

# Governance Report

## September 2018



### Coalition of Student Leaders

Geser Bat-Erdene, USUAA President  
Nick Bursell, USUAS-JC President  
Dawson Mann, ASUAF President

The Coalition of Student Leaders thanks the Board of Regents for the opportunity to present this report. Below is a brief summary of student government activities on the three main campuses over the summer.

In April 2018, the Associated Students of UAF (ASUAF) elected Dawson Mann as president and Melissa Clark as vice president for AY19. Over the summer, ASUAF also worked on providing additional support to new student orientation programs and creating an early framework for senator orientation. ASUAF also passed additional funding for the Wood Center student food pantry. As fall approaches, ASUAF has been largely focused on office renovations and the recruitment of a new office manager, and plans to have both projects completed later this fall. They continue to work with administration regarding campus security issues.

The Union of Students at UAA (USUAA) held bi-weekly meetings over the summer. As a group they worked to increase communication and collaboration with members of UAA administration, the Faculty Senate, Staff Council leadership and department heads. USUAA also sponsored Adopt-a-Road cleanups throughout the summer. Following the resignation of Alec Burris shortly after the student elections concluded, Geser Bat-Erdene and Clare Baldwin took over as president and vice president, respectively.

The United Students of UAS-Juneau Campus (USUAS-JC) had a busy summer and worked on a number of issues, including:

- Funding a student sustainability position for the 2018-19 academic year, and providing funds for various projects for this position, such as composting bins
- Approval for funding to continue the Power and Privilege symposium (UAS' highest attended event last year)
- Ending funding the Banff Film Festival, a fundraiser for UAS' Outdoor Studies (ODS) Program. The funding previously allocated to this fundraiser is now available for ODS students to apply for directly through travel grants. The change in focus saves USUAS-JC money and man hours while making greater funding available for ODS travel grants.
- Providing funding for reusable containers for incoming freshman to reduce campus waste
- Providing funding to support the Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity (URECA) disc golf course project that is being built on the Juneau campus

Moving forward from these summertime accomplishments, there remains much work to be done, and the Coalition is committed to ensuring that the primary stakeholder in the University of Alaska—students—are heard and represented in that process.

At its upcoming fall summit, the Coalition will elect new officers and begin to consider its goals for AY19. Foremost on the agenda is continuing exploration and representation of student issues across UA, developing methods for advocating for UA with the Legislature, determining how best to represent solely distance/online students, and approving a process for administering the Coalition's scholarship to students.

In conclusion, the Coalition is highly optimistic for the upcoming year, and the future of the University of Alaska, and looks forward to engaging the Board on challenging and important issues that affect students across all campuses and walks of life.

*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**

Chris Fallen, Chair

The UA Faculty Alliance will hold its first meeting on August 31 and its annual fall retreat from September 15 to 16 in Juneau at the University of Alaska Southeast (UAS), closely following the September meeting of the UA Board of Regents (BOR). This time and location for the retreat departs from recent past practice of holding the retreat in late August at the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) or University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF), but was chosen to maximize attendance given faculty teaching and research schedules, and also is appropriate as UA moves forward with implementing the Alaska College of Education to be housed at UAS, a location chosen and announced to UA faculty, students, and staff by President Johnsen at the February 6, 2017 full meeting of the BOR.

At the retreat, Faculty Alliance will review the status of ongoing work, plan for the academic year ahead, and discuss goals for Faculty Alliance and faculty governance at each university in the UA system. In particular, among considering other items of business, Faculty Alliance will:

- Review the Faculty Alliance Constitution and Bylaws and move forward with appropriate modifications including updating references to UA Statewide executive leadership job titles that have changed recently.
- Review the General Education Requirement (GER) alignment process, announced as completed by Faculty Alliance during the June 2018 full meeting of the BOR, and discuss appropriate changes as the GER alignment moves into a maintenance

process, in order to further ensure that GER course credits and fulfillments earned by students transfer easily and transparently between the universities in the UA system.

- Review a report on the UA system-wide Faculty Morale Survey conducted in AY2017-2018 by UAA faculty.
- Share progress reports and plans for implementing the Alaska Native Theme requirements at each university.
- Discuss the role of the Common Calendar Committee in reviewing and adopting proposed UA system-wide academic calendars for AY 2020-2021 through 2022-2023.
- Discuss lessons learned and propose changes to the UA-UNAC Faculty Initiative Fund request for proposal (RFP) and evaluation processes for Spring 2019.
- Discuss coordination of faculty Title IX committees at each university for the purpose of reviewing and proposing changes to Title IX University Regulations based on faculty experience and expertise in maintaining equal access to education and providing productive, safe learning environments.
- Announce a new grassroots effort to record the open portions of the full meetings of the UA BOR and maintain access to those recordings on YouTube, a popular and free video archiving and streaming service, in fulfillment of requests by the UA faculty and system governance groups to review the open BOR meeting discussions, when viewing the full-day livestream or attending the meeting is not practical, and when seeking documentation of a particular discussion.

The members of Faculty Alliance during AY 2018-2019 are

- Dr. Sine Anahita, Associate Professor of Sociology and President-Elect of UAF Faculty Senate
- Dr. Heather Batchelder, Associate Professor of Education and President-Elect of UAS Faculty Senate
- Dr. Donie Bret-Harte, Associate Professor of Biology and President of UAF Faculty Senate
- Dr. Megan Buzby, Assistant Professor of Mathematics and Past President of UAS Faculty Senate
- Dr. Sharon Chamard, Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice and Past President of UAA Faculty Senate
- Mr. Scott Downing, Assistant Professor of English and 1st Vice President of UAA Faculty Senate
- Ms. Robin Gilcrist, Assistant Professor of Construction Technology and UAS Faculty Senate President
- Dr. Maria Williams (Vice Chair), Associate Professor of Alaska Native Studies and UAA Faculty Senate President

Please extend warm welcomes at all appropriate Board governance activities in the University of Alaska system to the members of Faculty Alliance. While many aspects of system-wide university faculty governance are often not well understood or appreciated by all stakeholders in the university system, the members of UA Faculty Alliance are passionate about higher education and fulfilling the teaching, research, and service missions of the three universities in the University of Alaska system.

Dr. Chris Fallen, Chair of the UA Faculty Alliance, is a Research Associate Professor in the Geophysical Institute Space Physics group and is the Chief Scientist of the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) High-frequency Active Auroral Research Program (HAARP) Ionospheric and Radio Science Laboratory in Gakona, Alaska. He earned his Ph.D. in Space Physics from UAF (2010) while working as a graduate teaching assistant at the UAF College of Natural Science and Mathematics, at the UAF College of Engineering and Mines, and as a graduate research assistant at the former UAF Arctic Region Supercomputing Center; his M.A. in Mathematics from the University of Kansas (2004); and his B.S. in Physics and B.A. in Mathematics from Fort Lewis College (2000). In addition to serving as Chair of the University of Alaska (UA) Faculty Alliance, Dr. Fallen is the Principal Investigator (PI) of the Lowell Digisonde Instrument at HAARP and the one currently under construction at Poker Flat Research Range (PFRR). He is also the PI of multiple funded projects at HAARP, and is currently seeking Federal funding to expand the research infrastructure at HAARP and PFRR.

*The UA Faculty Alliance is the system-wide governance group elected to represent the faculty in promoting welfare and education effectiveness at UA, to provide consultation to system executive leadership, and to facilitate system-wide communication among faculty at all three universities at UA.*

## **Staff Alliance**

Josh Watts, Chair

UA Staff Alliance held its first meeting online on July 24 to introduce the new members and to discuss the role of governance for the upcoming year. The group had a significant amount of turnover for the upcoming year with five out of eight members new to UA Staff Alliance. 2018 – 2019 Staff Alliance membership includes:

- Kiwana Affatato, Vice President, UAS Staff Council
- Kara Axx, President UAF Staff Council
- David Felts, President, UAS Staff Council
- Arthur Hussey, President, SW Administration Assembly
- Brenda Levesque, Co-President, UAA Staff Council
- John Moore, Co-President, UAA Staff Council
- Mathew Mund, Vice President, UAF Staff Council
- Josh Watts, Vice President, SW Administration Assembly

UA Staff Alliance held the annual retreat on Aug. 17 in Fairbanks. President Jim Johnsen, Vice President Michelle Rizk, Vice President Paul Layer, Director of Benefits Erika Van Flein, Director of HR Accounting and HRIS Michelle Pope, Director of Compensation Tara Ferguson, Chief Title IX Officer Mary Gower, and Associate General Counsel Rachel Plumlee were in attendance to discuss the upcoming FY20 budget development, employee compensation, employee benefits, responsible employees under Title IX, and employee morale. Outgoing Alliance Chair Kara Axx encouraged Staff Alliance to continue tracking changes to staff emeritus regulations and participation of governance with executives.

Josh Watts (SW) was elected chair of Staff Alliance and Brenda Levesque (UAA) was elected vice chair. They are excited to have the opportunity to represent their fellow staff to President Johnsen and the Board of Regents. As a result of several years of steep budget cuts, it is no secret that all employees in the UA System are dealing with increasing responsibilities, fewer resources and increasing stress. Over the next year, Staff Alliance is looking forward to working on improving staff morale, empowering employees at to create efficiencies while increasing levels of service, continuing work towards equality in compensation and benefits, continuing representation of governance with UA Leadership, and providing quality communication back to our constituents.

Josh has been on campus since 2006, where he started as an undergraduate student at UAF studying Computer Science. Since then, he has been involved with UAF and UA in many roles, including as a student employee, a grant-funded employee for the OWL grant, a member of OIT's leadership team, and as the staff advisor for a number of clubs. Most recently, Josh has served as the OIT Customer Support Services Manager, and as the Vice President of SAA. While not in the office, Josh enjoys spending time with his wonderful wife, and they fill their life with adventures enjoying everything from Brazilian jiu-jitsu to live action role playing, video games, and the outdoors.

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