**Charge and Membership**

*Continuing and Professional Education Report*

*May 2019*

In December 2018, a task force appointed by Chancellor Sandeen, sought to answer the following questions related to UAA’s continuing and professional education (CPE) programming.

* What is the current state of CPE programs at UAA?
* How are similar institutions organized to serve the CPE market?
* What is the main purpose of our existing CPE programs?
* What models of centralization might be most appropriate at UAA?
* What types of programs should UAA offer, and in what format (i.e. open enrollment, online, hybrid)?
* How do we involve faculty in CPE programs?
* Which policies might need to be developed or revised in order for us to effectively offer CPE programs?
* What are some appropriate measures for us to track progress?
* What are options for an enhanced CPE unit at UAA and next steps for achievement?

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**Process and Findings**

The CPE task force reviewed continuing and professional education (CPE) targeted to adult working professionals offered through UAA. The CPE task force met between January and March 2019. The overarching charge of the task force was to determine if UAA has the potential to expand programs in the area of CPE. To both improve our understanding of the current mix of programming as well as to address specific questions raised in the charge, the task force established subcommittees, each assigned to research and answer questions posed in the charge. The following information is a summary of outcomes.

**Degree Centralization/Program Array:** UAA is the largest campus located in the largest business and economic center of Alaska. UAA currently delivers CPE offerings in a decentralized model. Each college and community campus has the ability to deliver offerings to their respective communities/constituents, and each manages their registration and delivery systems uniquely. UAA has three primary continuing education offerings, including (1) Professional Development and Training, (2) Personal Enrichment, and (3) University Access and College Success. A central UAA Continuing Education website portal created with links to each UAA college/campus that delivers continuing education offerings in the three areas. Targeting of specific markets occurs.

<https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/academics/continuing-education/index.cshtml>

UAA offers Continuing Education through a streamlined and easy-to-use registration system, “ASAP”, separate from Banner. Classes range from non-credit and Continuing Education Units (CEUs) to Workforce Credentials in high demand fields; summer camps for kids; college prep courses; and offerings designed to provide personal enrichment for community members. Non-credit courses do not count toward a degree; however, participants may receive a certificate of attendance. Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are predominantly for career continuation or advancement, but at times taken for personal enrichment. The number of CEUs awarded is determined by the time required to master the material. CEUs do not count toward a degree; however, upon successful completion, participants may receive a certificate of completion from the offering unit. Professional Development 500-level courses do not count toward a degree and provide continuing education for professionals at a post baccalaureate level. Workforce Credentials include a series of non-credit courses aligned with national standards, recognized certifications, or industry-specific employment standards. Workforce Credentials do not count toward a degree; however, upon successful completion, participants receive a credential. Summer Camps and Bridging Programs include non-credit programs for both youth and adults in specialized topics, from science and math to career exploration and more.

Demand for programs offered varies by each individual unit. Revenue generation is the overarching goal in some instances, and classes are cancelled if a minimal student enrollment is not achieved. In other cases, units will provide classes regardless of enrollment as a “lost leader” to attract students and raise awareness to a program or to provide a community service. There is also great opportunity to offer CEUs through public/private partnerships whereby we develop programming that meets the CEU requirements for say maintenance of a CPA, but the majority of these opportunities go untapped.

**Peer Institution Review:** A review of continuing education and professional development offerings as well as best practices of peer institutions was undertaken. Specifically, a review of CPE programming at Boise State University, Ferris State University, Weber State University, Florida Gulf Coast University, Indiana University, and Northern Kentucky Universityoccurred through both surveys and direct conversations with representatives. Almost all of UAA’s peer institutions maintain a centralized center or primary point of contact for all CPE activities. CPE programming is in many cases closely tied in a collegial way to academic units, while the day-to-day management of non-credit courses are a separate business function. These business units serve the needs of business, industry and professionals through the provision of: 1) customized and open access non-credit professional development; 2) professional development for the maintenance of credentials as well as career advancement; and in some instances, 3) personal enrichment offerings. Many spoke to addressing the life-long learning needs of their community. While the offering of the non-credit professional development courses were in most cases managed and delivered through a centralized unit, this unit seemed well integrated with the campus. Each program reviewed appeared to invest some time and resource into determining the best mix of classes to offer, while some offered legislatively required courses. Course delivery was both on campus, in many cases through space dedicated to the business unit (no renting of space), as well as through space arranged off-site, with the objective of better integrating the campus with the community. Many spoke to the importance of developing corporate partnerships as well as partnerships with the academic programs of the campus. The web platforms of these peer institutes appeared to be a crucial ingredient for selling courses to prospective clients, the more successful having a clear brand. Peers spoke to the importance of having the ability to standup and take down courses with flexibility and ease.

**Guiding Principles:** Currently, there is no central or shared vision for CPE at UAA. Each college and community campus determines whether they will develop and deliver CPE offerings either due to faculty interest or community demand. UAA predominantly delivers CPE offerings in health, safety, technical skills, maritime, business management & leadership, executive education, engineering, IT, teacher education, personal enrichment, and youth camps (culinary, healthcare exploration, automotive, etc.). While revenue generation is the driver in some instances, in other instances, UGF is leveraged freely to deliver courses as a service to the community.

**Faculty Involvement**: UAA Faculty possess a broad array of expertise (skill sets and knowledge) which they are, in many cases, eager to share. In part, this reflects the fact that UAA faculty take pride in sharing their talents with the community. In some cases faculty contribute time as a “service” component and in other cases faculty are paid additional to their faculty contract. Paying faculty largely occurs as a workload adjustment and not an overload and policies and practices are often differing depending on the faculty member or academic unit.

The range of CPE courses delivered by UAA faculty is diverse. Most faculty share in common: a vision for broadening our connections to the community; raising the visibility and consciousness of UAA; and having an additional vehicle to recruit students into regular classes and degree programs. There is potential benefit in more intentionally and strategically involving faculty in CPE. However, the obstacles associated with engaging faulty are numerous and more than procedural tweaks to how UAA manages CPE faculty hires will be necessary.

Faculty hires fall typically into distinct buckets: 1) industry specific courses, and 2) topic specific courses. In consideration of industry specific courses (e.g. welding, hospital administration, project management, logistics, business management and even leadership) skilled faculty are available both within and outside of UAA. In many instances, the hiring of professionals external to UAA is bureaucratically easier. Properly recruited and vetted, these professionals serve CPE programs as adjunct faculty effectively. CPE offerings specific to professional development, credentialing, or training, can be ramped up quickly and when marketed and planned well offer promise of earned income revenues sufficient for sustainability.

When we consider topic specific courses (e.g. East Asian history, culture, and politics; medieval literature; cultural practices of indigenous peoples, mating patterns of fish, etc.) professionals possessing deep and specific knowledge outside of the university are rare. This knowledge is primarily among full time, tenure track faculty. The impediments to unlocking the value inherent in that knowledge for CPE are considerable, but principally revolve around budgetary and institutional restraints associated with faculty contracts and perceptions that CEP offerings could negatively influence enrollments and even accreditation.

UAA’s current fiscal climate has placed greater pressure on full-time, tenure track faculty to assume a larger share of teaching responsibilities. It is also increasing poignant that (faculty workload agreements under the current CBA actually represent exact faculty effort contributions) as budgets get tighter both faculty and administration are increasingly tightening workload to extract maximum value from faculty. This discourages faculty from taking on of additional teaching responsibilities and stifles entrepreneurial efforts on the part of faculty that do not have the flexibility within their workloads. In many instances, faculty teaching non-credit courses do so through an external corporation and not through UAA.

While external funding of CPE efforts for full-time, tenure track faculty can be somewhat effective in unlocking faculty value, the fact is such opportunities are rare and infrequent. Faculty contribute their time and knowledge, but inconsistent mechanisms for rewarding faculty exist. Simultaneously, a more concerted effort would rely heavily on UGF resources to ensure all faculty were provided similar opportunities for community engagement. In the current environment, full-time, tenure track faculty will be hard pressed to meet the needs of their home programs, much less take on additional duties in order to generate revenues or even provide a public service training or workshop. In some instances, faculty are incorporating a community-engagement component within the courses they deliver to address their personal desire for supporting a community broader than UAA, these course can be directly competitive to CPE offerings and therefore we should manage these engagements carefully.

**SWOT Assessment**: Following is a summary of the strengths, and weaknesses (factors internal to UAA) as well as opportunities and threats (factors external to UAA) that contribute to faculty engagement.

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| **Internal Factors** | |
| **Strengths** | **Weaknesses** |
| * Faculty expertise & diversity of experience * Faculty & staff willingness * Faculty connections with community * Ability to adapt programming to meeting local community and corporation needs * Statewide relationships and experience * CPE programming successfully delivered through some units already * CPE positively received * Pockets of proven revenue generation | * Faculty delivery inconsistent * Faculty workload contracts constrain engagements * Faculty can be hard to engage to deliver the specific needs of clients * Institutional support & coordination – culture unsupportive of entrepreneurial units * Decentralized structure / ad hoc system * Inconsistent communications with clients * Inconsistent public image * Weak to non-existent brand * Marketing extremely limited untargeted * Limited external reach and enrollments * Facility costs contribute to lacking feasibility |
| **External Factors** | |
| **Opportunities** | **Threats** |
| * Community and corporate level demand increased as budgets have tightened across Alaska * Professional development & training – life-long learning demand growing * Some external funding & support – proof that external funds can be leveraged * Visibility & opportunity to serve Alaska – not just the Southcentral region * Employers are increasingly using professional development as an employee retention strategy * Recruiting external faculty streamlined and offers wider bench than solely UAA faculty * Specific client target areas potential   + Professional licensure – real estate, engineering, planning, contractor   + UA leadership and supervisor training   + ASD leadership and supervisor training   + Veteran transitional training   + International training - China   + Summer Bridge – onboarding students * Micro-credentialing / badging / stacked credentials * Take it to them rather than just offer it here – many corporations want to establish a “corporate university” leveraging UAA/Alaska talent. | * Lacking UAA vision for CPE * Decline in UA budgets, investment to support centralized transition might not occur * Competition is fierce – external U’s marketing heavily in our marketplace * UA website markets UAF and UAS non-credit continuing education but makes no mention of UAA course offerings - https://alaska.augusoft.net/ * Other U’s and providers have a stronger brand recognition in the Alaska marketplace than UAA * UAA reputation – delivery inconsistent due to ongoing shift relating to offerings * Perception that our offerings are less than high level – since that UAA delivers only community college level courses * Lost revenues – lacking systems * Lost opportunities – inability to mobilize timely |

**Policies, Practices and Procedures:** UAA currently has a non-credit/CEU registration system (ASAP), non-credit/CEU curriculum development process and form, inventory of offerings (IR), and guidelines for development of non-credit workforce credentials. All resources are located on the UAA OAA Curriculum website. There is a perception that the existing processes would benefit greatly from streamlining and ensuring that all elements are essential. There is also broad lack of recognition that policies and procedures exist, given that various units follow different practices. Likewise, some courses, largely 500 level courses, run through banner in a process distinctly different from other non-credit courses. Of concern of the academic units is that no system exists for sharing revenues derived from CPE offerings.

**Productivity Measures:** Most UAA colleges and community campuses currently track CPE productivity in one or more of the following ways: enrollments, revenue (break even or profit), student success based on CEUs awarded for re-licensure, number of underserved (primarily rural) individuals served, student satisfaction surveys, and number of classes offered versus number cancelled.

**Desired Future State Recommendations**

The taskforce is in unanimous agreement, adult working professionals need to continually update their knowledge, skills and abilities, and UAA is uniquely positioned to lead this charge for Alaska. Based on task force findings, this group recommends the following: (1) gather more information, (2) optimize resources to focus on strategic delivery, (3) remove existing barriers, and (4) be responsive as well as focused on quality in the deployment of CPE programs.

***Gather more Information:***

While we at UAA have individual data points, we lack strategic data regarding our Alaska marketplace and specifically the actual professional and continuing education needs of our marketplace. Improving our understanding of high demand areas as well as willingness to pay will provide greater clarity and focus. UAA should formally survey key community member organizations of our primary communities of interest (Anchorage; Eagle River; Mat-Su (Palmer, Wasilla); Kenai Peninsula (Seward, Homer, and Soldotna); Kodiak; and Prince William Sound (Cordova, Valdez, and Copper River Basin). Likewise, we should develop a complimentary survey targeted to key industries, and even alumni regarding their professional development needs. Questions could include: What are your top three professional development needs? What professional licensure areas shall we develop? Where do you prefer to take the majority of your classes? What days/times are best for taking professional development classes? What length of class is preferred (short two-hour top specific series or one 8 hour)? What are you willing to pay per hour of CPE delivery? Answers to these and other related questions would serve to inform and aid us in prioritizing UAA CPE suite of offerings. It would also be helpful to have a firmer understanding of best practices. Sending a lead to attend the University Professional and Continuing Education Association, Association for Professional, Continuing, and Online Education and/or the Conference of Management, Executive and Professional Development for networking and learning is encouraged.

We believe an opportunity is to better focus on training(s) required by employers specifically for licensure purposes. For example, engineers who want to practice in Alaska must have Arctic Engineering coursework. Once a thorough needs assessment is completed, a ‘customer first’ model can be implemented. A centralized unit is likely best to ensure consistent management of faculty hiring to maintenance of transcripts.

Ultimately, we are going to need to make some decisions. We have a diverse mix of clients having a wide range of professional and personal develop needs. Simultaneously, the CPE market is changing rapidly and what sold well last year, is not necessarily going to sell moving forward. Mapping an improved understanding of demand as well as our current offerings will better inform where any gaps or even unnecessary offerings exist. Now more than ever we need to ensure our UAA educational assets are strategically leveraged as well as appropriately marketed. Successful peer institutions appear very aware of their client needs or content demand, preferred format, scheduling and ability to pay.

***Optimize Resources to Focus on Strategic Delivery:***

An improved understanding of all UAA resources already supporting CPE efforts across UAA’s various units and campuses is essential. Currently all UAA academic units are offering some non-credit courses, many utilizing UGF to cover staff time and a few delivering courses having zero UGF investment. Additionally, staff across UAA are involved in processing paperwork through procurement and HR units and these administrative functions are not factored into course delivery fees in a similar way research might have a F&A associated fee. A more formal inventory of activity as well as associated expenditures and revenues is warranted. While we do not need to know how each penny flows to make recommendations, it is important for UAA to establish improved tracking systems related to CPE functions to ensure institutional goals are achieved. Revenues, while largely tracked through ASAP, also process through Banner for 500 level course. If we are seeking to optimize our resources to deliver the highest quality CPE courses we first need to improve our understanding of the full level of resource contributed, revenues derived and shared outcomes achieved; none of this exists in a formal way.

As proven by the UAA Center for Corporate and Professional Development, it is entirely possible to run a CPE unit with zero UGF contribution. It is however impossible to run such a unit long-term given a lack of shared UAA strategy and streamlined policies and procedures that support success. Furthermore, significant disruption occurs when administrative level transitions occur, CPE requires a more formal existence.

***Remove Existing Barriers:***

Barriers currently exist that limit efficient and effective delivery of CPE courses. Foremost, there needs to be a clear vision for CPE established from the UAA Chancellor level. Secondarily, establishing a clear taxonomy of the full suite of CPE offerings including definitions will be helpful, particularly when coordinating with the Office of Academic Affairs. Given the current fiscal climate, this may not be the time to establish a new overarching CPE unit; however, establishing such would go a long way towards establishing common definitions, practices, productivity measures, and quality control systems. As a starting point, it will be important for UAA to explore the full value stream associated with CPE delivery and intentionally establish more streamlined processes and procedures across all CPE offering units. Examples of inefficiencies include hiring of faculty, maintenance of transcripts or “records of attendance” for non-credit and CEU offerings, paperwork processing, and marketing via a collective brand. Based on our peer review, there are ways to centralize the “back-office” without preventing colleges and community campuses from responding to their specific community needs, i.e. Kodiak and maritime training. However, formal centralization of licensure offerings or commonly demanded courses such as leadership and executive training, regardless of where offered is recommended. Once a more formal vision and brand is established, the UAA CPE website can better highlight areas of expertise, professional re-licensure offerings, and corporate training events.

***Be Responsive/Quality Matters:***

Addressing barriers will allow UAA to become more responsive. CPE units at our peer institutions indicate they are laser focused on being flexible and responsive. If we are to become the preferred provider of CPE we must first consistently provide CPE offerings where they are needed, i.e. licensure, CEUs, etc., and simultaneously we must recognize that we cannot provide everything for everyone. While much has improved, CPE offerings at UAA follow a similar process as for-credit courses, a process established by the Office of Academic Affairs. We currently have limited flexibility and UAA’s thoughts regarding course content supersede clients. In addition to increasing responsiveness and providing the correct mix of offerings, we need to likewise ensure pricing and relevancy to our marketplace. Ultimately, UAA’s reputation is closely tied to each units’ ability to deliver high-quality CPE, we can no longer afford to run CPE through a fully decentralized model paying limited attention to how decentralization is experienced by our shared customers. Pricing, flexibility and responsiveness should be consistent across each client sector.

**Next Steps**

Establish a vision, guiding principles, definition for success and roadmap. UAA is ready for a clear CPE vision, establishment of guiding principles as well as a roadmap to ensure UAA becomes the preferred provider for all CPE in Alaska. Until UAA declares a vision for CPE, success metrics will be hard to define as each unit approaches CPE with a unique mindset and definition for success. Secondarily, establishing a centralized unit to have primary responsibility for CPE offerings would allow for leaner operations and quality control. Guiding principles or arriving at shared goals and priorities is complicated in a decentralized model. Establishing a CPE advisory group is a recognized best practice and simultaneously aligned with establishing a centralized CPE delivery model.

Decide on a target market focus through a more intentional market analysis. Currently CPE offerings are categorized and marketed in three distinct areas: 1) Professional Development and Training; 2) Personal Enrichment; and 3) University Access and College Success. Having better market data as well as an established vision, and guiding principles will enable strategic decision making to occur. Centralization would potentially allow for improved market awareness following an initial market assessment. While UAA has established a centralized website, additional market data may trigger the need for redesign. Minimally, establish an improved brand and marketing strategy.

Make CPE sector determinations at the Chancellor level or inform CPE direction.

If CPE programming is going to target adult working professionals that already have a degree, then minimally, University Access and College Success courses should be marketed separately from CPE courses. Making target market decisions such as this will help tighten branding and marketing efforts.

University access and college success offerings have the potential to serve as valuable undergrad student recruitment offerings. Due to the import to UAA, a separate level of centralization may be warranted. For example, youth ‘boot camps’ in specific fields should be offered with consistent standards, and require additional oversight due to working with minors. College/University summer bridging programs, test preparation, math emporiums, college writing camps, and the like can lead directly to higher levels of student success. Alternatively, a broader CPE unit could be established with a “division” that focusses efforts towards this market.

Personal Enrichment offerings are currently offered largely as a community engagement strategy. As such, expenses are not tightly tracked. No UAA strategy or guiding principles exist to shape decision-making regarding when and what classes are offered. Classes tend to be offered based on a community request or a staff member’s interest in a particular subject matter. Having well established guiding principles will enable improved decision-making.