Dear UAA Community,

I am writing to inform you of my decision to stay in our current, mostly remote, operating mode for the spring 2021 semester. This decision applies to all UAA campuses and programs.

I consulted with cabinet, deans, governance groups, as well as Dr. Tom Hennessy, who has previously served as a faculty member in our College of Health and is currently serving as a consultant to University of Alaska Interim President Pitney on the system's COVID-19 response.

Given infection patterns and the likelihood we will not see much improvement between now and the start of spring semester classes, I believe the most prudent course of action is to continue to use mostly alternate course delivery with limited face-to-face courses. By deciding now, I am providing faculty, staff and students some certainty and time to plan for a successful spring semester.

College During COVID continues at UAA.

Current approval processes remain in place for classes that incorporate any face-to-face activities. Look for further information from Provost Runge's office for guidance. In addition, please continue to work with your dean, director or supervisor regarding approval to access campus. In the face of constant changes, I encourage leaders of our units to remain flexible and help employees meet work demands as they juggle the educational and care needs of their children and families.

When entering campus facilities, please follow all safety protocols including wearing a mask. Please note university buildings remain locked. The facilities team is transitioning buildings on the Anchorage campus to a new online access control system that will allow employees and students to access buildings with their WOLFcards, affording us greater campus safety.

Please continue to leverage resources available to you for advice, guidance and support as we prepare for next semester. The Academic Continuity website provides excellent resources for faculty; likewise, the College During COVID website is a fantastic resource for students. Consult the COVID-19 website for more information about our campus operations.

It is my hope that should infection rates drop and a vaccine become available and widely distributed, we might be able to hold some safe, small, in-person
events toward the end of the spring semester. We will need to wait and see.

Again, I would like to express my gratitude for your flexibility, creativity and perseverance during this extended period of sheltering in place. In the meantime, let's stay focused on our mission and the students and communities we serve.

Sincerely,

Cathy Sandeen
UAA Chancellor