



UNIVERSITY  
*of* ALASKA

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*Many Traditions One Alaska*

## **Arts and Humanities Report**

April 11, 2017



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## **Team Charge, Scope and Goal, Members and Stakeholders**

### **Charge**

Weigh the options of pursuing collaborative opportunities including but not limited to common course numbering, common catalogue, course sharing, common curriculum committees.

### **Scope**

UAA College of Arts and Sciences, UAS School of Arts and Sciences,  
UAF College of Liberal Arts.

### **Goal**

Achieve better coordination and leveraging between the campuses to improve UA student success and potential cost savings.

### **Team Members**

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### **Key Stakeholders**

- ▶ Students - Current (Student Success)
- ▶ Student Family Members
- ▶ Faculty
- ▶ Alumni
- ▶ Staff
- ▶ Legislators
- ▶ Executive Leadership
- ▶ Donors in and out of State
- ▶ Community
- ▶ Potential Partners
- ▶ Employers

## Process Overview


The Arts & Humanities team is one of 7 teams in Phase 3 of Strategic Pathways. Phase 3 began January 30, 2017 when the teams met for the first time. During that first meeting, Session 1, there was a thorough orientation to the overall effort, and the charge, scope, and goal were refined. Most teams also identified the first iteration of potential options. In the weeks between Session 1 and the second meeting, Session 2 (February 27, 2017), the Arts & Humanities team continued to define its options with weekly teleconferences and virtual collaboration. The pros and cons for each option were developed in Session 2.

Since then the Arts & Humanities team has been continually refining its options with their pros and cons, the opportunities they present with their potential and challenges, and writing them into the following document. This report serves as the main source of information for the presentation to the Summit Team scheduled for April 11, 2017.

The liberal arts and sciences represent the core of any university, and so it proves with the UA system. Arts, humanities, and social and natural sciences account for the vast majority of student credit hours (SCH) and tuition revenue produced within the UA system. Arts and sciences courses also provide the foundation for students pursuing degrees in engineering, health, business, education, etc. Consequently, all three universities within the system have an obligation to provide students access to a broadly-based liberal education in the arts, humanities, social and natural sciences. These disciplines instill in their students' skill sets related to effective communication, critical thinking, analytical evaluation and empirical reasoning which employers consistently indicate are the most desired skills for their employees. The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) reports that nearly 93% of surveyed employers agree that "a candidate's demonstrated capacity to think critically, communicate clearly, and solve complex problems is more important than their undergraduate major." Further, NCHEMS reports that "by their mid-50s, liberal arts majors with an advanced or undergraduate degree are on average making more money those who studied in professional and pre-professional fields," meaning that liberal arts degrees are no less valuable in the long term.

The team's initial meeting demonstrated that Phase 3 of Strategic Pathways, at least as it pertained to Arts & Humanities, was a fundamentally different process than that undertaken in previous phases. The task the team was asked to undertake was also substantially different from previous iterations of Strategic Pathways. The team was not asked to consider any broad structural changes to the current UA system. Rather, our team was tasked to find ways to leverage our resources to make the maximum use of our diverse pool of faculty talent with an eye towards increasing student success. Any realization of cost savings would be a useful bonus, but was not the primary motive for our efforts.

The team was presented with four "options" the pros and cons of which we were asked to delineate. Initial discussions quickly established that these were not truly mutually exclusive options but rather opportunities to take action. And while each action possessed various pros and cons, we found it far more significant that each action provided its own unique potential for



growth of the institution as well as its own challenges to implement. Many of these actions, and others refined or created by the team, are in fact complementary.

The team also rejected the notion that common should be defined as being identical. Indeed, it was quite the opposite. The UA system consists of three distinct universities, rooted in distinct communities, with distinctly different faculty in terms of their areas of specialization, academic culture, and workload expectations. While many feel this to be a vice of the system, we firmly believe it to be a virtue. Our mutually supportive six actions are designed to take full advantage of the synergies to be found in our three distinct universities so that the total of the UA system may be more than the sum of its parts.

The Arts and Humanities team (like other teams in Phase 3) was larger and featured a greater faculty component than past teams. It consisted of 15 members, fourteen representing the administration, faculty and students of the three universities and one outside community member. Facilitated by Jen Jarvis, this mix proved to be very fruitful, with no one group within the universities or a stratum of individuals from any level of them able to dominate the discussions or drive the agenda. Indeed, all members possessed useful perspectives which provided insight and focus to our discussions. While it would be unfair to highlight any individual's contribution over any other the team would like to express our special appreciation for our two student team members and our community member.

## Action 1 – Common Course Numbering

### Narrative Description

The concept is that courses at the three units have common program prefixes (i.e. PHIL), common numbers (i.e. A101, F101, S101), common course titles (i.e. U.S. History I), and common course descriptions. The current initiative to align GER's across the universities based on their broadly shared content and student learning outcomes is a modest example of this, although one which still requires considerable time and effort. The team considered what would be required to implement a completely new numbering system providing common prefixes, numbers with standardized progression (100, to 200, to 300, to 400), titles and descriptions, including frequency of offerings.

### Key Change Elements

- ▶ Program/Offering Changes
  - Changes to course numbers, titles and course descriptions, and potentially course level
- ▶ Staffing Changes/Faculty Workload
  - Faculty would be required to coordinate efforts to agree on common numbers and undertake necessary curriculum changes
- ▶ Use of Facilities/Technology
  - No new technology required
  - If additional course numbers are added there will be some programming issues
- ▶ Access for Students
  - Requires updated catalogue copy and coordination for registration
  - Previous courses taken would need to be transferred into the new system
- ▶ Administration
  - No new administration needed
- ▶ Front-End Investment
  - Time, especially in terms of faculty and staff work hours
  - Significant time to develop and implement processes to manage new system
- ▶ Community (external) Engagement
  - Explaining our actions and building awareness among students and community members on need for and purpose of the change

## *Action 1 continued – Common Course Numbering*

**Key Takeaways:** There is no inherent virtue to common courses numbers. It matters what students are taught in a class, not what the number of the class is. Each university already possesses extensive transfer tables laying out course equivalencies. Instituting common numbers comprehensively would require starting a new system from scratch (while still maintaining the old). This would be a massively time consuming and highly expensive process. A far more efficient and effective solution is to map courses based on broadly shared content and student learning outcomes. Course mapping is the key prerequisite to realizing the full potential of other proposed actions.

### **Potential and Challenges**

#### **Potential**

- ▶ Opportunity for collaboration at universities
- ▶ Simplifies communication and student transfer once it is completed
- ▶ Helps community understand options

#### **Challenges**

- ▶ Course numbers do not matter, rather what students learn in a course
- ▶ May address symptom but not underlying issue for transfer students (see Action 3 DegreeWorks)
- ▶ Modest impact on student success
- ▶ Really time consuming, expensive, and difficult
- ▶ Requires a great deal of front-end investment (see addendum)
- ▶ A process is already ongoing for GER alignment to address the issue
- ▶ Creates redundancy
- ▶ Would extend timeline to create new courses
- ▶ Very complex (involves more than just changing numbers)
- ▶ Course numbers, once assigned, must remain assigned to the specific course, which can make aligning difficult because many common numbers will not be available
- ▶ Would also require a massively complex process involving alignment of credit hours and disciplines



*Action 1 continued – Common Course Numbering*

**Challenges continued**

- ▶ Solution to a problem which does not actually exist
- ▶ Common does not need to mean identical

**Further Analysis Needed**

- ▶ What programs are currently attempting this now?
- ▶ How will this option affect current initiatives, such as the GER Coordinating Task Force?
- ▶ Where would doing this be most beneficial to students?
- ▶ Precisely how “common” does the system need to be?
- ▶ How does this address student learning outcomes?
- ▶ If this action is designed to address the “transfer problem,” what is the data on students shifting between universities (within UA and from outside UA)?



## Action 2 – Common Public Accessible Degree Portal

### Narrative Description

An easily accessible website for students not yet enrolled and the general public to view and compare degree programs and course offerings in the arts and humanities across universities and campuses. This would make it easier for potential students to find what they need to complete their degrees and match their interests and skills. This change would better serve community members and other stakeholders who require easier navigation of the wide array of arts and humanities offerings throughout Alaska. The portal would demonstrate our commitment to creating a student-centered, service-oriented university, and highlight the centrality of the arts and humanities to the university mission.

### Key Change Elements

- ▶ Program/Offering Changes
  - None at first, although perhaps some would develop as a result of insights derived from familiarity with this comparative perspective
- ▶ Staffing Changes/Faculty Workload
  - Creation and maintenance of this site would require initial faculty input and a chunk of staff time going forward; also would need to be vetted regularly by Marketing
- ▶ Use of Facilities/Technology
  - Minimal hosting, no new tech
- ▶ Access for Students
  - Would increase access and give another option alongside DegreeWorks
- ▶ Administration
  - Supervision to ensure regular maintenance/updating and funding, mainly commitment needed
- ▶ Front-End Investment
  - Website building and faculty information and coordination--dependent on other options succeeding (Actions 3, 4, and 5)
- ▶ Community (external) Engagement
  - Community would have to demonstrate user satisfaction--might need to track progress from this portal to actual enrollment.

## *Action 2 continued – Common Public Accessible Degree Portal*

**Key Takeaways:** There is currently no means for potential students or the general public to see the distinct programmatic offerings of the three universities in one place. Access to such information will allow them to make better choices on which of the universities might best fit their interests regarding programs and assess their needs for various stages of degree completion. The portal would likely have to be built from scratch and user friendliness must be an absolute priority in its design and implementation.

### **Potential and Challenges**

#### **Potential**

- ▶ Provides a much broader door for the public to understand what the three universities offer
- ▶ Upfront decision-making could help students save time and money toward degree completion
- ▶ Impact on recruitment
- ▶ Highlights the distinctiveness of degree programs within the various universities
- ▶ Benefits all 3 universities
- ▶ May assist community in understanding the qualities of each university
- ▶ Increase collaboration between universities
- ▶ Creates awareness of differences among the three universities
- ▶ Opportunity to create links for communication to each university for potential students
- ▶ Can assist potential students to find the best “fit” among the universities
- ▶ High community impact
- ▶ Timeline is shorter than Action 1
- ▶ Impact is greater than Action 1

#### **Challenges**

- ▶ Highly complex system requiring lots of coordination
- ▶ System would need to be regularly maintained
- ▶ Marketing would have to be closely involved and dedicate time to this, along with IT (it is essentially a marketing piece)
- ▶ Implementation timeline unclear and may have costs



*Action 2 continued – Common Public Accessible Degree Portal*

**Potential continued**

- ▶ Well received by public and legislature
- ▶ Publically demonstrates coordination between universities
- ▶ Strong potential for impact on student success

**Further Analysis Needed**

- ▶ How will IT and Advancement need to be involved?
- ▶ How much prior work would have to be done by Disciplinary Coordinating Teams (Action 5) to make this as useful as possible?
- ▶ How is this impacted by other actions?
- ▶ What outside sources should be utilized in design and implementation?
- ▶ How can this system ensure the individuality of each university so that students can choose the right one from the outset?
- ▶ How difficult would it be to make using the site “easy/user friendly”?

## Action 3 – DegreeWorks - Upgrade to Include Course Equivalency

### Narrative Description

DegreeWorks is an online system that allows students and faculty advisors to access information regarding progress towards degree completion. The system currently provides campus specific coursework completed, a listing of courses required in order to complete a degree, and the ability to look up additional degrees. The system should be modified to show options for programs offered by all three universities (especially in “What If”) and to provide course options from other campuses that could fulfill GER and/or degree requirements. All information is currently specific to each university.

### Key Change Elements

- ▶ Program/Offering Changes
  - Few changes; improved access to information; fewer independent/directed studies being required in order to facilitate student degree completion (because students would be able to find other courses included at other universities to meet degree requirements)
- ▶ Staffing Changes/Faculty Workload
  - Fewer directed/independent study courses on faculty workload (which are difficult to quantify on faculty workloads)
  - Training for advisors
- ▶ Use of Facilities/Technology
  - DegreeWorks is already in use, would require significant update/revision
- ▶ Access for Students
  - Improved access to students to relevant information in their academic pursuits
- ▶ Administration
  - Three versions of DegreeWorks would need to be consolidated
- ▶ Front-End Investment
  - Potential significant upfront programming requirements
  - Coordination across universities to identify alignments
- ▶ Community (external) Engagement
  - At this time, none anticipated
  - Open up DegreeWorks (or similar functionality) to prospective UA students

### *Action 3 continued – DegreeWorks - Upgrade to Include Course Equivalency*

**Key Takeaways:** UA students like DegreeWorks and make good use of it. A system upgraded to give students the full range of their options within the entire UA system would considerably increase the return on our investment in it. It would provide UA the opportunity to gauge student demand for programs and courses in real time and aid decision making regarding where our scarce resources might most effectively be put. Such an upgraded system would increase student awareness of the potential benefits of course sharing (Action 4).

#### **Potential and Challenges**

##### **Potential**

- ▶ Augmentation to a program which students already use and are comfortable with
- ▶ High potential to increase student success and timely degree completion
- ▶ Could address underlying causes of student transfer issues
- ▶ Unlock potential ROI not being realized in DegreeWorks; maximize the use of program we already own
- ▶ Will support culture to cooperate more and focus on student sharing
- ▶ Impact on retention among transfer students
- ▶ Increase collaboration between universities
- ▶ Creates awareness of differences among the three universities
- ▶ Highlights the distinctiveness of degree programs within the various universities
- ▶ Can assist students to find the best “fit” among the universities
- ▶ Benefits students at all 3 universities
- ▶ Timeline is shorter than Action 1
- ▶ Impact is greater than Action 1
- ▶ Well received by public and legislature

##### **Challenges**

- ▶ Highly complex system requiring lots of coordination
- ▶ Implementation timeline unclear and may have costs
- ▶ Will require culture shift (to cooperate more and focus on student sharing)
- ▶ Would involve front-end training (front-line advising, faculty, and student)
- ▶ Student advising and registrars would have to be closely involved and dedicate some time to this, along with IT
- ▶ Investment needed
- ▶ Benefits may not be immediately realized



*Action 3 continued – DegreeWorks - Upgrade to Include Course Equivalency*

**Potential continued**

- ▶ Demonstrates coordination among universities to students
- ▶ Help to design new programs if we understand what students are looking for based on data from DegreeWorks

**Challenges continued**

**Further Analysis Needed**

- ▶ What is the potential impact on the current DegreeWorks systems at the three universities?
- ▶ What are the principal technical issues in implementing the change?
- ▶ Do the registrars have appropriate resources for the implementation?
- ▶ How much prior work would have to be done by Disciplinary Coordinating Teams (Action 5) to make this as useful as possible?
- ▶ How would needed culture shift be supported?
- ▶ What are opportunities for data analysis with the new system?
- ▶ Would this unequally impact certain departments, programs, etc.?

## Action 4 – Course Sharing Across Universities

### Narrative Description

Course sharing across universities to increase choice and frequency of course offerings and to diversify learning opportunities for students. Possibilities include courses offered at one university being open (via distance and online learning) to students at other universities. Alternatively, faculty or students from one university might temporarily teach/take courses at another university. While applicable to GER courses this action would be particularly relevant to upper division and graduate courses necessary for degree completion.

### Key Change Elements

- ▶ Program/Offering Changes
  - Limited changes to courses at each university
  - Access to courses at other universities would be increased/made easier
  - Degree requirements might be modified by allowing courses from other universities
  - Bundle classes for degrees/minors/certificates (including new degree options)
  - Academic calendar could be changed to accommodate courses offered in special time periods or blocks allowing students to travel between campuses and complete courses
- ▶ Staffing Changes/Faculty Workload
  - Increased IT support
  - Potentially larger class sizes
  - Coordinate advising within and among universities
  - Ongoing commitment for faculty resources to facilitate shared courses
  - Pedagogical implications; coordination of student learning outcomes
  - Increased opportunities for collaboration between faculty members
  - Classroom aides added at remote sites
- ▶ Use of Facilities/Technology
  - Improved technology and facilities for any online or distance delivery
  - Room and board options for visiting students
- ▶ Access for Students
  - Courses offered to students at multiple campuses
  - Frequency of course offerings to meet degree requirements would increase
  - Diversity of course offerings/access to faculty experience/knowledge increased
  - Bundle classes for degrees (including new degree options)
- ▶ Administration
  - Awareness of options; changes to advising
  - Ongoing commitment for faculty resources to facilitate shared courses
  - Changes to revenue sharing for shared courses/student credit hours

## *Action 4 continued – Course Sharing Across Universities*

- ▶ Front-End Investment
  - Technology, especially for distance as opposed to online learning
  - DegreeWorks changes/improvements
  - Coordination of registrars
  - Disciplinary teams would need to collaborate on shared courses
  - Commitment for faculty resources to facilitate shared courses
  - Possible travel costs for faculty and/or students
- ▶ Community (external) Engagement
  - Improved cooperation between universities
  - Provides more pathways to enroll in degree programs at any of the three universities

**Key Takeaways:** This is how synergies utilizing the distinct mix of faculty specialization and course offerings within the UA system is ultimately realized. Modest experimental efforts in this direction led by faculty at the three universities are already underway. We can make more efficient use of the talent of our faculty and more efficiently provide for the needs of our students. However, it requires a commitment to provide the necessary elements for true “distance” as opposed to “online” education or intensive residential class offerings.

### **Potential and Challenges**

#### **Potential**

- ▶ Could increase the range of upper division course options for students, allowing students to graduate in a more timely fashion
- ▶ Already being piloted in several programs, including philosophy, fisheries, business/management, chemistry, math, health, and engineering
- ▶ Fully utilizes the capacity of faculty
- ▶ Exposes students to faculty talent at other campuses
- ▶ Fewer directed studies, independent studies courses on faculty workload

#### **Challenges**

- ▶ Lack of facilities/technology
- ▶ Logistical difficulties for faculty, students attempting to take courses at other campuses
- ▶ Requires time, money, and resources to coordinate appropriately
- ▶ Requires an institutional shift to incentives for course sharing
- ▶ Challenges in coordination of course offerings
- ▶ Cost for travel and IT infrastructure
- ▶ Investment of faculty time for course development for compressed or distance delivery courses



## *Action 4 continued – DegreeWorks - Upgrade to Include Course Equivalency*

### **Potential continued**

- ▶ Cost saving by sharing teaching expertise
- ▶ Fewer upper division courses canceled due to low enrollments
- ▶ Improved access for rural and non-traditional students when delivered by distance learning
- ▶ Positive attention for university from community
- ▶ May allow teachers to teach more in their desired area
- ▶ Highlights the distinctiveness of degree programs among the universities
- ▶ Supports a sharing culture shift
- ▶ Opportunities to reinvest money
- ▶ Requires a high level of collaboration
- ▶ Compressed courses would be attractive to nontraditional students

### **Challenges continued**

- ▶ Not all courses are amenable to sharing or intensive delivery
- ▶ Some shared courses may need to be taught in compressed course blocks (i.e. “wintermester”), which do not exist at all universities
- ▶ Distance courses require more time for faculty to teach effectively
- ▶ Potential competition for tuition dollars
- ▶ Lower pay for summer course teaching may be a disincentive

### **Further Analysis Needed**

- ▶ Who gets the student credit hours? What costs are associated with multi-campus delivery?
- ▶ Who shoulders travel costs and/or provides housing?
- ▶ What are the intellectual property issues?
- ▶ How will this be reflected in faculty workloads?
- ▶ How do we plan availability of shared courses? (see Action 5)
- ▶ How do you support the culture shift?
- ▶ How much prior work would have to be done by Disciplinary Coordinating Teams (Action 5) to make this as useful as possible?
- ▶ How is this impacted by other actions?
- ▶ What measures would be used to support incentives for course sharing?
- ▶ How would this be marketed to current students?
- ▶ Are there limitations to alternative classes?
- ▶ How do we coordinate offerings? (see Action 5)
- ▶ How stable/sustainable are course rotations?

## Action 5 – Disciplinary Coordinating Teams

### Narrative Description

Teams comprised of faculty within a discipline from each university would initially map their courses for broadly shared content and student learning outcomes. Subsequently, the teams would periodically discuss program/course offerings, specializations, methodology, modifying student learning outcomes, academic assessment, etc. Provides faculty led coordination for resource-sharing, quality of programs, and student success. This option enables the implementation of all other options. It would also be the vital prerequisite for eventually moving to a transfer system like the WICHE Passport.

### Key Change Elements

- ▶ Program/Offering Changes
  - Potential for course sharing, coordinating course rotations, diversification of programming, faculty development
- ▶ Staffing Changes/Faculty Workload
  - Staff support to coordinate meetings/travel
  - Time commitment of faculty and workload considerations to serve on the team
- ▶ Use of Facilities/Technology
  - Widespread and reliable distance technology
  - Increased bandwidth on and off campus
- ▶ Access for Students
  - Wider range of academic options
  - Increased access to electives, specialized faculties, specialized facilities, and diverse students
- ▶ Administration
  - Increased need for support and communication among the deans at each of the 3 universities and among the community campus directors
- ▶ Front-End Investment
  - Travel, technology upgrades, faculty workload (continuing)
- ▶ Community (external) Engagement
  - More diverse engaged learning opportunities (service learning, etc.)

## *Action 5 continued – Disciplinary Coordinating Teams*

**Key Takeaways:** Actions 2, 3, and 4 cannot be realized without this action being taken first (and doing so would obviate Action 1). It would also be critical to fostering a culture of communication and coordination among the faculty to maintain broad alignment in matters such as GER's but perhaps to supplement, rather than compete with, areas of specialization within the three universities. Would require heavy commitments of time and goodwill but also determination to break down habits of operating in silos both within and between the three universities present from time out of mind.

### **Potential and Challenges**

#### **Potential**

- ▶ Provides fundamental groundwork for the success of other options
- ▶ Could eventually drive hiring decisions to make the range of expertise within the state more diverse
- ▶ Building a culture of coordination and communication
- ▶ Can provide mapping of course outcomes for us in determining transfer or equivalency of courses between universities (see Action 4)
- ▶ Foster a culture of communication and collaboration within and between universities
- ▶ Could facilitate opportunities beyond curriculum for programs, departments, faculty, and students to work/learn together
- ▶ Would help students and advisers plan better for degree completion and deal with contingencies in faculty availability (due to illness, sabbatical, etc.)

#### **Challenges**

- ▶ Wide variance in implementation presents opportunities for dysfunctional process
- ▶ Potential to morph from opportunity to burden
- ▶ Impact on service load for faculty on the team
- ▶ Requires a minimum level of faculty engagement to be successful
- ▶ Coordination takes time
- ▶ Requires a minimum amount of administrative accountability between universities and community campuses



*Action 5 continued – Disciplinary Coordinating Teams*

**Potential continued**

- ▶ Provides a potential institutional “home” to deal with implementation challenges created by various system and program changes necessitated by strategic pathways
- ▶ Provides disciplinary peer support and brainstorming options for program leaders/chairs

**Further Analysis Needed**

- ▶ How can we institutionalize this cooperation so that it’s not overly dependent on especially communicative faculty members?
- ▶ How will each team work to complete the tasks referenced in other options: coordination of transferring from one university to another; coordination of offerings for public access portal; coordination of shared courses?
- ▶ What is the makeup of the team and how is it determined?
- ▶ What will constitute a “discipline” for the purposes of forming a team?
- ▶ How is this reflected on faculty workloads?
- ▶ How do we avoid the opportunity presented by this from becoming a burden?

## Action 6 – Strengthen and Expand Support for High-Impact Teaching Practices

### Narrative Description

System-wide commitment and resources for faculty development and academic support for teaching with high-impact practices. Increased and equitable access for diverse students to high-touch, experiential learning opportunities, which has been shown to correlate with retention and completion. A particular course may be high-impact learning. A particular program or initiative could also be high impact learning. In the single course example, it should not be assumed that all classes or faculty will utilize high-impact practices. If the high-impact practice is programmatic, this would be a commitment those program faculty would support.

### Examples of High-Impact Practices include:

[https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/LEAP/HIP\\_tables.pdf](https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/LEAP/HIP_tables.pdf)

- First-Year Experiences
- Common Intellectual Experiences
- Learning Communities
- Writing-Intensive Courses
- Collaborative Assignments and Projects
- Diversity/Global Learning
- Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
- Internships

### Key Change Elements

- ▶ Program/Offering Changes
  - Increased use of high-impact practices
- ▶ Staffing Changes/Faculty Workload
  - Staff support for some types of practices; faculty time for development and delivery
  - Possible need to develop transcribing processes
- ▶ Use of Facilities/Technology
  - Possible need for specialized space; highly variable
- ▶ Access for Students
  - Increased access to proved experiences to improve educational outcomes
  - Increased proportion of students participating both in class and outside
- ▶ Administration
  - Risk management
- ▶ Front-End Investment
  - Faculty development, resources, travel
- ▶ Community (external) Engagement
  - Need to develop community partners for many types of high-impact learning experiences

## *Action 6 continued – Strengthen and Expand High-Impact Practices*

**Key Takeaways:** At the level of practice, nothing faculty can do will improve student success more than this. Engaged, challenged students perform better in the classroom. However, each faculty must teach their students according to their own strengths and proclivities. So while opportunities for faculty to develop and employ high-impact practices in their classes must be provided, the provision of high-impact practices by all faculty cannot be mandated. Exposure to high-impact practices needs to be available to students wherever and through whichever modality classes are taught.

### **Potential and Challenges**

#### **Potential**

- ▶ Proven to increase student success, degree completion, and retention
- ▶ Many options available for unique interests and faculty expertise
- ▶ Many options available for unique interests and student learning experiences
- ▶ Great recruitment “tool” for students
- ▶ Many programs and/or faculty already do this
- ▶ Increases faculty morale and potentially retention
- ▶ Supports educational needs of nontraditional students
- ▶ Enhances diverse scheduling options for students
- ▶ Could drive private fundraising and/or research revenues

#### **Challenges**

- ▶ Certain high-impact practices require much higher levels of institutional support, engagement, and commitment
- ▶ Requires resources for faculty development and training
- ▶ Cannot be utilized by faculty with large numbers of highly enrolled sections
- ▶ Requires some flexibility in scheduling

### **Further Analysis Needed**

- ▶ How to incentivize faculty implementation and curriculum development while maintaining academic freedom?
- ▶ These high-impact practices should be a major part of the recruitment effort for students and facilitated by a concerted effort to communicate between advising, faculty, marketing. How would recruiting occur to target populations of students?
- ▶ How can access to these experiences be equitable for students across the state?
- ▶ How can faculty be encouraged to offer classes utilizing high-impact practices?
- ▶ How would impact on student recruitment, learning, retention, and completion at an institutional level be gauged?

## Other Opportunities for Change

- ▶ LEAP <https://www.aacu.org/leap>
- ▶ WICHE Passport <http://www.wiche.edu/passport/home>

### Necessary Cultural Change

The University of Alaska System is composed of three separately accredited universities. Each of these universities is rooted in a distinct community and has adapted to meet its needs. Each of these universities has areas of specialization and core competencies rooted in their distinct locations and the needs of the populations they serve. The differences in the three universities are manifest in their distinct faculties, which pursue research in varying areas, operate within heterogeneous institutional cultures, and must fulfill workload requirements particular to the universities where they are based.

For far too long perceived “redundancies” within the three universities have been presumed to be wasteful indulgences rather than necessary components needed to meet the needs of the people and communities we serve. For far too long the three universities have been forced to play a zero-sum game, vying for the lead role instead of focusing on their strengths and what is best for their students and their regions. The truth, however, is that the missions of the three universities must be to become the best university for the people of the regions they serve. The collaboration for excellence that this report endorses is simply not compatible with either homogenization of our universities or programmatic competition between them.

The time has now come to end the zero-sum game, to acknowledge the separateness and embrace the distinctiveness of the three universities, and to encourage collaboration and harness the synergies inherent in their particular specialties, competencies, locations and populations to make the University of Alaska System add up to more than the sum of these three institutions.



## **Addenda**

- ▶ Liberal Arts Grads Win Long-Term
- ▶ Liberal Arts Graduates and Employment
- ▶ UAF Registrar's Office Initial Thoughts Regarding Common Course Numbering
- ▶ High-Impact Practices Create a Roadmap to Success at Brookdale Community College
- ▶ Support for High-Impact Practices - A New Tool for Administrators