

System Governance Report

September 2013



Coalition of Student Leaders

Shauna Thornton, Speaker

We just wrapped up our annual summit for the 2013-2014 academic year. Leaders from a variety of statewide departments came to discuss their programs to the coalition. The guest line-up included: Patrick Gamble, UA President; Dana Thomas, Vice President of Academic Affairs; Gwen Gruenig, Associate Vice President, Institutional Research and Analysis; Mary Gower, Director of Enrollment Services-Stay on Track; Mark Herrmann, Dean, UAF School of Management; Arthur Hussey, Student Services

Manager; Ann Ringstad, Development Officer, UAF College of Engineering and Mines; and Kate Ripley, Director of Public Affairs.

Officers elected for the 2013-14 academic year include, Shauna Thornton re-elected as speaker for the coalition and the System Governance Council representatives:

- Representing large sized schools - Ayla O'Scannell, President of the Associated Students of UAF
- Representing medium sized schools- Teresa Cross, President of the Kenai Peninsula College Student Union; and Jessica Dominy , Vice President of the United Students of UAS-Juneau
- Representing small sized schools- Sharon Carter, President of United Students of UAS-Sitka

During the summit, Dean Herrmann, from the UAF School of Management, gave a presentation on differential tuition. The discussion included many good ideas that helped increase our understanding of the concept. There were a number of alternative solutions discussed including the possibility of a pilot program.

The students asked good questions about differential tuition. We are still trying to gather information to ascertain how other aspects of the university are affected. After learning more about the college savings plans, concern arose about the ramifications of differential tuition on the savings plan and the effect it may have on the ACT Portfolio.

As student leaders, it is our intention to not shoot from the hip on differential tuition. These decisions may have intended and unintended consequences affecting others for many generations. We feel the consideration of this topic is worth more time than three hours of our time. We will be meeting multiple times in August and September. We will also collaborate with various university departments to ensure we can make an informed decision on differential tuition by weighing and processing all aspects. We, as the Coalition of Student Leaders, are working to understand what the financial and fundamental ramifications of differential tuition have on student programs and how this fits our campuses, communities and university, and most importantly, our students who we serve. Differential tuition is not something to take lightly, and we strongly believe that other alternatives have yet to be fully explored and assessed.

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 held its fall retreat August 16th and 17th and was hosted by UAA. The alliance thanks the statewide offices for the funding and opportunity to meet our system colleagues face to face for in depth discussions of important system wide issues. The alliance reviewed the Faculty Alliance constitution and bylaws and is in the process of drafting changes to reflect the current or desired workings of the Faculty Alliance. The alliance reviewed and discussed broad goals for the year and prioritized them for further discussion and processing.

Some important items on this list included:

Responding to initiatives suggested by the Statewide Academic Council on establishing the following on a system wide basis: a) a minimum standard for admission into baccalaureate degrees; b) common math and English placement exams and cut off scores; c) a common student satisfaction survey.

The alliance also established its own initiatives for: a) establishing a clear and consistent procedure for review and revision of BOR policy and regulation pertaining to academic affairs; b) developing principles, goals, and processes on the role of faculty in managing the financial impacts of anticipated budget reductions. This includes articulating a position paper to share with the statewide administration and the administration at each of the UA Universities.

Other topics for consideration included: UAA's recent (and possibly temporary) resolution on not accepting ACE recommendations for credit for MOOCs. The possibility of coordinating one of the face-to-face Faculty Alliance meetings with a BOR meeting to facilitate a deeper dialogue between the two groups.

Finally, the alliance discussed the possibility of working to establish a UA Faculty Regent to contribute a focused faculty perspective on the UA BOR, as is common practice with many BORs.

In related efforts, the Faculty Alliance chair convened the Faculty Alliance Task Force on General Education Learning Objectives on August 19. This task force includes representatives from all the universities of the University of Alaska System and continues the work began at a working retreat held in January 2013. That work is aimed at identifying the extent to which faculty at the three universities may agree upon the fundamental learning outcomes of the general education requirements curriculum. This would set the foundation for better alignment of the GER programs at the three universities facilitating students' education and degree attainment while engaging course offerings thought the UA system.

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

Monique Musick, Vice Chair, Acting Interim Chair

This year six of the eight members on Staff Alliance are in their first year serving at a system-wide level. The annual two-day retreat August 7-8 was spent in intensive working sessions to bring the whole group up-to-speed on many important issues affecting UA staff. The issues included: the compensation working group proposals submitted by Staff Alliance to UA Human Resources this spring; President Gamble's proposed performance evaluation; FY15 staff compensation; staff recognition, promotion, succession planning and career development plans; bullying and the grievance process; benefits including a new wellness vendor; potential for smoke free/tobacco free campuses; and the Strategic Direction Initiative. We shared an overview of our discussions with our constituents via the Staff Alliance Blog and asked for their feedback and input on many of these issues. We look forward to continuing to work with the administration on these and other issues in the coming year.

An election was held for officers during the meeting. The vice chair is myself, Monique Musick. The chair position will be filled at the next meeting when all members are present and after Staff Alliance representatives have had the opportunity to discuss being a chair with their supervisors. I will act as interim chair until the chair is elected.

Monique was born and raised in Ester, Alaska. She attended the University of Alaska Fairbanks, and in 2001 earned a Journalism degree with an emphasis in photography. She became the production manager for Mushing Magazine and when the magazine was sold to new owners, Musick leased the building and opened her own photo studio and gallery. Three years later the Publication Specialist position opened at UA Statewide and she came to work for the Office of Public Affairs. Here she gets to do what she loves: photography and graphic design. She enjoys being an active member of System Governance, supporting co-workers and participating in policy review.