To: Jayne Harvie  
From: Josef Glowa, Chair  
Re: FDAI Committee Year-end Report  
Date: 4/23/2012  

During the academic year 2011-2012, the FDAI committee continued to be an important forum for discussions of key issues relating to faculty development, assessment, and improvement of teaching and research. We had an active and successful year, attendance at our meetings was good, and most meetings were held with working quorums. Our committee’s recorder was Kelly Houlton (her second year as recorder), who has done an outstanding job! We are very grateful for her thorough and timely processing of the meeting minutes. During our second meeting in October 2011, Josef Glowa was elected to serve as committee chair for another academic year. All members worked hard to achieve the following accomplishments.

Joy Morrison of the Faculty Development Office (OFD) provided monthly updates on her work. She organized New Faculty Orientation, with about 20 out of 36 new faculty participating. She expressed frustration regarding low faculty attendance at other development opportunities, so the committee discussed ideas and decided to address the issue and find ways to be more proactive in promoting the presentations offered by the OFD. Joy is also concerned about the continued cuts in her budget by the Provost.

OFD sponsored events during the academic year, for example, a presentation on undergraduate research by Barbara Taylor from the Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarly Activity (URSA); a “Winning Teams, Winning Grants” workshop on collaborative grant writing; Lynn Lott’s talk on how to use social media in teaching; and webinars, such as a series of presentations on Alaska Native education issues entitled “Indigenizing Education.” Joy again brought Bob Lucas from the Institute of Scholarly Productivity to UAF to present workshops on scholarly writing and grant writing, April 27-28, co-sponsored with Vice-Chancellor of Research. She submitted other funding requests to United Academics and was awarded $59,000.

Joy participated in an audio conference with United Academics, Statewide Labor Relations, and faculty development offices of UAA and UAS. She reported that while UAF employs 57 percent of the UNAC faculty, the union has decided to have each campus submit proposals for funding requests for faculty development. She noted that OFD received funding from United Academics after negotiations with UA Statewide, UNAC and all three MAUs. She attended the POD (Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education) conference in October, and she brought back several resources, including information on courses and curriculum design. Together with a group of UAF faculty, Joy attended the Alaska Society for Technology and Education (ASTE) conference in Anchorage. She attended several Apple presentations and met with the Apple rep, and arranged for him to come up to Fairbanks. She reported that several UAF professors presented workshops at ASTE.

During her sabbatical in spring semester 2011, Joy discovered some interesting
faculty development materials, for example, on Great Britain’s Teaching Certificate program for university faculty. Joy was able to send eight new faculty members to the Lilly West Teaching conference in California, which took place in March. She gave two presentations on Fulbright Scholarship opportunities in spring.

The OFD has continued to successfully provide valuable support to UAF faculty. However, there is concern regarding low faculty attendance at various development opportunities throughout the year. Joy has therefore asked the committee to find ways to be more proactive in promoting OFD presentations. Over the past few months, our committee discussed various approaches and strategies. One suggestion, for example, was to have Provost Henrichs encourage faculty to attend a minimum of 8 faculty development sessions each year, an idea that did not find enthusiastic reception. Another idea was to develop a survey for UAF faculty to gauge their interest levels in upcoming session topics. We invited Melanie Arthur, the present UNAC VP, to talk with us about the development of more effective survey, as she has not only a lot of experience developing surveys, but also experience with our committee as a former member. Duff Johnston and Josef Glowa volunteered to speak with Cyndee West with UNAC about developing a survey that could be distributed by UNAC to their respective faculty. Generally, UNAC supports the move to commit faculty to a set number of faculty development presentations. The committee decided to take on the job of designing a list of topics to include on the survey. UNAC has not followed up on this.

However, it was Amanda Rosenberger’s (Assistant Professor of Fisheries) list of thoughtful suggestions that inspired us to find a completely new approach. Joy shared Amanda’s suggestions with the Deans, and their mostly positive responses led us to support a concept that would provide more tailor-made faculty development presentations to specific colleges each month. We are all thankful to Michael Castellini, who took the proposal outline for a school-by-school monthly personalized Faculty Development program to the Dean's Council. Everyone there was enthusiastic about the concept. The details still need to be worked out, but work on this new approach can already begin during the summer period.

We are all excited about this new approach and decided that a survey may not be the best way to achieve our goal, but rather to include some of our question areas into what we tentatively called Joy’s “buffet” list. C.P. suggested that “buffet” could be used as an acronym for: Better Understanding Faculty-Focused Effective Training. The committee believes this approach addresses several important issues: irrelevancy, proximity, and scheduling (to an extent). However, Joy is concerned about lack of staff at OFD. She feels that these changes cannot be effectively made without additional staff in OFD in the form of a few faculty fellows for FY2013. These faculty could receive a one-course buy out and assist with tailored programs in each college. UAA has 3 full-time people in their faculty development office, as well as several faculty fellows.

In the fall 2011, the committee discussed the UAF Principal Investigator Frequently Asked Questions list (UAF PI FAQ), provided to us by the Research Advisory Committee. We gave critical input and assistance with distributing it to the faculty. Another review assignment dealt with the “BOR Policy and Regulations.” Faculty Senate president-elect Jennifer Reynolds asked our committee to review and give critical feedback regarding specific sections of these policies and regulations. We discussed the difficulty of finding “red flags,” since so much of the information is out of our
committee’s purview. Within the realm of our various experiences, however, we did not find any red flags and did not feel that any changes were necessary, but we were thankful for the opportunity to serve.

The committee plans to continue work in all the areas above, supporting the design of a new approach to faculty development, and further exploring other relevant issues involving the development, assessment, and improvement of our UAF faculty. We are working on strengthening a culture of faculty development at UAF, and we thank the members of the FDAI Committee for their dynamic input.