September 23, 2020

Dear UAA Faculty,

I hope your fall semester is going well. I am grateful for your dedication and commitment to our mission to serve Alaska’s students, and I hope your interactions with your students are going well. Please remember your interactions with the students in your classes are critical to student success, and they help us meet federal guidelines, which specify that ongoing interaction is required, even in asynchronous courses.

As we approach the middle of the semester, I wish to share some best practices, as well as information and guidance.

**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 Grade Entry tab in UAOnline, anytime between September 28 and October 16, 2020. 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. For final examinations, please use the standard final exam time blocks posted on the Registrar’s website (see Fall Finals). Faculty teaching in-person, synchronous, and some hybrid courses and who are not using the final examination time blocks for an examination should plan to use that time for a regular class meeting, to meet credit-hour requirements.

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.

**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](#).

**INCOMPLETE GRADES THAT WERE DUE TO BE COMPLETED IN SPRING AND SUMMER 2020**

Interim Provost Stalvey extended the deadline for any incomplete grades that were due to be completed in spring or summer 2020. These are now due by the end of the fall 2020 semester. If you approved any incomplete grades that fall into this category, please reach out to the students to be sure they are on track to submit their remaining work to you. You will need to submit the Change of Grade form by the fall grade submission deadline.

**SPRING 2021 PREPARATIONS**

**Spring Class Schedules**

The deadline for colleges to submit to the Registrar’s office their spring class schedules is this Friday, September 25. Thank you for your help developing these schedules. The goal is to input the classes once, rather than pivot them to a different delivery mode later. Changing class delivery modes after the schedule is submitted causes extra work behind the scenes by staff in your department, college, the Registrar’s office, and accounts payable, and we wish to use everyone’s time wisely. I know that means you have had to make some hard decisions up front, and I am very appreciative.

**Anchorage Campus Online Bookstore Course Materials Submission Period**

The textbook and other course materials submission portal at the UAA Anchorage Campus Online Bookstore will be open for Anchorage faculty to submit their adoptions from October 12 to November 2. Additional guidance will be available soon, including information about trainings, Open Educational Resources, and Inclusive Access (formerly, Day One Delivery). It is important that all Anchorage faculty enter course material information, even just to indicate that the class will use Open Educational Resources, other zero cost materials, or that there are no required materials for the class. Federal regulations require UAA to post
information about textbooks and other course materials to help students understand their full cost of attendance. The online bookstore allows us to more readily demonstrate that we are meeting these federal regulations. Faculty with questions about course materials options can email the UAA Online Bookstore at uaabookstore@akademos.com.

**Low-Stakes versus High-Stakes Assessments**
As you plan and develop your spring courses, 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, Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs