

## UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS PRIORITIES

During fall 2014 the UAF Planning and Budget Committee (PBC), which includes broad representation from faculty, staff, and administration, developed the following statement. The statement encompasses a vision for UAF and strategies for implementing that vision.

This statement is consistent with UAF's core themes and objectives, which were developed as part of the continuous improvement process that is required for institutional accreditation, and also is consistent with the strategic plan. However, those statements of goals or objectives were developed one to three years ago, in a more optimistic fiscal climate where growth was expected. The "University of Alaska Fairbanks 2020" statement recognizes the probability of reduced funding from the State.

### UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS 2020

- ***Vision:*** UAF attracts well-prepared baccalaureate and graduate level students from throughout Alaska and beyond.  
***Strategies:*** Build UAF's reputation for quality education and unique student research opportunities. Maintain a breadth of high-quality programs to attract students. Focus recruiting to target students who can be attracted to the strengths of UAF. Expand and recruit students to distance program offerings. Continue to work with high schools (statewide, in cooperation with the rest of UA) to align high school graduation requirements with first-year college courses. Make necessary organizational and policy changes to foster interdisciplinary academic programs. Provide incentives for excellent teaching and provide resources to help faculty improve teaching. Direct undergraduate students who are not prepared for baccalaureate programs to community campuses.  
***What is reduced:*** Lower quality or small programs that attract few students to UAF and that lack potential for growth and improvement, given the available resources. Developmental education. Developmental education would be reduced or made more efficient, not eliminated.
- ***Vision:*** UAF is Alaska's research university and the world's leading Arctic research university.  
***Strategies:*** Maintain or increase faculty strength in disciplines and research focus areas that are responsive to public information needs and necessary to be competitive for external research funding. Make necessary investments in research support, facilities, and equipment. Provide incentives for excellent research (or creative activity) and provide resources to help faculty improve research. Make necessary organizational and policy changes to foster interdisciplinary research. Improve communication and increase interactions among researchers in different administrative units. Maintain a focus on undergraduate and graduate student research.  
***What is reduced:*** Research (or creative activity) capacity in fields without external funding opportunities and without an Alaska/Arctic focus. This might be achieved through changes to faculty workload (increased teaching), reductions in faculty numbers, or program eliminations.
- ***Vision:*** UAF meets the greatest needs of Alaska's employers for skilled career and professional staff.  
***Strategies:*** Monitor workforce needs and add or increase, revise, or reduce or eliminate programs according to demand. Maintain access to postsecondary education for rural students is maintained, in part through increasing distance degree and certificate program offerings.

Secure financial and other support from employers for programs that meet their needs. This is particularly necessary for programs that are relatively small in enrollment or that have unusually high costs per student.

Add tuition surcharges or fees to support higher cost/student programs, especially if those lead to high-wage (or high-salary) jobs.

What is reduced: Programs with smaller enrollments and/or higher costs per student, particularly if these do not receive employer financial support or approval for additional student fees.

Programs that have become, or are becoming, less relevant to employer needs.

- Vision: UAF is an integral part of Alaska's communities and their cultural and economic development.  
Strategies: Engage with communities to understand their needs and priorities and partner with them to provide educational and cultural activities that meet the most important needs.  
Seek external financial support of educational and cultural outreach activities.  
Modify approaches to providing research-based information, analysis, projections and solutions to better meet the needs of Alaska.  
Further develop partnerships with communities, business, and industry in support of research and dissemination of research products.  
Continue to develop intellectual property that provides solutions to regional problems or opportunities for economic development.  
Provide incentives for excellent outreach and provide resources to help faculty improve outreach.  
What is reduced: Outreach that does not have substantial external financial support.  
General fund support of outreach that does not measurably strengthen UAF reputation and advocacy in Alaska's communities or enhance student recruitment.

### **PLANNING & BUDGET COMMITTEE (PBC)**

The PBC was charged by the Chancellor with reviewing and assessing the options reduction and revenue generation provided by the Budget Options Group (December 2013). In March 2014, the PBC agreed to [guiding principles](#) and a decision process. About twenty additional budget reduction items were added to the initial list, either by committee members or by other individuals from across the campus community. The PBC rated the reduction/efficiency options and passed those ratings and an evaluative review to the Chancellor's Cabinet in May 2014. Broad feedback was collected and reviewed.

As the budget climate has continued to tighten, the PBC was reconvened in the fall of 2014 to further examine all cost reduction actions, consider any new viable options, and determine which programs will undergo a special program review based on identified criteria. These reviews are in progress in 2015 with actions expected prior to the FY16 fiscal year, where possible.

### **SPECIAL PROGRAM REVIEWS**

It is unlikely that UAF will be able to sustain all of its programs and services in the coming years. The PBC recommended special program reviews of a number of non-academic and academic programs. Special committees are reviewing the operational and/or financial models for the following programs:

- Athletics
- eLearning
- Farms and large animal care
- KUAC
- Public information, marketing and communications
- Summer Sessions and Lifelong Learning
- K-12 outreach/bridging programs

An additional committee has been charged with identifying and evaluating revenue enhancement options.

The criteria developed for academic special program review is as follows, approximately 45 programs are being reviewed under this criteria:

- The lowest enrollment programs, by type - certificate, associate, baccalaureate, graduate
- Enrollment declines of more than 30 percent in the past five years
- Graduating the lowest number of students in the past three years, for programs by type

A few low-enrollment graduate programs were excluded based on levels of external research funding, and a few grant-funded certificate and low-cost programs were also excluded.

### **ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEWS**

The Provost is also reviewing academic programs which aims to identify \$3 million in reductions. Not all programs will be reviewed. All academic programs are reviewed every five years.

Information and/or reports specific to the following reviews can be found on the OMB website: <http://www.uaf.edu/finserv/omb/uaf-program-reviews/>

### **RESEARCH PROGRAM REVIEW**

UAF has undertaken a Research Program Review twice: once during the summer of 2014 and again in the winter of 2014-15. Research units and research support units were provided with data by UAF's Planning, Analysis, and Institutional Research (PAIR) unit that covered the period 2010-2014. In the lead-up to the second review, a small group met to adjust the selection of data provided by PAIR to be more useful to the units and to allow for more common metrics across units. Units submitted their reports and a committee evaluated each unit's response and produced a final report.

The Research Program Review was intended to provide information to the Chancellor about the financial position, research productivity, and general strengths and weaknesses of each school, college, institute, or center. The second Research Review was submitted to the Chancellor in March 2015.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES PROGRAM REVIEW**

All units within Administrative Services, except Facilities Services, conducted a self-review during FY14. All Administrative Services departments were sent the same questionnaire to complete. The information provided was compiled into a report, which comprises a comprehensive picture of Administrative Services. This information is helping to determine where to invest and where to streamline for FY16 and has informed FY15 budget actions.

Facilities Services undergoes an external review on an annual basis by a national firm, Sightlines. The facility review includes operations performance, costs and customer service. Additionally, UAF has a space utilization review in process with an expected completion in spring 2015. The reviews provide valuable information for decisions necessary to achieve FY16 spending reductions.

### **UNIVERSITY & STUDENT ADVANCEMENT (USA) PROGRAM REVIEW**

USA is the UAF administrative unit that houses traditional student services functions including Nanook athletics, as well as advancement functions such as KUAC TV/FM, alumni relations, development, community advocacy, and marketing & communications. The unit focuses on student success, graduation/completion rates, brand and image building, and outreach to communities and partners throughout the state.

During 2014 USA program reviews were conducted at two levels: 1) the program or department, and 2) the higher organizational level as described in the 2012 USA Transition Plan. The results and recommendations from those reviews are detailed in a report that is being used to implement changes to meet the FY16 budget.

### **PROCESS IMPROVEMENT & EFFICIENCY EFFORTS**

In addition to the program and service reviews, UAF has an established framework for examining business processes in every unit and is diligently working to streamline administration in all areas. Major efforts from 2012 through January 2015 have resulted in an estimated \$400,000 per year in cost avoidance or savings, as well as improvements to processing times and accuracy. Major initiatives and results are detailed online: <http://www.uaf.edu/finserv/omb/process-improvement/results/>.