



UAF Chancellor Marshall Lind confers with his team of administrators in a weekly cabinet meeting.
UAF photo by Todd Paris

STANDARD SIX

Governance and
Administration

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS

6.A. Governance System

The University of Alaska was established in the Alaska Constitution, Article VII, Section 2 [W6.1], at the time of Alaskan statehood in 1959. The current structure of the University of Alaska system consists of a statewide administration and three individually accredited universities (called major administrative units or MAUs): the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA), the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF), and the University of Alaska Southeast (UAS). The Board of Regents, which governs the statewide system, describes the University of Alaska as “a multi-mission single university” [G4 Minutes 1994]. The board encourages each MAU to pursue its own identity, mission and goals, but it has also mandated some cooperation among the three, especially in administrative and academic areas that directly affect students.

Evidence-Based Description

The University of Alaska is a multi-unit system governed by the Board of Regents and administered by a president and a statewide administration. As specified in the Alaska Constitution, the Board of Regents has financial responsibility for the university, sets its own policy [G2], and selects the university president.

The Board of Regents approves policy, as expressed in its bylaws [G2 P01.01.00]. The president is responsible for promulgating regulations [G3] for the administration and implementation of board policy (see also G2 P01.03). Roles of major system administrators, including the MAU chancellors, are defined in Board of Regents Policies [G2 P02.00, P09.01.04]. Board Policies and University of Alaska Regulations also specifically address the roles and responsibilities of staff [G2 P04.01-02; G3 R04.01-02], faculty [G2 P04.04; G3 R04.04], and students [G2 P09.00; G3 R09.00] (6.A.1).

Board of Regents Policy [G2 P03.00] recognizes the right of governance organization by faculty, students, and staff (6.A.3). The relationship of faculty, staff, and student governance to other administrative entities of the University of Alaska system is depicted in the Appendix [A6.2]. (See also W6.2 and standards 6.D and 6.E.) The roles of system and UAF governance groups are set forth in their bylaws [W6.2]. Leaders of faculty, students, and staff typically attend and are recognized at Board of Regents meetings and work with statewide and MAU administrations on matters of mutual concern. The agenda for Board of Regents meetings includes opportunity for reports from faculty, staff, and student bodies (6.A.2).

Board of Regents policies further delineate the authority and responsibilities of the Board of Regents, statewide administration, MAU administrations, and the faculty, student, and staff governance bodies (6.A.4). A newly established faculty fellow position provides the president with additional academic input and the faculty with another voice in statewide administration. The faculty fellow position was created by the president and the Faculty Alliance (a group composed of three faculty from each of the three MAUs, appointed by local faculty senates). The position is appointed by the president from faculty recommended by the Faculty Alliance and serves a one-year term. The roles of the various entities are supplemented by tradition and usage. For example, the Faculty Alliance has a tradition of coordination with the Systemwide Academic Council (composed of the chief academic officers [provosts] of the three MAUs).

The interrelation of the Board of Regents, the UA statewide administration, and UAF can be seen in the following three examples: 1) Board policy dictates that the bachelor's degree must include a minimum 34-credit-hour general education [G2 P10.04.04] with details specified by regulation. The regulation [G3 R10.04.04] is the purview of the UA statewide administration. Modification of policy requires board approval; modification of the regulation would be by action of the Systemwide Academic Council in cooperation with the Faculty Alliance with final approval by the president. Each MAU has interpreted the regulation according to its own mission, goals, and faculty preference. The UAF faculty through its Faculty Senate interprets the regulation as specific degree requirements, in this case the Core Curriculum. 2) Program assessment is dealt with in Board of Regents Policy [G2 P10.06.01] and Regulation [G3 R10.06.01] and interpreted in detail by the faculty and administration of UAF. 3) In financial matters, the statewide administration prepares the budget request that the board makes to the Alaska Legislature. After approval of the allocation the board, with recommendation from statewide administration, allocates funding to UAF in broad categories [G10]. UAF administration then has the discretion to expend funds within the specified categories.

Appraisal

The advantages of viewing the three separately accredited universities as one institution within a statewide system are to reduce duplication and thus cost, to promote inter-campus cooperation, and, perhaps most important to the board, to allow students to take advantage of academic opportunities available throughout the system with minimal difficulty. Examples of current cooperation can be found in common course-level standards and grading regulations [G3], in the continuous debate about transferability of academic credit [G4 Minutes], and in the use of the administrative computing program Banner as a statewide system. Particularly in curricular matters directly affecting students, the Board of Regents has promoted a view of the university as a single institution rather than three universities. Recent examples of academic cooperation among the campuses are programs in education, early childhood, microcomputer support, and social work. However, such cooperation does not come without cost to the individual MAUs. While the board views the university from a statewide perspective, the campuses fear a loss of control over academic policies and a diminishment of their unique identities, missions and goals.

Projections

Cooperation among the three MAUs is a viable goal, but because restructuring the three into one is pragmatically difficult, the system of a statewide university with three distinct separately accredited MAUs will continue. Increased communication between the Systemwide Academic Council and the Faculty Alliance, together with proposed face-to-face meetings of departmental faculties across MAU boundaries, holds the promise for inter-campus cooperation. However, the Board of Regents and the three MAUs will continue their constant give and take over the issue of statewide cooperation versus individual control.

6.B. Governing Board

Evidence-Based Description

The role of the Board of Regents, which governs the university, and the appointment of its members are specified in Article VII, Section 3 of the Alaska Constitution [W6.1]. Regents are appointed by the governor and approved by the Alaska Legislature [W6.1], thus assuring representation from and by various public constituencies. Nine of the ten board members serve staggered eight-year terms; a student regent serves a two-year term. Board of Regents members represent the gender, ethnic, and geographic diversity of Alaska (see biographies [A6.1]) (6.B.1).

The university president is the chief executive officer of the University of Alaska system and as such is appointed and regularly evaluated by the Board of Regents, which also sets the president's salary [G2 P01.001] (6.B.4). The president is not a member of the Board of Regents (6.B.1) but does set the agenda for board meetings. The Board of Regents elects a chair, vice chair, secretary, and treasurer from among its members by annual vote. No member of the Board of Regents is an employee of the university.

The Board of Regents is organized into the following committees:

- Academic and Student Affairs
- Audit
- Finance, Facilities, and Land Management
- Human Resources
- Nominating
- Planning and Development
- Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
- University of Alaska Foundation
- Ad hoc committees as may be required.

The committees recommend action to the full Board of Regents, which takes final action (G2 P01.01) (6.B.2). (See the Minutes of the Board of Regents [G4].) The structure of the Board of Regents, together with its responsibilities and procedures, as described in 6.A above, are made public in detail at the Board of Regents web site [G4] (6.B.3).

As one of its duties, the Board of Regents approves the mission statements for the University of Alaska and each of its MAUs. As a result of discussions in the 1990s, the board in 2000 rewrote the University of Alaska mission statement and approved a new mission statement for the University of Alaska Fairbanks [G4 Minutes]. New degree and certificate offerings or termination of such at all levels from certificate to Ph.D. require board approval, as do substantive academic or administrative changes affecting the individual universities in the University of Alaska system [G4 Minutes] (6.B.5, 6.B.7). The Board of Regents does not approve minor academic changes to courses or degree requirements.

At nearly every meeting, the board discusses its own effectiveness, the need for policy change, and the relationship of the University of Alaska to the priorities of the Board of Regents and the priorities of the State of Alaska. Such discussion is open to the public, which is encouraged to

testify, and that testimony and subsequent discussion are available in the minutes [G4]. Board meetings are held at Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau (6.B.6).

By constitutional authority, the Board of Regents has financial authority for the University of Alaska and takes responsibility for all funding within the system. The board's Audit Committee hires external auditors to monitor the financial affairs of the university [G4]. The annual budgets of the system and each component thereof are approved by the board. The board is responsible for the budget request to the governor and Legislature, and it actively lobbies for state funding (6.B.8).

While the board relegates operational management to the statewide and MAU administrations, it reviews the administrative structure of the MAUs and approves all major changes to the structure [G2 P10.02] (6.B.7). As an example, the reorganization of the College of Natural Resources Development and Management (discussed in 6.C) was approved at the June 2000 board meeting [G4 Minutes]. The board is given regular presentations, updates and status reports on the accreditation of the three MAUs and specialized accreditation of programs within those MAUs [G4 Agenda] (6.B.9).

Appraisal

The Board of Regents as a group and as individual members are approachable by people from both inside and outside the university community. This accessibility is both a strength and a weakness. Clearly, the better informed the members are, the better they are able to function. However, the board is often presented with matters that would have been more appropriately handled elsewhere (e.g. issues of inter-campus transfer of credit) or that simply have no foundation. The result is some wasted effort.

As in most such public policy-making organizations, the Board of Regents has a tendency to micro-manage on occasion. A review of the minutes of the Board of Regents over the years indicates that the current board is much less likely to micro-manage than some past boards have been. In particular, more operational detail is being relegated to regulations, which come under administrative authority, rather than to policy, which requires Board of Regents approval.

Projections

The Board of Regents has been a powerful organization in representing the University of Alaska to the public and state government and in shielding the university from the vagaries of state politics. It serves its role well. There is no reason to believe it will or should change.

6.C. Leadership and Management

Statewide Administration

The evolution of major administrative offices and individuals serving in them is depicted in the Appendix [A6.3]. During this decade the University of Alaska has had three presidents, the most recent being President Mark Hamilton who was appointed in mid-1998.

Evidence-Based Description

The structure of statewide administration is depicted in the Appendix [A6.4]. The organization of statewide administration is based on functional lines and is unremarkable. The president is a full-time employee of the university (6.C.1). The roles of the various statewide administrators are detailed in the UA system administration notebook (6.C.2). Also contained in the system administration notebook are the vitae and salaries of the major system administrators. A perusal of these documents verifies that the administrators are particularly well qualified (6.C.3). The Board of Regents has established policies related to system-level administrators [G2 P02.00, P10.02] and policies related to conduct and ethics [G2 P04.10] (6.C.2).

Policies and regulations for the hiring, evaluation, and promotion of administrators and staff are published in the Board of Regents Policy and Regulation documents [G2 Part IV; G3 Part IV] and apply to the statewide and the UAF administrations (6.C.3). Sections of these policies are reviewed frequently [G4 Minutes] by the Board of Regents (6.C.8). The statewide Office of Labor Relations periodically reviews the salaries of all employees, compares them to national averages and attempts to make appropriate adjustments. The salaries of statewide and MAU administrators are reviewed under the university's Executive Services Compensation Plan [E6.1] (6.C.9). (See also G3 R04.05.040.)

Included in statewide administration is the office of the University of Alaska Statewide Budget and Institutional Research, which annually publishes "UA in Review" [G6]. This document contains a wide range of statistical data pertaining to the university and its various campuses. It is widely distributed both within and outside the university. Other studies are undertaken as needed by the board or the president (6.C.7).

The Faculty Alliance, Student Alliance, and Staff Alliance are afforded ready access to the Board of Regents, the president, and his staff. An example is the recent high level of cooperation between the statewide administrative staff and the Faculty Alliance in producing a board policy and regulation on information technology, which preserved academic freedom and confidentiality of data and communication while providing information technology staff the flexibility necessary to protect the computer system and the university (6.C.6).

Of particular note is the Systemwide Academic Council, which consists of the chief academic officers (provosts) of the three MAUs. Generally, academic regulations at the system level are proposed by the Systemwide Academic Council in close cooperation with the Faculty Alliance (see Appendix [A6.2] and Governance section below). The two groups meet together at least once a semester to exchange ideas and solve problems (6.C.6).

Appraisal

While a certain amount of rivalry and competition among the three MAUs is inevitable and even desirable in a multi-campus system, the statewide administration and the office of the president have made an effort to minimize the negative impact of such behavior. The structure of the Systemwide Academic Council and the Faculty Alliance and their close working relationship have improved cooperation and collegiality among the campuses. Similarly, the recent revision of student affairs policy and regulation aligned procedures more closely across MAUs and established a higher rapport among the MAU senior student services officers and their staffs.

Over the past two years, the current president has proved to be an extremely powerful spokesperson for the university. He has also provided leadership in directing the university in new and expanded roles in Alaska. In particular his proposal that the university play an increased role in economic development has been well received.

Projections

It must be recognized that the cooperation and collegiality noted above are in large part due to the personalities of the individuals involved and in particular to the force of personality of the current president. It is also the case that the downward spiral of budget cuts has been reversed (as discussed later), easing much of the inter-campus rivalry. Leadership at the statewide level and within UAF will contribute to improved cooperation across the system.

UAF Administration

The evolution of major administrative offices and individuals serving in them is depicted in the Appendix [A6.5]. It should be noted in particular that Chancellor Marshall Lind was appointed in spring 1999 but has a long-term association with the university and Alaska [chancellor's notebook, vita for Chancellor Lind]. Provost Paul Reichardt was appointed provost in 1998 but has been at the University of Alaska since 1972 [chancellor's notebook, vita for Provost Reichardt]. Chancellor Lind was appointed directly by President Hamilton without the customary academic committee process or input of the university community (see Standard 9).

Evidence-Based Description

UAF is administered by a chancellor and an administrative staff as depicted in the Appendix [A6.6]. The chancellor is a full-time employee of UAF (6.C.1).

The roles of the various UAF administrators are detailed in the chancellor's notebook (6.C.2). Also contained in the chancellor's notebook are the vitae and salaries of the major administrators. A perusal of these documents verifies that the administrators are particularly well qualified (6.C.3). Procedures for appointment, review, and promotion, as well as the setting of salaries are handled as for statewide administrators. In addition, there is a Faculty Senate policy for the review of UAF administrators [E6.2] (6.C.8) (6.C.9). The senate policy was augmented by a procedure initiated by the provost [A1.5].

Reporting directly to the chancellor is the equal opportunity assistant, who is responsible for verifying that all hiring procedures and the hiring of faculty and staff meet the requirements of the Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Policy [A9.1; G2 Part IV Chapter II] (6.1).

The chancellor, provost, vice chancellor for Administrative Services, dean of students, executive dean of the College of Rural Alaska, director of Tanana Valley Campus, director of Facilities Services, and director of University Relations form the Chancellor's Cabinet, which meets regularly for planning and to handle problems (6.C.5). The Development Office, which works with the community campuses, the schools and colleges, and other departments to foster community involvement and financial support, also reports to the chancellor (6.C.4.).

The chancellor appoints the provost following consultation with the president and the Board of Regents. The provost is responsible for supervising and implementing academic programs, both originating at UAF and shared among MAUs. An overview of the academic organization administered by the provost is depicted in the Appendix [A6.7]. The provost meets monthly with deans and directors in the Provost Council to discuss current issues and to plan (6.C.5, 6.C.6). Also reporting to the provost is the Office of Planning, Analysis and Institutional Research, which produces the UAF Fact Book [G5] (6.C.8). UAF Fact Book information is used by deans and directors at their planning meetings and is used at Provost Council meetings. It is available to all UAF constituents on the World Wide Web.

Academic sites other than the Fairbanks campus are administered in a parallel structure by the College of Rural Alaska, with an executive dean who reports directly to the chancellor. The executive dean, while not reporting administratively to the provost, is included in the Provost Council to consider academic matters. The organization of the College of Rural Alaska is presented in the Appendix [A6.8].

Faculty, staff, and student governance is described below. The relationship of constituency governance to the administration is depicted in the Appendix [A6.9]. The cooperation between governance and administration has been close; leaders of governance meet regularly with administrators (6.C.6). In particular, the president and president-elect of the Faculty Senate meet with the provost and chancellor before every senate meeting. Both the provost and chancellor attend senate meetings and address questions from the floor. Their comments are made public in the minutes of the senate [G11]. Similarly, the president and the president-elect of Staff Council meet with the chancellor before council meetings. The chancellor regularly attends those meetings. The president and other members of student governance meet with the chancellor on a regular basis.

Appraisal

The current chancellor and provost are extremely approachable and take seriously the role of governance by the constituent groups. Morale among faculty, staff, and students has improved vastly as a result, and this is viewed as a current strength.

UAF Academic Structure

The history of the UAF academic structure is depicted in the Appendix [A6.10]. As discussed in the paper by Provost Reichardt [E6.3], the intent of the academic reorganization of 1992 was to focus the College of Rural Alaska mission and to place academic departments such as Psychology in a more traditional setting. The 1997 reorganization was an attempt to cut administrative costs by reducing the number of colleges and schools from nine to five and to exploit areas of common interest. In 2000 it became apparent that the 1997 reorganization had only partially met the desired ends, and with the exception of the College of Science, Engineering and Mathematics (CSEM) and the Department of Geography, the structure essentially reverted to the pre-1997 configuration [chancellor's notebook, provost's notebook].

Evidence-Based Description

The current academic structure is depicted in the right column of the chart presented in the Appendix [A6.10] and in the Provost's Office Organizational Chart [A6.7]. Details of the internal structure of each college and school can be found in the corresponding notebook.

Appraisal

UAF is a more complex organization than most institutions of its size. As the major research branch of the University of Alaska system and a Land, Sea, and Space Grant institution, it houses research institutes of world repute, has considerable external funding, offers graduate education, and fulfills a significant outreach responsibility. It is a traditional degree-granting university, but also as the center for rural education it offers vocational and remedial education over a wide geographic area. Consequently, UAF often behaves as three entities: the research institutes, the colleges and schools, and the College of Rural Alaska. The pressures of external funding and state politics further exacerbate the matter. This disjunction is a weakness in two specific areas. First, the institute faculty remain uncomfortable as members of the College of Science, Engineering and Mathematics [CSEM notebook] and particularly feel neither adequately represented within the Faculty Senate nor bound by its academic policies [departmental notebooks].

Second, there is a weakness in the academic structure because the formal linkage between the College of Rural Alaska and the rest of the UAF academic units occurs only at the highest level. The chancellor is the lowest level of common administration. Even for faculty teaching in the same discipline, and even physically teaching on the Fairbanks campus, there is no discipline-based structural connection between faculty of the community campuses and those of the rest of the academic departments (see the Provost's Organizational Chart [A6.7]). Although good cooperation exists between some academic departments and CRA faculty teaching in the same discipline (e.g. Communication, Social Work), the cooperation is informal. This increases the challenge to ensure that core courses that have the same designator in fact have the same outcomes. To date UAF has not achieved this ideal (see Standard 2.C Projection for discussion of a plan for outcomes assessment). Another consequence of this structural linkage is a perception among some units outside of the College of Rural Alaska that they are not responsible for development and delivery of distance education. The placement of the Center for Distance Education and Independent Learning within the College of Rural Alaska adds to this perception.

UAF administration has attempted to overcome this through workshops sponsored by the Faculty Technology Resource Center and through Graduate School funding for the development of distance education courses.

Finally, the academic structure has been unstable [A6.10]. It should be noted that with few exceptions, most notably the School of Education, the departmental and school notebooks refer to the structural changes as having had little impact. The current structure includes large colleges as well as schools the size of traditional small departments. The effect of this is that the small units are over-represented in the university planning and budgeting processes. Small units are, for example, represented on the Provost Council and in deans' and directors' meetings.

Projections

Because of the disparity of roles played by the faculty of the institutes, the College of Rural Alaska, and the traditional academic departments, some disjunction as discussed in the analysis is likely to remain. The university has long recognized the academic problems caused when faculty colleagues teaching courses with identical designators have no common administrator below the chancellor level. The chancellor plans to regularly bring together those faculty who teach within the same discipline so they may discuss academic matters.

The issue of responsibility for distance delivery remains open but is being studied. Many departments other than those that serve rural students are beginning to offer courses via distance delivery. Various faculty and departments (most notably Justice) have developed web-based courses outside of the Center for Distance Education and Independent Learning. Pressure for a uniform effort and a workable structural solution continues to build.

The recent action of the Faculty Senate to permit non-tenure track institute faculty to serve on the senate (they were always counted in senate demographics) may mitigate some of the perceived disenfranchisement of that group.

Finally, since breaking into more, smaller academic units seems to solve a variety of perceived and real problems, it is likely that more reorganization will occur. The continued inclusion of the Geography Department within the School of Agriculture and Land Resources Management and of the engineering departments within the College of Science, Engineering, and Mathematics in particular remain in doubt. Consequently, the over-representation of small units in the planning process is unlikely to be mitigated.

6D. Faculty Role in Governance

Faculty and Staff Alliance

The role of faculty in institutional governance increased during the early 1980s with the creation of the UAF Assembly, which is a governance organization composed of faculty and staff. In December 1988 the UAF Faculty Senate was founded.

Evidence-Based Description

The purposes of the Faculty Senate and its committees are to ensure faculty involvement in UAF governance and to exercise the faculty's authority in academic matters. It works with the administration in a shared governance model. Every UAF college or school has proportional representation in the senate with senators elected by majority vote of faculty in their colleges and schools. Faculty at the community campuses remote from Fairbanks serve on the Faculty Senate and its committees. Senate and committee meetings use audio-conferencing as appropriate to assure participation of all faculty. Traditionally the senators elect a president-elect who becomes president in the following year. The senate meets once a month during the academic year but also operates in the summer through its officers and its Administrative Committee. The Faculty Senate is also represented on the statewide Faculty Alliance.

The role and function of the Faculty Senate is stated in its bylaws [G11]. Senators represent their units and are encouraged to discuss issues with their colleagues but are not bound by colleagues' opinions. Senate actions and minutes are available to faculty through the Faculty Senate Office and its web site. The chancellor and provost attend most meetings. Selected deans are ex-officio at the senate meetings and also on the major senate committees.

The senate's role in governance relies on the involvement of its standing committees in policy development and review. These committees consider routine issues in the areas indicated by their names and forward proposals to the senate for action. Faculty also are recruited to serve on ad hoc committees and task forces to consider emerging issues that do not fit conveniently into the charge of an existing committee. All full-time university faculty are invited in the spring of each year to identify their willingness to serve on the senate and the university standing committees for the following academic year. Research faculty have recently been invited to serve, and the Faculty Affairs Committee is discussing the details of this issue. Senate committees are

- Administrative
- Curricular Affairs
- Faculty Affairs
- Core Review
- Developmental Studies
- Curriculum Review
- Faculty Appeals and Oversight
- Faculty Development, Assessment and Improvement
- Graduate Academic and Advisory.

After the creation of the United Academics union in the late 1990s the Faculty Senate revised its procedures to come into agreement with the new Collective Bargaining Agreements. Promotion

and tenure and pre- and post-tenure evaluations are now reviewed by one of three MAU Peer Review committees appointed by the provost from a list of unit members submitted by the Faculty Senate. The Faculty Senate is in the position of having faculty from three different unions on its committees.

Faculty also participate in system-wide governance through the Faculty Senate's membership in the Faculty Alliance (membership described in 6.A). The Faculty Alliance receives its authority through the Board of Regents [G2 P03.01.01], and it carries out its functions subject to the authority of the board and the university president.

The Faculty Alliance represents the faculty of the University of Alaska in matters that affect the general welfare of the university system and its educational purposes and effectiveness; it provides consultation to the president of the university and the Board of Regents on academic matters; and it serves as an instrument by which information that is of interest and concern to the university system faculty may be freely collected, disseminated, coordinated, and discussed.

The Faculty Alliance structure recognizes that the faculty of the individual MAUs have the primary academic responsibility and authority for their MAUs. The Faculty Alliance has an advisory and coordinating role in academic affairs; no action of the alliance may abridge an individual MAU's authority in traditional MAU faculty governance activities.

When issues have statewide impact, the responsibilities of the Faculty Alliance include, but are not limited to, discussion and coordination on matters relating to academic affairs such as academic program review; methods of instruction; aspects of student life that relate to the educational process such as coordination of degree requirements, grading policy, and transfer; and the general welfare of the university and its educational purposes and effectiveness.

Appraisal

The Faculty Senate maintains close ties with UAF administration and attempts, through its approximately thirty-five senators, to maintain similar ties with all faculty. UAF supports the president and president-elect with half-time course release, a full-time administrative assistant, and office and travel costs. From a leadership point of view the senate accomplishes its mission by stimulating discussion and providing the administration with a broad faculty perspective.

There is some dissatisfaction with the faculty's role in the governance of the university. Some faculty believe that the senate serves only an academic policy-making function while representing faculty interests; others disagree and believe that the senate should deal with broader issues as well. No single issue has yet brought that disagreement to the forefront. Also there has been concern about the degree to which the effectiveness of the Faculty Senate is based on the particular personalities of its leaders rather than on clear principles.

In recent years, e-mail has improved communication between the senate office and the faculty concerning emerging issues of the university and the action of the senate. Although some difficulties have been noted in the transition to a mostly web-based medium as opposed to print form of displaying important documents, technology has greatly improved communication

overall. However, the university still faces some challenges in improving communications with distant sites. For example, the clarity of audio connections at senate and committee meetings needs to be improved. Generally, the campuses, schools, and colleges feel adequately represented on the various governance bodies, even though they are limited by the difficulty of finding people with the time to participate.

Perhaps the major challenge to the faculty's role in governance is the apparent reluctance of many UAF faculty to participate in the senate and on senate and university committees. The Administrative Committee (composed of the senate president, president-elect, and chairs of all the standing and permanent committees) reports difficulty finding willing participants to fill out the committee rosters, even for the most important committees for which seats were competitively sought in the past. There are a number of contributing factors, not least of which is the perceived lack of influence of the senate. In addition, some faculty complain that service on important committees of the university provides minimal benefit to faculty members who are attempting to build a record of scholarship. Some of the cohort of early retired faculty, who would have served on committees, have deprived the senate of its institutional memory. Further, newly hired faculty have little history with the purpose and potential benefits of the senate. These factors, and the new unions, combine to diminish continuity in the senate itself and on its committees.

Projections

The senate will continue to redefine its changing university world, especially in relation to the faculty unions. In view of the recent decision to allow non-tenure-track research faculty (see definitions in Appendix to Standard 4) to serve on the senate, the senate will work to get those members more involved in governance.

Faculty Unions

Prior to 1987, the only unionized faculty members within the University of Alaska system were those of the community colleges. This faculty had been affiliated with the Alaska Community Colleges' Federation of Teachers (ACCFT) since 1974. With the 1987 administrative merger of the community colleges and universities, the university system took the position that the union no longer existed. However, the ACCFT disputed this and the issue went to arbitration. ACCFT prevailed and the union was reinstated in 1990 for faculty now specified by location and workload. The remainder of the full-time faculty—tenure track, tenured, and term funded—were organized into the United Academics-AAUP/AFT under a contract effective January 1, 1998. In the following year the part-time and adjunct faculty were organized into the United Academics Adjuncts AAUP-AFT/AFL-CIO under a contract effective January 1999.

Evidence-Based Description

Before the organization of the United Academics-AAUP/AFT, when union members were a minority in the Faculty Senate, there was little interaction between the senate and the unions. During this period the senate (and its predecessor) attempted to serve as the academic policy legislative body and also to represent the faculty interests in employment. With the advent of

United Academics-AAUP/AFT, there was some question as to whether the senate should continue to exist, its role to be supplanted by the unions. However, the need for the senate in academic matters became clear and, in fact, the existence of the unions has allowed the senate to concentrate on those issues. The senate has cooperated with the unions in rewriting policies and procedures for promotion and tenure and grievance [G11; G14; G15] (6.2).

The unions negotiate their contracts with the University of Alaska statewide system, not the individual universities or campuses. This is a matter of some concern in the application of national salary data uniformly to three disparate universities (see Standard 4).

Appraisal

It is clear that the union is responsible for negotiating wages, hours, and working conditions and that the Faculty Senate has faculty authority for academic policy. Yet faculty in general do not perceive a clear demarcation between other senate/union responsibilities. To date, however, this lack of clarity has not become an issue. The union has supplanted the senate's role of overseeing working conditions, but the senate's responsibility for academic policy remains in place.

During its first year, United Academics struggled to establish good communication with faculty, and that struggle placed some pressure on the senate to become a conduit for faculty input to the unions and to place union issues before the administration. However, the senate leadership has been careful not to allow the senate to become a platform for the union or a forum for union debate. Its success in that regard has served to maintain the credibility of faculty governance with the administration and the Board of Regents.

Projections

The relationship between the administration, the senate, and the unions should become clear as more issues arise and are settled. At this time, there seems to be no conflict of interest between the senate and the unions. In the near term, areas of potential conflict are intellectual property rights and distance delivery of courses.

6.E. Student Role in Governance

Student government at Fairbanks was originally established in 1923 as the Alaska Agricultural College and School of Mines Student Association. Since then the organization on the Fairbanks campus has undergone several changes, but it now exists as the Associated Students of the University of Alaska Fairbanks (ASUAF). Student governance organizations were also formed at the Bristol Bay and Kuskokwim campuses, but no single organization has been formed to unite the students on all UAF campuses. However, in 1993 the University of Alaska Coalition of Student Leaders was formed as a statewide organization bringing together student leaders from each campus of each MAU in the UA system. The coalition represents recognized student governance groups as well as other forms of student activity in campus affairs. In the past, student government has focused strictly on providing services to students, but in recent years it has also taken on university advocacy and increased lobbying efforts. ASUAF in particular has been vital in recent successes in gaining increased state appropriations to the university.

Evidence-Based Description

Board of Regents Policy [G2 P03.01.01] authorizes student governance to represent the concerns of students in regard to board policies, university regulations, and other matters affecting the interests of the university. ASUAF, the largest and most consistently active of UAF student governance groups, represents the students of the Fairbanks campus and the Tanana Valley Campus. ASUAF exists to represent its students to the UAF and statewide administrations and the Board of Regents, to provide services to students, and to represent students to the state and federal governments on matters related to education and education funding. A detailed description can be found in the ASUAF Constitution [G16]. ASUAF has a good relationship with the university administration, working with it on campus initiatives and reviewing all proposed policy and regulation changes.

ASUAF consists of a legislative and an executive branch. The ASUAF Senate, the legislative branch, has the legislative authority of the organization and is responsible for making all appropriations. The senate consists of twenty senators serving one-year terms, elected by the student body. It relies on committees to consider routine issues and to advise the senate on issues of concern to particular committees. Senate committees are Executive, Student Affairs, University Relations, and Public Relations.

The president and vice president are elected by the student body and form the executive branch of ASUAF. They have authority over the organization and hold responsibility for everyday operations. The president hires and supervises all ASUAF department directors and employees. The president has veto and line-item veto authority over bills and resolutions passed by the senate. The senate may override a presidential veto by a two-thirds vote. The president officially represents the interests of ASUAF before the Board of Regents.

ASUAF departments exist to provide services to students and to work on issues that require substantial effort by the organization. ASUAF departments are Government Relations, Information Services, Recycling, and Ombudsman.

ASUAF maintains a student service component, which funds the student newspaper, radio station, and intramural athletics. ASUAF also provides funding for and manages a tutoring program and an attorney consultation program for students.

ASUAF representatives sit on several standing UAF committees and boards. These include but are not limited to the Media Board (oversees the campus radio station), the Publications Board (oversees student newspaper), the Student Recreation Center Board, the Technology Advisory Board (recommends allocations of the Technology Fee to the chancellor), and the Polar Express Advisory Board (oversees implementation of new student ID). Student representatives to the campus Master Planning Committee are appointed by the chancellor upon recommendation by the dean of students.

ASUAF works with the other UAF community campuses through the Coalition of Student Leaders, which is the statewide association created to review matters that affect all students in the University of Alaska system and to provide a unified voice. Each UA campus has one voting seat on the Coalition of Student Leaders. Student governments communicate with the student representative to the Board of Regents through the coalition, and the student regent is the official spokesperson of the coalition. The student regent is a student from a University of Alaska campus, appointed by the governor to a two-year term. ASUAF was responsible for the idea and creation of the Coalition of Student Leaders.

In the past year, much effort has been directed at diversifying ASUAF and to have a student government that is truly reflective of the constituents it serves. In recent years, a majority of ASUAF's officers have been Caucasian male students. Twenty-eight percent of ASUAF's constituents are not Caucasian and 56 percent are not male.

Appraisal

ASUAF maintains a good working relationship with the UAF and statewide university administration and Board of Regents. ASUAF supports its leaders by providing a salary for the president, vice-president, senate chair, directors, and employees. The executive officers have their own travel fund and have discretionary funds available for their use. This support improves leadership within the organization.

Communication with constituents is a key challenge facing ASUAF. Every year, on an organizational survey, students complain about lack of communication from ASUAF. The problem is exacerbated by the large number of UAF students who are non-traditional or part-time students, who spend a limited amount of time on campus, or who do not attend the Fairbanks campus. Few graduate students participate in student government, leaving a communication gap between ASUAF and a large group of the students it represents. This problem prompted the establishment of the Graduate Student Organization, which gives a voice to graduate students although it is not formally recognized by the Board of Regents. Through the recently created Club Council, ASUAF strives to involve more students in governance and to provide a means of communication with student and campus clubs.

Perhaps the major challenge to students' role in governance is the reluctance of many UAF students to participate in the senate or on student seats on campus and university committees. In recent years, the senate has had trouble retaining all twenty senators. Each year, several senators resign or do not return to UAF the following semester. ASUAF continuously has student seats on campus and university committees that remain empty due to lack of student interest. Although recent student involvement has increased, much work is left to be done in this area.

Projections

Through the recent acquisition of a student web server, ASUAF hopes to develop new and innovative ways to communicate with students electronically. When fully completed, the web site will be a major communication tool. ASUAF will continue to develop other new and efficient ways to communicate with constituents and will strive to increase student involvement in governance. Recent discussions about the possibility of forming a single student organization that would represent all UAF students, including those attending the community campuses, are expected to continue.

(The following Standard 6.F. does not correspond to a standard in [the NASC Accreditation Handbook 1999.](#))

6.F. Staff

Evidence-Based Description

During fall 2000 UAF employed 1,450 non-faculty support staff members and 90 executive management staff members, nearly twice the number of faculty [G5]. Staff members are essential to the daily operation of the university, to its infrastructure, to operation of facilities, and to implementation of academic programs. Every major academic department and most offices depend on staff workers, and many also hire students. Executive staff lead the university administratively, and other staff perform essential functions. Often a staff member is the first contact for students during recruitment and remains a source of daily assistance to those students after they are enrolled. The staff role in student affairs is discussed fully in Standard 3. Executive salaries are discussed in Standard 6.C.

UAF staff members view morale surveys as tools for positive growth and change. In 1992 a Strategic Planning Leadership Survey [E6.4] on Improving Morale sought to gauge staff concerns about morale. The Staff Morale Follow-up Survey [E6.5] conducted in 1994 reflected many of the same issues and concerns as the first survey. Four issues were identified: (1) communication among faculty, students, administration, the public, and among campuses; (2) low wages and lack of cost-of-living increases; (3) poor working conditions and dirty buildings; and (4) job security. Staff responses identified several areas for improvement: (a) increase wages and pay equity; (b) improve communication among all levels of university operations; (c) heighten the recognition of the value of staff by supervisors and the university administration; and (d) provide compulsory supervisor training and evaluation.

The first survey was instrumental in promoting staff training, in-house advancement opportunities, and a series of supervisor training sessions. Various training sessions and staff development courses are offered each month during the academic year. These sessions augment a standard orientation service for new staff. In response to a Staff Council resolution [W6.3 Minutes May, 1996], the UAF administration restored the UAF Human Resources position of training coordinator, demonstrating its responsiveness to the Staff Council's claim that "employee training is a basic need not only for employee development and morale, but more importantly to provide our clientele and the public at large with a consistent level of quality service."

The McDowell Group conducted employee opinion surveys in 1998 and 1999 [E6.6]. A sample of approximately 800 University of Alaska staff members received surveys by mail in 1999, and 416 were returned. The surveys were designed to measure employee attitudes and opinions on workplace issues and, in the case of the 1999 survey, to measure changes in attitude since the previous survey. Of those staff members who responded to the survey, 91 percent felt that the university made good use of their skills, 90 percent rated the benefits package acceptable or better, and 85 percent were satisfied with their jobs. Fifty-five percent of the respondents rated salaries unacceptable compared to similar jobs outside UA; 57 percent felt that top management at UAF demonstrated that employees are important to the success of the university.

The University of Alaska system-wide Job Evaluation Form (JEF) is an extensive, detailed job description that narrowly defines each position and evaluates it for grade level placement. There are approximately 2,100 active JEFs in the system [E6.7]. This process is being revised and is discussed further under Projections.

The Retirement Incentive Program (R.I.P.) [E6.8] played a large role in a decrease in staff morale in the 1990s. Retirements during the three years of the R.I.P. were arbitrary with respect to overall needs. In FY97, forty-seven staff retired through the R.I.P. and eighteen were replaced. In FY98, thirty-eight staff retired and none were replaced. In FY99, thirty-five staff retired and five were replaced. This loss totals 120 workers with twenty-three—only one out of five—replaced. Remaining staff absorbed the duties of departing staff with no corresponding pay increase.

Although staff receive yearly step increases, the salary base has not kept up with inflation. The UAF Staff Council outlined historical problems with staff salaries [W6.3 Minutes October 13, 2000] and found "staff compensation to be at least 4-28% beneath State of Alaska, 3-25% beneath Federal, and 4-40% beneath industry levels," compared with a 12.4 percent nationwide increase between 1994 and 1999 according to the Consumer Price Index, U.S. city average. The Staff Council recommended that the Board of Regents raise staff salaries at least 12 percent across the board (W6.3 Minutes October 13, 2000). On March 9, 2001, the Board of Regents approved a 1.5 percent increase to the non-union staff salary structure [G4 Minutes]. This is the first adjustment to the staff salary scale since 1994.

In January 2000 the university changed the health insurance plan for staff only, and as a result more health care costs are now passed on to employees. The deductible increased from \$100 to \$250 per person. The new plan compensates health care providers on a preferred provider list at

80 percent with 20 percent paid by the employee, while health care providers not on the list are compensated at 60 percent with 40 percent paid by the employee. The premium paid by the employee for dependents has decreased over the last two years.

The Alaska Higher Education Crafts and Trades Employees (formerly the Classified Employees Association) represents maintenance, trades, crafts, and custodial workers under an agreement effective January 1, 2001, through December 31, 2003 [E6.9]. In the early 1990s an organizing effort of other support staff failed; however, the possibility of unionization is currently being discussed.

The chancellor and the new administration are working to revitalize staff morale through various programs and methods of appreciation and recognition. A Chancellor's Recognition Program was begun in 1997 "to recognize the University of Alaska Fairbanks staff for their continued service and outstanding contributions toward accomplishment of our institutional mission." A staff longevity program, which recognizes employees for years of service, was instituted in the 1980s by the administration and is now managed by the Staff Council. In addition, the staff supervisory training mentioned above is mandatory on subjects such as preventing sexual harassment, evaluating performance, and cultural awareness. The 2001 Technology Refreshment Program improved staff working conditions by providing money for computers that were long overdue for replacement.

Appraisal

UAF employs a talented and diverse cadre of staff, many of whom have made the university their career choice.

UAF must give increased attention to rebuilding staff following the R.I.P. New staff positions are being filled in some areas, but new programs have started and R.I.P. faculty replacements have been hired with no corresponding staff hires. As a result, existing staff are being asked to incorporate more duties into their workloads without increased compensation. Administration is addressing this issue.

The JEF system was meant to bring equality to similar positions within UAF and between MAUs and statewide administration. Within this system, a staff member's salary cannot be increased to the next grade without revising the JEF, nor can a staff member advance to a new or enhanced position within his or her work area without a new recruitment. Many staff assert that some individuals, in order to be adequately compensated, have been assigned JEF classifications higher than warranted by their function, thus creating an imbalance in the grading system. Some staff perceive the evaluations of JEFs to be inconsistent and skewed. Additionally, some staff perceive that moving to similar positions in the statewide offices results in decreased responsibility and increased pay.

As a result of longevity, some staff reach the top of the salary scale and are considered "redlined," that is they can receive no further compensation in their current positions. To increase their compensation, some staff upgrade their positions by asking their supervisors to

rewrite their JEFs, some move to a job at a higher grade, while others remain in their positions because they enjoy their work and are effective in their roles.

Projections

UAF is in the process of rebuilding the number of staff lost to budget retrenchment in the 1990s, an effort that is expected to result in higher staff morale. The restructuring of the staff salary scale and job classification system should also boost morale as balance and equity are brought to positions throughout the UA system and staff are adequately compensated. The budget initiative process is key to this rebuilding, and essential staff in areas such as admissions, counseling, and the registrar's office have been hired as a result.

The UA system is addressing the job classification system. The JEF system will be replaced with Job Family Descriptors, which will capture the essence of a position rather than the specifics and have a range of grade levels available for that type of work. This should be an improvement as it will reduce the number of existing job descriptions by 80 to 90 percent and will offer greater flexibility in rearranging job content and responsibilities. Development and implementation of the new descriptors will take approximately two years.

Statewide administration will begin a total compensation review of staff salaries in fall 2001. An official vote on support staff unionization could be held as early as fall 2001. A McDowell Group survey of employee opinions on workplace issues will be conducted in the summer and fall of 2001.

Staff Governance

Evidence-Based Description

UAF Staff Council [W6.3] gives employees an avenue to help formulate new policies, change existing policies or working conditions, and influence matters that affect the services they perform. With membership elected from non-unionized staff, Staff Council seeks to represent employees by helping to improve working environments. The council provides a channel of communication between the staff and university administration.

Over the past ten years, Staff Council has been responsible for a number of employee benefit improvements. These include a leave share program, the establishment of a university holiday on Martin Luther King Day, and a flexible work schedule. Members have worked on refining supervisory training, internal recruitment, the staff recognition and longevity awards, health and leave benefits, development and implementation of the new salary system, correspondence with state legislators on bills concerning the retirement system and the university budget, and consultation with the Office of Human Resource on UAF hiring procedures.

In keeping with its prerogative to advise on matters concerning human resources policy, the Staff Council recommended in December 1996 that the UAF administration reaffirm its commitment to career advancement of staff by way of internal recruitment [W6.3 Minutes]. There has been renewed effort to offer new or vacant positions internally prior to opening them to external

recruitment, with care being taken for the requirements of university policy on nondiscrimination and equal employment opportunity. More recently [W6.3 Minutes April 8, 1998, Minutes March 2, 1999] Staff Council supported extension of the chancellor's mandate through December 31, 2001, whereby a mandatory internal recruitment is to be conducted for all staff positions over a five-day period prior to external recruitment. The affirmative action officer, to comply with the EEO/AA goal of hiring "protected candidates" in units where they are underrepresented, can waive internal recruitment.

The president and president-elect of Staff Council are given ample opportunities to discuss staff concerns with the administration through monthly meetings with the chancellor and by attending Board of Regents meetings. The president and president-elect both serve on the University of Alaska Staff Alliance [W6.2], the governance group that consists of the president and vice president from each of the four staff governance groups within the UA system. Staff Alliance actions have included reviewing university regulations, taking the lead in creating governance regulations, investigating the effects of raising employee fees such as parking, investigating the possibilities of cashing out annual leave and opting out of health insurance, and allowing tuition waivers to be used for self-support courses.

Appraisal

Overall, the UAF Staff Council maintains a good relationship with the administration and with its constituents. The Staff Council support office does an exemplary job of communicating with UAF's diverse staff, which is hindered somewhat because of geographic separation. The council has members hundreds of miles away from the Fairbanks campus and this sometimes results in the council tackling issues that do not necessarily affect all constituents. For example, parking is a problem at the Fairbanks campus but certainly not a factor in Nome.

Staff Council has difficulty finding staff to participate in the council and on the various committees. While unwillingness to serve is often the result of lack of interest, some employees claim that their supervisors discourage participation because of the time it takes away from work. The current chancellor is aware of this problem and has made steps toward ensuring that university supervisors allow and encourage staff to participate in governance.

Some staff members feel that Staff Council does not receive the same respect that other governance groups do. Some staff believe that the organization does not contribute much to the university. This may simply be because many people associate the Staff Council only with the annual staff picnic and awards ceremony. Efforts are being made to showcase the variety of contributions the council makes not only to the staff, but also to the university community. Once that perception changes, others may feel that the council is able to accomplish important goals and therefore will be more willing to participate.

Projections

The Staff Council will be concerned with several issues facing UAF:

- Recruitment, retention, ongoing training, and career advancement opportunities.
- Improved training and orientation for new employees.

- Improved outreach to rural employees.
- Adequate staff levels to meet UAF's mission and goals.
- Continued adequate state funding to allow continuation and growth of UAF.
- Recruitment and retention of students.
- Competitive compensation including benefits and health care to attract and retain qualified employees.
- Improved representation and participation in Staff Council and Statewide Staff Alliance.
- Compensation for "redlined" employees, who have reached the top of the salary schedule.

Standard 6 Documents List

Appendices

- A1.5 Annual Report from UAF Administrators Memo
- A6.1 University of Alaska Board of Regents
- A6.2 Relation of UA System Governance to Administration
- A6.3 Evolution of UA System Major Administrators
- A6.4 UA Statewide System Organizational Chart
- A6.5 Evolution of UAF Major Administrators, 1991-2001
- A6.6 UAF Organizational Chart
- A6.7 UAF Office of the Provost Organizational Chart
- A6.8 UAF College of Rural Alaska Organizational Chart
- A6.9 Relation of UAF Governance to Administration
- A6.10 Evolution of Academic Structure, 1990-2000
- A9.1 UAF Equal Opportunity / Affirmative Action Policy

Exhibits

- G2 Regents' Policy (<http://www.alaska.edu/bor/>)
 - G3 University Regulation (<http://www.alaska.edu/bor/>)
 - G4 Board of Regents' Home Page (<http://www.alaska.edu/bor/>)
 - G5 UAF Fact Book (<http://www.uaf.edu/pair/factbook.html>)
 - G6 UA in Review (<http://www.alaska.edu/oir/Review/index.html>)
 - G10 Red Book (<http://www.alaska.edu/swbudget/redindex.htm>)
 - G11 Faculty Senate Home Page (<http://www.uaf.edu/uafgov/faculty/index.html>)
 - G14 Collective Bargaining Agreement: United Academics – AAUP/AFT (UNAC) (<http://www.alaska.edu/labor/current/united/table2001.html>)
 - G15 Collective Bargaining Agreement: Alaska Community Colleges' Federation of Teachers (ACCFT) (<http://www.alaska.edu/labor/current/accft/Contract/table.html>)
 - G16 Associated Students of UAF (ASUAF) Home Page (<http://www.asuaf.org>)
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- E6.1 Executive Services Compensation Plan
 - E6.2 Faculty Senate Policy on Evaluation of Administration
 - E6.3 Academic Organization of UAF Paper by Provost Reichardt, October 2000
 - E6.4 Strategic Planning Leadership Survey, 1992-1993
 - E6.5 Staff Morale follow-up Survey, 1994
 - E6.6 University of Alaska Employee Opinion Survey – McDowell Group, 1999
 - E6.7 Documents Describing Employee Job Descriptions and Compensation
 - E6.8 RIP Schedule
 - E6.9 Collective Bargaining Agreement: Alaska Higher Education Crafts and Trades Employees Local 6070

Additional Web Sites

- W6.1 State of Alaska Constitution <http://www.gov.state.ak.us/ltgov/akcon/table.html>
- W6.2 UA System Governance <http://sygov.swadm.alaska.edu>
- W6.3 UAF Staff Council <http://www.uaf.edu/uafgov/staff/index.html>

Notebooks of Interest

Chancellor's notebook

Provost's notebook

College of Science, Engineering and Mathematics notebook

department notebooks

