

# UNIVERSITY of ALASKA

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## Staff Alliance

### Draft Minutes *Approved @ 9/23/'08 mtg.)*

Thursday and Friday, August 7-8, 2008

Thursday: 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM

Friday: 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Butrovich Building – 109 A/B

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Megan Carlson, Chair, Staff Alliance  
Paloma Harbour, Vice Chair, Staff Alliance  
Heather Swanson, President, UAS Staff Council  
Bobbi McCoy, Vice President, UAS Staff Council  
Julia Martinez, President, UAA APT Council  
Juella Sparks, President, UAF Staff Council  
Martin Klein, President-Elect, UAF Staff Council  
Jason Davis, President, Statewide Administration Assembly

Pat Ivey, Exec Officer System Governance

Guests:

Brian Rogers, Interim Chancellor, UAF  
Michelle Rizk, Statewide Budget Director  
Pete Kelly, State Affairs Director  
Kate Ripley, Director of Public Affairs  
Dan Julius, Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Beth Behner, Associate Vice President, Human Resources  
Mike Humphrey, Statewide Benefits Director  
Anne Sokumoto, Director of Faculty/Staff Training and Development  
Kris Racina, Director, Statewide Labor and Employee Relations  
Will Daniels, HR Analyst  
Jill Dumesnil, Chair, Faculty Alliance  
Kathy DiLorenzo, Faculty, UAS  
Ivan Show, Statistician, UAS  
Michael Ciri, Information Technology Services Director, UAS  
Stephanie Yates, WIN for Alaska Juneau Representative

2. Adopt Agenda

MOTION: passed as amended

“The Staff Alliance moves to adopt the agenda as amended to begin the August 8 meeting at 8:00am and move external reports before the election of officers. This action is effective August 7, 2008.”

3. Approve July 15, 2008 Minutes  
<http://gov.alaska.edu/Staff/minutes/2008/07-15.pdf>

MOTION: passed as amended

“The Staff Alliance moves to approve the minutes for the July 15, 2008 meeting as amended in the motion to adopt agenda for the July 15 meeting instead of June 10. This action is effective August 7, 2008

4. Welcome and introduction of new and returning members

The members introduced themselves.

5. Orientation for new members

- 5.1 System governance structure and roles of governance office staff

Pat Ivey provided a brief overview of the governance system and Staff Alliance responsibilities. In general, Pat provides overall maintenance of the office and oversight of the groups, and budget oversight for the office. Jodi provides event coordination and travel and budget details. Dani handles web page redesign and fixing broken links, brochure design, and advocacy coordination.

- 5.2 MAU governance structures, relationships with other governance groups and administrators

MAU members compared their respective structures.

6. External Review Results and Lessons Learned from Transition Teams

UAF Interim Chancellor Brian Rogers updated the Alliance on his transition teams. All documents are available on line at [www.uaf.edu/transition](http://www.uaf.edu/transition). Rogers said the team recommendations will be grouped into three categories: people first, engage the communities we serve, just do it. Several recommendations have already been set in motion that affect broader constituencies, one example being childcare, a high priority affecting faculty, staff, students and the broader community. A committee will be formed to deal with UAF based childcare. Rogers is meeting with community leaders because lack of childcare in the community affects everyone. UAF opened two parking lots to visitors over the summer for free and established a Polar Express bus pass for employees and students to reduce our carbon footprint by paying \$20,000 to cover lost revenues to the borough. Regarding human resources, UAF is putting together a supervisory training program in three parts; first a series of 17 modules that every supervisor should complete with some reward and recognition for completing all modules. Those supervisors who don't need the modules can take courses in lieu of the modules. The OSHA module is important and President Hamilton is very interested in increasing safety and security.



Rogers and Beth Behner are meeting on the HR redesign, focusing on a continuous improvement model. Rogers is opening a new leadership position at UAF in the next couple of weeks. He recognizes the unique human resources needs in the research units.

The HR redesign has not stopped but they are struggling with how to refocus the redesign so it makes sense. Rogers said it was more about the incremental process fixes and we will worry about the organization later. We want training first and then examine where we are.

The chancellor's convocation in September will include discussion of all of the transition items above and ice cream.

Regarding the external review and recommendations, Rogers indicated that it is the president's purview to discuss. From a UAF perspective, the key issue is human resources. Statewide sets the policy and UAF works within the policy or lobbies to change it. Other recommendations that come out of the report, will take at least three years to implement, President Hamilton is not filling the vice presidential position. Rogers is disappointed that the legislature cut the budget as a result of the external review when the review intent was to shift some responsibilities and related funding to the campuses.

Regarding rural supervisors taking advantage of the training, rural supervisors may be able to videoconference or if campus directors are meeting on-site, maybe they can do training then. To start with, rural supervisors may be looking at SkillSoft for some of the training.

Rogers was asked if he learned anything surprising as a result of the transition teams. He said he was surprised about how much he didn't know about UAF.

7. Budget development process overview and FY09/FY10 update - Michele Rizk

A system wide budget meeting was held August 5<sup>th</sup> for the first reviews of the FY10 budget request. New this year were planning groups for certain areas, expanding from the previous health planning group. Planning groups included health, engineering, construction, workforce development, student success, and competitive research. Planning groups recommended priorities from the group's perspective, with input from MAU's on how their priorities fit into the system priorities. Last year there was a group for health but this year the process has expanded to 6 planning groups. Each planning group gave a presentation and then the chancellors for MAU specific requests. Early budget considerations include \$26 million in new money for fixed costs and \$15 million for programs. Monday, a joint administrative council meeting will be held to take another look at the budget request and make some observations for review by President's cabinet. In the capital budget, UA will be asking for \$50 million for deferred maintenance, along with funding for a UAF life sciences building (formerly BIOS but at a lower request amount) and an engineering building, a new UAA engineering building, and more dorm space for UAS. There is a place holder for staff salary compensation at 4.5%, currently expected to be a grid adjustment similar to the one in FY09. Discussions are still underway about exactly how staff salary compensation increases will work in FY10. This budget planning process has been the most transparent, open process so far.

The next steps for the budget approval process are (A) approval of a final budget by the Board of Regents on October 31<sup>st</sup>, (B) approval by the Governor's office in December, (C) approval by the legislature starting in January (operating goes from



House to Senate, capital from Senate to House). Finally, the budget will be approved by the Governor after the legislature submits their final version.

8. Advocacy overview and update

Pete Kelly introduced Izzie Martinez, who has joined his staff in supporting the state relations website and the Support UA list serve and website. Pete Kelly briefed the group on the legislature, outlining past problems and future strategies. He said that the budget planning groups play a key role in the FY10 budget and will be key advocacy groups for their areas in the upcoming session. Staff Alliance plays a key role in the advocacy area as well. Deferred maintenance tops the list of priorities in the capital budget because the university pays for that up front. He indicated that the legislative outlook for this year is a little unclear right now, because so much is dependent on the results of the elections, and how that affects the leadership within the House and Senate.

Pete recommended that Staff Alliance plan its annual legislative advocacy trip to Juneau during the final week of February again, because it is likely to fall during the budget approval process in the 90-day session.

9. Student Success

Dan Julius thanked staff without which he said we couldn't do our jobs. Regarding the student success initiative many people are involved. How do we ensure that the passage from K12 to college and beyond is successful? Alaska has the highest ratio of non-finishers in the nation. Part of that is geography. We began to look at what it would take to align budget and program to have a cohesive and aligned budget. A lot of our student success initiatives are focused on that. We looked at the demographics of why students succeed and don't and began to develop our most important priorities. This winnowed down to advising communication, tracking learning communities, at risk students, and funding opportunities. The April 10 Student Success Steering Committee summaries should be public and distributed through Megan.

There are a lot of roadblocks: campus, department and faculty autonomy. Reward researchers the most. We need to become student-centric rather than campus or department-centric. We need to identify shared values and goals. Whatever your tasks, push people to share values. It is not acceptable that people don't finish degrees. How many low income students attend UA? Less than 8 percent. Make the student experience here the best it can be. Dan Julius gets to articulate the vision and other people have to make it happen.

Health initiatives administered by Karen Perdue, Workforce Development by Fred Villa, and Melissa Hill on the Teacher Mentoring Program. Saichi Oba is responsible for work related to student affairs. We are a unit with no formal authority and have to rely on powers of persuasion to get people to do what you want them to do. The tone should be inclusive, that values diversity, and recognizes creativity of everyone we worked with.

Julius is starting an academic master planning process through SAC with Faculty Alliance representation and to other groups once approved by the president.

The Alliance asked for Staff representation on SAC. Julius said summaries of the meetings are made available online. He suggested that Staff Alliance review those summaries and determine if they still felt they needed SAC representation.

10. Employee Relations Brainstorming Session

Top issues currently affecting staff

Child care (600 daycare slots for 4500 children at Juneau)

Retiree benefits - need to follow up with the departments that would offer benefits (such as IT, parking), and keep in mind the limited budgets of some Alumni Associations (for instance, UAA's current structure, which is being phased out, does not include dues).

Communications

Staff Alliance to our constituents

Communication through HR to employees consider developing an HR corner in the Statewide Voice

Revamp the Staff Alliance web site.

Staff Alliance blog

Taking local information and sharing it (on the SA website?)

Written committee reports for agendas

Compensation: the grid/step question

Health care - How well is SkillSoft reaching rural employees?

Supervisor modules

Evaluation training

Non-retention policies

RIAA – concerns about how it is handled

Integrated Advocacy

New ORP Tier will be discussed at September Board of Regents meeting  
Sharing and learning from each other—what's working really well? What is effective to include in retreats? What can we learn from processes in other councils?

Shift to submitting written reports for councils and MAU reports

**(Break for day, resume business at 8:00 a.m. Friday morning)**

11. Human Resources

11.1 Staff Salary Compensation for FY10 (Will Daniels stepping in for J. Senechal)

Based on the legislative activity last spring, it is clear that the legislature wants to fund only "Cost of living allowance" grid increases, and leave the responsibility for funding step increases to the University. This year UA was funded 4.5 percent for grid increase.

The task force is evaluating the best way to receive funding and still have step increases. Supporting the continuation of step increases allows employees to progress from their current level (particularly new employees). Ideas include giving steps every two or three years, revising the grid, hiring people at lower steps than outgoing and using salary savings to pay step increases. Whatever we do, it has to be cost neutral.

What does a grid only do for us? Employees are hired at lowest step and then never advance. Balance step increases with increases for performance.

Under a strict time frame. Right now there is a placeholder for a 4.5 percent increase in the FY10 budget. Administration will make recommendations to the Board in September.



In grade step adjustments are different than the annual step adjustments. In grade step adjustments are not intended to become more plentiful. In grade step adjustments are for exceptional performance or equality in pay concerns. These adjustments are always funded at the campus level according to their own rules. UAF budgets positions at 80 percent so has no salary savings to use for step increases. Julia Martinez asked for news regarding this issue to be posted on the HR website and also on the budget site.

#### 11.2 E-learning Update- *Anne Sakumoto*

Anne Sakumoto gave a power point presentation on E-Learning. Essentially, there are 1072 registered users, 308 completed courses, and 3369 resources accessed. The Alliance asked how many people are using SkillSoft at the rural sites. There is no data right now, but Anne hopes to discover some usage trends.

SkillSoft is currently funded as a UA resource through January 2009. Anne is seeking feedback on whether to continue to offer the service. She will be meeting with governance and MAU representatives to identify usage and interest in SkillSoft. If funds are not available at Statewide, Anne may come to the MAUs for additional funding.

Currently, the system spends \$742K in employee tuition/registration fees. This amount does not include employees who are assigned to provide training in areas such as HR, IT, and Banner.

#### 11.3 Supervisory Training- *Anne Sakumoto*

Anne Sakumoto gave a power point presentation entitled: "Training and Development at UAA Workforce Plan and Reach into the Future. 6/2008."

Anne was asked what our next steps are in supervisor training, and she indicated that her direct priorities are statewide employees. This initiative has minimal resources and budget, supported by SW Human Resources and Administration.

Anne emphasized the need for continuous improvement, to ensure that employees are provided the highest quality materials and courses. She regularly seeks out feedback to determine what needs to be modified to advance the materials.

#### 11.4 Health Care Update

Mike Humphrey gave a power point presentation and said that the best thing has been our wellness program but the Summex WebMD telephonic coaching wasn't working as well. About 15 percent of employees and dependents are causing 85 percent of the costs because of chronic health concerns. We could reduce healthcare costs by 25 percent with good nutrition and exercise. That's where WIN for Alaska comes in. We need to improve WIN awareness and promote it. Nationally costs are increasing 7 percent. In Alaska, costs are rising 15 percent. UA and employees will have to pay for \$30/40 million new dollars if we don't keep costs down. Governance can help control health care costs for UA by promoting wellness, and hosting wellness breaks. If one dollar spent on wellness results in three dollars in savings, how far will the university go?

UA contracted with WIN for Alaska to provide personal coaching. Employees don't understand their benefits. HR sends out packets, but the information is not getting through to employees well.

The Joint Health Care Committee has \$300,000 to spend on initiatives but so far no discussion on types of initiatives. All the activities of the joint health care committee are on the web. The next JHCC meeting is August 13 at 2pm. One issue before them now is the expansion of the wellness consultants to the Fairbanks campus.

One initiative the JHCC has sponsored is the offering of Weight Watchers programs on campus. Weight Watchers is now on the Fairbanks campus in the admin building. There is talk of putting a second Weight Watchers program on West Ridge. There are currently no leaders in Anchorage and Juneau to run the programs. The UAF admin group lost 700-800 pounds lost in two full group sessions.

There will be no significant changes to the plan design at least for a year. HR is focusing on healthcare initiatives, WIN for Alaska and whether or not to do the healthcare assessment and if so how we might do it better. Personal coaching seems to be cheaper, \$1600 per person versus \$2000 per person for telephonic coaching and we get better results.

Staff Health Care Committee was instrumental in shaping the design of the current benefits package and needs to continue. Staff council presidents have been asked to submit nominations for new representation on this committee. A regular meeting date will be established, most likely about a week before the recurring JHCC meeting. Work with the JHCC on how to spend the initiative money.

#### 11.5 Non-Retention Policy and Practices

Based on concerns raised in the last Staff Alliance meeting about consistent and proportionate policies for dealing with non-retained employees, Kris Racina outlined the university's non-retention policy and practices. The current process begins with the supervisor contacting the MAU HR office, talking about issues and gathering information to bring to Statewide HR and General Counsel. After SW and General Counsel are involved, additional discussions and meetings with supervisor and other relevant employees are held, to ensure the reasons for requested termination are legal and appropriate. Employees are either given notice in administrative leave, or pay in lieu of notice.

Staff Alliance emphasized that this issue has not yet been identified as a system level problem. While there is some evidence that UAF has problems in this area, and some have been seen at UAA, more information needs to be gathered to evaluate whether any additional action is necessary.

#### 11.6 Retiree Benefit Committee-

Juella Sparks advised that the retiree benefit committee is on hold until September.

#### 11.7 Child and Family Friendly Policies – Heather Swanson, Kathy DiLorenzo, Ivan Show



Kathy Di Lorenzo and Ivan Show surveyed the three MAU's and Statewide, restricting the survey to the three main campuses. Two survey versions were used, one for the Juneau campus that doesn't have day care and another for Anchorage and Fairbanks that do have daycares on campus.

#### Population vs. Responses

UAA 58 percent/ 33 percent of responses

UAF 31 percent/ 52 percent of responses

UAS 11 percent/ 15 percent of responses

This indicates that the response rates did not correlate to the share of employees and students at each MAU.

#### Population vs. responses

Students 70 percent/ 29 percent of responses

Staff 23 percent/ 55 percent of responses

Faculty 7 percent/ 16 percent of responses

This indicates that the response rates did not correlate to the share of employees and students at each MAU.

1229 returns 32835 total population

Mean age 38

Female 81 percent

Male 19 percent

One third answered the race question, but several hundred said it was none of our business. It's important in the future to make it clear that this question is being asked for legitimate reasons, since some grants are based on racial makeup of the population.

71 respondents were females working full time

Be aware of perception (low) that people are willing to pay for childcare when making decisions.

40 percent reduced work or school load due to lack of childcare

62 percent would increase work or school load if had on campus day care.

No statistically significant differences in the responses to common questions for each of the MAU's so results presented in total.

These are absolute minimum results

Need 491 day care slots across the 3 campuses, if adjusted for students 889 minimum between the three campuses. UAF and UAA slots equal 205 combined.

This should be viewed as a preliminary survey. DiLorenzo and Show will continue to work on the results and delve deeper into issues we'd like to know more about.

The full report should be prepared within about two weeks, which will give more context.

#### 12. Faculty Alliance Update

Jill Dumesnil outlined the Faculty Alliance goals for next year: Student success, monitor external review implementation, distance education and the academic master plan, and



sustainability. Sustainability should also be an agenda item for the System Governance Council since it affects everyone. It was stated that Staff Alliance meetings are open to the Faculty Alliance chair and it was asked if this relationship was reciprocal. Dumesnil did not see that the majority of issues discussed would be of interest to staff but said she will mention it to the Faculty Alliance.

13. Access to WIN for Alaska through MyUA Portal- *Michael Ciri*

DRAFT MOTION: passed

"In response to demand by University of Alaska employees, Staff Alliance endorses the addition of optional single sign-on access to the WIN for Alaska Health Activity Tracker through the MyUA Portal. In endorsing this proposal, the Alliance notes that the support is contingent on continued protection of employee private data, and that this access method will be an additional option for employees who choose to use it. This action is effective August 8, 2008."

14. Formal Adoption of FY09 Revised Meeting Calendar Attachment 14.

- 14.1 Note special videoconference with President Hamilton 9/23 12:00-1:30

PASSED:

"The Staff Alliance moves to adopt the agenda revisions as shown below with the caveat that the February on site meeting is contingent upon president's availability.

July 15, 2008 10:00 – 12:00  
August 7-8, 2008, on-site Fairbanks  
September 9, 2008, 12:30-1:30pm  
September 23, 2008 12:00-3:00pm  
October 14, 2008, 12:30-2:30pm  
November 11, 2008, 12:30-2:30pm  
December 9, 2008 12:30-2:30pm  
January 13, 2009 12:30-2:30pm  
February 10, 2009 12:30-2:30pm  
February 25-26, 2008 on site, Juneau (Pending President Approval)  
April 14, 2009 12:30-2:30pm  
May 12, 2009 12:30-2:30pm  
June 9, 2009 12:30-2:30pm  
This action is effective August 8, 2008."

15. Election of Staff Alliance Officers

Heather Swanson was elected as chair by acclamation. Juella Sparks was elected vice chair by acclamation.

16. Selection of Staff Alliance AY09 Goals and subcommittee membership

A committee to develop guidelines for the Staff Make Students Count Awards has already been established, with Heather Swanson as lead  
Family Friendly Policies/Child Care – Heather Swanson (lead), Jason Davis and Paloma Harbour

Compensation –Task force membership already determined (Juella Sparks, Megan Carlson, Jason Davis, and Gwenna Richardson) staff compensation committee.  
Retiree benefits--Juella Sparks (lead), Megan Carlson, and Bobbi McCoy  
Integrated Advocacy Committee – Paloma Harbour (lead); Megan Carlson, Martin Klein  
Improving internal communications – Megan Carlson (lead) Julia Martinez, Jason Davis, Bobbi McCoy

Handbook and mission statement review committee – Martin Klein (lead), Bobbi McCoy

17. Selection of Staff Alliance representatives on UA System Committees

Human Resources Council – Juella Sparks, Bobbi McCoy alternate

HR Redesign – in flux; HRC delegate could serve in that role

External Review Committee – not continuing

Business Council – Bobbi McCoy, Martin Klein alternate

Student Services Council – Paloma Harbour

IT Council – Jason Davis, Heather Swanson alternate

JHCC – Heather Swanson (first year of 2 year term), Lisa Sporleder alternate

Staff Healthcare Committee - Council Presidents and one other designee from each of the 4 MAU's

Student Goal Attainment Steering Committee – Megan Carlson

18. Compressed Wellness Break and overview of wellness program- *WIN for Alaska*

Stephanie Yates from WIN for Alaska provided healthy snacks and explained the program.

19. External committee reports

19.1 External Review Committee – *Megan Carlson*

The external review committee is no longer meeting.

19.2 Human Resources Council – *Juella Sparks*

Beth Behner said the Human Resources Council talked about educational benefits and about opening non-credit courses to tuition waivers and about a uniform tuition waiver form.

Workforce development does not list its courses through Banner and is a principle provider of non-credit courses in Anchorage. The most recent language change to the educational benefit policy is that where an employee takes classes deemed of benefit to the university they do not have make up the time. This change should be up and ready for fall 08.

Juella voiced her concerns about treatment of the non-retained which led to Kris Racina's presentation; Staff alliance looks forward to further discussions with her.

Beth Behner thought Kate Ripley would be receptive to working with Staff Alliance on an online suggestion box.

A performance management software tool will be demonstrated at the next HRC meeting. All the position descriptions entered into the system could be dumped to



the tool to use there, which would be an easier way for supervisors to complete evaluations.

19.3 HR Redesign project - *Juella Sparks*

The HR redesign is still in limbo

19.4 Business Council - *Bobbi McCoy*

Two things: a presentation from Emeriti. Not enough participation so will have a separate presentation at another date before the September Board meeting. Then the Business Council went into closed discussion of the external review. We need better clarification as to what administrative councils do and relation to other councils, statewide and campus folks. Joe Trubacz is going to chair the Business Council because Jim Johnsen left.

19.5 Student Services Council is meeting Monday as a part of the Joint Council meeting to discuss the FY10 budget request

19.6 IT Council - *Heather Swanson*

The ITC met yesterday but Swanson can't report on it until she sees the meeting notes.

19.7 Joint Health Care Committee – *Heather Swanson*

Covered in Mike Humphrey's presentation

19.8 Staff Health Care Committee – *Megan Carlson*

Already discussed above.

20. Staff Governance Reports - SW, UAS, UAA, UAF

SAA met last week and discussed many of the same topics as Staff Alliance, such as benefits and compensation. SAA redesigned their mission statement to better represent the work they do. They also supported a commuter resolution. DeShana York will be visiting the UAA groups. The Municipality of Anchorage has a share a ride program but it only goes to Eagle River.

UAA's governance groups are planning a legislative candidate fair for all students and employees. Classified Council is also planning a retreat for council members. APT Council president Martinez is brand new and excited about the group and about learning more.

UAF Staff Council doesn't meet over the summer but our Elections, Membership and Rules committee has been meeting and is working on revising our constitution and by-laws. Juella noted that she was a part of the Administrative Services transition team and overall transition steering committee.

Juella on is on the administration transition team, and has learned a great deal from participating in the transition team. Juella is enthusiastic about working with Interim Chancellor Rogers, who is supportive of developing supervisory training at UAF.

Juella is interested in learning more about what works at the other campuses, to determine what we can learn from each other. Two examples are creating a year end report to the Chancellor on the staff council's work, and finding ways to recognize employee longevity.

UAS met in July; talked about a lot of Staff Alliance matters. Encouragement team started sending out anniversary cards, and received overwhelmingly positive responses from recipients and coworkers. Convocation at UAS is August 20 and 21. The new assistant to the Chancellor is Madelyn LeFavre.

21. Agenda items for September 9 meeting

Agenda items for next meeting September 9 will include but may not be limited to staff compensation and a Board of Regents update.

22. Agenda items for the September 23 Meeting

Agenda items may include, but may not be limited to Staff Alliance budget update, annual legislative advocacy trip checklist and other advocacy matters, goals, guidelines for Staff Make Students Count awards, educational leave and release time, tuition waiver regulation changes and the external review.

Alliance members will submit written committee and MAU reports before each meeting.

23. Other items of interest

There were no other items of interest

24. Comments

There were no additional comments.

25. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:30 pm on August 8.