

Governance Report

April 2016



UNIVERSITY
of ALASKA
Many Traditions One Alaska

Coalition of Student Leaders

Mathew Carrick, Chair

I am pleased to report that we have returned from our annual legislative fly-in in Juneau. We had over 30 students attend and advocate for the University, and we heard from such esteemed speakers as Commissioner Pat Pitney and Representative Tammie Wilson.

We elected as a group to advocate for three positions:

1. Maintaining funding for the University in the operating budget.
2. Completing a floor of the Fairbanks engineering building.
3. Amending SB 174 to be more favorable to the University.

Although Alaska is facing significant budget hurdles, I am pleased with the connections we made in the Capitol, the enthusiasm with which we presented our case, and the investments we made in ourselves as leaders.

Back home, we turn our attention to the future of our school. Once again, Strategic Pathways is the focus of much of our attention. Although it is difficult for us to form a cohesive view of the strategy without more clearly defined plans, we maintain an optimistic outlook.

Finally, I would like to remind the Board that while maintaining fiscal solvency deserves the lion's share of attention, offering a quality education takes more than a sound budget. One especially pressing issue is campus safety, and Title IX compliance in particular. We applaud the efforts of the Board of Regents and administrators at both the statewide and local levels, but there is always more work to be done. I firmly believe that improving campus safety should be one of the University's top priorities, and hope that there will continue to be opportunities for students to help lead efforts.

Mathew was born in Florida but considers Alaska his adopted home. He attends the University of Alaska Fairbanks, recently graduating with a degree in economics, and now pursues a Master's in Business Administration. He also serves as the president of the Associated Students of UAF.

The Coalition of Student Leaders consists of student government representatives from the University of Alaska campuses and portrays the diverse scope of student affairs and needs. The Coalition promotes the educational needs, general welfare and rights of all University of Alaska students, and functions as an advisory group to the UA president and administration on student issues.

Faculty Alliance

Dr. Cécile Lardon, Chair

As everyone in the University of Alaska community, members of the Faculty Alliance have been following the Alaska legislative session, the Statewide Transformation Process, and developments related to Strategic Pathways. While some faculty and staff were at the universities in the late 80s to witness that financial crisis, for most current employees this is a new and unsettling experience. We

realize that the budget shortfall will not be the end of the university system – but it will have significant and long-term impacts on almost everything we do. And while faculty, staff, students, and university leaders will likely have some disagreements about the best ways to move forward we do appreciate the efforts of the Board, the President, the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Research, the Chancellors and Provosts, and many others to protect the universities from the worst damage.

President Johnsen and Vice President White joined the Faculty Alliance at our last meeting. We had a productive discussion of the current status of the budget, Strategic Pathways, and SB 174. We reiterated our willingness and desire to take an active role in leading the university system through this crisis. We will continue to develop constructive ways in which faculty leaders can take a more direct role in the governance process. In my last report, I listed some of the leadership opportunities and responsibilities Faculty Alliance members identified at our last retreat. We will develop these thoughts further in collaboration with other university leaders and the Board.

Foremost on our minds is the likelihood that, due to legislative budget decisions, programmatic academic decisions will need to be made before the process outlined for Strategic Pathways can be implemented. In other words, academic programs and positions will need to be cut before the more strategic and system-level decisions will be made. President Johnsen has tasked the Alliance with developing a draft set of criteria that can be used to make decisions about academic programs and services by April.

SB 174 is a troubling piece of legislation to many faculty, students, and staff members. Faculty already receive threatening communications from students and have direct interactions with angry students that require careful handling. This legislation, if passed, we most definitely have a direct impact on faculty interactions with students in and out of the classroom. We urged the President to take a proactive approach in helping members of the UA community adapt to the possible presence of weapons on campus.

Continuing Projects:

The Faculty Alliance will continue to work with the four statewide taskforces to align math, English, and general GER requirements and the academic calendar across the UA system. And individual members of the Alliance will continue to serve on the Board of Regents' taskforces.

Dr. Cécile Lardon is a professor of Psychology and chair of the Department of Psychology in the School of Liberal Arts at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Originally from Germany, Dr. Lardon earned her PhD from the University of Illinois Chicago (1999) in community, organizational, and social psychology. Her research has focused on community leadership, community and organizational development and change, organizational culture, and health promotion. Currently, Dr. Lardon is a researcher at the Center for Alaska Native Health Research. She joined the UAF faculty in 1999.

Faculty Alliance is the faculty voice in matters affecting the academic welfare of the University of Alaska system and its educational programs.

Staff Alliance

Faye Gallant, Chair

Staff governance organizations at the three universities and Statewide have put forward their selections for the Staff Make Students Count award. This year had an encouragingly high number of nominees, highlighting the direct and meaningful contributions staff make to our students' experiences and success at UA.

Staff Alliance heard from the Title IX coordinators about the changes to UA policies and regulations to better comply with federal guidance, and will be providing feedback on these changes. Alliance members expressed their support for the revisions that collected Title IX information in one place, rather than being scattered throughout various sections, but would also like to see this opportunity used to discuss more of what UA is doing to prevent sexual misconduct and power-based violence. Additionally, staff have provided feedback on the telework regulations.

Staff Alliance also voted on a resolution opposing SB 174, following the passage of resolutions of opposition by staff groups at both UAS and UAF. The voting on the Alliance resolution is not final at the time this report is due; an update will be provided during the chair's testimony to the regents in April.

Faye Gallant came to Alaska in 2003 as an undergraduate at UAF, where she earned her Bachelor's in Geography (2006). She started her UAF career in 2009 and currently works for the Office of Management and Budget. She has a Master's of Public Administration from UAS (2013) and is an active member of UAF's Process Improvement team. When she's not working, Faye travels the world with her husband, gets walked by her dogs, or heads to the hills around Fairbanks to hike and camp.

Staff Alliance serves the classified and administrative, professional and technical staff throughout the University of Alaska system.

System Governance Council

Monique Musick, Chair

The System Governance Council continues to work to gather feedback, suggestions and concerns to help inform the Strategic Pathways process and provide a meaningful avenue for staff, faculty, students and alumni to give input. Our feedback form received 226 responses by its closure on March 4. Members of the council, working with Diane Hirshberg, are compiling the information for Regents and UA leadership in order to be ready for the April Regents' meeting. The summary of that information will be submitted separately. Additional forms and polls will be conducted as needed as the process moves forward.

Members of System Governance have been asked to help suggest criteria which should be used in reviewing the roles of campuses, services, departments and programs during Phase 1 of this process. That could involve a new poll, direct contact with constituents, work done by local groups and individual brainstorming. Clarity on criteria is one area we heard lots about in the initial feedback and we appreciate the opportunity to be involved in this important step.

The value of the Council as a collaborative environment where we get to hear the perspectives of other members of the university community continues to express itself in our meetings and discussions. We are grateful to President Johnsen for meeting regularly with our group, as well as the many other leaders who introduce new policies and other important issues during our meetings. Your time and attention, plus the opportunity to be involved in shared governance is valued by all.

Monique Musick was born and raised in Ester, Alaska. After attending ICS and later Lathrop High School, she received a bachelor's of art in journalism from UAF. She currently works for UA Public Affairs doing what she enjoys most: photography, communications and graphic design. She became involved with governance in 2009 shortly after coming to UA Statewide and has enjoyed being an active member of System Governance ever since. She values the opportunity afforded through shared governance to support co-workers, participate in policy review, advise on changes in the university and to advocate on behalf of staff throughout the system. She recently purchased her old family home in Ester and enjoys gardening, photography, motor sports, outdoor activities, prospecting, music and time with friends.

The System Governance Council consists of the leaders from Faculty Alliance, Staff Alliance, and Coalition of Student Leaders and includes the alumni directors from the three UA universities. The Council provides the setting for collaboration on University of Alaska system-wide issues.