

Academic Council Notes

May 6, 2020; 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

[Zoom Recording and Transcript](#)

Present: Steve Atwater, Heather Batchelder, Karen Carey, Teri Cothren, Morgan Dufseth, Alex Fitts, Gwen Gruenig, Larry Hinzman, Jeff Jessee, Susan Kalina, Paul Layer, Jak Maier, Saichi Oba, Anupma Prakash, Priscilla Schulte, John Stalvey, Maria Williams

Action/Business:

1. Approve [April 1 Meeting Notes](#)

Faculty members objected to the brevity of the notes, especially the lack of narrative in support of any dissent. The notes do accurately capture the recommendations made by the Council on April 1, however, they do not include detailed opinions by each member. A link to the meeting recording and audio transcript are included as part of the meeting notes. Paul agreed he would work with his assistant on future meeting notes to ensure they capture the spirit of the meeting and any dissent given by members.

2. Program Action Requests

- a. [Revision – Associate of Applied Sciences in Computer Networking and Computer Systems Technology – UAA](#)

Discussion: John and Susan noted this was a combination of two programs; the revision has been under discussion for several years. Currently, one program is taught at MatSu College and the other on the Anchorage campus; there is slight overlap but they hope this revision will bring the programs together to meet needs and also make the programs more efficient by pooling resources; there was a lot of faculty involvement in the restructure. Maria noted this was approved on the consent agenda of the UAA Faculty Senate at a recent meeting.

Objections: none given

ACTION: VP Layer will forward this item to the BOR ASA agenda (either May 13 or 28), for final consideration by the Board at its June 2020 meeting.

b. [Revision – Bachelor of Science in Geological Engineering – UAF](#)

i. [Task Force Report](#)

Discussion: Anupma noted this revision was to move the BS and MS in Geological Engineering under Civil Engineering at UAF. This will help UAF capitalize on resources and faculty to provide courses for both programs. After surveying stakeholders, to help determine maximum need for the state, this was the plan that was developed to help support students and faculty in both programs. Maria noted she had heard concerns over the restructure from private industry in Alaska that this was creating a watered-down version of each program. Anupma noted both programs were at risk of becoming ineffective due to lack of faculty and resources if they did not take action and come up with a creative solution. Jak noted only one faculty from each program had been involved, and they were reducing the number of credits, and stated this should have been reviewed by the UAF Faculty Senate prior to review by the Academic Council; she also noted the task force had been handpicked by the dean and without open input from engineering faculty, as well as the fact that both the dean and chancellor are both civil engineers (and that it was unethical/professionally inappropriate for one kind of engineer to comment on or judge another form of engineering); also noted there was concern the new program would not meet ABET qualifications. Anupma noted the task force was developed at the request of a regent and that it was made up of three members, including one civil and one geological engineer. An open survey was sent out to all stakeholders and that feedback was aggregated to help guide the plan moving forward. From her perspective, this is a grassroots effort to determine the best use of current resources to meet state and student needs. The new plan was shared with all faculty in both programs. The way the new revision has been developed, it would still meet ABET requirements. Maria noted she had been told the Alaska mining engineering community opposed the revision (although no specific information to support this statement was provided); Jak stated some Alaskan engineering professionals have written in to oppose this change because they believe it will negatively affect the resource extraction industry, the state of Alaska and UAF. Paul noted he met with President Johnsen to discuss several of the concerns heard at the meeting today,

especially accreditation with so few faculty in the program. Also noted he has not seen any messages in support of the revision and that most of the feedback he received was critical of the restructure. Jak noted she felt it would be better to combine the civil engineering programs at UAA and UAF. John noted the task force report states there are only two universities that have combined civil and geological engineering programs. Objections: All three faculty members opposed the action request and expressed concern regarding the revision, however, other Council members were in support of the request and felt it was the best way forward to ensure the health of both disciplines at UAF and the state of Alaska.

ACTION: VP Layer will forward this item to the BOR ASA agenda (either May 13 or 28), for final consideration by the Board at its June 2020 meeting and will note the dissenting opinion on the agenda and in his comments to the committee.

c. [Revision – Master of Science in Geological Engineering – UAF](#)

See above discussion and outcome for Item 2b.

3. Notice of Intent – Paul

a. [Notice of Intent to Add - Occupational Endorsement Certificate in Culinary Arts - UAA](#)

Discussion: John noted they hoped to see an increase in interest in this OEC in the future, especially as restaurants and other businesses open back up following the COVID-19 closures. The proposal was developed by faculty at UAA. It was reviewed by the full UAA Faculty Senate curriculum process.

Objections: none

ACTION: Paul will include as a notice to the BOR ASA committee at one of its May meetings.

b. [Notice of Intent to Suspend \(Suspend with Intent to Discontinue\) – Refrigeration and Heating Programs – UAA](#)

John noted this request was rooted in the lack of interest due to outdated courses in the program from students and the heating/cooling industry. UAA is working to develop a one-year certificate that will better meet the needs of the industry and will result in an industry certification that meets federal standards/requirements. The new program will

go through the regular faculty and senate approval process when it is developed and ready for review.

Objections: none

ACTION: Paul will include as a notice to the BOR ASA committee at one of its May meetings.

4. Regents' Policy and University Regulation

a. [Regulation 05.10.070.B. Tuition and Student Fees](#)

Paul noted this was added to the agenda at the request of Anupma; he wanted to introduce this regulation revision today but wait until the next meeting to take any action. There has been concern about this clause because the fee question may influence a student's evaluation of a course. Karen noted they had been including this question all along and had not seen any detrimental effects. John noted UAA had been remiss and had not been including the question in the course evaluation surveys. Anupma noted UAF had changed the process for new fees so the requesting faculty member must put together a fee assessment that is evaluated by the dean, the financial office, and must include justification for the fee and how it will be used in support of the course (or courses--some fees are used to support a bundle of courses). Paul noted it would be good to continue a regular, periodic review of the necessity of a fee, however, it doesn't have to be tied to course evaluations. Ultimately, it is important to explain to the student where their money goes and how it is used but there could be another way of gauging whether a fee is appropriate. John noted he thought the clause that should be amended is the prescribed method of gathering that information; it would be more effective for each university to determine how it will get that input from the student. Paul stated he would like to see if the Council wanted to recommend modification of this regulation to remove the last part of the clause (*"and inclusion of a request for the level of satisfaction with the value received for such fee as part of the student's teacher/course evaluation"*) and provide a rationale and recommendation to the president. He asked members to ask for feedback within their respective areas and make a decision at the next Academic Council meeting. Jak asked if this was related to CTC students being required to pay fees for services they don't use (e.g. UAF's bundled

fee which includes the Student Rec Center and admission to sporting events); Anupma noted the bundled fee would not be subject to the requirements of this regulation (which is solely about fees that are incurred in support of materials and other resources for a specific course).

ACTION: Maria noted the faculty were about to go off contract so it would make more sense to take this issue back up in the fall. Other members didn't have any objections to this and Paul agreed to revisit it at the start of the fall semester.

Updates/Discussion:

5. [Faculty Alliance update](#) – Maria/Heather/Jak

As stated in her report, Maria noted they have sent two communiques to the BOR ASA committee regarding major procedural errors and confusion over budgets and cost savings. Their concern is that the budget information presented to the ASA on May 13 and 14 verged on fictional because the Faculty Alliance could not determine where the numbers had come from. Also, when the administration was directly asked about where the budget data came from, they couldn't or didn't answer. There is also concern over pink-slipping tenured faculty and eliminating unique programs. Maria noted the Faculty Alliance did not have the opportunity to call forward guests to speak to the proposed actions on the ASA committee agenda whereas the administration was allowed to bring whatever guest(s) that they chose to bring. Maria asked if Heather would be able to call forward guests at the next ASA meeting; Paul replied that invitations to speak were at the pleasure of the committee chair but that he would share these concerns with Regent Perdue.

Faculty members noted their concern about course modality in the fall and stated they expect faculty to lead the process for developing options for course delivery. They would like to serve on the committee that President Johnsen is asking the chancellors to form to address this issue; faculty need to be integral to the development of a way forward. They are still concerned with the top-down decision-making that led to the Alaska College of Education, which has turned out to be disastrous for education students. Maria also noted they are considering asking President Johnsen to require a 10-20% reduction in pay for all executives at UA, similar to what is taking

place at universities across the country; in the UA system this would save roughly \$4 million. They are also concerned about teach-out schedules, especially the ten programs that are still strong and viable. Teach-out schedules for those ten programs would likely take as much as four years. There is concern the Board is conflating the teach-outs for programs who have few current students and the ten programs that still have a large enrollment. A particular worry is about accreditation and how all of this will impact student success. Maria noted that these are not small concerns.

Jak noted she was concerned about the information being supplied to the Board and that it is one sided and that it does not allow them to make fully informed decisions. Ultimately, it will be bad for students and bad for the university.

Jak noted the UAF Faculty Senate passed a motion to protect the proprietary rights of the faculty in that they are the sole creators of their course content and modality *once the COVID-19 crisis has passed*, and that ultimately it is up to the faculty how they deliver their courses. Maria also noted the Alliance is likely to consider forming a task force to examine the lack of response from administration to governance communications. There needs to be a more creative solution to keep the academic integrity of courses that require face-to-face instruction due to the nature of the course. Susan asked Maria if she could share the memo regarding teach-out concerns with the deans at UAA; Anupma said she would do the same at UAF.

6. Dual enrollment update – Teri

Paul noted that Teri had recently been designated as the liaison for the state on workforce needs. Fred Villa, former AVP for Workforce at UA, is on the Governor's task force for COVID response to examine workforce needs. Teri has been asked to work with Fred to develop workforce programs to help with those efforts. Teri noted they were exploring the best way to approach this to leverage resources and noted it was in the preliminary phase but will need to include key stakeholders from each university. The dual enrollment update was postponed to the next meeting for the sake of time.

7. COVID-19 updates/issues

- a. Planning for Fall 2020 - Paul noted the administration was looking at how to ease up restrictions and begin to move to a more relaxed state, as well as to determine a plan in

the event of a second wave (especially how and when the university would implement restrictions again). They are working on developing FAQs for students and employees; local IMTs are addressing campus issues and will provide input at the local level.

b. Modes of delivery discussion

8. Academic Program review update – John/Anupma/Karen

Not too much of an update but the ASA agenda is under development and will include review of the three programs not finalized at the April ASA meeting.

9. May 13 Academic and Student Affairs committee meeting

a. Program Action Requests – three programs postponed at April ASA

b. Teach-out plans - detailed report on ELOs and teach-out plans

c. Community campus impacts - at the request of Regent Parker; Paul is working on a report now

10. Planning for May 28 ASA meeting - This meeting will address a couple regular program action requests (outside the expedited review); also an update on impacts of the COVID-19 shutdown on students; and a plan on how to address dropping enrollment due to the global pandemic and how UA can get students back to class (online or in-person). Maria noted the recent tuition increase, the termination of staff, and the reduction of services are all sending messages to students, potential students, and the general community that UA is considerate of their situations and cognizant of the change in quality of instruction and experience. John noted he supported the recall of the tuition increase for AY21 and reported he had heard students were waiting to enroll/register until they find out more about how instruction will take place in the fall.

11. June Academic Council meeting and AY21 scheduling

As currently scheduled, the next Academic Council meeting is the day before the June full Board meeting. He suggested finding a time to meet shortly after the BOR meeting so they could address any issues that may come up. Members did not have any objections to rescheduling the June AC meeting. Paul will have his assistant work on finding a new day/time.

Regarding the AY21 schedule, he asked everyone to work with his assistant on finding a new standing monthly meeting time. He noted the Council will meet over the summer and will work

with members, especially the faculty, on finding times that are suitable for at least the three provosts and three faculty members.

12. College of Education update – Steve/Paul - postponed to next meeting

13. Roundtable and future agenda items – All

14. Adjourn – The meeting adjourned at 11:03 a.m.

notes: mad