**New Regents Orientation to Academic and Student Affairs (WORKING DRAFT)**

1. **Academic Affairs**

Teaching, research and service (outreach) are the tripartite duties of a university and these are the responsibilities of Academic Affairs. These three duties are used in establishing annual workload assignments for faculty.

Teaching - The University of Alaska’s three institutions offer a wide variety (over 500) of academic programs including occupational endorsements, certificates, associates, baccalaureate, post-graduate licensure, masters, and doctorates. UAF and UAA are doctorate granting institutions and UAS is a masters granting institution. All three MAUs offer serve as community colleges and universities; this is unusual/innovative at the national level. Each UA university and UA Statewide also offer non-credit/non-degree programs like the master gardening, canning, cold weather housing, mine safety, and pesticide safety; these courses and programs are sometimes included in the service (outreach) area because they are non-credit.

Research –All three MAUs have faculty members engaged in research and creative activity but community campus faculty members typically do not have a research workload. Scholarly and creative activity is demonstrated by such things as: success in developing and carrying out significant applied and basic research; work in contributing to the arts; and publication in advancing knowledge. Research and creative activity may be externally funded or funded by the institution. Most externally funded research at UA is for the sciences and engineering. In FY12 UA had about $130 million in externally funded research; $120 million at UAF, $9 million at UAA, and $1 million at UAS.

Service - Professionally related and publicly recognized service, sometimes referred to as outreach, may be to constituencies external to the university, including public and private sector groups, governmental agencies, elementary and secondary schools, boards, commissions, committees, public interest groups, community groups, businesses, and urban and rural residents; successful design and implementation of technology-transfer programs to external constituencies; application of directed research to the needs of constituencies; recognition, awards, and honors from constituent groups; and reputation among peer deliverers of public service. University service is typically demonstrated by such things as: work on university committees and task forces; participation in faculty governance; colleague assistance; administrative work; and work with students beyond formal teacher-student relationships. Some entire university units have outreach or service as their primary mission, e.g., UAF’s Cooperative Extension Service and the Alaska Sea Grant Marine Advisory Program (both of which have federal funding supporting their activities).

**Organizational Structure**

The UA Statewide Vice President of Academic Affairs serves as the chief academic officer. This position l oversees the university’s educational programs, and is assisted by the MAU chief academic officers (Provosts) via the Statewide Academic Council (SAC). Board policy 2.02 indicates that the chief academic officer shall assist the president in:

* articulating the overall academic mission;
* assigning the scope and responsibility for implementation of the mission;
* the administration and supervision of overall planning for instructional, research and creative activity, and public service programs;
* academic development and program review;
* advising the board on the status of current programs and the need for the addition or deletion of programs;
* facilitating student access to courses, programs, and academic support services;
* the review, revision, and administration of faculty personnel policies and procedures; and
* consulting with systemwide governance on matters of academic policy

SAC members include the MAU provosts and lead research administrators from UAF and UAA. This Council reviews all proposals for program additions and deletions, proposals for the establishment of new centers, and makes recommendations for academic policy additions, deletions or revisions including those related to research and service.

The following UA Statewide units report to the VPAA:

* Strategic Direction Initiative Leadership
* Student and Enrollment Services
* Institutional Research and Analysis
* Workforce Programs, which includes UA Corporate Programs and Mining and Petroleum Training Services
* K-12 Outreach, which manages Alaska Teacher Placement, Future Educators of Alaska, Alaska Statewide Mentoring, and a number of externally funded educational grants
* Systemwide Governance Office

**Shared Governance**

Board policy 03.01 established a system of shared governance within UA. It recognizes 1) that the faculty, staff and students shall share in the governance of the university, 2) that shared governance is an integral part of the business of the university and 3) that participants in shared governance are empowered by the Board of Regents to carry out their governance responsibilities to the best of their abilities without fear of reprisal.

Institution specific faculty, staff, and student governance groups are established and these groups participate in system governance through the following organizations:

* Faculty Alliance
* Staff Alliance
* Coalition of Student Leaders
* System Governance Council

Alumni associations are established at the three academic units and participate ex-officio on the System Governance Council. Additionally, the Community Campus Directors meet regularly and make recommendations.

**Accreditation Overview**

There are two types of accreditation in higher education; institutional accreditation and specialized (or programmatic) accreditation.

Institutional accreditation is a quality assessment mandated by the U.S. Department of Education for institutions to receive and distribute federal student aid. This accreditation is typically a condition, although not the only approach, for students to transfer credits from one institution to another, and it plays a role in some external grant funding. The U.S. Secretary of Education has delegated institutional accreditation to six regional accrediting commissions; UA institutions are accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. UA has four separately accredited institutions; UAA, UAF, UAS, and Prince William Sound Community College.

What should the Board be informed about with respect to accreditation?

* The various types of accreditation that the institution holds
* The board’s role in the accreditation process
* A timely preview of forthcoming re-accreditation processes and periodic progress reports on the required self-studies
* Key elements of the self-study, the visiting team’s report, and formal action and decision letters from the accrediting organization, and it should consider their implications for the institution’s strategic goals, mission, and resources.

The Institutional Accreditation Process

Accreditation evaluation is a peer-review based process following a seven-year cycle addressing the five accreditation standards. The Commission describes the five standards as follows:

Standards for Accreditation are statements that articulate the quality and effectiveness expected of accredited institutions, and collectively they provide a framework for continuous improvement within institutions. The five standards also serve as indicators by which institutions are evaluated by peers. The standards are designed to guide institutions in a process of self-reflection that blends analysis and synthesis in a holistic examination of:

* The institution's Mission and Core Themes;
* The translation of the Mission's Core Themes into assessable objectives supported by programs and services;
* The appraisal of the institution's potential to fulfill the Mission;
* The planning and implementation involved in achieving and assessing the desired outcomes of programs and services; and
* An evaluation of the results of the institution's efforts to fulfill the Mission and assess its ability to monitor its environment, adapt, and sustain itself as a viable institution.

Each standard (and each element therein) is addressed during the cycle (Standard One in year one, Standard Two in year three, Standards Three and Four in year five, and Standard Five in year seven). The standards and the process are intended to create a cycle of continuous improvement. Institutions prepare Self-Evaluation Reports addressing the standard(s) addressed at a particular point in the cycle. Previous Self-Evaluation Reports addressed earlier standards may be updated, expanded, and modified, based on updating information or evaluator feedback, to produce a cohesive report.

Outside of the regular evaluation process, institutions must seek the Commission’s permission for offering an existing program at a new location or by eLearning, offering an entirely new program, or when offering a new program level, e.g., associates, baccalaureates, masters or doctorates. The Commission’s approval is sought after Board of Regents approval.

The Boards Role in Institutional Accreditation

During years three and seven of the accreditation cycle, a peer-evaluation team visits the institution and typically requests to meet with some subset of the Board. The peer-evaluation team typically asks questions related to the following Northwest Commission of Colleges and Universities’ accreditation standard elements that reference the board’s role:

1.A.1 The institution has a widely published mission statement—approved by its governing board—that articulates a purpose appropriate for an institution of higher learning, gives direction for its efforts, and derives from, and is generally understood by, its community.

2.A.4 The institution has a functioning governing board consisting of at least five voting members, a majority of whom have no contractual, employment, or financial interest in the institution. If the institution is governed by a hierarchical structure of multiple boards, the roles, responsibilities, and authority of each board—as they relate to the institution—are clearly defined, widely communicated, and broadly understood.

2.A.5 The board acts only as a committee of the whole; no member or subcommittee of the board acts on behalf of the board except by formal delegation of authority by the governing board as a whole.

2.A.6 The board establishes, reviews regularly, revises as necessary, and exercises broad oversight of institutional policies, including those regarding its own organization and operation.

2.A.7 The board selects and evaluates regularly a chief executive officer who is accountable for the operation of the institution. It delegates authority and responsibility to the CEO to implement and administer board-approved policies related to the operation of the institution.

2.A.8 The board regularly evaluates its performance to ensure its duties and responsibilities are fulfilled in an effective and efficient manner.

In addition, peer-evaluators may ask specific questions about intended strategic direction of the institution, perceived strengths and weaknesses, and how the board is organized (this one is likely for UA because the by-laws only identifies the audit committee and no others).

**Specialized Accreditation**

Specialized accreditation is a quality assessment by a professional association. For example, the education programs at all three MAUs are accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education and approved by the Alaska State Board of Education and Engineering programs at UAA and UAF are art program at UAA is accredited by ABET, Inc., the Engineering Accreditation Commission. Accredited programs at each MAU are available in their respective catalogs or online at the following URLs:

UAA - <https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/records/catalogs/uaacatalog_2012_2013.cfm>

UAF - <http://www.uaf.edu/catalog/current/overview/accreditation.html>

UAS - <http://www.uas.alaska.edu/provost/accreditation/specaccreditation.html>

Each professional association has their own schedule, process and standards for specialized accreditation.

The Board generally does not have a role in specialized accreditation evaluation processes. However, if a major accredited program receives a negative evaluation, the Board may receive questions from the press or public about that program. Therefore, the Board should stay informed about the status of specialized accredited program and their evaluations.

**Program Review**

Board policy 10.06 establishes an Academic Program Review process. Each MAU is charged with conducting assessments of all instructional, research, and service programs with respect to quality, efficiency, and contribution to mission and goals. This process is fundamental to the Board’s responsibility to ensure that the institution assesses the effectiveness of its academic programs. Policy dictates that all certificate and degree programs are reviewed at least once every five years. The programs reviewed during each year of the five-year cycle and the outcomes of those reviews are reported annually to the Board.

1. **Student Affairs**
2. **Student Affairs at the MAU’s**

The breadth and depth of Student Services / Student Affairs at the University of Alaska campuses encompasses a multitude of offices, programs and specialized services. To provide a manageable framework upon which to present this information, the areas of responsibility are clustered by affinity: **Enrollment Services, Student Life and Student Services.**

***A note on the Student Services organizational structures*** found at the MAU’s and in the UA System Office. The organizational structures found at UAA, UAF and UAS are not homogenous and reflect the history, culture and other unique aspects of student services at each Main Administrative Unit (MAU). There is some uniformity – for example the role of Chief Student Affairs Officer (CSAO) is common to each MAU and is delegated to the Vice Chancellor for Students or Student Affairs. These senior staffs report directly to the Chancellor and sit on the Chancellor’s Cabinet along with the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Administrative Services.

At the System level such a role would be found in the Associate Vice President for Student & Enrollment Services – a direct report of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The AVP facilitates the Student Services Council (SSC) comprised of the VC’s for Students, the AVP and representatives from Faculty and Staff governance is the entity which develops Regent policy regarding students; approves modifications to Banner (for student processes) and provides system leadership on student and enrollment issues.

**Enrollment Services** refers to thecollection of offices and processes therein that facilitate the enrollment and transition of students to the university.

*Admissions (incl. Recruitment)* – The effort to attract, recruit and admit students to the University of Alaska is centered in the Office of Admissions. Staff members with specialized training in communication and recruitment strategies, including the use of social media and other technologies, are often the first point of contact for future UA students. Admission is also the office that receives and processes applications for the campus. While most of the admissions process can be accommodated on-line, the nature of this relationship (student to university) also requires a high degree of personalized interaction – on the phone, on-line or in-person.

*Financial Aid* – Perhaps no other office is more important to thousands of UA students than the Office of Financial Aid. Federal, State, institutional and private financial aid is processed through the offices of financial aid found at each MAU. Financial Aid officers comply with federal and state statutes, manage numerous programs, work with a myriad of vendors and yet must also provide one-on-one help to students and families new to the financial aid process.

*Registration & Records* – Services from the Registrar’s Office support every currently registered student at the University of Alaska as well as all faculty and staff members who interact with those students. The office is responsible for: class enrollment and registration, verifying graduation, diplomas, preservation of student academic records and protection of their privacy (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act commonly referred to as FERPA), transcripts, maintenance of the schedule of classes, and managing classroom usage at the campuses. The office also assists with residency determinations and transcript evaluations (along with the Office of Admissions).

*Testing & Advising* – the testing offices contracts and administers paper and pencil and computer based exams for a variety of purposes. These include testing for course placement, admission, awarding of college credits, career and life planning, and professional certification. Prior to registration students are provided with placement testing. The results of these placement tests helps academic advisors and students better understand their strengths and weaknesses in core areas such as mathematics and English. In turn, these results along with other indices of academic potential help advisors place students in the appropriate courses.

Advising is one of the most important services for students. The interactive relationship provides students with critical help in identifying, planning for, and achieving academic and career goals. All students have the right to high quality academic advising and the University has an obligation to ensure that academic advising is available to all students.

*Orientation* – orientation programs at UA are designed to assist new students in making a successful transition, academically and socially, into the UA culture and community. This integration to university life is achieved through activities and programs that help students cultivate meaningful relationships with members of the UA community (i.e. advisors, mentors, student life professionals, faculty members, other upper-standing students, and fellow first-year students). In addition, orientation helps new students with university processes including reading a class schedule, understanding University terminology, navigating the campus and University online systems and software, advising, registration, financial aid, and fee payment.

**Student Life** – learning takes place in and out of the classroom in college. The offices that comprise student life support students in their social and intellectual development. These offices encourage exploration – such as an exchange or by joining a club but also provide guidance through residence life and student government. The approach is holistic – building upon lessons in the classroom with lessons in life.

*Residence Life* – *welcoming* – if there was one word to describe residence life at UA that would be the word. Residence life staffs at the MAU’s are professionally trained to provide programs and services that create a community living environment in which mutual respect among all of its members is achieved. The opportunity to work and live with people of varying ages, ethnic backgrounds, abilities, sexual orientations, and religious affiliations helps strengthen the UA community. We recognize individual rights to cultural expression and encourage exploration of other traditions. Residence life is student centered and provides safe, clean housing options, resources, facilities, leadership opportunities and activities to help students be successful and to complete their academic goals.

*Judicial Affairs* – participation in the UA community brings with it a responsibility to protect and maintain an academic climate in which the freedom to learn can be enjoyed by all. When this climate is jeopardized by actions taken by a student or there is a violation of the student code of conduct, such matters are referred to the campus Judicial Officer. Sanctions handed down by the campus Judicial Officer can be severe including the recommendation that a student be trespassed and/or expelled from the university.

*Student Activities/Student Union* – the MAU’s all have a facility dedicated to social and organizational activities of the student body. At UAF, the iconic Wood Center houses a variety of eateries – including a Pub (21 or older), the Office of Student Activities, student newspaper and the Offices of the UAF Student Government. At UAA, the aptly named Student Union is a multi-use facility home to the department of Student Union & Commuter Student Services, the Dean of Students Office, the office of Student Life & Leadership, the office of New Student Orientation, the office of Student Clubs & Greek Life, the Student Union Art Gallery, ASUAA and student newspaper. In Juneau UAS has partnered with the Alaska National Guard to provide a joint use facility that offers students unrivaled access to workout facilities, classrooms and multipurpose space. Regardless of the location – the goal is the same to provide a variety of services and activities to accommodate the diverse needs of UA’s students.

*Recreation* – in keeping with the theme that college is a time to develop the whole person – mind and body, the UA campuses strive to provide opportunities, programs and facilities to promote a healthy lifestyle and to explore the great state of Alaska. From kayaking in SE Alaska, exploring Denali National Park or mountain biking trails above Anchorage opportunities abound for the seasoned adventurer or weekend backpacker. If working out means weights, aerobics or playing basketball – or testing your skills on an indoor climbing wall - we have that covered as well.

*Native / Multi-cultural Student Services* – All main campuses of the University of Alaska have staffs and offices dedicated to provide services for rural and Native students. In general, information on enrollment services such as admission, registration and financial aid including, federal, state, and institutional as well as opportunities through Native Corporations are available. In addition, advising services – both transitional to the campus as well academic are offered. In many instances students also choose to pursue programmatic advising through their academic major.

Staffs in these offices are trained not only in the procedures and protocol of the university setting, but often possess a connection to rural Alaska – which allows a greater sense of understanding in working with students new to the urban environments of Fairbanks, Anchorage and Juneau. This training and connection manifests itself in a commitment to serving students – which is evident in the testimonials often provided by students to family or other students in their home communities considering attending UA. But perhaps the greatest testament to the efforts of staff in these offices in serving Native and rural students is when some of those students from a generation ago are now sending their own children to the University of Alaska.

*Student Safety* – Student safety and security are of utmost importance at the University of Alaska. Safety personnel patrol all campuses - including full-time campus Police at UAA and UAF. Campus shuttles and walking escorts are available at the larger MAU’s as well. Even so, personal safety starts with the individual and knowledge is a key component to maintain a safe and secure space. Whether it’s an understanding of the published crime statistics on campus (The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act often called the Cleary Act) or taking a self-defense course, UA strives through programs of education, information, and active police and security presence to provide a safe environment for learning and living.

*Student Leadership / Government* – student leadership opportunities abound at UA. Student government – perhaps the most well recognized opportunity – supports a rich mix of activities and programs which create an atmosphere of opportunity for students to develop and practice organizational and leadership skills in a nurturing learning environment. Perhaps less known are the broad range of student activities, clubs, organizations and formal leadership programs that also provide students with the opportunity to enhance personal growth and foster social and professional development. In addition, students participate on university committees and councils, which also provide a wide variety of outstanding leadership opportunities for University of Alaska students.

**Student Services** – offices and services in this grouping build upon those under the previous section – Student Life – by further contributing to UA students' emotional and physical well-being and to their intellectual, cultural, and social development outside the context of formal instruction.

*Health & Counseling* – the objective of health and counseling services is to promote optimal health for our university community. This is achieved by providing access to high quality and affordable primary outpatient health care, preventative health care, consulting, outreach and health education. Counseling services range from individual counseling to crisis intervention, alcohol referrals and general adjustments to college life.

*International/Exchange Student Services* – each MAU offers national and international exchange and study abroad options, there are hundreds of universities/program sites to consider for a semester or full year adventure. Sites are available throughout the United States, its territories, Canada, and over 50 countries around the world.

*Disability Support Services* – providing equal opportunities for students who experience disabilities is a university-wide responsibility and commitment. Disability support services at the MAU’s provide accommodations to UA students with documented physical, cognitive and/or psychiatric disabilities. In addition, DSS can provide access to training material and assistive computer programs such as screen readers and voice to text.

*Career Services* – each MAU provides resources that help students (and alumni) actively engage in exploring and pursuing their career aspirations leading to meaningful and purposeful contributions to the Alaska, country and in some cases international workforce. The staff in career services assists individuals in assessing personal interests, skills and life goals; identifying and implementing career choices; provide career counseling, job search and internship advising. The offices offer help with resume and cover letter writing, job search techniques and interviewing skills, and maintain a database of current off- campus job and internship opportunities.