

Date: March 4, 2020

To: Cathy Sandeen, UAA Chancellor

From: Bruce Schultz, UAA Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs

RE: Program Review Recommendations – Enrollment Services

I have completed my review of the report submitted by Associate Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Services Lora Volden, which include the following departments:

- Admissions, Recruitment, Marketing & Communications
- Enrollment Services Administration
- Financial Aid
- Military & Veteran Student Services
- Registrar

The departments comprising this review have broad responsibilities for supporting students at nearly every point in their UAA experience, from pre-enrollment and through to graduation and beyond with degree verifications and continuing credentials/records management. Their core services include recruitment, admission, registration, student records, transcripts and transcript evaluations, scholarship and aid management, merit/need-based grants, federal work study, services for military and veteran students and their families, international student services, UA Scholars, Banner Student data access, training and query development, academic course schedule production and maintenance, academic room scheduling, university catalog management, production, and retention, course registration and management, degree audits and awarding, FERPA oversight, National Student Exchange, and regulatory compliance assurance. Collectively, the Enrollment Services suite of programs and services provide essential services to assist students in accessing educational programs, persisting in the pursuit of their educational goals and fostering a culture of academic goal completion. Equally as important, Enrollment Services provides systems for supporting faculty and staff and executing academic policy consistently across the institution.

The Student Affairs general fund budget cuts from FY15 to FY20 total \$3.9M, which is 34% of the Student Affairs' FY14 general fund allocation. Furthermore, between FY14 and FY19, Student Affairs has reduced its personnel spend by \$2.2M. These reductions impact every UAA Student Affairs function, each of which are basic student services provided by almost any comparable U.S. metropolitan public university.

According to the Chronicle of Higher Education<sup>1</sup>, UAA’s percentage of total spending devoted to student services in FY18 was \$3,020 per student FTE, which is \$1,454 less than UAF and \$510 less than UAS. UAA Student Affairs has taken drastic budget reduction measures such as eliminating divisions, departments, and programs; reorganizing and merging departments; eliminating three associate vice chancellor positions; eliminating exempt and non-exempt positions; reducing service hours to bare minimums required for safe operations; implementing new technologies in an effort to improve the student experience and increase efficiency with reduced staffing; reducing travel; maximizing Federal Work Study benefits by hiring Federal Work Study students within Student Affairs and maximizing assistance through the JLD program; supplementing the reduced budgets with grant funding; and reduced spending on storage. This is not an exhaustive list of actions taken by Student Affairs to maintain the integrity of the student services programs and services with ever-decreasing operating budgets and staffing.

It’s important to note that Student Affairs is currently projecting to start FY21 with a \$280K deficit. This deficit is due to the the loss of internship revenue transferred from Career Services to the academic colleges, unfunded personnel increases associated with transferring duties from eliminated positions to the remaining student development and enrollment services staff, and covering unfunded personnel increases to retain employees identified as operationally critical.

### **Recommendations**

In FY19, the Student Affairs Leadership Team developed six decision-making principles and priorities. Four of those principles and priorities in particular guide me as I make the following recommendations relative to the enrollment services departments reviewed by Associate Vice Chancellor Volden: (1) maintain investments in recruiting students toward UAA’s goal of matriculating the maximum number of undergraduates possible, (2) Student Affairs professionals who provide essential direct services to students are of great importance, (3) preserve essential Student Affairs functions which support UAA’s mission, and (4) be the best stewards of University resources we can be.

1. Reduce the annual operating budgets (non-labor) for the Office of the Registrar and Financial Aid by \$30K each. Enrollment Services will need to pool and share salary savings to fund regular operating expenses. The operating budgets for the remaining areas of Enrollment Services must be left in-tact as investments in

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<sup>1</sup> Colleges that spend the most per student on student services. (2020, February 16). *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

recruiting and admitting students. As enrollments are near record declines, loss of funding will directly impact all levels of the enrollment funnel.

**FY21 GF Reduction: \$60K**

2. Implement a mandatory ten-day employee furlough will provide one-time savings for the enrollment services areas. These one-time savings will allow for a more systematic and strategic implementation of reductions over-time. In FY22, Enrollment Services will be expected to reduce 3.0 FTE of processing technicians for FY23 to make this reduction permanent.

**FY21 GF Reduction: \$190K**

**FY22 GF Reduction: \$190K**

<b>Total FY21 GF Reduction: \$250K</b>	<b>Total FY22 GF Reduction: \$190K</b>
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I commend Associate Vice Chancellor Volden and her leadership team for the years of reductions they've so effectively managed while remaining focused on improving the student experience and not jeopardizing UAA's compliance with the myriad of complex mandates we must adhere to. AVC Volden's review includes many wonderful examples of ways in which Enrollment Services has improved the student experience and implemented technologies to help keep pace with the personnel and operating budget reductions. I am particularly appreciative of the entire Enrollment Services team for their steadfast commitment to quality, accuracy and compliance. The team's attention to these details creates savings through increased effectiveness and efficiency and minimizing costly risks and liabilities.