

**Kate Ripley, Director**  
Office of Public Affairs  
206 Butrovich Building  
P.O. Box 755340  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99775-5340  
(907) 450-8102  
FAX (907) 450-8101  
email: [kate.ripley@alaska.edu](mailto:kate.ripley@alaska.edu)



UNIVERSITY  
of ALASKA  
*Many Traditions One Alaska*

## News Release

---

For Immediate Release  
Friday, Sept. 16, 2005

### **Regents to Take Up Tuition, Budget and Various Projects**

Members of the University of Alaska Board of Regents will discuss tuition, the budget for the upcoming fiscal year, and review various projects across the state when they gather next Tuesday and Wednesday, Sept. 20 & 21, at the University of Alaska Anchorage campus.

The public will have the opportunity to testify both days, at approximately 10 a.m. Tuesday and 8 a.m. Wednesday. The board is scheduled to discuss tuition matters Tuesday and is scheduled to take action Wednesday afternoon.

UA President Mark Hamilton is proposing the fourth in a series of 10 percent tuition hikes. If approved, it would go into effect for the Fall 2006 academic year.

“Nobody likes to have to pay more, but the truth is a top-notch education at any one of our University of Alaska campuses is still less expensive than at many of our counterparts in the Lower 48,” Hamilton said. “We all have to be in the game when it comes to taking this university system to its next level—to be the university of first choice for all Alaskan college-bound students, to assist the state in a changing economy, and to be a globally recognized leader in research.”

Hamilton also is proposing to adjust the senior citizen waiver to a 50 percent discount and match the eligibility age to Social Security benefits. The senior waiver program has come under scrutiny lately because, while representing an estimated \$400,000 in lost revenue annually currently, the demographic is due to triple in the next five years. Meanwhile, the university faces large increases in day-to-day operating costs such as its retirement obligations, health insurance increases and rising costs for other fixed items, such as fuel.

University system officials also will present the board with the proposed operating and capital budgets for the coming fiscal year. The operating budget for day-to-day expenses is anticipated to be \$295.5 million in state general funds, an increase of \$47.4 million over the current budget year. Adding in university receipts from tuition and other funding sources, such as federal grants, the total budget--if approved by the regents, the governor and Legislature--would be \$793.6 million.

The capital budget for the coming year is estimated at \$329 million, of which \$259 million would come from state coffers.

-MORE-

Regents also are slated to review the following projects, which need formal project approval to go forward:

\* The Cold Climate Housing Research Center on the Fairbanks campus, an industry partnership with UAF. The center would focus on cutting-edge construction and engineering techniques for northern climates and include test bays, monitoring equipment and a structural lab for testing and development—the first laboratory of its type in Alaska. Foundation work began earlier this month. June 2006 is the targeted completion date.

\* The \$21.5 million School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences Facility at Lena Point, near the Juneau campus. Funding for the new facility comes from two separate state appropriations. The UAF program, in cooperation with UAS, would move out of its cramped quarters in the Anderson Building next to the existing National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Auke Bay lab. NOAA would also locate on the site in a separate building. The new university facility would consolidate scattered classrooms, labs and offices; enhance graduate and under-graduate academic programs and research; and provide adequate space for visiting scholars.

\* UAF Physical Plant Code Correction and Renewal, the second phase of a project aimed at updating and improving the physical plant, which was built in 1963. This second phase, at an estimated \$3.4 million, would renew the first- and second-story space on the building's west side, providing workers with a safe, comfortable and efficient environment. The space will house the labor, safety, asbestos and housing shops, along with providing a second-story mezzanine, new warm vehicle storage, new restrooms, and new mechanical, electrical and communications systems.

To view the Board of Regents' agenda online, click on [www.alaska.edu/bor](http://www.alaska.edu/bor) and go to "agendas."

-30-

For more information call Kate Ripley, 907/450-8102.

NR15-05