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THE TWO UNIVERSITIES OF ALASKA, ANCHORAGE

by

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The following very brief and incomplete historical sketch came about as an assignment given the writer by his administrative supervisor. It attempts to answer the expressed need of the University counselor for such a sketch. The time span in which the sketch had to be produced made it impossible to document most of the information reported. The facts are as they are remembered by Pam Hunt, Director of Institutional Studies, Nancy Lesh, Associate Director of the Library, Kay Wilson, Director of Admissions and Records, and myself, Director of the Library. Each of us has lived through much of the period covered. I alone take responsibility for the opinions and the errors reported.

CIAA-HIST.

Introduction

Under the umbrella of the statewide system named the University of Alaska, two different organizations have existed which were called the University of Alaska, Anchorage. One of the organizations succeeded the other in the late 1970s. Each of them employed some of the same people who carried on the same functions. Yet, each University of Alaska, Anchorage was different enough to be regarded as a distinct entity.

The Southcentral Region of the University of Alaska Statewide System was cradle to the first institution to bear the name of University of Alaska, Anchorage. The Southcentral Region was organized in 1967, with Donald DaFoe, formerly superintendent of schools in Anchorage, as the first provost. The Southcentral Region was a geographically organized structure comprised of Anchorage Community College, the Anchorage Senior College, Kodiak Community College, Kenai Community College, and several widely scattered learning centers. The administrative offices of the Southcentral Regional Center were located in Anchorage in a building on Northern Lights Boulevard near the Aurora Shopping Center. The central staff, in addition to DaFoe, consisted of two women, Corky Sterling, the secretary, and Sparky Rumfeld, an accountant.

Organization of the Southcentral Region happened at about the same time that demand for a four-year educational institution in Anchorage emerged as a topic of public concern. Prior to this time the University of Alaska had proceeded under the policy that four-year education would be offered only on the Fairbanks campus. The various two-year institutions would serve as feeder colleges, preparing their students for the Fairbanks experience. It was the agitation in Anchorage for a four-year university which brought about the birth of the Anchorage Senior College. With the emergence of a senior college, the first University of Alaska, Anchorage came into being, with Anchorage Community College as the lower division

and Anchorage Senior College as the upper division. Alaska Senator Genie Chance of Anchorage, recalling the event about five years later, reported that the often-divided Anchorage delegation stood firm and threatened to stall the appropriation for the rest of the University unless a senior college was created and funded. The Provost of the Southcentral Region also served as the Provost of the University of Alaska, Anchorage. If the two colleges under him comprised an organization which resembled a university, that resemblance was superficial. The Anchorage Community College was fully developed, possessing all of the usual academic and support services, including a business office, maintenance department, a registrar, a library and a food service. The Anchorage Senior College possessed none of these. It was desirable that Anchorage Community College's services not be duplicated but that they also serve Anchorage Senior College. A reorganization occurred which took most services from under the Anchorage Community College Dean and put them under the Provost of the University of Alaska, Anchorage. Lewis Haines, formerly Dean of Students on the Fairbanks campus, was now Provost. He had been in that office since 1969. Instead of making a sweeping reorganization, Haines plucked off Anchorage Community College's services one at a time over a period of several years. In all this, Anchorage Community College was staunchly defended by its fiery little dean, Eugene Short. Short resisted any and all efforts to diminish his own authority or the stature of the Anchorage Community College.

A host of unsolvable problems plagued the unity of the Anchorage Community College and the Anchorage Senior College. The Anchorage Community College faculty had formed a collective bargaining unit and gone on strike for better pay in 1973 and 1974. The pay which the strikers obtained in binding arbitration gave this group, once the underdog, a decisive advantage over the Anchorage Senior College faculty. While the latter faculty chafed over its pay status, many of its number strongly opposed unionization. Efforts to form a bargaining unit at the University of Alaska, Anchorage resulted in a statewide bargaining unit definition by the Alaska Labor Relations Agency. Whether or not the University of Alaska, Anchorage could have succeeded in establishing a bargaining unit was academic. The Fairbanks faculty, including an army of researchers, outnumbered the University of Alaska, Anchorage faculty heavily; they were opposed to union organization. Without doubt, many University of Alaska, Anchorage faculty members looked with envy on the negotiated pay scale of the Anchorage Community College with a contract including periodic cost of living adjustments.

Another source of friction between the Anchorage Community College and the Anchorage Senior College was the question of who controlled program requirements. The two colleges had duplicate departments in many disciplines. For example, there were two faculties of English, History, Mathematics, and Psychology. All mutual efforts in developing and implementing four-year programs were dependent upon a kind of cooperation

which was popularly referred to as "articulation". If the duplicate faculties were compatible, the way was smooth. But if faculties with conflicting views presided jointly over a discipline, it was Heaven help the poor student who sought to earn a degree here. The difficulty with which the University of Alaska, Anchorage Baccalaureate degree was attained was a source of discontent throughout the community. In 1975 the Anchorage Community College and the Anchorage Senior College got together and developed what was originally called a "fast track" program, giving priority to the needs of the four-year student. The program was later referred to as the "Bac-Track." Although a few students did enroll in Bac-Track, the program passed out of existence after a year when the University of Alaska, Anchorage underwent a significant reorganization.

In 1976 the office of the provost was abolished and replaced by that of the chancellor. John Lindauer became the first Chancellor of the University of Alaska, Anchorage, succeeding Lewis Haines as chief administrator in July of that year. Lindauer, formerly Dean of Business and Public Affairs at Murray State University, was a man of great ambition and energy. In the fall of 1976, at the direction of the Board of Regents, Lindauer and his staff began planning the separation of the Anchorage Community College and the Anchorage Senior College into two institutions. The separation was implemented in the following year. The Anchorage Community College was to follow along the path of a typical community college; Anchorage Community College to be sure would still produce

lower division students for the upper division. The Anchorage Senior College would continue offering the same undergraduate and graduate degrees, but in many cases it would have its own lower division courses, even if some of them duplicated courses offered at the Anchorage Community College. The Anchorage Senior College would change its name and become the University of Alaska, Anchorage, an action which would confuse many people. Under the name University of Alaska, Anchorage, the senior college had complete control of the four-year curriculum. There was no more need for time-wasting articulation. The University of Alaska, Anchorage was comprised of the College of Arts and Sciences and several schools, including Business and Public Administration, Education, Nursing, and a Division of Engineering. A Consortium Library, which was a part of the University of Alaska, Anchorage, also served the faculty and students of the Anchorage Community College and Alaska Pacific University. The second University of Alaska, Anchorage had been created.

John Lindauer was conspicuous both on and off campus through all this change. Faculty generally applauded Lindauer's fearlessness. He openly advocated autonomy--even separation from the system--for the University of Alaska, Anchorage. Conspicuous also were his efforts to obtain a larger share of resources for the University of Alaska, Anchorage. Lindauer's relationship with the local press was excellent and at this time the University of Alaska, Anchorage began to receive favorable press notices. While other factors were at work in

creating this phenomenon, the personal influence of John Lindauer was a factor. But personnel involved in University administration, support services, and business affairs were often critical of Lindauer, whose policies were erratic and difficult to follow. In December of 1977, Alaska Governor Jay Hammond announced the appointment of Lindauer to the Alaska Pipeline Commission. Lindauer left the campus early in the following year. He never joined the commission because of objections which his appointment encountered in the state legislature. In 1982 he operated a radio station in Anchorage.

Lindauer had been replaced by Frank Harrison, formerly Dean of the School of Business at Illinois State University. Harrison also had managerial experience at Lockheed. Among the duties which he inherited from Landauer was the unfinished task of representing the University of Alaska, Anchorage to the statewide administration in the unresolved question over which buildings would come to UAA after the splitting of the campus. For a time Harrison was highly optimistic about his ability to wrest facilities from the Anchorage Community College in what was becoming an acrimonious contest. The outcome was that the Anchorage Community College got all 10 of its traditional buildings on the original ACC campus. In addition, it got the Performing Arts Center, also located on that campus. This was a blow to UAA. The Performing Arts Center had been claimed by UAA for its theater arts program. A second great disappointment to UAA, was the decision to

award the new Student Center to the Anchorage Community College. But the University of Alaska, Anchorage got the Library, the College of Arts and Sciences Building, and the Health Occupation Facility. Somewhat comforting to UAA, which had expected more, was the possession of the new Physical Education Building.

Harrison left the University of Alaska, Anchorage in 1981 to become president of the Southern Connecticut State College. He often spoke of himself as a manager, and he is indeed remembered for his improvements in the organization of UAA. He showed great concern for the day-to-day operation. Firm decision making, previously wanting at both the old and new University of Alaska, Anchorage, was his forte. Less gifted in the art of human relations, he made a lesser impact on the city, the statewide administration of the University of Alaska, and the Legislature and Governor. Harrison was succeeded in December 1981 by David Outcalt, formerly Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs and Acting Chancellor at the University of Alaska, Anchorage.

Conclusion

In response to popular demand and a legislative mandate for four-year public education in Anchorage the University planners sought to build on the already, well-developed Anchorage Community College. The community college wished to be included in the plan, but it rebelled against extensive restructuring or administration from without. In Alaska where populations are small, political races for the legislature are sometimes decided by as few as 10 or 15 votes. Anyone who wants to influence the course of events in the state often may do so merely by being articulate. The administrators of the statewide system of the University had to bear in mind the attitudes of Anchorage legislators on questions of University reorganization. Such caution is understandable in a state where bills calling for reorganization of the University have been introduced in the legislature as regularly as the hooligan run or geese fly south in the fall. The ACC staff, students, alumni, and friendly lawmakers contributed greatly to the failure of the University to subdue and alter ACC in such a way as to make it conform satisfactorily to its new role of lower division to a University. Several years later when the Juneau campus was reorganized, the statewide system profited from Anchorage's experience. In Juneau the community college was abolished. Faculty and other resources were reconstituted to become the lower division of the four-year university. Because this did not happen in Anchorage, that city enjoys varied educational

resources. Its citizens have access to a publicly-supported four-year university as well as a community college. On the negative side, critics have viewed this as an unnecessary duplication of resources.