

*Record of Proceedings:*

*Administrative Services Division  
First Step Workshop (1/30/09)  
And  
Next Step Workshop (10/2/09)*

*PREPARED FOR:*

*Administrative Services Division  
University of Alaska Fairbanks*

*PREPARED BY:*



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# **Introduction: ASD Planning and Implementing**

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The management team of the University of Alaska Fairbanks Administrative Services Department (ASD) is focused on improving the performance of the ASD as it serve the entirety of UAF, and on enhancing a positive workplace environment for all employees providing that service. To this end, the ASD began a series of “Step” workshops with professional facilitation provided by Eric McDowell, Principal of McDowell Group, Inc., an Alaska research-based consulting firm with a long record of service to the University of Alaska system.

## **First Step Workshop**

The management team convened in a one-day First Step strategic workshop at the Wood Center on campus on January 30, 2009. The purpose of the workshop was to bring together leadership from throughout the diverse 400-employee division to re-establish the organization’s common mission of service, address key issues of concern to all managers, and to identify concrete action plans for performance improvement. Attending were 40 managers, assistant managers and other key ASD personnel.

The first section of this document is a record of proceedings of this First Step Workshop, ending with a single task under the heading, First Step Action Plan. That single task was entitled, “Develop First Step Action Plan Priority Tasks” and was assigned to Vice Chancellor of Administration Pat Pitney. That task was completed on February 13, 2009 and identified 13 specific action plan tasks for improving ASD service and enhancing the work environment. As a result of the many recommendations by First Step Workshop participants, ASD chose to organize action planning into five categories:

- **Communications Action Plan**
- **Empowerment Action Plan**
- **Process Efficiency Action Plan**
- **Professional Services Improvement Action Plan**
- **Collaboration Action Plan**

## **Second Step Workshop**

On October 2, 2009 the ASD management team convened in the Next Step Workshop on the UAF campus. Participants reported on their progress on the 13 First Step Action Plan Priority Tasks and then viewed, and discussed, a McDowell Group presentation of the findings of an online ASD Employee Survey conducted as one of the 13 priority tasks. Participants engaged in group discussions based on the five action plan categories and recommended the next series of action plan tasks in each category. The second part of this document is a record of proceedings of this workshop and includes the 13 First Step Action Plan Priority Task document.

# The First Step Workshop

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The management team of the University of Alaska Fairbanks Administrative Services Department (ASD) convened in a one-day strategic workshop at the Wood Center on campus on January 30, 2009. The purpose of the workshop was to bring together leadership from throughout the diverse 400-employee division to re-establish the organization's common mission of service, address key issues of concern to all managers, and to identify concrete action plans for performance improvement. Attending were 40 managers, assistant managers and other key ASD personnel.

The workshop was led by Vice Chancellor of Administration Pat Pitney, and facilitated by Eric McDowell of McDowell Group, Inc., an Alaska professional services firm with a long-time professional relationship with the University of Alaska system.

The workshop had two major components – presentations by major customers, and a facilitated open discussion. Vice Chancellor Pitney opened the workshop with introductory comments, setting the stage for the day. Six speakers then addressed the management team from their perspectives as major customers of ASD services. Each speaker described their particular job and their vision for their portion of the University. They addressed service issues and offered solutions (and compliments for specific current service levels) for how ASD could better serve their organizations. Speakers were:

- Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor Susan Henrichs (Academic Affairs)
- Acting Vice Chancellor Jennifer Carroll (Rural, Community and Native Education)
- Associate Vice Chancellor John Blake (Research)
- Vice Chancellor Jake Poole (Advancement and Community Engagement)
- Vice Chancellor Tim Barnett (Student and Enrollment Services)
- Chief Information Technology Officer Steve Smith

Following these presentations and a brief lunch break, participants began a facilitated open discussion that included these components:

- Table team recommendations for service improvements that would have the greatest impact on achieving the UAF mission.
- All participants discussing (and agreeing upon) a new refined mission statement specifically for the Administrative Services Division.
- Participants identified the values that shall guide the behavior of all ASD employees in pursuit of the ASD and UAF missions.
- Open discussion of action items that could increase ASD service delivery as related to the UAF mission.
- Identifying and prioritizing five major action plans that managers consider essential to achieving both the ASD and UAF missions.
- Closing comments of all participants regarding the value of the workshop process.

# Summary of Major Customer Presentations

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The six major UAF customers of ASD summarized their jobs, expressed their vision for their area, identified ASD service topics and offered solutions for these service issues. Summaries of each presentation follow.

## **Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor Susan Henrichs (Academic Affairs)**

Vision:

- Attract Alaska's best
- Increase graduation rates
- Help students progress
- Increase enrollment and learning options
- Improve Alaska Native success
- More engagement and support of the wider community

Service Topics:

- Need ASD to handle things related to administration to allow us to better do our job.
- Help with things that are hard to do like hiring a student (very difficult for us) – we need a simple tool.
- Communication – the advice we need on how to do things is often not available – suggest guidelines for how best to respond.
- Compliments for: Physical plant, handling of honor students, and renovation.

## **Acting Vice Chancellor Jennifer Carroll (Rural, Community and Native Education)**

Vision:

- Responding to local needs in underserved communities
- Contributing to workforce development where it is most needed
- Making lifelong learning available in remote locations

Service Topics:

- Difficulty with HR, timeliness, and communications
- We need help "getting to yes!"
- More flexibility to our needs, more alternative solutions instead of "no"
- No more student put-downs
- Suggest more student focus and smooth service for our students
- Compliments for: Facilities services, and grants and contracts

### **Associate Vice Chancellor John Blake (Research Services)**

#### Vision:

- Strategically growing research beyond \$150 million
- Tie research closely to the entire institution
- Be ambitious in this age of uncertainty

#### Service topics:

- Be prepared to change and evolve our practices to serve research and other UAF entities
- Communication is critical

### **Vice Chancellor Jake Poole (Advancement and Community Engagement)**

#### Vision:

- Growing success in alumni relations, fund raising, recruiting new students
- In five years, everybody is part of the UAF family
- We have a successful capital campaign raising \$20-\$30 million

#### Service Topics:

- Need progress in grants and contracts
- Compliments for: Improvements in procurement and HR

### **Vice Chancellor Tim Barnett (Student and Enrollment Services)**

#### Vision:

- Create a good student experience staying for completion
- Achieve national average for 6-year completions
- Help for the unprepared
- Modern recruiting model – actively marketing to prospective students
- Enrollment increases in ocean sciences and engineering
- New housing facilities and more modern student facility

#### Service Topics:

- Needed for ASD: Training in customer service
- Eliminate ping/ponging entirely
- Problem: no fixed schedule for setting rates
- Student hire procedure very cumbersome and difficult – need upgrade
- Open billing – tell us why
- Establish a no-later-than date
- Documents describing Polar Express

Compliments for:

- Housing support, ADM, improved HR for non-students
- Police, food service
- Purchasing and travel

**Chief Information Technology Officer Steve Smith**

Vision:

- Serving UAF, statewide and the total system as a complete system
- Our #1 priority always is security
- We are problem solvers and our priorities are in this order:
  - Problems affecting many people that are easy to fix
  - Problems affecting a few people that are easy to fix
  - Problems affecting many people that are hard to fix
  - Problems affecting a few people that are hard to fix

Service Topics:

- Team approach needed when people are gone. Saying, "So-and-so is gone, we can't help you." is an absolute service no-no.
- Bring us to the table early before you decide what programs and equipment you need – we can solve your problem, but not after you go it alone.
- You own the content; we just help with the vehicles.
- Disaster recovery plan is needed.

# Table Recommendations for Performance Improvement

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Workshop participants conducted discussions at each of the six tables, coming to consensus on actions that could enhance the delivery of ASD services in the best interests of the overall UAF mission. Table notes are recorded verbatim.

## Table Recommendations

*“What would make the most difference in ASD serving the overall UAF mission?”*

### TABLE #1

Communication:

- Website simplicity – website updating
- Need resources, need to prioritize

Take responsibility:

- Lack of coverage when folks go on vacation – need cross training for shared responsibility.
- Give rewards to incent “Ownership of cross-training” and to reward those who step up to the plate and take cross training!

How to promote from within – supervisor training

Student hiring – need simpler process

Communication:

- Decentralize decision-making (where possible) to the knowledge holders who can make and effect decisions. This will require training, empowering, giving responsibility and authority.
- Websites – students are digital. They will look for information on websites. We need to update websites. We lack resources. Possible answer: Students are capable of this function! They are a plentiful labor pool. We are utilizing their expertise to help us train them for future jobs.

### TABLE #2

- Recognize a lot of what Administration Services does deals with state and federal laws – need to educate campus users on the requirements. Also have a way to deal with odd things that come up.
- Sufficient personnel with knowledge base to do the job and make decisions.
- Streamline processes – re-evaluate what we do, why we do it, how we do it.
- Need access to information and databases at UAF – access only as needed.
- Beef up and utilize systems we already have in place. i.e., Polar Express for building access, etc.

- Facilities, infrastructure as well as M&R have to keep pace with environment – i.e., if we want to bring more students into the University system we need the facilities and space to put there. If facilities and space are substandard they won't stay.

### **TABLE #3**

Automation of workflow items - example: timesheets.

Emergency alert notification

- Proactive communication
- Emergency alert and response
- Public safety

Strategic funding plan

- Analysis of services – streamline and reduce duplicate services
- Strategic funding across silos
- Good for the organization – not just good for me

### **TABLE #4**

- Communicate – what we do and what is driven by compliance issues
- Risk averse issue
- Single point of failure – how to remove ping-ponging

### **TABLE #5**

- Service to please – “Learn to say yes”
- Information re; grants “Q menu/Vista plus” – timing of information
- Process mapping – push some things back to unit level
- Banner: User needs, have many people put together browsers and merging Banner finance and HR needs. What browsers actually pull
- If low risk – do it, do things quickly
- Post doc mining (?) – more trust, more consequences
- Procurement and HR consistency and backups need improvement

### **TABLE #6**

- Training incentives for all - staff/students/faculty
- Communication – giving the extra effort
- Communicating who can help with specific problems
- Empowering users
- No problem is unique – all need to work to solve problems

# Mission and Values

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The mission statement of the University of Alaska Fairbanks and the revised mission statement of the Administrative Service Division were central to the day's discussions. In addition, Chancellor Brian Rogers addressed the management team by teleconference and emphasized the three overarching themes of his administration. These themes, along with the UAF and ASD mission statements, were posted in the conference room and guided the presentations and discussion throughout the day.

## The UAF Chancellor's Overarching Themes

**Put people first**

**Engage the community**

**Take responsible action**

Participants discussed and recognized the overall UAF mission as the purpose being supported by all ASD service delivery.

## University of Alaska Fairbanks Mission Statement

The University of Alaska Fairbanks, the nation's northernmost Land, Sea and Space Grant university and international research center, advances and disseminates knowledge through teaching, research and public service with an emphasis on Alaska, the circumpolar North and their diverse peoples. UAF – America's arctic university – promotes academic excellence, student success and lifelong learning.

## **ASD Mission Statement**

The following new revised ASD mission statement is considerably more detailed than the previous mission statement. Participants discussed the concepts represented by the additional language in the new revised statement and came to consensus. Clarification of these new concepts follows the mission statement.

### **University of Alaska Fairbanks Administrative Service Division Mission Statement**

**The Division of Administrative Services inclusive of facilities services, grants and contracts, finance and auxiliary services, procurement, human resources, police, fire, and risk management is a team that collaboratively provides safe and effective support services for students, faculty, staff and other constituents to achieve the University of Alaska Fairbanks mission.**

“Inclusive”, meaning all elements of the department are honored as important integral parts of a functioning whole with a common mission of service.

“Team”, in that all employees and parts of the ASD support one another in their success to the extent possible.

“Collaboratively provides” speaks to the spirit in which ASD provides services to customers in all parts of the University, as well as to their fellows within the ASD.

“Safe and effective” are bottom-line performance standards for the ASD. The ASD must insure a completely safe environment for successful learning to take place. The ASD must be effective in all its endeavors, achieving the desired end result of administrative service delivery in a supremely competent manner.

“Students, faculty, staff and other constituents” acknowledges the wide universe of customers for whom the ASD inclusive team collaboratively provides safe and effective service.

“To achieve the University of Alaska Fairbanks mission” is the honorable service purpose of each ASD employee and unit.

## Values Discussion

Workshop participants produced the following admirable list of values. Values are defined as principles that shall guide the professional and personal behavior of all ASD employees as they serve the missions of UAF and the ASD. The values named by participants are sorted into four general categories.

### Administrative Services Division Values

<b>Ethics Values</b>	<b>Support Values</b>	<b>Leadership Values</b>	<b>Performance Values</b>
Integrity	Flexibility	Humility of team	Accountability
Honesty	Recognition	Servant leadership	Effective
Transparency	Collaboration	Leadership by example	Professional service
Safety	Compassion	Good stewardship	Resourcefulness
Loyalty	Support	Institutional leadership	Timeliness
Respectfulness	Humor	Listening	Synergy
			Results-driven

# Action Plans

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Throughout the day, from the morning's presentations to the table recommendations and in virtually all discussions, participants and speakers identified dozens of candidates for constructive action for service improvement. Near the end of the day, participants identified five major action plan categories, listing them in approximate order of priority.

- **Communications Action Plan**
- **Empowerment Action Plan**
- **Process Efficiency Action Plan**
- **Professional Services Improvement Action Plan**
- **Collaboration Action Plan**

All detailed action plan suggestions were then sorted into these five categories. These five action plans and the many suggestions will form the basis for the ASD "First Step Action Plan." Vice Chancellor Pitney made the first accountability commitment and pledged to have the "First Step Action Plan" drafted by the end of the day on February 13, 2008

## **Communications Action Plan**

- Transparency
- Email policies
- Database access sharing
- Emergency alert notification
- Communicating ASD limitations
- Prioritize information to be communicated
- Information access
- Website updates
- Employee and customer surveys
- Director meetings
- Constituent communications
- Distinguish content vs. vehicle for content

## **Empowerment Action Plan**

- Authority/responsibility match
- Centralization problem
- Sufficient personnel
- Risk adverse assessment
- training
- Student hiring
- Statewide relationship

- Resources
- Accountability
- HR qualifications
- Recognition program

### **Process Efficiency Action Plan**

- Single point of failure
- Automation
- Emergency alert notification process
- Website updates
- Student hiring
- Low risk? Do it
- Browsers
- Statewide
- Database access sharing

### **Professional Services Improvement Action Plan**

- Flexibility
- No ping/ponging
- Say yes to solving the problem
- Coverage 24/7
- Low risk? Do it.

### **Collaboration Action Plan**

- Funding sharing
- Efficiency cooperation

## **Action Plan Accountability**

One initial action plan task resulted from the workshop – to begin the action planning process based on the input during the workshop. Vice Chancellor Pitney committed to draft priority action plan tasks by the end of the day on February 13, 2009. Below is a simple format for action planning that lists the specific action task, identifies the responsible party, sets a timeline, and records when the task is actually done.

### **First Step Action Plan**

<b>Action Task</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Done When</b>
Develop "First Step Action Plan" priority tasks	Vice Chancellor Pitney	EOB February 13, 2009	February 20, 2009

## First Step Action Plan Priority Task Accountability

Following the First Step Workshop, Vice Chancellor Pitney, in consultation with her management team developed the following First Step Action Plan Priority Tasks list. At the beginning of the Next Step Workshop, members of the management team responsible for each task reported on the status of that task. Managers reported on the task status to determine if they “Got ‘Er Done” (GED denotes successful completion), had made progress, hadn’t progressed, or revised the task plan. Readers should understand that this accountability exercise is simply part of the ongoing “living plan” nature of strategic planning. More often than not, once a project is underway, managers discover new information, encounter unanticipated issues, and external circumstances change. These require changes in the project plan and may delay or accelerate progress.

### **Administrative Services First-step Workshop Action Plan Tasks and Accountability - February 20, 2009 - Working Draft**

Below is a summary of assignments as a result of the Administrative Services First-step Workshop January 30, 2009. Everyone’s participation was deeply appreciated and this document will provide a means to communicate monitor progress. The “Record of Proceedings” of the workshop are attached and along with this listing will be available on the web at <http://www.uaf.edu/adminsvc/>. Of particular note in the in the record of proceedings is the ‘meaning’ inherent in the UAF ASD mission statement (page 8) and key values (page 9). The key values fall in four categories; Performance, Leadership, Ethics and Support. This can be interpreted as ASD is here to PLEaSe!

The task listing below provides 13 distinct projects that the Administrative Services Division (ASD) will pursue to address the action plan categories (empowerment, communications, process efficiency, professional services, and collaboration) and key values developed during the ASD First-step Workshop. Projects and tasks will be added to this list as they are identified. It is important to note that this listing does not reflect all active projects and does not contain many of ASD’s current priority tasks. Thus, if you are concerned about the status of a particular project/task that does not appear on this list feel free to contact Pat Pitney, Mary Parson, or the relevant department director.

**Administrative Services Division First Step Workshop Priority Task Status  
(as of 10/2/09)**

<b>Action Plan Task</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Due Date &amp; Status on 10/2/09</b>	<b>Major Project or Transition Rec. (T)</b>	<b>Action Plan Category</b>
<b>Develop "First Step Action Plan" Priority</b>	Pitney	2/13/09 <b>GED: 2/21/09</b>		Empowerment Communications
Streamlining Student Hiring	Racina	4/10/09 <b>GED: 4/15/09</b>	Aligned Business Model, Speed of Hiring (T)	Process Eff.
Post Award Efficiencies - School Institute Auth. Pilot Project	Grisgavage	5/30/09 <b>Progress: Ongoing</b>	Aligned Business Model	Process Eff. Professional Ser. Empowerment Collaboration
Emergency Alert Notification - implement & test four systems	McGee	6/30/09 <b>Minor progress</b>	Safety & Compliance Coordination Committee	Communication Process Eff.
ASD Web Site Improvement	Parsons	3/30/09 <b>Some progress</b>		Communication Empowerment
ASD Employee Survey - baseline of awareness and action based on shared values	Pitney	3/30/09 <b>GED:6/1/09</b>	Improving Employee Morale (T)	Process Eff. Professional Ser. Communication
Inventory of UAF wide Administrative Capacity	Duhamel	3/30/09 <b>No progress, task being revised</b>	Aligned Business Model	Communication Empowerment
Police Access to Available Data	McGee/Roberts	3/30/09 <b>50% progress</b>		Collaboration
Facilities Customer Survey	Schedler	3/15/09 <b>GED: 10/1/09</b>	Facilities Customer Service(T)	Professional Ser. Communication
Travel Module Implementation	Anderson	6/30/09 <b>55% progress</b>	Aligned Business Model	Process Eff. Empowerment
Skillsoft Increase Department Use	Racina	5/30/09 <b>50% progress</b>	Improve Training (T)	Empowerment
Browser Query Inventory - Web Accessible	Harrington	4/30/09 <b>Started and revised</b>	Rationalize Budget Process	Collaboration Empowerment
Develop Recognition/Reward Program	Pitney	6/30/09 <b>Tiny(1%) progress</b>	Aligned Business Model	Professional Ser. Empowerment Collaboration
Budget Distribution Reporting	Roberts	3/30/09 <b>Ongoing task</b>	Rationalize Budget Process	Communication Empowerment Professional Ser

## **UAF/ASD Employee Survey Results**

The McDowell Group presented results and analysis of the UAF/ASD Employee Survey conducted in the spring of 2009, and facilitated a discussion with workshop participants. Over sixty percent of all ASD employees participated (247), an excellent response for an initial online survey, and one lending well to statistically valid results. Detailed survey results are available through Vice Chancellor Pitney's office and are not included in this document.

## **Workshop Action Plan Group Recommendations**

Participants divided into the five action planning categories and engaged in group discussions, ultimately recommending the actions and concepts that they thought would have the most impact on enhancing communications, empowerment, process efficiency, professional services improvement, and collaboration. Following are verbatim recordings of each group's recommendations.

### **Communications Work Group Recommendations**

Create a campus main page that will have A-Z topics for all of UAF, including forms and applications

TRUST: Communication is key between supervisors and employees and vice-versa.

Diminish the fear factor. Insure clarity of the mission and goals and objectives at the department, unit and institutional levels.

Actions Proposed:

- Walk the talk
- Acknowledge concerns and issues
- Foster relationships
- Develop more collaboration and identify problem-solving pathways
- Share information so informed decisions can be made
- Gather all pertinent information prior to decision-making

### **Empowerment Work Group Recommendations**

Promote training and education

- Utilize expert and peer review

Onboarding – check lists, roadmap and training

Evaluations – feedback quarterly, monthly and daily

Create administrative services CD plan and succession plan

Other acknowledgements of success – pat on the back, thank you cards, and time off

## **Process efficiency Work Group Recommendations**

Finish inventory of UAF-wide administrative capacity

Pool administrative functions

Staff training and development

Online forum

## **Professional Service Improvement Work Group Recommendations**

Problem: Quick fixes and unclear priorities.

Action: Mandatory supervisor training to include:

- How to set priorities
- How to communicate priorities

Problem: Lack of training for job performance and advancement

Actions: ASD training resource:

- Develop training with departments
- Insure dedicated funding and time

Problem: Employees unclear of expectations

Action: Provide periodic expectations within the performance evaluation program

## **Collaboration Work Group Recommendations**

MBWA – Have a presence with your clients, visit them in their natural habitat frequently (Continue open forums to facilitate idea exchange)

Partner with units to disseminate training knowledge (i.e., create on your processes inside a unit – they will train others)

Work groups that focus on process efficiency, best practices, and standards and who are empowered to make authoritative recommendations

## The Vice Chancellor's Closing Comments

Vice Chancellor Pitney thanked all participants for a productive workshop and closed with three themes:

**Evaluations:** It is critically important to do the employee performance evaluations – these will help us reach a lot of the goals we have outlined today.

**Training:** Training is a priority and is a two-fold issue. We want to encourage and demand training, and in turn we must provide opportunities and recognize successful training efforts.

**Values:** We have values of ethics, support, leadership and performance. We want to instill these values - our values - in our employees, and ourselves so that when and if leadership of UAF and this division changes, our values remain ours in ASD as an institution permanently devoted to service.