

UAA Administrative Review Questionnaire – Spring 2020

1. **What are the core functions of your unit that are funded in Fund 1 (i.e. Fund 104110)? (Bullet point list is preferred. No more than one-page, please.)**

Description: University Relations (UR) works to enhance the reputation of UAA to increase philanthropy, enhance enrollment, build community and state support, inspire pride and loyalty among UAA's students, staff, faculty and alumni.

Core functions include internal and external communications:

- **Public Relations**

Media relations, crisis communications, reputation management

- **Marketing and branding**

Recruitment ad campaign, creative content development, ad buys, brand awareness and integrity, writing, editing, communications plans

- **Website, social media, digital communications**

UAA website: content development, maintenance, UAA Green & Gold News website, homepage

Social media: account management, monitoring, listening and analytics reporting*

E-newsletter production: Seawolf Daily (internal e-bulletin), Seawolf Weekly (weekly e-newsletter)

**Institutional social media accounts: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn*

**Chancellor's social media account: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram*

- **Graphic design and digital media**

Logo and image design, collateral development, branding standards, photography, videography

- **Storytelling**

Story development, feature writing, editing, research

- **Chancellor communications**

chancellor messaging for campuswide email and web, talking points for events, presentation development and video production

- **Consultation and Training**

Media training, campus communicators' monthly meeting, social media presentations

2. If one or more of these functions was reduced or discontinued, what would be the impact on: (Not all elements may be relevant for your unit. Only address relevant items.)

a. More students persisting and completing educational goals?

UR manages UAA's recruitment marketing campaign in partnership with the admissions office.

Building awareness of UAA framed with positive messaging is critical to prompt prospective students to take that first step toward applying and accessing a UAA education. We cannot help students achieve their educational goals unless they apply and enroll in courses.

Once applicants are current students, UR participates in internal marketing efforts to make students aware of important university initiatives, particularly ones directly relevant to their academic success. The university recently undertook a major student advising initiative designed to connect new students with first-year advisors.

As part of that effort UR helped publicize the launch of Seawolf Tracks, an app designed to connect students to their advisors and make it easy to schedule appointments and receive other supports such as reminders of upcoming registration deadlines and personalized "to-dos." This project could not have been accomplished without UR's direct involvement and support.

b. Supporting overall student, faculty and staff success in meeting UAA's mission?

UR's role in communicating UAA's faculty and student successes, telling the amazing stories of our stellar programs, helps to raise the perception of UAA both locally and nationally. UR amplifies the work and achievements of our students and employees and particularly speaks to the idea of *engagement* with our external stakeholders.

In 2017, the College of Health launched a surgical technology program in response to a request from major employers in the Alaska health care sector. UR publicized this in a press release that garnered local and national media coverage, highlighting UAA's responsiveness to industry need.

Without UR, there is no consistent, reliable source amplifying the ways we are fulfilling our mission, including the ways we are meeting the state's educational needs – a stated objective in our mission. To remain viable, UAA must be able to demonstrate its value to the state.

c. Impacts to UAA's reputation, and ability to attract and retain students and/or external support?

UR is essential to UAA in many ways. According to a 2010 Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) study, "Investments in communications and marketing are directly related to the success in fundraising, alumni relations, student recruitment, and other areas."

Communicating successes to the Alaska community helps increase donor and potential donor confidence in UAA, inspiring future donations that help provide student scholarships and program funding enhancements. These donations contribute to student achievement and attainment.

Sharing stories of the relevant and innovative research our faculty and students are conducting increases awareness of what UAA is doing to positively impact the state of Alaska and its people. Success breeds more success. As UAA's reputation increases, so does its ability to attract the best faculty, staff and students.

3. Identify measures and targets used to monitor the impact of functions on each of the above (not all elements may be relevant for your unit, only address relevant items).

UR's measurement falls into two different categories: project-based and ongoing. For example, we may look specifically at social media metrics for a Facebook campaign we ran, but we also keep track of our ongoing social media metrics across our platforms. We also work closely with our institutional partners to measure the success of our collaborative efforts, such as recruitment marketing.

Media Relations

- News hits
- Circulation audience (print)
- Unique pageviews of online stories
- Ad value
- Media releases, advisories, pitches

Social Media

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube

- Followers
- Impressions
- Engagements

Green & Gold

- Top posts
- Pageviews
- Unique Pageviews

Alumni Publications and Activities

- Alumni Howl e-newsletter subscribers
- Alumni Spirit circulation
- Event participation

Admissions (collaborative re: recruitment marketing)

- Prospects
- Inquiries
- Applicants
- Admits
- Enrolled/Registered
- Yield (i.e. enrollment %) for each group
- Conversion (i.e. rate at which they move through the funnel process) for each stage
- Demographic and territory information (i.e. age, gender, ethnicity, high school, self reported h.s. GPA, etc.)

This is broken down by first-time freshmen, transfer and readmitted students (i.e. student type) and residency status (in-state vs. out of state/WUE)

Analysis is all about conversion (i.e. movement through the funnel) and yield (i.e. enrollment) for any given segment/event/communication plan/etc.

4. What improvements have been achieved over the last five years?

- Closer alignment of activities with mission and focus of university
- Implementation of Cision media tracking software
- Social media and online analytics
- Introduction of video for use in storytelling, chancellor communications and social media
- Public opinion surveys, alumni opinion surveys
- Focus groups and stakeholder interviews
- Professional development/training in current trends and services
- Feedback from university and community members
- Enhanced collaboration and coordination with all departments and units across campus (e.g. campus communicators regular meeting)
- Implementation of local and national media relations efforts to cost efficiently extend the reach of UAA's public relations.

5. What efforts have your unit made to improve efficiencies and reduce costs? What was the result?

- The UR team has shrunk from 13 employees to nine employees over the last three years
- UAA will publish limited quantities of Alumni Spirit magazine and has transitioned from print to online publications, wherever possible
- Produced all html email communications in-house
- Reduced employees to 9 or 10-months contracts when feasible (graphic design, special events, writing)
- Free or low-cost software for graphic design
- Maximize employee productivity with specific production metrics
- Performed all graphic design in-house for events. EX: Green and Gold Gala, savings of \$5,000.
- Using free services to allow for more streamlined content creation, limiting steps to produce online publications, saving on personnel costs.

UR's largest expense is personnel with 9 employees. We keep salaries low but acceptable for professionals. We work in a fast-paced, deadline-driven environment, and produce excellent products under tight timelines. When possible, we allow employees to take unpaid leave, particularly in summer, another way to keep costs down.

6. List and briefly describe any current or proposed Board of Regents Policy, State or Federal mandates, or laws that require the continuation of your core function(s).

UR plays a critical role in the event of emergency and crisis situations. Board of Regents policy Chapter 02.05 – Crisis Planning, Response, and Communications notes the following:

P02.05.020. Crisis Communications; Designated Spokespersons.

A. The university responds quickly, accurately, and fully to requests for information about any crisis that affects the system, its employees, its property, its students and its public image, within the constraints imposed by concern for individual privacy and legal responsibility.

B. The crisis plans will designate university personnel to be designated spokespersons during the crisis. No other employee is authorized to disseminate information on behalf of the university about the crisis to the news media unless designated to be a spokesperson by the president or a chancellor. (04-21-00)

- In the event of an emergency or natural disaster, UR staff are an integral part of the incident management team and among a handful of people at UAA trained and authorized to utilize the university system's emergency management software. This requires understanding of the types of communication being disseminated and channels

through which we can release it. For example, only emergency alerts can go out via phone and text. Use of these channels for a campus closure due to inclement weather could result in FCC violations. This software tool is also used for Clery notifications regarding crimes that present a threat to the campus community – also required by federal law.

- UR's staff handle media relations for the university and work to preserve the university's reputation and public image. They disseminate information regularly to press and act as spokespersons when necessary. They also are important links in the notification chain to leadership in the event of crisis, and they prepare for events as part of crisis response rehearsals as noted in BOR P02.05.030 and P02.05.060.
- UR also handles information requests from press, as well as members of the public. When the School of Education lost accreditation for its initial teacher licensure programs, UR received media requests to access the reports UAA submitted to CAEP. The reports were not FERPA compliant, which required coordination with the Office of the General Counsel to redact certain portions of the report before release. Without UR's involvement and expertise, the university would have been in violation of FERPA.
- UR staff also ensure creative content complies with federal laws regarding copyright, human research and animal research. Staff also gather photo releases granting permission to use images and recordings of individuals in our advertising and promotional materials. This is particularly important when photographing minors who are participating in campus activities such as summer camps.

7. Potential cuts: Please describe any function reductions or eliminations that are feasible without significantly affecting UAA's mission fulfillment or its compliance mandates? Are any functions within your unit are duplicated elsewhere at UAA? Is there an opportunity for efficiency to be created by partnering or combining functions? Please describe the opportunities you identify within your unit and include the approximate dollar values and savings that would result.

UR is part of an integrated Advancement team, and part of the larger UAA Administration team. We provide support for the offices of Alumni Relations and Development in addition to accomplishing the institutional communications functions for which UR is solely responsible. UR is nearly always involved in university wide committees for initiatives and events. In that way, we serve the whole university as communications team members for each initiative or event, such as strategic planning, accreditation, commencement, etc.

Outsourcing of certain UR functions is possible (e.g. graphic design, social media, some writing) that could result in savings of: \$130,000.