

## **FROM THE PROVOST: April 6, 2015**

### **• UAS FY16 BUDGET DEVELOPMENT**

The Alaska State Senate just approved a University of Alaska operating budget that now must be reconciled with a House version. The current budget plan would bring a \$20M cut to the university system—about a 4.9% reduction compared to the current year. For UAS, this amounts to something like a \$2.3M reduction, although the precise number remains uncertain. In its budget, the Senate rejected negotiated FY16 pay raises for faculty and other unions. It is uncertain whether or not this will remain in the final version. Moreover, staff benefit rates have not yet been finalized. These and other factors will impact our final UAS budget allocation. A House-Senate conference committee will meet to reconcile operating budget differences before the final version goes to the Governor. For more information, see <http://www.alaska.edu/state/report/>

UAS is employing the Strategic Planning and Budget Advisory Committee (SPBAC) process to consider how to construct a FY16 budget. This includes identifying new revenue sources, reducing current costs, and anticipating likely FY16 reductions. All units have gone through a challenging exercise to consider how up to ten percent of their FY15 budget might be reduced. In the end, the SPBAC process will make recommendations about overall budget priorities, keeping in mind our UAS mission and core themes. Details about SPBAC process and meetings can be found at <http://www.uas.alaska.edu/vicechancellor/spbac.html>

### **• COMMENCEMENT EVENTS ON THE HORIZON**

UAS campuses are planning student commencement activities for the end of April and beginning of May. The UAS Sitka Campus graduation takes place on Friday, May 1, at 7pm in the Sitka Campus lecture hall. Ketchikan Campus holds its commencement on Saturday, May 2, at 3pm in the Ted Ferry Civic Center. The Juneau Campus holds its ceremony on Sunday, May 3, at 2pm. In addition, a hooding ceremony will take place in Anchorage for many students from across the state who are completing graduate degrees in Education and Public Administration.

### **• UA BOARD OF REGENTS MEETS IN BETHEL, APRIL 9-10**

The UA Board of Regents will meet in Bethel on April 9-10. On its agenda are updates about the FY16 budget, facilities, and academic program prioritization—including a report from UAS about our academic program review process. The Board is also expected to adopt a resolution thanking Chancellor Pugh for his 28 years of service to the UA system. The agenda can be found at <http://www.alaska.edu/bor/agendas/2015/apr-9-10/>

### **• UAS FACULTY HANDBOOK NEARS COMPLETION**

On Friday, April 3, the UAS Faculty Senate reviewed a near-final version of the AY15-16 UAS Faculty Handbook. It looks much like the AY14-15 Handbook except that it incorporates updates from the new UAFT collective bargaining agreement and several other provisions. Feedback is still welcome on the final draft, which is expected to be approved both by the Senate and Provost in early May. It will be effective July 1, 2015.

### **• COMMON UA CALENDAR PLANNED FOR AY16-17**

All three UA universities will use a common academic calendar, effective Fall 2016. The Board of Regents approved a change of policy that calls for a common academic calendar and also common instructional time blocks. A preliminary plan is in place to implement this. Faculty Alliance and UA registrars were involved in crafting the new plan.

### **• REMINDER ABOUT ASSIGNING 'INCOMPLETE' GRADES**

As the end of semester approaches, this is a good time to review our UAS policy and practice with regard to Incomplete ("I") grades. A grade of "I" indicates that a student has not completed the coursework by the end of the course. A final grade and credit will be withheld without penalty until the course requirements are met within an approved time, not to exceed one year. After one year, the "I" becomes a permanent grade. Faculty need to have the student complete a course completion contract specifying the terms under which an "I" grade is assigned. A copy of that form can be found at [http://www.uas.alaska.edu/ketchikan/faculty\\_staff/documents/incomplete\\_contract.pdf](http://www.uas.alaska.edu/ketchikan/faculty_staff/documents/incomplete_contract.pdf)

### **• NEW MATH COURSE NUMBERS AND NAMES—ALIGNED ACROSS UA EFFECTIVE FALL 2015**

Faculty from all three UA universities aligned course numbers, names, and student learning outcomes across the UA system. These will be effective in Fall 2015. For example, Math S107, College Algebra, will now be known at Math S151, College Algebra for Calculus.

### **• UPDATING STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES CONTINUES**

The Faculty Senate's Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, working under the able leadership of Professor Chris Hay-Jahans, continues to work with faculty on updating Student Learning Outcomes for all UAS courses. Our goal remains to have the update of all SLOs completed by the end of this academic year, in keeping with NWCCU accreditation requirements.

#### **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

April 8	Statewide Academic Council meets--Anchorage
April 9-10	UA Board of Regents meets—Bethel (UAF Kuskokwim Campus)
April 17	Provost visits UAS Ketchikan Campus
April 27	Provost's Council
April 30	UAS Sitka Campus commencement
May 1	UAS Ketchikan Campus commencement
May 2	UAS Juneau Campus commencement
May 3	Celebration of Faculty Excellence, 3-4:30pm