senates are in the process of conducting similar surveys to obtain feedback from faculty on their perspectives on course block alignment. The Alliance expects surveys will be completed later in the academic year.

Finally, this exercise in exploring options for inter-university course sharing exemplifies the power of shared governance, where the diverse and expansive expertise and creativity we cultivate among our faculty, students, and staff is unleashed to find solutions to problems that could never be envisioned in a single office or committee. Universities are unique organizations much different than businesses or government, requiring correspondingly unique management that plays to the strengths of a highly educated, decentralized, and independent workforce. The importance of true shared governance or participative management (inclusive of faculty, staff, students, and administrators) is a cornerstone of any successful university because it cultivates an environment that allows creativity and innovation to thrive. Top-down decisions should be viewed with caution, as they limit the valuable input of the shared governance units that contain vast academic experience, domain expertise, and institutional knowledge. Faculty Alliance encourages administration to facilitate coordination and communication among all university constituents and harness their collective wisdom when making decisions that directly impact the teaching, research, and service missions of the University of Alaska.



The University of Alaska Faculty Alliance AY2018-2019 during its Winter Retreat January 26-27, 2019. Clockwise from left: Morgan Dufseth (UA System Governance Executive Officer), Megan Buzby (UAS), Scott Downing (UAA), Sine Anahita (UAF), Syndonia (Donie) Bret-Harte (UAF), Maria Williams (Vice Chair, UAA), Robin Gilcrist (UAS), Chris Fallen (Chair, UAF), Sharon Chamard (UAA), Heather Batchelder (next Vice Chair, UAS).

Staff Alliance

Josh Watts, Chair

University of Alaska Staff Alliance met on Thursday, January 24 and is scheduled to meet again on Friday, February 15.

Staff across the system have been reviewing the new Total Compensation Review FAQs posted by HR, President Johnsen's message on January 16 regarding the budget, and the draft of the proposed Alcohol and Marijuana Regulation.

We appreciate SW Human Resources' efforts to answer and publish timely FAQs related to the Compensation Review. Staff at UA are eager to have access to as much data as is legally allowable, and hope that we are kept abreast of the situation as the decision making process with General Counsel continues. In addition, staff were pleased to see that a communication plan to notify those impacted by the equity study is being developed, and our team at Staff Alliance is interested in discussing that with HR as it forms.

President Johnsen's candid January 16 memo regarding the FY2020 budget was welcomed by staff despite its dire contents. Many staff across the system have been closely following the budget request originally submitted by Governor Walker, which will shortly be amended by Governor Dunleavy, and were relieved to hear about the efforts being made by President Johnsen