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## News Release

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### Board of Regents Meets in Juneau

For Immediate Release  
Friday, Feb. 11, 2005

The University of Alaska Board of Regents will gather Wednesday and Thursday, Feb. 16-17, for a regularly scheduled meeting in Juneau.

A packed agenda includes approval of several new academic degrees and certificates; a presentation on the Alaska Teacher Mentoring Project; and an updated project cost for the University of Alaska Museum of the North.

The Alaska Teacher Mentoring Project is a collaborative effort initiated by Education Commissioner Roger Sampson and UA President Mark Hamilton. It matches over 300 new K-12 teachers in Alaska with 23 experienced teachers trained specifically as “mentors” who offer professional support, regular communication and personal visits, said Dave Veazey, assistant vice president for academic affairs at UA statewide. Experts across the nation have found that quality mentoring programs reduce teacher turnover in the first five years from 50 percent to near 5 percent, improving overall student success.

“With president Hamilton’s focus on the university responding to state needs, we are attempting to reach out to our Alaskan educators, asking the question, ‘What we can do to support you?’” Veazey explained. “While this mentoring project is very visible, it’s only the tip of the iceberg. The university’s schools of education are passing their accreditation with flying colors. Fairbanks has innovative distance delivery rural programs, Juneau has a successful Alaska Native teacher recruitment program and Anchorage has created unique professional development school collaborations with K12.”

The goal, Veazey said, is a seamless connection between the university—particularly the schools of education--and the K-12 schools across Alaska.

The board also will consider the following new academic programs:

- A bachelor of science in engineering at UAA, a new program designed collaboratively by local industry and UAA faculty to meet demand for engineers in the Anchorage region and across the state. Over 900 engineering job openings were posted in Alaska during the past year. The program expects to attract 40 students the first year, with enrollment expected to grow to 200 by 2007-2008.

- A bachelor of science degree in computer engineering at UAF, which merges the fields of electrical engineering and computer science and is expected to attract 10 to 20 new students per year with projected enrollment at 30 to 60 students in four years.
- A certificate (two-year) in pre-radiologic technology qualifications from UAS, which would prepare students to enter professional medical imaging programs. The health industry has emerged as a major employer in Southeast Alaska, and the program expects to attract 20 students its first year.
- A certificate in drafting technology at UAS, which would address a shortage of locally trained, entry level drafting technicians in Southeast. Projected enrollment is for four students the first year, growing to 14 students by 2008-2009.

All of the new programs would be offered by the fall 2005 semester. They would be funded largely through reallocations and mostly use existing teaching faculty.

In other business, the board will consider a \$1 million increase in the price tag for the University of Alaska Museum of the North, bringing the project total to \$42 million. Earlier estimates accounted separately for construction, a previously approved loan and a fund for furniture, fixtures and exhibits. The proposal before the board would bring those funds together in one basket, as well as provide for an additional \$1 million to complete the project.

The new museum, which will double in size and include a new art gallery, research labs, expanded storage for collections and a multi-media auditorium, is scheduled to open in September. The \$1 million increase would come from accrued interest earnings on previously approved capital projects.

The meeting will be the first for new board members Jeff Staser and Carl Marrs, both of Anchorage, and Bob Martin of Juneau. Gov. Frank Murkowski announced the appointments last month, subject to legislative confirmation. In addition to routine board business, members also will meet with state lawmakers to discuss university priorities, and they'll attend a reception kicking off the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the Cooperative Extension Service in Alaska.

Wednesday's board meeting will take place at the Cedar Room of the Goldbelt Hotel in downtown Juneau. On Thursday, the board will meet at the University of Alaska Southeast Auke Lake campus.

For the full board agenda, go to [www.alaska.edu/bor](http://www.alaska.edu/bor). For more information call Kate Ripley, 907/474-6311.