

MEETING THE MOMENT

A Vision for the University of Alaska Fairbanks

William Schnabel

Candidate for Chancellor

University of Alaska Fairbanks · 2026





We are engaged Alaskans.
We are UAF.



AMERICA'S ARCTIC UNIVERSITY

My View

America's Arctic university is more than a geographic designation.

It is a set of values, obligations, and opportunities.



Small in Number

≈11,000 Students/Staff/Faculty

Immense in Scope

Occupational Endorsements to PhDs, 6 campuses across Alaska, World-class research

Collaborative

Complex problems demand expertise across disciplines and across communities.

Nimble

Rapid change requires rapid action. We live this.

Resilient

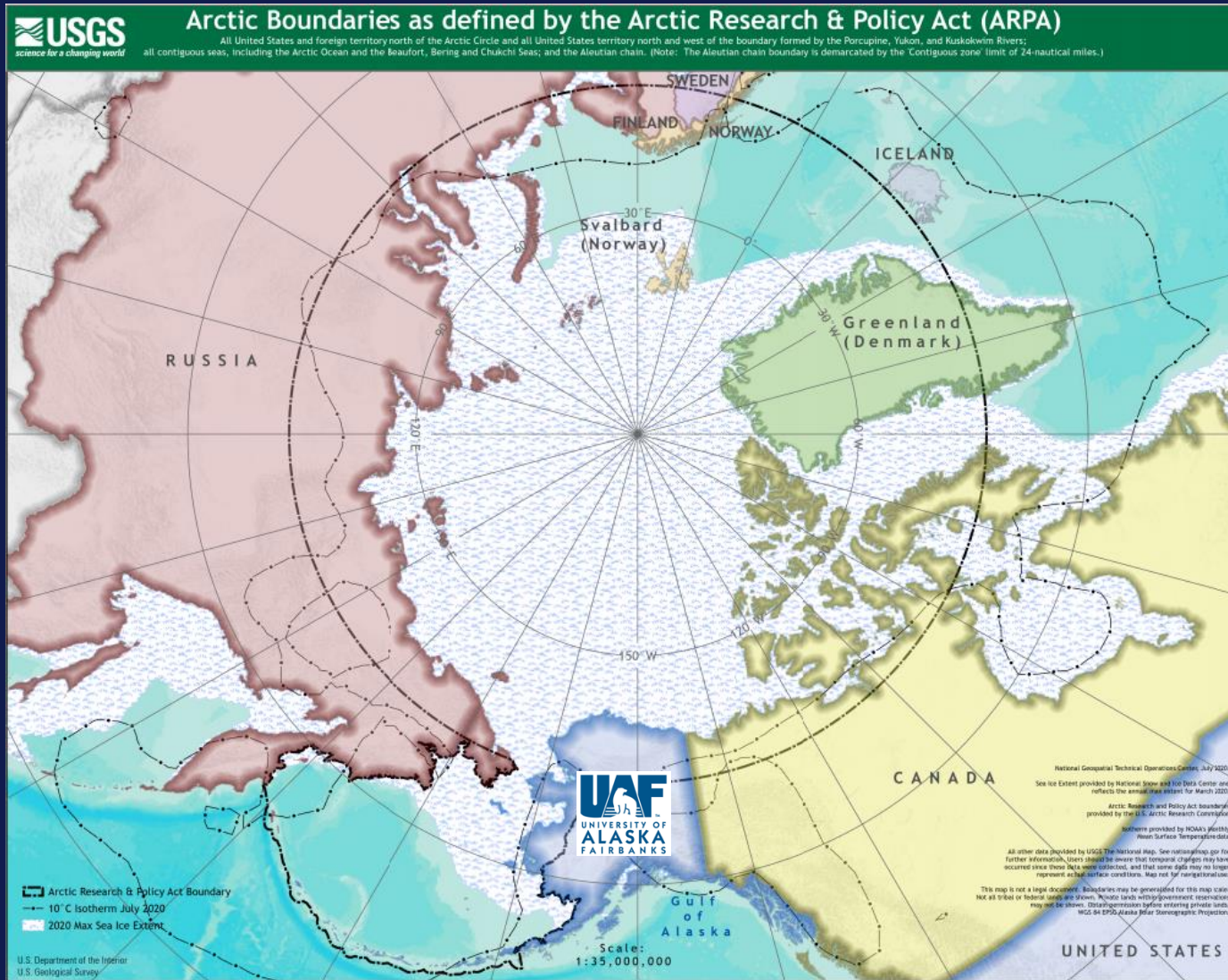
Our setting makes us tough. We bounce back.

Arctic Focused

We don't just study the Arctic. We are the Arctic.

AMERICA'S ARCTIC UNIVERSITY

The World View — UAF at the circumpolar center



The eyes of the world are watching now.

Strategic Defense

Global Trade Routes

Natural Resources & Energy Security

Climate Change

THE WINDS OF CHANGE

These are uncertain times. Together as a team, we have the assets necessary to create opportunity.

ENROLLMENT CLIFF

Declining demographics are reshaping the higher education landscape nationally. UAF must compete differently.

FEDERAL FUNDING SHIFTS

Changes to federal research priorities and funding channels create disruption as well as opportunity.

CONSTRAINED STATE FUNDING

Alaska's fiscal environment requires UAF to diversify revenue and optimize academic offerings.

THE EMERGENCE OF AI

Graduates must be prepared to thrive in a workplace that has been fundamentally transformed by artificial intelligence.

I AM A LEADER OF TEAMS

Why I want to lead UAF — and what I bring to the table.

I build teams, not silos.

Every challenge I have faced has been solved by bringing the right people together and trusting them to lead.

I listen before I act.

The first months will be about learning: from faculty, staff, students, and partners across every community UAF serves.

I lead with transparency.

Shared problems require shared understanding. I will communicate openly, honestly, and often.

I am committed to UAF's mission.

This is not a stepping stone. This is where I want to make my mark.



THE GRAND CHALLENGES

Facing these challenges honestly is the first step to meeting them.

ALASKA'S GRAND CHALLENGES

Workforce Development & Outmigration

Working-age people leaving at rates that undermine Alaska's long-term economic and civic capacity.

Physical & Institutional Infrastructure

Aging systems, food and energy insecurity, decreased school funding, scarce medical care.

Volatile, Undiversified Economy

Resource dependency creates cycles of boom and bust that constrain investment in people.

UAF'S GRAND CHALLENGES

Enrollment

Demographic shifts demand new strategies to attract, enroll, and retain students from every corner of Alaska and beyond.

Physical & Programmatic Infrastructure

Sustaining world-class facilities, optimizing our academic portfolio, and fostering an identity of promise

Uncertain Financial Support

Navigating changes in federal priorities while protecting and growing our research enterprise.

THE LAMP

Three principles. One university. An unlimited future.



THE LAMP

We draw people in.
We offer education at every level.
We build Alaska's workforce.

THE LAMP · THE LODGE

Three principles. One university. An unlimited future.



THE LAMP

We draw people in.
We offer education at every level.
We build Alaska's workforce.



THE LODGE

We offer belonging.
We build a place worth coming to.
We invest in who we are.

THE LAMP · THE LODGE · THE LOCOMOTIVE

Three principles. One university. An unlimited future.



THE LAMP

We draw people in.
We offer education at every level.
We build Alaska's workforce.



THE LODGE

We offer belonging.
We build a place worth coming to.
We invest in who we are.



THE LOCOMOTIVE

We power the economy.
We drive innovation and research.
We advance Alaska through ideas.

THE PATH FORWARD

A strategic planning timeline grounded in who we are

**MONTHS 1–6
2026**

Listen & Assess

Evaluate progress on Strategic Plan 2027 across all six pillars. Build relationships. Learn from every corner of the university.

2027

Transition & Launch

Honor the existing plan through completion. Begin co-creating the next chapter — guided by The Lamp, the Lodge, and the Locomotive.

2027–2032

New Strategic Plan

A five-year roadmap built with the community. Goals that are bold, specific, and rooted in who UAF is and who it is becoming.

UAF'S FUTURE IS OURS TO CREATE.

*From the elders who first showed their children how to harvest troth,
to the graduates who walked across the stage last Saturday,
and everyone in between. This institution belongs to the people who believe in it.*



**We are community of engaged Alaskans.
It is our time to meet the moment.**

William Schnabel · Candidate for Chancellor