



UNIVERSITY
of ALASKA
Many Traditions One Alaska

Minutes

Faculty Alliance

Tuesday, May 3, 2016

Via [Google Hangout](#)

Audio-only: 1-855-280-1855

1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order

Voting Members:

David Fitzgerald, 1st Vice President, UAA Faculty Senate

Maren Haavig, President, UAS Faculty Senate

Diane Hirshberg, Past President, UAA Faculty Senate

Lisa Hoferkamp, President-Elect, UAS Faculty Senate

Cecile Lardon, Past President, UAF Faculty Senate, Chair, Faculty Alliance

Orion Lawlor, President-Elect, UAF Faculty Senate

Debu Misra, President, UAF Faculty Senate

Tara Smith, President, UAA Faculty Senate, Vice Chair, Faculty Alliance

Staff:

Morgan Dufseth, Executive Officer, System Governance

Guests:

Karl Kowalski, Chief IT Officer

Tom Langdon, OIT Customer Support Services Manager

Andy Anger, UAF Professor, Applied Business and Accounting

Sharon Chamard, Incoming AY17 Alliance member

Members Absent:

Kevin Krein, Past President, UAS Faculty Senate

2. Adoption of Agenda

Debu moved to adopt, Diane seconded. Debu requested discussion about revisions to a furlough policy and asked to amend the agenda; he noted he would lead the conversation. Tara seconded the amendment. There were no objections. The agenda was adopted with the noted amendment.

3. Approval of April 8 Minutes

Attachment 1

Debu moved to approve as presented, Diane seconded. The minutes were approved as presented.

4. Public or Guest Comments
New member from UAA, Sharon Chamard, said she would listen in for the meeting.
5. Report from Chair
Cécile gave closing remarks as chair—she noted she wished she had been able to accomplish more during her tenure with the Alliance. Issues for next year: GER alignment, concurrent enrollment, and definition of college readiness.
6. Report from Faculty Senates

UAF – Orion noted they had updated their grade appeals policy, they also have a couple new minors moving through the approval process; there has been an issue with faculty retiring and then immediately becoming adjunct faculty—which is tough because they are very experience but treated differently within the Senate—the Senate is looking at ways to address that issue; passed resolution to change Freshman to First Year (outdated and sexist term, in their opinion); they are also thinking about a wholesale change to the year designations; Debu brought up student honors (summa cum laude, cum laude, etc.) when they have past schooling transcripts with lower grades—will need to review the policies surrounding that issue

UAS – Maren noted that the UAS Faculty Senate has not met since the last Alliance meeting; they are meeting Friday to discuss statewide Blackboard stakeholders group; they have been working with the UAS student group for a Power and Privilege Forum in Juneau in November.

UAA – Passed a motion on statewide moving back to the 2017 implementation date for Blackboard; also reviewed joint task force with students to look at teacher evaluation—students indicated they don't like it (doesn't seem anonymous—run through Blackboard, can't find results easily—prefer RateMyProfessor.com; for faculty, they haven't been getting enough results to make it worth the contract); Dave is now the president for the UAA Faculty Senate.

7. Ongoing Business
 - 7.1. Alaska Native GER – Memo to Task Force Attachment 2
Cécile noted she had sent the request to the GER Coordinating Task Force and asked for a response from them by Sept. 30.

8. New Business
 - 8.1. Moving to one version of Blackboard for the UA system – Karl Kowalski and Tom Langdon

UAA passed a resolution asking for a return to the original implementation date (rather than implementing over the summer). Tara noted the concerns centered on the rush and the cause behind the rush. The inconvenience seems needless from the UAA faculty point of view. Feel there could be potential student impact as well. Diane noted that there was also concern about governance not being involved in this change.

Members noted concern that faculty don't have access to their courses for next year—and unclear it is still when they will have access. Overall, several Alliance members expressed they didn't feel faculty were involved in the decision to go to a single instance of Blackboard.

Karl noted the administration's expectations were that faculty would have access to shell courses. Right now, UAF has not turned off access to shell courses but UAA and UAS have—this was unexpected and Karl noted he wasn't entirely sure why that decision was made at the campus level.

Karl also noted that, two years ago, the Summit Team directed campuses to move to single Blackboard. A year ago, system-wide project kicked off to move to a single Blackboard—there has been campus participation all along the way. The local Blackboard programmers will still be able to customize the campus view—to keep the local campus branding. The benefits to moving to single Blackboard include license savings along is \$100k/year; there will also be savings on hardware over time. Feedback two years ago from student was that they wanted a single instance—especially if they take classes at different campuses. Current homegrown workarounds do let student taking classes from multiple campuses, however, they are inefficient and prone to problems.

Maren noted that faculty are supportive of moving to a single Blackboard, however, the issues of concern are about timing and communication. How can faculty get better information? Karl noted the switch would have been seamless if local sites hadn't turned off access—and that is solely a local decision.

Tom noted everyone will move from three separate instances to one single instance—all three campuses will have to migrate to the new instance. SW IT is working to create batch exports/imports for the transition so that faculty won't have to copy each individual course shell. There is also a plan to copy historical records (i.e. past year's courses). Karl noted that if the merge didn't happen as planned, all faculty would still have access to their old Blackboard (the same instance they have been using)—and they still wouldn't have any interruption.

Karl noted that external pressure is behind the shortening of the timeline. This change was also included in the SW Transformation Team recommendations. President Johnsen strongly supports unifying behind-the-scenes processes to avoid duplicative hardware, software, staff, etc.

Alliance members stressed that their concern was not over the single instance, it was over the rushed timeline. Karl stated he took responsibility for any miscommunication or lack of communication, however, the plan had always been for a seamless transition that still allowed for local customization.

Maren asked about short-term plans to improve communication. Karl noted there will be a project website that will help explain the updates; information will discuss timeline, link to test site, etc. He anticipates it will be ready by the end of the week.

Karl also spoke about the upcoming IT decision-making task force—there used to be one several years ago but its strategic funding was used for other purposes. However, they are now working to reinvigorate the IT governance process at UA. An announcement will be coming shortly.

David asked about the switch to Google. Karl stated that (despite certain rumours) Google email is HIPPA and FERPA compliant for all the core business apps (Mail, Calendar, Drive, Vault). The social apps (Hangout, Google+) are not compliant because we can't control who students interact with or invite to those sites. Diane noted UAA has a number of collaborative agreements with school districts, using Office 365, which may create unintended consequences. Karl noted that Mail and Calendar won't go through Office 365, however, other services might—and in the future there may be system agreements for Office 365.

8.2. Faculty Overload Benefit Rates

Attachments 3& 4

Andy Anger led a discussion of faculty overload rates. He note the current faculty overload benefit rate is 47%. Because of this high benefit rate, faculty are regularly denied overload contracts. UAF passed a resolution asking that overload benefit rates be lower, because the only additional benefit incurred by an overload contract is retirement. Similar to if an exempt staff member took on an adjunct assignment—they would not charge more for their benefits because medical and leave is already calculated. Maren noted she had not seen this issue at UAS. Tara noted there had been “moratoriums” on overload contract but without much information to justify the decision. Members noted they have also seen overload faculty be charged for healthcare during the summer, even though they had already paid for their 12-month coverage during their 9-month contract.

Debu and Andy would like to see a similar resolution from the Alliance to bring the issue to the attention of SW administration. Cécile would like to see a better explanation as to why these benefits rate are applied to overload faculty contracts. This issue will be addressed again in the fall when the Alliance reconvenes.

8.3. Directory Information – Enrollment Status – Did not address.

8.4. Tuition Notice – Mid-Year Increase Expected – Did not address.

8.5. Telework Regulation – Did not address.

8.6. Transition Process – The chair will transfer to Tara over the summer. Cécile will give the governance report to the Board at their June meeting in Anchorage and Tara will be introduced as the new chair at that time.

9. Comments, concerns, and announcements

Outgoing members noted they will miss working with faculty governance. Cecile noted if members had questions about items 8.3, 8.4, or 8.5 to email her and she will respond.

10. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.