WE PUT STUDENTS FIRST!

January 8, 2021

Dear UAA Faculty,

I send you my great appreciation and warmest wishes for a fulfilling semester. As we head into the spring semester, I wish to remind us all about some best practices and provide some information and guidance.

SPRING 2021 DATES AND DEADLINES

As we worked through the shift to remote delivery and addressed different issues related to COVID-19, we made a set of exceptions to policies, processes, dates and deadlines. UAA has now returned to the regular policies, processes, dates and deadlines for withdrawal, CR/NC, and incompletes.

See the Spring 2021 Dates and Deadlines on the Registrar’s website. Note that Add/Drop, Credit/No Credit, and Credit-to-Audit come quickly, on January 22.

EXCEPTIONS

Exceptions to Policy: While UAA has returned to the regular dates and deadlines, please keep in mind that for many, if not most, policies, exceptions are possible. There is a policy petition for this on the Registrar’s forms website. However, for time sensitive issues, it is possible in many cases to expedite this process. Please consult with your dean or community campus director’s office if a situation arises where you want to help a student, but are not sure how to go about it.

Incomplete Extensions: Students may request an extension to an incomplete deadline, even if a year has passed. It is an academic decision that the faculty can make with the student and recommend to their dean, who may request an exception through OAA. This can be handled by a simple email with the basic information about the course (semester, year, CRN, prefix, number, title), the extension requested and a brief rationale.

STUDENT SUCCESS

Mid-Term Grades: Faculty are asked to post mid-term grades, particularly for first year, GER, and “gateway” courses that are required for progress in students’ degrees. Mid-term grades can be entered through the Faculty Services tab in UAOnline (click Enter Grades), anytime between February 15 and March 5, 2021. Providing mid-term
grades during this window allows advisors to conduct outreach to underperforming students, encouraging and supporting them to make needed adjustments.

**QUIZZES, EXAMINATIONS, MID-TERM EXAMINATIONS, FINALS**

**Quizzes and Examinations:** Courses that are in-person, synchronous, or hybrid may require scheduled exams and other scheduled assessments. However, these must be held during a regularly scheduled session, as published in the official class schedule. Asynchronous courses must allow for asynchronous quiz and examination taking. Students selected the course in part due to the flexibility offered by asynchronous delivery. If you would like to revise an examination for alternate delivery, these strategies and resources from our faculty development network may be helpful, and you can reach out to uaa_design@alaska.edu for more individualized consultation.

**Last Day of Class/Final Examinations:** All classes that have scheduled meeting days/times, except for some hybrid courses, must meet on the final examination day. If you are not using the time for a final examination, please plan to use that time for a regular class meeting, in order to meet credit-hour requirements.

The last day of class/final examination is scheduled using the standard final exam time blocks posted on the Registrar’s website (see Spring Finals).*

Early in the semester, please be sure to inform your students about the date/time of the last day of class/final examination.

*Any exceptions to the meeting day/time of a final examination must be approved by the provost.

**Proctored Examinations:** In general, in-person proctored examinations should not be required for a class that is otherwise distance delivered. Even using the remote proctoring tool RPNow can be challenging for students, particularly if they do not have the required technology, or if they have an accommodation for examination taking.

Here is information, in the case that a student must take the examination in person.

**Face-to-Face Proctored Examinations:** The UAA Testing Center in the Consortium Library is open, and is available for Face-to-Face (including "paper and pencil") Proctored Exams needed for distance-delivered classes (whether the class is taught by a UAA Anchorage faculty member, from one of our community campuses, or even from UAF or UAS) at no charge to the student. Due to COVID-19, testing space is limited and students need to sign up for a time in advance through this link. Students are only charged for proctoring if it is for a non-UA school.
If a class has exams through RPNow, but the student does not have an RPNow-capable setup (Windows or Mac, recent OS, camera, quiet room free of distractions, etc.), please direct them to the Consortium Library, where they can check out a laptop, and use one of the quiet areas/study rooms for testing. (Please note that Chromebooks are not compatible with RPNow.) For information see the Consortium Library’s website.

Low-Stakes versus High-Stakes Assessments: Please remember that multiple, scaffolded low-stakes assessments can demonstrate student achievement equally as well as a few high-stakes assessments. Low-stakes assessments are proven to be less stressful, and they allow students to demonstrate improvement over time. Our Center for Advancing Faculty Excellence has several resources on this topic, if you would like to learn more.

Thank you all for your attention to these items, and your dedication to our students. UAA is committed to supporting you, just as you are committed to the students. If you have questions about courses, grading, or need additional information, your dean can provide assistance. You can always reach out to me directly as well (drunge@alaska.edu) with specific questions or for clarification.

Sincerely,

Denise Runge

Denise Runge, Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs