

# eLearning Team Presentation

**Charge:** Develop and review options for organizational restructuring including but not limited to further decentralization, consolidation at one campus, or consolidation at SW of functions that support significant enrollment growth and student attainment through outsourcing, automation, intercampus collaboration, process standardization, and other means TBD by the team.

**Scope:** Production, marketing, and management of fully online and on-line hybrid classes across the system.

**Goals:** Increase access to the university, decrease unnecessary duplication, and increase efficiency.



UNIVERSITY  
of ALASKA

*Many Traditions One Alaska*

UA Strategic Pathways  
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# Team Members

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# Key Stakeholders

- ▶ Students
- ▶ Faculty
- ▶ Staff
- ▶ Executive Leadership
- ▶ Board of Regents
- ▶ Community – Local Governments and Native Corps
- ▶ Grantors
- ▶ Vendors
- ▶ Regulators
- ▶ Employers
- ▶ Parents
- ▶ Alumni
- ▶ Legislators

# Points to Consider in Scope and Emphasis

- ▶ Substantial recent growth in UA eLearning
- ▶ Options emphasize supporting continued growth, not cost savings
- ▶ Courses/programs are offered by faculty/departments/schools
- ▶ Options address management of:
  - ▶ eLearning support services, instructional design (production)
  - ▶ marketing and enrollment management opportunities (marketing)
  - ▶ eLearning enrollment management and decision-making (management)
- ▶ Option outcomes depend on implementation
- ▶ The team wrestled with a common definition for eLearning

# Options

Option 1 – Cooperative Decentralization

Option 2 – Complete Outsourcing to Vendor

Option 3 – Consolidating eLearning Support Services at one University

Option 4 – Centralization at UA Statewide

Option 5 – eLearning Inter-University Consortium

# Option 1: Cooperative Decentralization

Administrative management is retained at each university. eLearning central offices are identified at each university, and a collaborative statewide working group is established. Each institution maintains parallel services to serve local academic programs.

- Local support
- Straightforward alignment with NWCCU accreditation and SARA administration
- UA-wide eLearning cooperative structure
- The most conservative change option

# Option 1: Pros and Cons

## Pros

- ▶ Builds on recent growth
- ▶ Maintains local support for both students and faculty
- ▶ Easiest to scale
- ▶ Least disruptive
- ▶ “Stepping-stone option”

## Cons

- ▶ Fewer opportunities for economy of scale
- ▶ Doesn't address inconsistencies
- ▶ More difficult to go lean
- ▶ Most duplication and least standardization

# Option 2: Complete Outsourcing to Vendor

UA contracts with an online program management (OPM) vendor. Vendor selects a handful of UA programs desirable for investment. Vendor coordinates all aspects of program development and delivery.

- Vendor contracts for select programs based on profitability
- UA decides whether to retain or eliminate other online programs
- Vendor assumes some degree of curricular control
- Vendor handles all marketing and recruitment
- Long-term contracting



# Option 2: Pros and Cons

## Pros

- ▶ Aggressive marketing outside AK
- ▶ Standardized student services
- ▶ Zero up-front costs
- ▶ Potential short-term savings

## Cons

- ▶ Vendor cherry-picks best programs
- ▶ Vendor offers programs, not courses
- ▶ Work and revenue sent out-of-state
- ▶ Packaged course content; limited innovation/responsiveness
- ▶ Compromised ability of UA to deliver courses/programs after contract expires
- ▶ Excludes community partners and local concerns
- ▶ Non-competition clauses

# Option 3: Consolidate eLearning Support Services at One University

Consolidates all eLearning support functions at a single university with minimal (or no) parallel support at other universities.

- eLearning support originates from a single location (similar to a call center)
- Centralized eLearning staff serve faculty offering courses at all three universities
- All eLearning operations are regularized
- Support staff address programs, accreditation themes, and student affairs policies of all three universities

# Option 3: Pros and Cons

## Pros

- ▶ Facilitates statewide marketing
- ▶ Decreases duplication
- ▶ Streamlines vendor management
- ▶ Supports strategic enrollment management

## Cons

- ▶ Disruptive transition for staff, faculty, and students
- ▶ Support staff geographically separated from academic units
- ▶ Instructional design grant monies don't transfer to the central campus
- ▶ Costly to implement

# Option 4: Centralization at UA Statewide

Consolidates all eLearning support functions at UA Statewide offices.

- eLearning support originates from UA statewide
- Centralized eLearning staff serve faculty offering courses at all three universities
- All eLearning operations are regularized
- Support staff address programs, accreditation themes, and student affairs policies of all three universities

# Option 4: Pros and Cons

## Pros

- ▶ Facilitates statewide marketing
- ▶ Decreases duplication
- ▶ Streamlines vendor management
- ▶ Supports strategic enrollment management

## Cons

- ▶ Inconsistent with Statewide mission (operations vs policy and administration)
- ▶ Disruptive transition for staff, faculty, students
- ▶ Instructional design grant monies don't transfer to the statewide office
- ▶ Support staff geographically separated from academic units
- ▶ Risk of policy discussion without user governance
- ▶ Most costly to implement

# Option 5: eLearning Inter-University Consortium

Creates a formal partnership between all three universities. Support services and administrative management are retained at each university. Consortium includes representatives from central eLearning offices at each each university. Formal articulated policy, governance structure, and potential for formal relationships with key stakeholders is created.

- Parallel local services at each institution
- Straightforward alignment with NWCCU accreditation and SARA administration
- Articulated UA-wide eLearning structure
- The Consortium acts as a single body to:
  - ▶ Serve as a point-of-contact for UA statewide
  - ▶ Engage in system-wide strategic enrollment management for eLearning
  - ▶ Manage statewide marketing for online programs
  - ▶ Contract collaboratively for products/services

# Option 5: Pros and Cons

## Pros

- ▶ Formalizes intent to increase quality
- ▶ Capitalizes on institutional strengths
- ▶ Keeps support near academic programs
- ▶ Promotes shared strategies for enrollment management
- ▶ Builds on recent growth

## Cons

- ▶ May create more bureaucracy
- ▶ Requires some additional staff
- ▶ May require additional time for new program development

# Role of eLearning

What is eLearning's role at UA? (what problem does it solve?)	Will the role be addressed efficiently through this option?				
	Decentralized	Outsource	Centralized at one University	Centralized at Statewide	Consortium
Expand access: Target non-traditional Alaskan students	maybe	no	yes	yes	yes
Attract students from outside Alaska	maybe	yes	maybe	maybe	maybe
Facilitate seamless experience for multi-campus students	maybe	no	yes	yes	yes
Improve recruitment and retention of campus-based students	yes	no	no	no	yes
Reduce time-to-degree for campus-based students	yes	no	maybe	maybe	yes
Improve recruitment and retention of online degree students	maybe	maybe	yes	yes	yes



# Other Opportunities for Change

- ▶ Shared vocabulary for eLearning and standardized coding/reporting
- ▶ Easily-navigable website listing all distance education offerings
- ▶ Centralized marketing for online/distance programs
- ▶ A common, well-produced student orientation to online learning
- ▶ Support programs for on-boarding non-traditional Alaskan students with some college credit (e.g. UAS Finish College Alaska)

# Further Analysis Needed

- ▶ Organizational and governance structure for eLearning offices/teams
- ▶ Funding for eLearning teams-- all options require additional support
- ▶ Impact of restructuring on existing federal grants
- ▶ Impact of transition period on students, faculty, and staff
- ▶ Impact on accreditation and SARA
- ▶ Relationship between eLearning offices/teams and OIT

# Q&A