Governance Report

Volume 16, Number 2, April 2012

Coalition of Student Leaders

Nicholas S. Pennington, Speaker

The Coalition is happy to report another successful and completed Legislative Conference. We are actively watching how things go down in the Legislature to see if students and the University will receive some relief. There are a lot of supportive legislators and we hope they carry the day. I would like to thank the faculty, staff, and administration members who supported us in this effort. Additionally, I would like to thank Regent Martin for speaking with students. It is significant that the board of the University of Alaska system is so open to communicating with students. We are happy to continue our involvement on the Tuition Task Force and we are looking forward to working with Saichi Oba and other members. We are eagerly watching the progress on tuition and fees and are happy to have the opportunity to communicate directly with the administration.

Nicholas Shane Pennington served two terms as president of the Kodiak College Student Government Association. He received an Associate of Arts through the Kodiak College and is pursuing a degree in Business Management.

Staff Alliance

Juella Sparks, Chair

Staff Alliance will hold our spring retreat in Anchorage on March 22nd and 23rd. We have a very full agenda with President Gamble video conferencing with us, extended sessions on compensation and healthcare, and our regular meeting. We have also invited Chris Christensen and Donald Smith to meet with us on several topics, i.e., a budget update, legislative advocacy, and the proposed changes to the education benefit. Finally, we will share the activities occuring at each MAU and feedback received from our constituents on topics such as the proposed tobacco free hiring policy. I will share the highlights and formal actions of this retreat during my testimony before you in Kenai.

Juella was born and raised in Alaska and graduated from UAF with a B.B.A. in Management. After several years working for the state and starting a family, she came back to the university to work for Cooperative Extension Service in December, 2002. She was active in student government and moved quickly to being active in staff governance at UAF. Juella has served as Staff Alliance vice chair 2007-2009, chair of the System Governance Council 2008-2009 and president of the UAF Staff Council 2008-2009

Governance Report

Volume 16, Number 2, April 2012

Faculty Alliance

Daniel B. Monteith, Chair

Since the January meeting of the E Lab task force the faculty developed a draft of recommendations that have been forwarded to the Alliance. The draft document was discussed at the Alliance meeting January 27, 2012. Alliance members have submitted comments and edits. On February 16th the Alliance comments will be forwarded to the Task force for final review. Alliance has reviewed and approved the E Lab Task Force Recommendations at the February 24th meeting.

The University of Alaska E Lab Task Force should be thanked for their diligent recommendations and hard work!

E Lab Task Force
Members of E Lab task force are:
Michael Stekoll (Biology, UAS),
Cathy Connor (Environmental Science, UAS)
Deborah Barnett (Biology, UAS)
Orion Lawlor (Computer Science, UAF)
Rainer Newberry (Geology, UAF)
Rich Collins (Atmospheric Science, UAF)
Jim Pantaleone (UAA, Physics)
Andy Veh (KPC Campus, UAA)
Mark Fitch (Math, UAA)
John Petraitis (Psychology, UAA)
Jacqueline Cason (English, UAA)
Daniel Monteith (Anthropology, UAS)

Faculty Alliance discussed a timeline for distribution to the MAU Faculty Senates. Senates will review the recommendations at the March and April meetings. Once each Faculty Senate has approved the recommendations the Faculty Alliance will discuss an implementation strategy and timeline.
This process has provided a model for further faculty review of GERs and Core classes in other areas like the social sciences and humanities. Alliance will work with the President's office to

initiate task forces in the other areas. These efforts will work toward more transferability between MAUs and specific courses on the GER/Core level.

Board of Regents Policy and Regulations

Each Faculty Senate has assigned committees to review the policies and regulations. The purpose and intent of the review is fourfold: to delete sections that are redundant, to edit sections with minor changes, to flag sections with major required changes, and to maintain sections that do not need any edits or changes. Work is ongoing!

Listening Sessions and Transferability

Faculty Alliance members have been attending many of the listening sessions. We are waiting for the final results and summaries for the listening sessions from Paula Donson's office.

College Completion

Faculty Alliance is engaged in a dialogue with the President regarding how we can make the national programs better suit our demographics and student body. Alliance feels strongly that the University of Alaska student body is unique and that the students encounter some different challenges in completing college quicker. Alliance wants to meet the needs of our students.

Daniel Monteith
Chair, Faculty Alliance.

Dr. Dan Monteith is Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Chair of Social Sciences at the University of Alaska Southeast in Juneau. While in Chicago he worked at the Field Natural History Museum and Oriental Institute Museum. As a student his summers were spent working in the fishing industry in Bristol Bay. This experience led him to his current research, which is an anthropological study of the Bristol Bay fishery. He holds a BA. and M.A. from the University of Chicago, and Ph.D. from Michigan State University. He served as Faculty Alliance member and UAS Faculty Senate president-elect 2010-2011 and is currently senate president as well as Faculty Alliance chair.

UA Distance Science Labs Task Force

Adopted by Faculty Alliance February 24, 2012, for Review and Approval by Faculty Senates

Chair: Daniel B Monteith
Task Force Members: John M Petraitis, Andy Veh, James T Pantaleone, Mark A Fitch, Jacqueline E Cason, Rich Collins, Rainer Newberry, Orion Lawlor, Michael S Stekoll, Deborah K Barnett, Cathy L Connor

Instruction methods are changing and evolving rapidly, with exciting opportunities but serious challenges, and this requires a more open and inclusive university-wide discussion including students, instructors, faculty, adjuncts, and administration. The University of Alaska has a mission to provide Alaskan students access to higher education. Laboratory natural science courses, which are a vital part of our bachelor's GER/core, pose particular challenges to ensure both **access** and **quality**. Crucially, lab science is about sensing and interacting with the physical environment, with the complexities as found in nature.

This policy defines a RECOMMENDED **review process** for GER/core lab science courses as defined below. WE RECOMMEND THAT existing lab science courses, distance or not, that have not been reviewed by this process **can no longer be offered** as GER/Core lab science courses starting Fall 2013.

This RECOMMENDED policy applies only to **lab science** courses accepted for the lab science requirement of the bachelor's GER/core at any MAU. Policies vary widely between the UAA GER /L lab courses, UAF natural science core courses, and UAS GERS lab natural science courses. Lab science courses affect every baccalaureate major, touching every department.

Principle: just as course content is governed by the department that controls the prefix (e.g., BIOL), **instructional method** for lab sciences is also a substantive issue that must be approved by that department. Disciplines can best determine content; disciplines are in the best position to judge instructional methods. However, Faculty Senate oversight is important to maintain overall quality control.

In addition to review of existing GER/core lab science courses, this RECOMMENDED policy requires review for GER/core lab science courses that **add or change primary delivery method** between:

- Hands-on in-classroom equipment.
- Take-home physical kits.
- Remotely operated equipment.
- Virtual/simulation, purely software onscreen.

When a new or existing GER/core lab science course changes primary delivery method, this modification **requires course approval** from the MAU department. Courses may be delivered experimentally using a new method up to two times prior to full review, with notification to and monitoring by the MAU department. Review is also needed via the ordinary MAU faculty senate curriculum process. Ongoing assessment and review is highly recommended.

Issues for **faculty to address** in proposing a lab course (see also: *Supplemental Questions for Online Course Approval Requests*, Berkeley Division of Academic Senate Committee on Courses of Instruction)

1. What are the goals and outcomes of the existing face-to-face sections?
2. What delivery methods will be used from the list above, and in what proportions?
3. What are the goals and outcomes of the lab sections? Are the goals and outcomes different for different modes of lab instruction? How will the goals and outcomes be achieved, and assessed?
4. If a new mode of delivery for an existing lab course is proposed, how will the new lab section be different from existing lab sections?
5. Is there a population of students identified that need this course?
6. Student preparation: How will students be advised and screened for technology proficiency? Do they have the prerequisite knowledge and preparation? Do they have the self-pacing skills needed for distance delivery? Are technologies introduced at an appropriate pace?
7. How will students and instructors interact? How will students and other students interact? Will the technology support a "community of learning"?
8. Will a fully asynchronous course include some synchronous time for students to ask and answer questions? Are synchronous sessions required (lecture/discussion) or optional (office hours)?
9. What are the expectations for student-faculty communications, such as email latency and frequency, and how will they be met?
10. What internet connection (bandwidth) will be required for students? For instructors?
11. Specific technology questions:
    a. For take-home kits, how will the kits be purchased? Maintained? Are there safety concerns? How does the equipment in the kits compare with in-classroom lab equipment?
    b. For simulations, how will they be used in this course, and how do they compare with reality? How do they compare with professional methods or practices in the field? What software will be required?
12. How will plagiarism and academic integrity issues be addressed?

Issues for departments to discuss during the lab course review process (see also: *Best Practices for E-Labs*, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, substituting "e-labs" for "programs")

1. What are students supposed to be learning in the existing face-to-face sections? Are they learning that, and how is it assessed?

2. Will distance courses affect face-to-face enrollment? Will distance courses draw students away from existing courses, eventually replacing them, or primarily draw in new students?
3. What impacts will this course have on the program's professional accreditation? What effect will the course have on downstream courses, using it as a prerequisite?
4. How will the course design work be supported, for the significant effort to develop a new distance course or convert an existing course? How much effort is it? Will it appear in faculty workloads?
5. Who will choose instructors for the course? How will instructors be trained in the changing technology for distance learning?
6. How is the enrollment cap determined for each distance section?
7. Will there be teaching assistants for additional distance sections?
8. How will the department validate the domain knowledge for the courses in their discipline? Who will be responsible for that validation?

Issues for the Faculty Senate curriculum council to address for a reviewed lab course:

1. How will coordination be maintained between campuses?
2. How will intellectual property issues be handled? Who owns the course content--the faculty who develop the course, the department, the university, the book publisher?
3. How will software, servers, and information technology be vetted, supported and standardized? How will these be maintained for the entire lifetime of the course?

Issues the UA Task Force decided not address:

- Non-GER/core science labs. Individual departments should choose how their own 300 and 400 level lab courses are designed and delivered. Further, their choices, will--in the vast bulk of cases--only impact their department and those equivalent ones of the other MAUs.
- Transferability of distance delivered courses, both between MAUs and from other institutions. UA Board of Regents Policy addresses transferability of credit both in general and for GER courses in particular (See sections P10.04.060 and P 10.04.062).

The UA Task Force recommends a annual or semi-annual inter-MAU faculty meeting would be useful to integrate the university system, which will assist with issues like transferability.