

## **UA Strategic Pathways Implementation Plan for Engineering**

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Engineering SP Implementation Team:

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### Summary

Following the submission of the report entitled “Strategic Pathways – Streamlining Engineering Education in Alaska” in August 2016 by the engineering review team, UA President Johnsen determined a set of recommended directions that were presented to the Board of Regents (BoR) at their September meeting in Juneau. After some discussion, the BoR approved President Johnsen’s direction statement which included the following:

- 1) Collaborative model with current administrative structure; no structural change and no BoR action required.
- 2) Require common course numbering/descriptions, a common curriculum committee, joint advisory board, and course sharing to gain economies of scale for FY 2018.
- 3) Report annually to UA VPAAR on progress.
- 4) Revisit in five years.

Following the BoR approval, the Engineering SP Implementation Team listed above was convened by VPAAR Dan White with the charge to identify and describe the steps needed to implement the approved direction and develop a timeline and metrics for the implementation process. The specific action items to be accomplished are listed in bullet point 2) above. However, during discussion additional points concerning cross-campus collaboration in faculty hiring and research collaboration were added to the action item list.

Three meetings were held in early October among the implementation team members and VPAAR White. During the course of those meetings, specific elements of the implementation plan were developed. Plans for implementing each of the specific action items are described in the paragraphs below and an overall timeline is suggested in the attached Gantt chart.

#### A. Common Course Numbering & Descriptions

The colleges are committed to improving the alignment of their curricula via common course numbering and descriptions when similar offerings exist on both campuses. It is envisioned that most core engineering courses in degree programs that are common to both campuses will be aligned in this manner. Work on this action item will begin immediately (October 2016) with the development of engineering course inventories for both campuses (Fig. 1, 1<sup>st</sup> entry). These course listings, along with existing UAA/UAF course transfer databases, will be used by the associate deans to develop a list of common courses to be considered for homogenized numbering/description. This list will then be used by UAA and UAF department chairs to initiate detailed discussions on homogenized courses and formulate a plan to involve faculty in the actual process of arriving at common numbering and

descriptions. Those chair-to-chair discussions will take place at an already-scheduled joint department chair retreat to be held on November 11 (Fig. 1, 3<sup>rd</sup> entry). Detailed plans for common course numbering/descriptions will be initiated in a joint chairs teleconference to be held in January 2017 (Fig. 1, 8<sup>th</sup> entry). Departmental faculty will then work to modify/unify courses selected for homogenization during the January-May time period (Fig. 1, 9<sup>th</sup> entry). Finalized plans for common course numbers/descriptions will be reviewed by the department chairs at a second retreat to be held at the end of the 2016-17 academic year (Fig. 1, 12<sup>th</sup> entry). The course alignment process will be completed during the Fall 2017 semester by completing the required Faculty Senate course-change paperwork on both campuses and then following the process through to ensure catalog changes are scheduled (Fig. 1, entries 15 & 16).

#### B. Course Sharing

In order to gain economies of scale and increase student/faculty ratios, the colleges are committed to a plan of course sharing. Improvements in course offering efficiency will be realized as individual course enrollments grow using the course sharing model where a single faculty member is utilized to teach students simultaneously on both campuses. In order to achieve this, planning is required to synchronize the offering of similar or identical courses on both campuses. While some course sharing has already occurred, we are committed to increase the number of engineering courses shared between the campuses on the order of ten per semester. Planning for AY2017-18 course sharing will be initiated at the November 11 joint department chair retreat (Fig. 1, 4<sup>th</sup> entry). These plans will then be finalized during the May joint department chair retreat (Fig. 1, 13<sup>th</sup> entry).

#### C. Common Curriculum Committee

Currently each college has its own internal curriculum committee. The function of these committees is to conduct internal reviews of requested curricular changes before the change requests are sent to each faculty senate for approval. The approved direction includes a call for a common curriculum committee with the presumed intent of keeping curricular changes on both campuses more aligned than in the past. The implementation team suggests that the common curriculum committee be formulated from a subset of the membership of each college curriculum committee, potentially just the two chairs of those committees. This will be implemented during the May joint department chair retreat based on detailed discussions to be held at that time (Fig. 1, 11<sup>th</sup> entry).

#### D. Joint Advisory Board

Currently each college maintains its own independent advisory body (The CEM Advisory and Development Council in the case of UAF, and the CoEng Advisory Board in the case of UAA). Each body has a membership of approximately 25 individuals. In the past we had maintained an additional advisory body, known as the Joint Engineering Advisory Council (JEAC) that was made up of a subgroup of each of the college's existing board members. The JEAC was active several years ago when UAA and UAF were working together to establish the need for new engineering facilities. The group has since become dormant. Our intention is that the direction to establish a Joint Advisory Board will be accomplished by re-establishing the JEAC with a specific charge and goals and with a formal regular meeting schedule. As before, the JEAC would consist of a subset of the existing UAF and UAA engineering advisory board membership. We will discuss options/charge/goals for the JEAC with our existing advisory boards during

the October 2016 – April 2017 time frame (Fig. 1, 10<sup>th</sup> entry), with the goal of having the JEAC active by the Fall 2017 time frame.

#### E. Research Collaboration

The August 2016 Strategic Pathways engineering report, referred to above, called for the establishment of a joint research council. This will be implemented by setting targets for research collaboration and establishing goals and objectives for the research council during the November 11 joint department chair retreat (Fig. 1, entries 5 & 6). The collaborative research goals will then be revisited during the May joint department chairs retreat. The May meeting will likely be attended by appropriate research directors, in addition to the department chairs, and it is the intent that final research council membership will be established at the meeting (Fig. 1, 14<sup>th</sup> entry).

#### F. Collaboration in Faculty Hiring

While no specific timeline is set for this in Fig. 1, the deans are committed to developing an effective plan for collaborating on faculty hires. The implementation team felt that this would most effectively occur at the level of the deans prior to finalizing hiring plans and turning the process over to individual hiring committees. The August 2016 Strategic Pathways engineering report, referred to above, called for the establishment of a dean's council to be made up of the two deans and associate deans. The dean's council will be used to implement collaboration in faculty hires as part of the council's regular discussions. The deans will also communicate with their respective provosts as the provosts are also a critical part of the faculty hiring approval process. Specific plans/protocols for collaboration on hiring will be developed by the deans in conjunction with the respective provosts before the end of the AY2016-17 academic year and will be reported to VPAAR White as part of the annual reporting process.

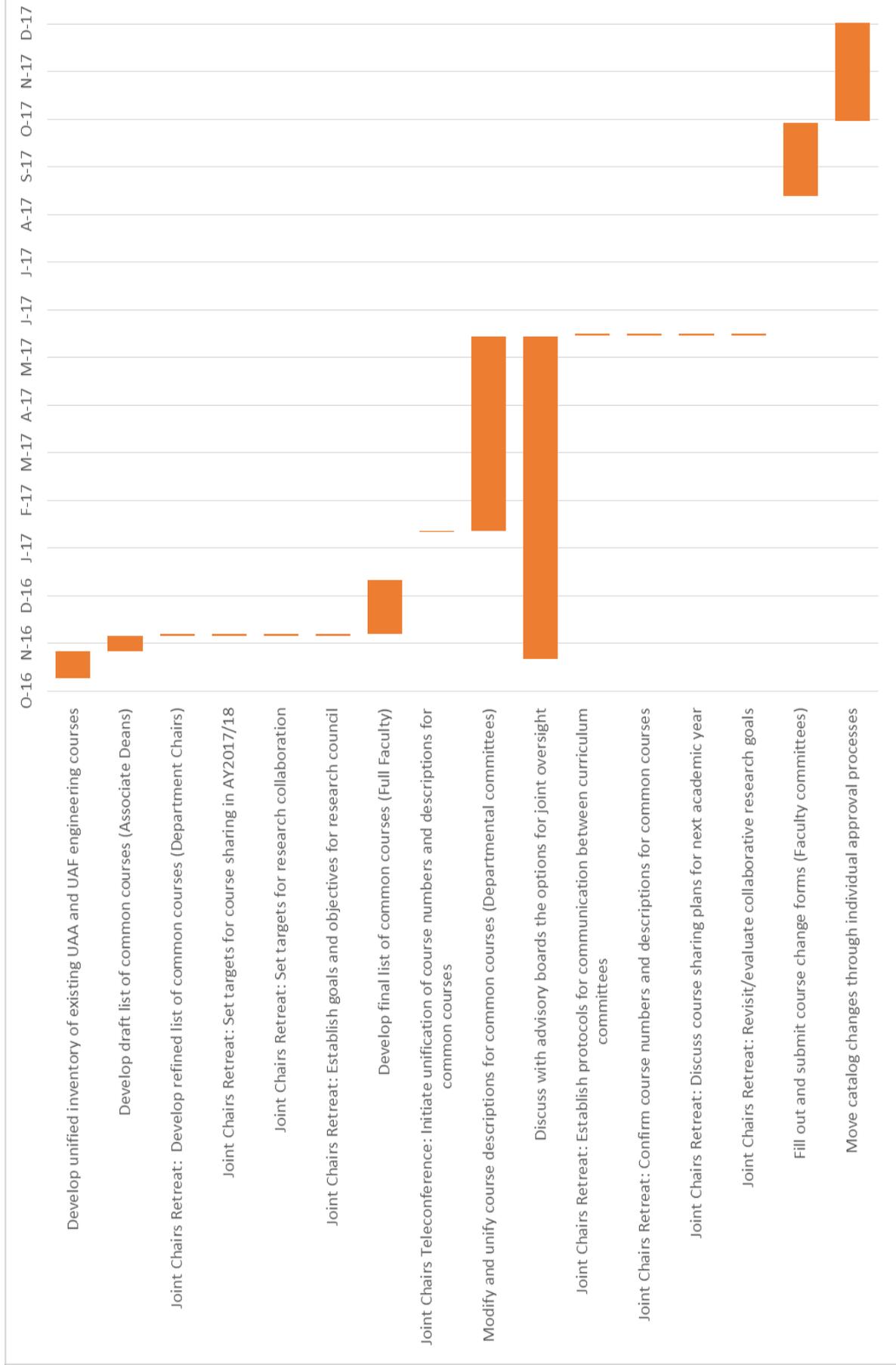


Figure 1. Implementation Schedule