

## Proposal for the establishment of a Graduate School at UAA

### Executive Summary

The University of Alaska Anchorage graduates approximately 240 graduate students per year (50% of the graduate degrees awarded in the state) from more than 30 graduate programs. The number of graduate students at UAA has increased significantly in recent years (see Appendix A). While the academic quality of individual programs is ensured through the academic governance process, the administrative and student support functions are highly decentralized, and there is no mechanism for ensuring consistent quality overall. There is also no office with the sole responsibility for promoting success of graduate students and graduate faculty. The Graduate Academic Board therefore proposes the formation of a Graduate School at UAA, which will provide advocacy and administrative support for graduate students and faculty in graduate programs. The Graduate School will also provide mechanisms for implementation and enforcement of graduate policies as instituted by graduate programs and the Graduate Academic Board. The functions of this Graduate School, consistent with the accreditation standards and the mission of UAA, are detailed in this document.

The Graduate Academic Board and the Faculty Senate instruct Douglas Causey, Vice Provost for Research and Graduate Studies, with the following actions to be undertaken immediately:

1. Create a *Graduate School*, headed by a *Director or Dean of Graduate Studies*, under the Office of the Vice Provost for Research and Graduate Studies.
2. Establish a constitution and set of bylaws for the Graduate School. This document will serve as a blueprint for the implementation of the Graduate School.
3. Create job descriptions and hire the following personnel: Director/Dean, Associate Dean (preferably a faculty member, 50% time), Graduate Studies Coordinator, and administrative support staff as needed to handle day-to-day operations of the Graduate School. Also identify physical space to house these personnel.
4. Establish a *Council of Graduate Program Chairs and Directors* to serve as an advisory council to the Director/Coordinator of the Graduate School on all graduate policy decisions not under the purview of the Graduate Academic Board.
5. Establish a *Community Advisory Committee for Graduate Studies* to provide advice, needs assessments and outside perspective on graduate programs at UAA.
6. Undertake a review of current graduate policies and programs at UAA to identify areas of needed improvement, and create plans for improvement of overall graduate program quality at UAA.

## Functions of a Graduate School

### 1. Mission, Goals, Planning and Effectiveness

The mission of the Graduate School at UAA is to maximize the university's contribution to the personal, intellectual and economic development of the people of Alaska, the United States, and the world. The school therefore commits to:

- Students - direct and support students in their scholarly pursuits
- Faculty - encourage and enable faculty to pursue purposeful scholarship and creative activities
- Programs - create, direct, support, evaluate and improve programs of study and research
- Applications - Apply the School's research resources to solve problems and create opportunities for the people of the state.

In order to effectively accomplish this mission, graduate offerings are housed in appropriate schools and colleges according to disciplines. Direct program administration and support, and specific student services for each program are provided by those colleges. General university support for the activities undertaken by graduate students and faculty members are provided through Student Affairs, Administrative Services and the Office of Academic Affairs.

A graduate school that is organized to provide an effective conduit for expression of needs, ideas and accomplishments to central administration and to the university community; provides direction and support to students and faculty; is committed to continuous assessment and improvement of graduate programs; and is capable of connecting the UAA graduate students and faculty with community partners and with the national and international community of scholars will enhance the effectiveness of faculty, increase the accomplishments of students and improve the relevance and productivity of research efforts.

### 2. Academic Programs

#### a. Development of standards

Standards for graduate academic programs will be developed through collaboration with existing programs. These will include procedures for justifying deviation from standards that are acceptable to both the GS and the programs.

##### i. Admissions

Review current admissions policies and standards for graduate programs and develop a set of common standards through collaboration with existing programs

##### ii. Graduation

Review current graduation requirements for graduate programs and develop a set of common standards through collaboration with existing programs

##### iii. Academic progress

Collaborate with existing grad programs to develop standards for academic progress. Standards will include procedures for justifying deviation from standards that are acceptable to both the GS and the programs.

#### b. Program Design and approval

i. Collaborate with existing graduate programs to create standards and procedures for program design and approval

ii. Assist departments in identifying and differentiating graduate faculty

iii. Create a mechanism by which faculty are recognized/receive credit for training/supervision of students doing research/projects

iv. Develop guidelines for creating/maintaining handbooks for programs

- c. Program Implementation
    - i. Review current procedures for approval, implementation and evaluation of new programs.
    - ii. Provide information to assist program development
  - d. Assessment
    - i. Collaborate with existing programs to develop procedures for Outcome Assessment of programs
    - ii. Include procedures for addressing identified outcome problems that are acceptable to both the GS and existing programs.
    - iii. Student learning & productivity
      - Collaborate with existing programs to develop procedures to assess student learning and productivity that are acceptable to both the GS & the programs
  - e. Collaboration
    - i. Interdisciplinary
      - 1. Assist students requesting information about Interdisciplinary Degrees (ID)
        - a. Educate students/faculty about procedures
        - b. Track students/faculty involved in IDs
      - 2. Make final approval of ID proposals
    - ii. Inter-UA
      - 1. GS will assist with academic collaboration within UA
        - a. Review existing policies on collaboration
        - b. Work with programs to develop guidelines and procedures related to Inter UA collaboration
    - iii. Inter-collegiate
      - 1. GS will assist in academic collaboration with universities outside the UA system (eg. WWAMI)
        - a. Review existing policies on Inter-collegiate collaboration
        - b. Work with programs to develop guidelines and procedures related to Inter-collegiate collaboration
  - f. Accreditation standards
    - i. Institutional
    - ii. Programmatic
3. Students
- a. Funding
    - i. Manage Graduate Tuition Waiver distribution
    - ii. Maintain a database of fellowships/scholarships
    - iii. Notify students about fellowships/training awards/travel funds
    - iv. Provide assistance to grad students with paperwork for all funding sources
  - b. International students
    - i. Act as a clearinghouse/referral base for requests from International students for information about UAA, financial aid, Internships and specific program requirements
    - ii. Assist International graduate students with problems related to UAA enrollment
    - iii. Assist International graduate students in joint programs
  - c. Accommodations with DSS
    - i. Act as a clearinghouse/referral base for requests from graduate students for accommodations in classrooms or academic situations
    - ii. Assist graduate students requesting accommodations with problems related to UAA enrollment
  - d. Enrollment services Support

- i. Graduate admissions
      - 1. gather all application files from ES and transfer them to programs
    - ii. Maintain relevant student paperwork/track student progress  
Collaborate with existing programs to develop standards for Progress Reports, Advancements to Candidacy, 7-year-rule decisions, etc. These will include procedures for justifying deviation from standards that are acceptable to both the GS and the programs.
      - 1. Progress reports
      - 2. Advancement to candidacy
      - 3. 7-year rule decisions
    - iii. credit transfer policies
      - 1. GS will assist students with understanding and/or petitioning credit transfers to graduate programs
    - iv. Graduate Studies Catalog
      - 1. GS will separate Graduate studies material from current catalog
      - 2. Update as necessary
  - e. Thesis
    - i. Review current guidelines  
GS will collaborate with existing programs and IRB to develop guidelines for graduate theses. These will include any special guidelines requested by individual departments.
    - ii. Consistency review  
GS will take over the final review of thesis for consistency with UAA guidelines (now done by Deans)
    - iii. Binding services  
GS will take over acquisition and procedures for microfiche and binding theses
  - f. Projects
    - i. Review current departmental guidelines  
GS will collaborate with existing programs to develop guidelines for graduate projects. These will include any special guidelines requested by individual departments.
    - ii. Programs will continue to do the final review of projects.
- 4. Faculty (Teaming, Mentoring, facilitating through policy, process, opportunity..)
  - a. Teaching
    - i. Collaborate with existing programs to review and/or develop policy for teaming between faculty
    - ii. Collaborate with existing programs to review and/or develop guidelines for mentoring of new faculty
    - iii. Be available to consult with programs about teaming/mentoring
    - iv. Collaborate with existing programs re: student Practicums/Internships
      - 1. Manage negotiation/acquisition of MOA/MOUs for Internships
      - 2. Sign for MOA/MOU agreements (now done by Deans of Colleges)
      - 3. Collaborate with programs about facilitating placements in Practicum and Internship sites
  - b. Research
    - i. Collaborate with existing programs to review and or develop policy for research in graduate programs
      - 1. Manage negotiations of MOA/MOUs in collaboration with programs
    - ii. Advocate on campus for graduate & faculty research
    - iii. support both students and faculty
    - iv. Grants acquisition

1. Coordinate with Office of Sponsored Programs to
  - a. Maintain a database for grants acquisition
  - b. Notify eligible faculty about grants
  - c. Assist faculty application & track progress of applications
  - d. Create GS funding for fellowships/awards/travel grants
- c. Service
  - i. Review/develop guidelines for service evaluation in conjunction with Review Boards as relevant to graduate faculty standing
5. Library and Information resources
  - a. Assist in the evaluation of graduate program information resource needs.
  - b. Assist campus information resource providers and graduate programs jointly in identifying and obtaining funding for information resource acquisition and development.
  - c. Identify graduate programmatic needs as relating to the Library and complementary information resource providers on campus, such as CAFE, E-Media and Information and Technology Services.
  - b. Ensure one original and one copy of theses are provided for addition to the Library's collections.
6. Governance and Administration
  - a. Creation of Council of Graduate Program Chairs and Directors as an advisory body to the Graduate School re: governance and administrative issues?
  - b. Develop a Graduate School Constitution/Bylaws
  - c. Establish the general principles and responsibilities of the graduate school including the administration of Graduate Programs.
  - d. Define the roles and responsibilities of the Director of the Graduate School; the administrative staff of the Graduate School;
    - i. the graduate faculty (including Directors of graduate programs and advisers);
    - ii. the graduate student body and the Graduate Student Association (GSA);
    - iii. the Graduate Academic Board, the Council of Graduate Program Chairs and Directors, and the Community Advisory Committee for Graduate Studies.
  - e. Provide information for university policy compliance (such as OSHA or other regulations) for Graduate Students and Graduate Assistants.
7. Finance - Establish who is responsible for
  - a. The development, planning and implementation of the annual budget, and the ongoing monitoring and oversight of expenditures for Graduate School funds.
  - b. Providing liaison to other campus units, for example, the Human Resource Services Office, the Budget Office, Business Services Office, and any campus unit receiving fiscal support from the Graduate School.
  - c. The management and administration of all personnel activities and procedures related to student staff employed in the Graduate School, in its research units, or on Graduate School funds.
  - d. Sponsoring fundraising events

*Sources:*  
[http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/Grad\\_Sch/](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/Grad_Sch/) (for the Finance sections a, b and c)
8. Physical Resources
  - a. Assist with the evaluation of physical resources—existing and planned—to ensure existing and proposed graduate programs and the Graduate School have access to sufficient space and material resources.

- b. Provide representation on the Master Plan Committee to advocate for long-term graduate program needs.

#### UAA Policies and procedures

- UA Board of Regents' Policy and University Regulations part 10.
- UAA Catalog, Chapter 7 – General admissions policies and course level descriptions
- UAA Catalog, Chapter 11- General University Requirements and graduate program descriptions
- UAA Curriculum Handbook – Guidance on creation and approvals of graduate courses and programs

#### Graduate Standards

- Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU.org)
  - Standard 2D. Graduate Program
  - Standard 2E. Graduate faculty and related resources
  - Standard 2F. Graduate records and academic credit
  - Other commission standards and policies related to distance delivery, faculty governance, financial management, etc. may also apply.

APPENDIX A

Recent trends in graduate student numbers and graduate degrees awarded at UAA

<b>Master</b>						
<b>Anchorage Programs Students</b>	<b>Fall 1999</b>	<b>Fall 2000</b>	<b>Fall 2001</b>	<b>Fall 2002</b>	<b>Fall 2003</b>	<b>Fall 2004</b>
CAS	111	114	140	184	189	164
CBPP	105	104	133	110	133	124
CHSW	87	93	83	89	126	141
COE	193	179	170	250	229	271
CTC	16	20	19	19	12	13
SOEN	59	55	56	61	60	60
UDCL	2	1				
<b>Total</b>	<b>573</b>	<b>566</b>	<b>601</b>	<b>713</b>	<b>749</b>	<b>773</b>

