

**2011 UAF Institutional Accreditation Evaluation**  
**Preliminary Evaluation Team Comments – Final report to come from the Northwest Commission**  
**on Colleges and Universities in January 2012**  
Davis Concert Hall October 5, 2011

Transcribed from audio recording by LaNora Tolman:

Chancellor Brian Rogers:

Good morning, everyone and I want to welcome those here in the hall and anyone who is streaming audio today to this presentation by the accreditation team of their findings after their review of the University of Alaska Fairbanks. I just want to open by thanking again the members of the evaluation team, a volunteer effort, hours and hours of interviews, and then digesting all of the information that we wrote, that we spoke, that they listened to, to digest to come up with their report to the Northwest Commission and that'll go forward and the Commission will make a decision later and we will hear about that this morning, and this morning is an opportunity for us to get sort of the flash results: what are the key points that they saw in this process and again thanks to all the members of the team and especially to the Chair, Joe Fedock, who has put in countless hours to make this happen. Joe, welcome to the podium.

Dr. Joseph Fedock:

Thank you much, Chancellor Rogers.

Firstly, despite your northern location, I feel compelled to note the extraordinary warmth and hospitality that all of us evaluation team members have experienced during our visit and the several previous days of fabulous weather have certainly helped in that regard as well. But I'd like to start by saying thanks to many individuals and groups who have helped to make this visit so enjoyable and productive. To the faculty, staff and students of the University of Alaska Fairbanks, wherever you are located, thank you, you are the heart and soul of this institution, to the administrative staff and senior leadership of UAF, thank you for your insights and thoughtful comments. We've also greatly benefitted from our conversations with members of the Alaska Board of Regents, and with the University of Alaska System President Patrick Gamble. Thanks. And Chancellor Rogers for your warm welcome to all of us on Monday and for your assistance in myriad ways during this visit. On a more personal level, all of us on the evaluation committee owe a tremendous thanks to Dana Thomas, the UAF Vice Provost and Accreditation Liaison Officer and his assistant LaNora Tolman, who did an outstanding job in facilitating all aspects of this visit. We greatly appreciate all that you have done for us both individually and collectively. And to the numerous others at UAF, who contributed to the self-evaluation report and visit and to this process in general, thank you very, very much! And last, but certainly not least, I want to express my personal deep thanks to my evaluation team colleagues for all of their quality work, conscientious deliberations and insights, their dedication to the original accreditation process and maybe most of all, for putting up with me. So thank you.

I'd like to take a few moments to explain the process from this point forward. In addition to the commendations and recommendations which I will read shortly, a draft of the evaluation report will be provided to Chancellor Rogers soon for corrections of any errors of fact. The institution will have a brief period of time to comment on factual aspects of the report. Additionally, the evaluation committee will be providing its confidential counsel to the Board of Commissioners of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities regarding the accreditation status of UAF, including a recommendation regarding any possible subsequent actions required of the institution. The Commission Board will meet in January at which myself and one or more UAF representatives will appear before the commissioners and then the Commission will take formal action on UAF's accreditation status at that time.

Before I read the commendations and recommendations, I want to interject a critically important factor in this accreditation review process. As we all know, a new set of standards has been recently adopted by the Northwest Commission for evaluating institutions, and UAF is among the first universities to go through a full-scale evaluation using these new standards. For that fact alone, I commend you for your great efforts in entering what I call “a brave new world” in terms of regional accreditation processes. One aspect of these new processes is a concept of continuous evaluation during the new seven-year cycle, the accreditation seven-year cycle. Hence, next year in fall of 2012, UAF will be required to submit a year-one report concerning mission, core themes and expectations. So, with that as a context, it is my great hope that our evaluation report will of major assistance to UAF in preparation of its year-one report in this continuous improvement process.

And now, the commendations that the team has identified on behalf of the University of Alaska Fairbanks:

1. The evaluation committee commends UAF for the thorough and inclusive nature of their development of institutional core themes involving a broad range of UAF constituencies and their deliberative identification of measurable indicators and objectives that help define mission fulfillment.
2. Secondly, the evaluation committee commends UAF for their continuing, unwavering commitment to serving rural and native populations across the state through effective educational programming that is responsive to local community and state needs. That commitment, also includes the collaborative establishment and operation of community partnerships that help sustain Alaska’s rural economy.
3. And third, in recognition of UAF’s unique location in the circumpolar north, the evaluation committee commends the institution for the depth and breadth of its activities focused around Alaska the circumpolar north and their diverse peoples which encompasses high quality educational, research and outreach programs.

And so those are the commendation that we have for UAF.

Recommendations that the committee has determined:

1. First, the evaluation committee recommends that UAF coordinate its planning and evaluation processes of core themes in a systematic manner to help insure that the institutions programs and services align with the accomplishment of the core themes and objectives. And I will be citing elements of particular standards associated with each one of these. So for this recommendation the cited standards are 3.B.1, 3.B.2, Core Theme Planning and standard 4.A.1 Assessment.
2. Secondly, the evaluation committee recommends that UAF evaluate its resource allocation processes and institutional capacity relative to its core themes’ objectives to help insure adequacy, effectiveness and sustainability of its programs and services. And that cited standard is 5.B.2 Adaptation and Sustainability.
3. And third, the evaluation committee recommends that UAF systematically implement and execute its educational assessment plan to consistently achieve identified program and degree learning outcomes and that assessment results be used to guide program improvement. And that reference is standard 4.A.3 Assessment.

That’s it in terms of my prepared remarks. I do very, very much though want to express on behalf of all the team members not only our appreciation for all of the hard work that you’ve done over the last couple years, but your obvious commitment to this process. It comes across in all kinds of ways and from my perspective I am just deeply appreciative of what you have done to make our work, I’m not sure if I want

to say enjoyable, but that have helped us tremendously throughout our role and responsibilities on behalf of the Northwest Commission. We recognize that this is a team effort and collectively and it strikes us that you have worked extremely well together as that team. And it's very obvious to me and I think to all of the team members that UAF has a bright future and you are the reason for that! And you have a tremendous university that you have justifiable pride in and it shows in many, many ways. And so, with that one final thank you very, very much for all that you've done and we will be on our way. So thank you, and good bye.