

The UAF Faculty Senate passed the following at Meeting #214, April 4, 2016:

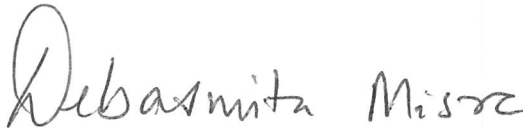
**MOTION:**

The UAF Faculty Senate moves to approve the memorandum titled *Strategic Pathways Implementation and Potential Impact* (attached), to be sent to UA President Jim Johnsen, Interim Chancellor Mike Powers, Provost Susan Henrichs and VCAS Kari Burrell.

EFFECTIVE: Immediately

RATIONALE: The members of the UAF Faculty Senate wish to collectively express their concerns regarding the implementation of Strategic Pathways planning, and offer constructive feedback in the spirit of shared governance.

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A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Debasmita Misra". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

President, UAF Faculty Senate



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## MEMORANDUM

To: President Johnsen, Interim-Chancellor Powers, Provost Henrichs, and VCAS Burrell

From: UAF Faculty Senate *Debasmita Misra*

Approved: April 4, 2016

Re: Strategic Pathways Implementation and Potential Impact

We begin by thanking President Johnsen for requesting the Faculty Alliance and other governance groups on March 14 to develop criteria for evaluation of academic programs and administrative services for inclusion in Phase 1 of Strategic Pathways (SP). We have three broad recommendations for the overall implementation of SP that we believe will assist UA in preserving the academic excellence and service we provide to Alaska during these difficult times:

- That the changes in academic programming at each university be undertaken in a way that does not provide a temporary illusion of cost savings while significantly reducing the ability to generate revenue and that the core mission of the university system be protected.
  - That SP and budget adjustments be coordinated across the university system so as not to result in decisions that contravene the ultimate goals of SP.
  - That a pathway for reorganization of administrative services be included along with the SP process in order to ensure that all areas of the university system are strategically reorganized.
1. The senate understands that academic programs draw the bulk of cost for the university and are therefore the focus of SP in its current form. However, academic programs are also the core mission of the university and must be handled with care in any restructuring. It is still unclear if there will be significant cost savings through the reorganization of academic programs using SP and it could be anticipated that such reorganization may impact revenue generation and potentially quality of our offerings. **The UAF faculty senate strongly supports the feedback of the Planning and Budget Committee of UAF to you on March 14, 2016, on the SP concept.** In particular, we agree that any changes must be made with the following questions in mind:
- *Will a particular implementation of Strategic Pathways help UA to educate Alaskans at a reduced cost?*
  - *Will a particular implementation of Strategic Pathways improve Alaska's college enrollment, retention, and graduation rates?*

- *Will a particular implementation of Strategic Pathways improve the ability of students to transfer among UA institutions?*

2. The senate feels that there are still significant unclear aspects of SP, its implementation schedule, and its potential impact. Currently, UAF is struggling with state appropriated budget cuts and strategy to balance the budget for FY 17. However, such planning is being done without the broad consideration of potential alignment to SP concepts. **Each campus is planning independently to meet the gap, without considering how SP is going to shift costs across the UA system.** This is particularly troublesome, because each university will make adjustments that are deeper than a shared planning of cost adjustments within the SP purview. Hence, programs might be cut inadvertently, which could have survived and been strengthened.
3. Finally, the senate feels strongly that there is a significant lack of information or direction on how SP will address reorganization of Administrative Services at UAF and across the UA system in the context of budgetary planning and future directions. It is evident that vacant faculty positions are not being filled at this point while many senior administrative positions are being actively searched for filling. Do these positions contribute critically to the core mission of the university? Or, could the university be equally effective without those positions being filled, focusing instead on serving and strengthening the core mission of academic excellence and job training? For research to remain viable, or even grow as a revenue source, administrative positions related to proposal writing and contracting are important to preserve and align closely with the needs of researchers. **It may be prudent to develop a “concept” similar to SP where administrative services (major blocks or units) be strategically reorganized using the same principles of focus, access, scope, excellency, and consistency put forth by SP for academic programs.** Such concept and implementation, in parallel with academic program reorganization may have a positive impact on the implementation of SP and reduction of adverse impact on each university within the UA system.

Thank you very much for your attention and consideration. We appreciate all your diligence in protecting the interest of UAF during these difficult times.