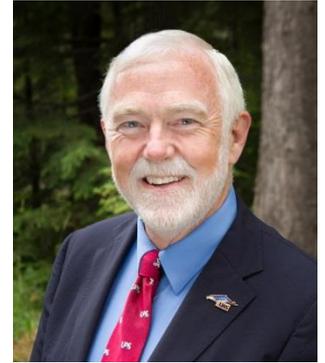


CHANCELLOR'S COMMENTS:

From UAS Chancellor Rick Caulfield



November 5, 2015

Dear UAS faculty and staff:

UAS is facing some significant recruitment and retention challenges, especially on our Juneau campus. In the period 2010-2014, overall student credit hour production at UAS fell 9.5 percent. This fall on the Juneau Campus, credit hours are down 10 percent compared with this time last year. The Sitka and Ketchikan campuses showed modest increases in credit hours, leading UAS overall to be down 3 percent compared to last year. Enrollments in programs offered largely online appear to be holding their own or even increasing modestly, but declines in campus-based programs are troubling.

We have an opportunity to change this, but all of us need to be involved. In short, all of us need to be UAS recruiters—placing recruitment and retention at the forefront of our work. Students tell us that one of the most valued aspects of coming to UAS is a close connection with talented faculty and staff. They tell us that personal interaction is one of the most important factors in deciding to attend our university. Marketing UAS in the media, including social media, is important. But students say that it is the personal engagement with faculty and staff and ‘word of mouth’ recommendations that really make the difference.

Retaining students who are already here is equally important. While we know that some students will eventually transfer, most will stay if they feel a part of an inviting community where they are challenged academically, find a supportive environment, and know that they can complete their degree in a timely way. Effective retention means knowing our students well—helping those who are struggling, who are challenged financially, or who are uncertain about staying.

The time to reverse enrollment declines is now. Prospective students are just now making decisions for next year. We’ve identified enrollment and retention as a major priority—through strategic marketing and enrollment management. A group of UAS faculty, staff, and administrators met recently with representatives from *Strategies 360*, a Seattle-based firm, to review current marketing efforts and to develop new strategies. This may well include our committing additional one-time funding to marketing and recruitment. You’ll be hearing more about these strategies soon.

A challenging factor is that the number of Alaska high school graduates is projected to decline in coming years—part of a statewide demographic change. This population is key to enrollments in Juneau. We need to re-double our efforts to reach these students, emphasizing what UAS provides: quality education at an affordable price, engagement with talented faculty, small class sizes and a supportive atmosphere, meaningful educational opportunities, and a beautiful place to live. We need to connect with high school counselors and teachers who influence decisions of prospective students—including recipients of Alaska Performance Scholarships (APS). And we need to encourage more transfer students from places like the Pacific Northwest where high school graduate numbers continue to grow. At the same time, we need to continue our successes in recruiting non-traditional students, both for our campus-based programs and for those online.

I invite your ideas and your engagement in improving recruitment and retention here at UAS. We’re all UAS recruiters! We know the great opportunities available at UAS. Let’s share that knowledge widely and see our enrollments and student retention increase. Thanks for your help!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rick Caulfield". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the word "Sincerely,".