

# *System Governance Report*

December 2013



## Coalition of Student Leaders

Shauna Thornton, Speaker

The Coalition of Student Leaders held three meetings since the last governance report. The student leaders completed an executive summary and submitted it to President Gamble in reference to the proposed tuition and network increases on Oct. 23, 2013. Students were in favor of the proposed tuition increase and recommend a flatter network fee structure. We will be working closely with the network department to brainstorm ideas that will best serve the students' needs and pocketbooks. We had a shift in student participation at the last few meetings, which included students from the rural communities. One contributing factor to the increase is our transition to Google Hangout on Air, an Internet platform for holding meetings, in place of audio conferencing. It provides a student friendly atmosphere and we have positive received feedback on using this venue versus the traditional phone conference. Our meeting on Nov. 7 showed a greater increase in student attendance with nine coalition members and seven student guests attending.

Recent coalition work includes editing our constitution and bylaws, and planning for our legislative session trip to Juneau on Jan. 31 through Feb. 4, 2014. The trip to Juneau involves planning for events, two days of meetings, and establishing a theme. Tentatively, we decided on "Education = Bright Ideas for Alaska." We plan to give out stress toys in the shape light bulbs at the session.

The coalition works with several groups on different topics. Right now, we are working on feedback related to Shaping Alaska's Future with the plan to submit our initial recommendations by the Nov. 18 deadline. We also participate on the Tuition Task Force to prepare for upcoming tuition discussions. Other groups we are involved in include the IT Executive Council, Stay on Track, and System Governance Council. Recently, the Stay on Track working group sent out two emails to students from the coalition speaker with messages referring them to the Stay on Track video and the Stay on Track Alaska Air photo contest. Both emails were successful in raising student awareness about focusing on finishing their degrees on time. It was exciting to hear the first email gained 870 viewers in one day.

We are streamlining our communication processes to enhance student participation and feedback. We also want to raise awareness about the coalition and what its role is to students across the state. Our goal is to market and brand the coalition statewide through Facebook, a brochure, a PowerPoint for the new student orientations, and by sending coalition members to student meetings. The Google Hangouts tool will be invaluable in this process. We plan to distribute a semi-annual survey to students for feedback on issues like tuition and fee increases. We hope this approach will allow the coalition to provide timely and accurate feedback to the president.

*Shauna Thornton has been a member of the KRC Student Union for several years, and a member of the Coalition of Student Leaders for the past two years. She successfully led the KRCSU to rally against cuts to the campus budget saving the campus hundreds of thousands of dollars, and was one of the leaders in Juneau for need based financial aid.*



## Faculty Alliance

Robert Boeckmann, Chair

The Faculty Alliance met twice (9/13/13 & 10/11/13) since its report to the BOR meeting in September. Notably, we held our Oct. 11 meeting using the free video chat program Google Hangout rather than the audio conferencing via Eventbuilder.com. Google Hangout allows up to 15 people to participate in a video conference for free if they have an internet connection and a computer with a web cam. An additional feature “on Air” allows the meeting to be recorded in a YouTube video as an archive.

This switch was suggested by LaNora Tolman as a way to replace our telephonic meetings with video while realizing cost savings by not paying for Eventbuilder.com services. After a few brief hiccups, the meeting went smoothly and we plan to continue to use this approach for meetings in the future.

In our meetings, we continued to review and revise the Faculty Alliance constitution and bylaws. We will hold a vote at our Nov. 15 meeting to approve changes. We also continued to dialogue about a proposed motion from Statewide Academic Council to establish a minimum standard for admission into baccalaureate degrees. Faculty tend to be concerned about the impact such a policy may have on students not meeting the standard if there are no systematic plans and funded programs in place to ensure they can effectively engage an education at UA universities. They also recognize that not every student coming to UA needs to earn a BA to benefit.

Progress on two other systemwide initiatives was discussed: General Education Learning Outcomes (GELO) for the UA System and a Common Student Satisfaction Survey. In regards to the GELO Task Force, the report indicated that the group has made significant progress on identifying and describing a common set of learning outcomes resulting from a general education requirements core at UA universities. The next step for this task force is to determine how to integrate this set into existing policy and regulation or to the extent to which the policy and regulation needs revision. The report on a common student satisfaction survey indicated progress after consulting with stakeholders at each university and learning what those stakeholders find most useful in a student survey. The next step is to compare these findings and select a common student survey or surveys based upon common needs across the system.

In my role as Faculty Alliance chair, I attended the Oct. 31 Shaping Alaska’s Future (SAF) meeting. The articulation of several SAF themes and alliance priorities were made apparent at the meeting and subsequent meetings. First, efforts to improve coordination of General Education Learning Outcomes will aid students in completing degrees within the UA system of universities (Theme 1). Second, it is possible that a common student survey will help flesh out metrics for Theme 1 and 5, particularly concerning how GERs impact citizenship and quality of life.

The alliance furthered plans to have a face-to-face meeting corresponding with the February BOR meeting to facilitate a deeper dialogue between the two groups. Such a meeting may also help initiate a dialogue about the potential benefits of having a UA Faculty Regent.

*Dr. Robert J. Boeckmann grew up in Southcentral Alaska and is now an Associate Professor of Psychology at the University of Alaska Anchorage where he teaches a variety of classes in the Undergraduate, Masters, and UAA/UAF joint Ph.D. program. Courses include: research methods, statistics, personality and social psychology and honors seminars in the psychology of social justice. He enjoys mentoring students in research at all levels but is particularly inspired by helping undergraduates explore and discover. Robert chairs the UAA Institutional Review Board and is active in faculty governance. Robert earned his BA, MA, and Ph.D. at the University of California Berkeley. His research is primarily focused on social identity and social justice, but more recently has expanded his interests to include Alaska Native behavioral health, evolutionary psychology, and social media.*



## Staff Alliance Carey Brown, Chair

The Staff Alliance made it a priority to nominate and elect a new chair for the current academic year. The chair takes the lead as a facilitator between staff and the UA Statewide administration. I appreciate the opportunity to serve in this capacity with the support of my colleagues. Shared governance is highly respected at our institution.

Staff Alliance works continuously to improve the conditions within each of the UA universities and their respective campuses. The outlet shared governance provides each university, in regard to the transparency between staff and administration, allow staff to express concerns and positive feedback alike.

Recent alliance work includes the following items:

1. A resolution was written in support of President Gamble's commitment to raise bullying awareness throughout the University of Alaska. The bullying issue surfaced in 2012-13 through a system-wide Staff Alliance work-life survey, which included feedback by employees. During the fall of 2013, UA Statewide launched new bullying awareness training to bring attention to a prominent issue raised by staff. The Alliance has expressed a desire to have this training offered throughout the UA System, to include UAA, UAF, and UAS. In addition, President Gamble offered support by suggesting the Alliance look into policy revisions at the board of regents' level allowing for some recourse by any employee encountering such behavior. In response to the resolution, President Gamble sent out a memo to the chancellors asking for the implementation of the bullying awareness training systemwide.
2. Outreach to the campus governance groups regarding the implementation of a universal annual performance evaluation tool to encourage conversation between supervisors and employees per UA Board of Regents' Policy and University Regulation. Currently, each university currently utilizes a separate tool for evaluation.
3. The alliance continues discussion and research on the following topics:
  - a. Shaping Alaska's Future (formerly titled UA Strategic Direction Initiative) and the inclusion, or lack thereof, of the importance of staff involvement in this topic as the Effect Statements are developed;
  - b. A UA systemwide resolution of a zero-tolerance smoke-free and tobacco-free campus initiative;
  - c. Research into the departments at each university addressing diversity through hiring practices and outreach for employment to potential candidates within Alaska and nationwide.

*Carey Brown is from Fort Worth Texas and is currently the Academic Advising Coordinator for the College of Health at UAA. He earned a bachelor's degree in health administration at Texas Southern University in 2001, moved to Anchorage, Alaska in 2006 to complete the MPA degree in 2008. He is also adjunct faculty for the College of Health and First-Year Experience courses. He is on the board of directors for Anchorage Urban League (Anchorage Urban Works), member of the ASD Multicultural Concerns Committee, and volunteers with various youth scholarship committees.*



## System Governance Council

Joe Hayes, Chair

I would like to thank my colleagues for re-electing me as chair of the System Governance Council and I apologize for not attending the board meeting today. The council's agenda this year will include working with the University of Alaska Statewide Administration and University of Alaska Board of Regents with Shaping Alaska's Future, working to modify the System Governance Council's constitution to better align the needs of our constituencies, reviewing UA health care policies, reviewing and suggesting ideas on non-smoking initiatives, reviewing UA Policy and Regulations, and working with the statewide administration to facilitate and educate our constituencies' items of importance to enhance the university's legislative advocacy.

The System Governance Council will be active in enhancing our constituencies' statewide understanding of the complex issues facing the University of Alaska both internally and externally. We will continue to offer critical evaluation on issues and provide advice as needed. We will continue to assist the statewide leadership team in advancing your priorities, vision and direction. The System Governance Council will continue to serve as an entity focusing on crafting dialogue between our respective groups and the UA system administration that is respectful, insightful and educational. I look forward to representing the council again this year and working with the University of Alaska Statewide Administration, President Gamble, and you, the members of the University of Alaska Board of Regents. Thank you for your time and I look forward to presenting my report in person at the next board of regents' meeting.

*Joe Hayes served as representative in the Alaska Legislature and is a UAF alumnus. While attending UAF, Joe was the first-ever African-American UAF student body president and UA student regent. At graduation, he received the Joel Wiegert Award as the outstanding senior man. Joe has been working hard for the university for many years, and he will continue to bring his energy and experience to the table and represent the university and alumni well.*