October 16, 2020

From: Denise Runge, Provost

To: UAA Faculty

Cc: Full Council of Deans and Directors

Re: Guidance regarding COVID-19 and Incomplete grades

General information: UAA’s standing policy on Incomplete grades states, in part, “...Students assigned an incomplete grade are not entitled to complete the remaining coursework within the classroom/lab or to any additional instruction, nor may they participate in the class/lab during a future semester without re-registering, paying tuition and retaking the course.”

However, due to COVID-19 and the pivot in Spring 2020 and beyond, UAA has extended its normal deadlines to complete work and receive a grade, and on a course-by-course basis will make exceptions to the above policy as needed.

Considerations: the primary considerations involve FERPA regulations, the ability of affected students to complete course assignments by alternate means, and the physical limitations and social distancing requirements in place in proposed teaching spaces.

- From a FERPA perspective, option one is for students to have continued access to the original Blackboard Shell, as long as access is continued only for previously enrolled students. There will be no additional cost to the students.
- From a FERPA perspective, option two for allowing F2F or online class participation by previously enrolled students into a course section, would be to have those students register as “auditing” the course, however they would then be responsible for tuition and fees—which the College might consider reimbursing with an Administrative Scholarship.
- A third FERPA-compliant method would be prior to or at the beginning of the course, the faculty member includes a statement on the course syllabus explaining that previously enrolled students will be allowed to participate as “Visitors” to the course, and directing students enrolled in the current section to notify the Instructor if they have any objection to such visitor participation. Faculty must give the enrolled students ample time to consider and respond. Please note: if using this option, faculty should record the dates of any F2F participation by non-enrolled students, for use in possible contact tracing if needed.

Process for approval for options two and three: Prior to the start of the course faculty should request access, in writing, for students from a prior section to participate in the current one. The request would be made to the Dean, who is the decision authority. Deans and the faculty member are responsible to follow the above guidance and to work closely with Risk Services to ensure COVID-related room capacities and other aspects of approved mitigation plans remain in compliance.