

An Operational Academic  
Decision Guiding Document for the next five years  
2015

Preamble: <How did we get to this point> connection to strategic plan, university mission/vision, purpose of the document, maybe merge with what follows. Decisions will be guided by this document, decisions will be made with or without. Connection to reaffirmation of accreditation. Post program prioritization process.

Preamble & Purpose: In response to an increasingly challenging budget projection, Provost Gingerich asked the deans to consider what the academic core of the University would look like in five years with a substantially reduced budget. He pointed out to the deans that they would be the ones primarily responsible for leading the colleges through these fiscally challenging times and that they should do so with a coordinated vision. As a result of this challenge, the deans reviewed the mission and vision statements of UAA and the various colleges and spent considerable time in discussion about the academic vision of the University. It was decided to create a document which captures the essence of these discussions. This discussion was then expanded to include the directors of the community campuses and the the leadership of the faculty senate. The discussion will be expanded in the early part of the Fall 2015 semester to include the greater campus community.

Realizing that tough decisions will soon be required with or without such a document, this document is intended to present

Purpose: Develop an operational plan that can be used by UAA's academic enterprise and by the institution as a whole to guide decision making as the institution implements existing and projected budget reductions. This planning process and the resulting plan(s) will be used during this economic downturn to guide the academic mission of the University. Simultaneously, this plan will be used by other units of the University to shape services provided in support of the academic mission of the institution.

This document is not intended to replace the current UAA Strategic Plan or any other document or accreditation efforts. It is, however, guided by these documents and accreditation themes and is intended to work within the confines of the Strategic Plan and accreditation themes. This work is also a logical follow on to the recent Prioritization effort as the valuable understanding obtained from the Prioritization effort greatly enhances the implementation of this operational plan.

Background: UAA is currently guided by the UAA 2017 Strategic Plan as well as by the system's plan, Shaping Alaska's Future. To help guide the University, a set of Core Accreditation Themes were established in 2012 and reaffirmed by the Chancellor's Cabinet in Feb. 2015. These efforts are aligned with these Core Themes:

- Teaching and Learning
- Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity
- Student Success
- UAA Community
- Public Square

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~~This planning activity is guided by this framework.~~

Assumptions: The following statements are being used to frame this process. Since this process is set up to be short-term, these assumptions build from the belief that the factors that exist today will continue for the near term.

1. The UA system will continue to face diminished revenue. Oil prices will stay low for another year or two before slowly rebounding. Elected officials will struggle to align state expenditures with revenue. Undesignated reserves will be depleted and the state will struggle to maintain support for UA.
2. The strength of UAA is its people: students, staff, and faculty.
3. The UA system will need to continue working to position itself within state agencies. The system will need to continually promote faculty and staff as the intellectual capital of the state, a source for services and advice that are critical at this time.
4. The Alaska student enrollments will continue to slowly decline and/or plateau.
5. The university will continue to be an open enrollment institution serving a diverse student body.
6. The State will continue to depend on the university to provide a qualified workforce.
7. The Alaskan population will continue to seek college education at current rates.

Process/timeline:

- Mid-October: Discussions and guiding document done
- October 2<sup>nd</sup>: Final reading/input by Faculty Senate
- September 2<sup>nd</sup>: Faculty Senate initial discussion
- August 9<sup>th</sup>: Initial Draft available for distribution to faculty and student/staff governance <Need dates for student & staff input>
- August Dean & Directors meeting.
- August 20<sup>th</sup>: Matsu College
- August 21<sup>st</sup>: Kenai Peninsula College
- August 10<sup>th</sup>: Kodiak College
- College meetings...
- <Maybe set up website/qualtrics survey>

Academic Vision: UAA is the premier postsecondary institution for learning in Southcentral Alaska ~~and throughout the circumpolar North~~<sup>[B1]</sup>. Built on partnerships and an innovative spirit rooted in tradition we provide opportunities for students to realize their potential, improve the health and wellbeing of communities, to promote the public good, to lead and transform our institutions and ~~to~~ develop our the Alaskan economy.

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## Operational Pillars:

1. Faculty & staff excellence
2. Successful students
3. Research to improve Alaska
4. High return on investment for Alaskans
5. Community engagement [B2]

To actualize this vision, the following goals will be used to guide prioritization of offerings and resource allocation.

- Prepare learners to be proficient in 21st century skills (literacy, numeracy, collaboration, problem solving/critical thinking, cultural competence, creativity)
- Prepare learners to be professionals ready for licensure, employment, and advancement in Alaska their chosen careers.
- Prepare learners to be employees with the technical and employability skills needed by Alaskan industries.
- Prepare learners to be professionals to support and to lead the business, industry, non-profit and governmental agencies of Alaska.
- Continue to strengthen UAA as a center that will support the work of the state as carried out by profit, nonprofit, and governmental agencies.
- Continue to strengthen UAA as a cultural center for Southcentral Alaska and the State.
- Strengthen UAA's role as a supporter and leader of Alaska's developing role in the Arctic.

## Strategies

1. Embed 21<sup>st</sup> century skills learning outcomes into all courses.
2. Collaborate more closely with, or contract with AK Dept of Labor & Workforce Development to teach employability skills to all UAA students.
3. Increase use of student data analytics (student-, faculty-, and staff-friendly) to improve student success and lower cost per student rate.
4. Require leadership skills be incorporated into all capstone projects/courses and/or require all students to take a leadership course within 15 credits of graduation. Offer a leadership course elective to students seeking 2-year degrees.
5. Encourage faculty to increase use of "Alaskan professionals" as guest lecturers in all degree programs.
6. Increase student internships in profit, non-profit and governmental agencies.
7. Ensure the drive for lower faculty cost per credit hour rates does not sacrifice quality of learning.
8. Increase faculty community service.

## & Tactical Plans

< Maybe developed by each college. This will be some place to emphasize college priorities .>

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Outcomes: to include measurable mileposts; assess/reset/loops; reporting

DRAFT

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