Chapter Three
Institutional Planning
# University of Alaska Planning Documents

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Chapter Three: Institutional Planning

Standard 3.A: Institutional Planning

Comprehensive Planning

The 2001 UAF Self-Study noted that planning in the 1990s “was driven by the need to develop immediate strategies to address the fiscal crisis” (UAF Self-Study, 2001). During the last decade, however, long-range planning has moved into UAF’s institutional culture and is evolving into a systematic, integrated process. The university’s plans provide a solid foundation for carrying out the institutional mission, yet the university is able to respond to unexpected changes in circumstances.

In 2003, the Board of Regents developed UA Strategic Plan 2009, which provides long-range goals for the system. The goals include student success, educational quality, research excellence, faculty and staff strength, responsiveness to state needs, technology and facility development, and diverse sources of revenue. UAF is expected to align its strategic plan within these broad-based goals. The UA strategic plan will be revised in 2011.

UAF Strategic Plan 2010

Using the mission statement as its guide, UAF developed a broad-based plan—UAF Strategic Plan 2010—which identifies six strategic pathways and accompanying goals that have guided the university’s development over the past five years. UAF Strategic Plan 2010, which was approved by the regents in 2006, uses some of the elements of UAF Strategic Plan 2005 for guidance, but the aim was to write a more concise, user-friendly document. A committee of faculty, staff, alumni, students, and community members undertook the strategic planning process. (3.A.1, 3.A.2)

The pathways are:

1. Teaching and learning for student success
2. Research and scholarship
3. Enrollment and retention
4. Community engagement and economic development
5. Advancement and philanthropy
6. Faculty and staff development

The strategic plan will be revised in 2011-2012 and it will be based on the core themes, objectives, and indicators identified through the current accreditation process, with any necessary updates.

UAF Vision 2017 Plan

In 2007, the chancellor convened the UAF Vision Task Force to solicit broad-based input from the community on the university’s future. Comprising 55 leaders from Alaska, the Lower 48, and the university, the task force was charged with making recommendations on how UAF could position itself to become the world’s premier arctic research and teaching university by 2017, when the institution will celebrate its 100th anniversary. The task force report and the strategic plan were merged to create the vision 2017 plan. The provost and each vice chancellor provided expected end results, objectives, targets, strategies, unit responsibilities, budget impact, and status updates for each of the six pathways, as appropriate to their unit. The vision plan presents a clear road map for the university to follow over the next seven years. In 2010, the Chancellor’s Cabinet completed a status review and implementation plan for Vision 2017. The Vision Task Force Final Report and the UAF Vision 2017 Plan are included in the materials sent to evaluators and are available online. (3.A.2)
It is anticipated that the UAF Vision 2017 Plan will provide much of the foundation for the strategic planning effort in 2012. The vision plan includes significantly more detail relative to objectives, measureable activities, and budgetary implications than the strategic plan.

Transition Team Reports

In May 2008, incoming Interim Chancellor Brian Rogers asked a diverse group of individuals to assist him in identifying strategic priorities that should be addressed within the two years of his interim appointment. Committees addressed administrative services, athletics, child care, community economic development, community engagement, enrollment management, facilities services, faculty/curriculum, information technology, KUAC, philanthropy, research administration, student services, and sustainability. Committee reports discussed the major strategic priorities within each area. The Steering Committee examined the reports to identify three levels of priorities:

1. NOW strategic priorities – actions that should be accomplished or initiated within the next 30 days;
2. 90-day strategic priorities – actions that should be completed or initiated by Dec. 1, 2008;
3. Two-year strategic priorities – actions that should be accomplished or initiated within two years.

Many key actions identified in the transition plan have been accomplished. For example, a joint HR redesign process involving UAF and UA ended, and substantial improvements have been made in UAF’s HR processes. Development of a one-stop shop for student services is well underway, with most such services now housed on the first floors of the Eielson Building and adjacent Signers’ Hall. Financial problems of KUAC, Athletics, and the bookstore have been addressed. Both KUAC and Athletics have reduced operations, and additional state general funding has been allocated to each. The bookstore has been outsourced to a contractor, Follett Corporation. Students approved a sustainability fee, and a campus sustainability coordinator has been hired and is already active on several fronts, including recycling.

Certain issues, such as improving on-campus child care availability and revision of the Core Curriculum, have required more time, but work continues.

In 2009, then-President Hamilton, after consultation with campus constituencies, changed Chancellor Rogers’ interim position to a continuing position. This meant that the two-year timeframe around the original transition plan was extended, and some elements have become part of longer-term strategic planning.

Academic Development Plan

The UAF Academic Development Plan 2007–2012 was adopted in 2007. Its four focal areas are directly related to the mission statement, the strategic plan, and the vision plan. The areas are:

- Building on academic excellence
- Economic and workforce development
- Northern peoples in a global context
- Northern sciences

The plan was developed by a working group that comprised administration, faculty, and staff, most of whom were also members of Provost’s Council. The plan expands upon the strategic plan, which contained few specifics relative to academic programs. UAF aims to sufficiently include academic planning in the 2012 strategic planning effort, so a separate academic plan will not be necessary.
Annual Unit Plan

At the school, college, and institute levels, the Annual Unit Plan (AUP) process was implemented in 2007. Designed to serve several purposes, it requires academic and research units to identify both short- and long-term goals and provide yearly progress updates. All goals must relate to the UAF Academic Development Plan and the UA Academic Master Plan as well as to appropriate goal(s) of the strategic plan; links to mission core themes were required beginning with the 2011 AUPs. The plans also serve as a single source of information for a variety of reports required by different audiences.

Research Development Plan

A new research development planning effort will be undertaken in fall 2011. This coincides with the appointment of a new vice chancellor for research. To date, a formal research plan has not been created, although each research institute takes part in the annual unit plan process, and institute directors lead planning in their areas.

Enrollment Management Plan

The Division of Student Services revised its enrollment management plan in 2009 (see Enrollment Management Plan 2009 in Exhibits). Specific goals were identified: new and transfer student recruitment; student success, retention, and persistence; improvement in enrollment processing; and reducing enrollment barriers.

Enrollment management planning has been a significant challenge over the past decade. The university’s recruitment efforts are influenced by UAF’s northern location, characterized by cold temperatures and limited light during the academic year; the relatively small western, northern, and interior population, compared with south central Alaska; a campus that has some outdated facilities and a backlog of deferred maintenance; a state program that lends funds to students who attend out-of-state higher education institutions; and a very limited need-based scholarship program. Alaska is ranked 51st out of 50 states (and the District of Columbia) based on the amount of need-based aid available to students from the state (Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education). UAF internally allocates about $300,000 per year (1 percent of tuition revenue) to need-based aid. While UAF is the only doctoral-granting institution in the state and conducts the majority of the research in the UA System, its sister institution to the south, UAA, has grown faster in the last decade and competes for state funding.

Recently the Division of Student Services developed a recruiting plan, which is intended to replace enrollment management plans. UAF’s recruitment plan for 2011–2013 was refined based on market demographics, enrollment trends, and institutional capacity. It focuses on a 2–3.5 percent increase in overall enrollment per year, with specific priority target areas and goals in the following segments: first-time full-time freshmen (concentrated in Alaska markets), transfer students (outside of Alaska), UA Scholars, and international students. The results of initial actions will drive changes in the recruiting plan, with the intent to make recruiting nimble and responsive to changing conditions and to evaluate the effectiveness of various strategies. UAF will also have to be nimble and responsive to adapt to the 2011 implementation of the state of Alaska merit-based Alaska Performance Scholarship and increased funding of the need-based Alaska Advantage grant program.

Development Plan

The UAF Development Plan, while confidential in nature, emphasizes building individual philanthropy, with a focus (albeit not exclusive) on alumni and friends. Development’s primary responsibility is to build donor relationships, and its goal is to raise private funds from corporations, foundations, and individuals to support UAF’s mission. This is done with the collective help of senior leadership, faculty, and staff. UAF’s FY12 fundraising goal is $11M, raising $5 million in philanthropic research dollars and...
the remaining $6 million from in-kind and cash gifts. The goal is to retain the existing donor base while increasing individual giving. UAF’s FY12 fundraising priorities fall under the categories of academic excellence, pre-college outreach, cutting-edge and global research, workforce development and high-demand jobs, and indigenous people and culture. Additional fundraising needs outside of these categories can be achieved through other donor-centric fundraising opportunities and strategic discussions (see Development Funding Priorities in Exhibits).

**Outreach and Engagement Plan**

The vice provost for outreach led an outreach and engagement planning group to develop a one-year plan (see UAF Outreach and Engagement Plan in Exhibits) that will guide development of longer term planning over the next year. This group concluded that most of what UAF currently offers is outreach, one-way flow of information; it does not offer engagement, which is defined by shared direction, governance, and responsibility. The group identified six major recommendations to help move UAF along the path from outreach to an engaged institution. One of these recommendations is to prepare to apply for Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Teaching Community Engagement Classification.

**Campus Master Plan**

A campus master plan for the UAF Fairbanks campus was completed in 2002 with the following goals:

- Create an efficient and attractive campus environment conducive to learning.
- Improve community access to the UAF Fairbanks campus.
- Make vehicle circulation and parking simple and direct.
- Promote safe and efficient travel throughout campus for pedestrians and non-motorized uses.
- Highlight natural assets of campus and the unique northern environment.

Specific actions related to the goals were developed, and the plan guided campus growth during the ensuing years. Specific building sites as well as designated open spaces were included in the plan; these were particularly important to campus planning. A five-year revision was completed in 2005; however, due to changes in regents’ policy and guidelines regarding campus master planning, the revision was never formally approved.

A revised 2010 Campus Master Plan (see 2010 Campus Master Plan in Exhibits) was completed in 2010 and will be in effect until 2017. Approved by the regents in June 2010, the plan builds on many of the concepts that were introduced in the 2002 plan. New approaches to integrating research and teaching facilities and more detailed space planning were included. In addition to the consultant team from Perkins + Will, the Master Planning Committee and a small working group guided the development of the plan. Public involvement, including the campus constituencies as well as the local community, was ensured through a variety of venues. These included a public review session and ongoing web-based information and feedback options.

The campus master plan includes the following revised goals:

- Support the integration of teaching and research through building location and use, circulation, and open space.
- Ensure the campus environment enhances both the academic and student life experience.
- Improve access to and circulation within the campus.
- Preserve and highlight the unique natural and cultural aspects of UAF’s northern location.
- Enhance space quality and maximize effective utilization.
- Employ best practices in sustainability for northern environments.

Resulting in part from increased planning funds, the 2010 Campus Master Plan has more detail than the 2002 campus plan and includes a series of campus maps that illustrate short-, mid-, and long-term priorities. A matrix listing the plan goals and accompanying actions based on the same priorities is
provided in the 2010 Campus Master Plan. This makes the implementation of plan goals easier to evaluate. The Master Planning Committee conducts periodic reviews to ensure that campus development is occurring according to the stated goals and actions. The UAF Community and Technical College completed a facilities master plan in 2010. Other CRCD campuses are in the process of revising their facilities master plans (last updated in 2006), with presentations to the Board of Regents scheduled for June 2012.

**Chancellor’s Cabinet**

The Chancellor’s Cabinet, consisting of the chancellor, provost, vice chancellors, executive officer, and some associate vice chancellors, is a vehicle for information exchange and decision making. The cabinet periodically engages in formal and informal assessments of progress relative to UAF’s official planning documents, and individuals or groups of the members are charged with actions relative to those plans. The cabinet is also responsible for collectively addressing emerging circumstances not considered by the longer-term plans. An example would be the withdrawal of Department of Defense support of the Arctic Region Supercomputing Center.

For the past five years, UA has conducted a system-wide operating review each fall. Each of the UA institutions presents an extensive collection of data that is used to evaluate fulfillment of its mission. Most of UAF’s data are collected centrally through its Planning, Analysis and Institutional Research arm, and the data are used in a variety of ways throughout the year. All deans and directors are required, through the mechanism of the annual unit plans, to include the most recent data in their evaluation of progress. The provost incorporates the AUP information into the operating review. Similarly, the data and other information contained in the AUPs are used in annual reporting to the State of Alaska Office of Management and Budget in both the Alaska Budget System (ABS) and Missions and Measures reports. The state posts the UA System ABS along with some elements of the Mission and Measures report online; specific UAF elements are indicated as such at that source. ABS reports must be backed up by current budgets submitted to the state. (3.A.3)

Future planning must be informed by data. In fall 2008, UAF implemented a revised baccalaureate admission standard because graduation data showed that the least qualified group of students formerly admitted had only a 3 percent chance of graduating within six years. In another data-driven effort, UAF has implemented supplemental instruction in certain 100- and 200-level classes for which successful completion rates were less than 70 percent, with subsequent improvement. Most recently, significant changes in recruiting practices were made based on data analysis. The extent of the research space deficit was illustrated even more clearly through analysis of the space data collected during the most recent campus master plan process.

**Budget Planning**

The UA Strategic Plan 2009, UAF Strategic Plan 2010, and UAF Vision 2017 Plan define budget priorities and guide resource allocation decisions. Budget proposals submitted to UA Statewide must list the statewide and UAF strategic goals addressed by the request. The budget planning process is fully described in Chapter 2 (see 2.F.3). (3.A.4)

**Emergency Preparedness and Contingency Planning**

Environmental Health, Safety and Risk Management is responsible for emergency preparedness. This includes the emergency response to a variety of events related to emergency situations, including fires, hazardous spills, flooding, earthquake, weather storms, explosions, or acts of terrorism.

UAF organizes, coordinates, and directs available resources toward an effective response to, and recovery from, any emergency. The effectiveness of this effort depends on the development of a comprehensive all-hazards plan and individual department emergency action plans. The university, therefore, requires
university units (e.g., departments) to develop detailed emergency action plans. The university’s all-hazards emergency operations plan includes a chain of command establishing the authority and responsibilities of campus officials and staff members, and requires that colleges, units, and departments designate building safety coordinators with the authority to modify emergency procedures and commit resources for emergency preparedness and recovery. The Fairbanks campus completed a simulated significant disaster exercise in July 2011 and will implement recommendations for emergency preparedness emerging from the exercise.

UAF has adopted the National Fire Protection Standard 1600, Standard on Disaster/Emergency Management and Business Continuity Programs, 2010 Edition. This was determined to be the best practices from three separate specialties: emergency management, disaster management, and business continuity management. The result is a single integrated approach to the emergency management cycle of prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

As described in Chapter 2 (section G.5), the University of Alaska has a geographically distributed computer information storage location in western Oregon for an off-site, disaster recovery facility. During FY11, the university brought this site online as a cold back-up, meaning that systems can be restored in a short period of time from data and services being backed up there. During FY12, the university plans to transition this to a warm site, meaning that redundant systems can be turned on and traffic rerouted to the facility for critical systems. During FY13, the university anticipates updating this facility to a hot failover site, meaning that within hours, all critical systems and functions can be rerouted to that facility with minimal downtime.

During the past year, UA Statewide has required us to engage in enterprise risk management. This has involved the cabinet in identifying the most serious risks to continuity of operations and developing plans to mitigate those risks. The potential failure of UAF’s only source of heat and affordable electricity, the 50-year-old Atkinson Power Plant, was identified as the most serious risk. The approach to mitigation is two-fold: (1) direct maintenance and renewal and renovation funding toward alleviation of the most critical issues (e.g., relocating the switch gear to a new facility outside the building containing the boilers), and (2) intensify efforts to plan, permit, and secure funding for a new heat and power plant.