



UAF Chancellor's Transition Team—Research Administration

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Research is a competitive enterprise nationally and internationally. UAF must strive continuously to improve the climate for research to capitalize on past success and preserve our competitiveness with a vision consistent with high standards. The success of our researchers, the reputation of our institution, and increased research funding, including non-state operating funds, are all at stake.

UAF must become more progressive, effective and efficient in the way it administers research. We must strive for an institutional attitude of results-driven, service-oriented administration that delivers worthy products to the state of Alaska and funding agencies. Although we need to ensure federal, state and university policies and regulations are followed, we also must foster an achievement-oriented, one-team approach to helping our researchers meet their goals.

UAF is classified by Carnegie as a “high research activity Research University,” but proudly wearing that crown and adding more jewels will require an investment of resources. Specifically:

We must change the culture of research administration from one that is risk-averse and personality-driven to one that is goal-directed, service-oriented and inclusive of all those involved in the process. Our on-line survey on research administration (appended) recommends the following:

- We must make governance of research more transparent and participatory. As an immediate action, researchers and research administration staff should be included on committees on research. Over the next two years and beyond, this issue must be addressed.
- We should examine ways in which to better integrate research and academics across campus. We need to strengthen the colleges’ role in conducting research and better utilize research faculty in teaching.
- UAF should strive for high rankings on national scales for our research and academic programs. Some ways we might improve the UAF ranking is to hire top level researchers, encourage publication in highly visible journals and reward research and teaching excellence.
- We must ensure that faculty and staff receive training on how to expedite routine and unusual processes with effective goal-oriented service. As an immediate action, a review of specific training needs should be undertaken, with implementation over next 2 years.
- We must make research administration processes simpler and more user-friendly. As an immediate action, a review of current processes and the potential for change should be undertaken, with identified improvements implemented within the next two years.
- We must include the rural campuses as partners in the research endeavor. Our on-line survey on the role of rural campuses (appended) recommends the following:
 - As an immediate action, we should include representatives from rural campuses on committees on research.
 - Over the next two years, we should examine the possibility of having more tripartite positions at the rural campuses.

- Over the next two years and beyond, we should make disseminating research results to rural communities a higher priority.

We must focus on research that aligns our expertise, abilities and facilities with the most urgent needs of our state, nation, and world. An examination of documents identifying research priorities (see Appendix 1 and 2 for complete listings) and input from deans and directors about current UAF response identified the following:

- We must align research with community needs. We should identify and support mechanisms that help close the research-application loop. As an immediate action, we should become more active in community-driven initiatives, such as the Interior Issues Council. Over the next two years, we should explore ways to connect better with our communities.
- We must make energy in Interior and rural Alaska a high-priority research area, and we should look at many aspects, including social-ecological impacts, sustainable and stable-priced supply, and renewable sources. Again, we should focus on community needs. As an immediate action, we should make a strong statement that we are focusing on energy issues.
- We should increase entrepreneurial activity. Over the next two years, we should create mechanisms to foster, address and engage entrepreneurs.
- We must improve communication with the Fairbanks community, the state of Alaska (especially rural areas), our state legislature and our federal representatives. We must create and nurture constituencies for research to ensure greater success with state and federal legislative initiatives. UAF is doing valuable and exciting research that nobody knows about. UAF research and researchers must be visible and vocal.
 - As an immediate action, we call for a public information officer in every school and college.
 - Over the next two years, we call for greater outreach efforts from the Center for Research Services to all these constituencies. Possibilities include research symposia geared to the public, television and radio spotlights, a research “day” in Juneau, etc.

Community Engagement

Engaging the community in research at the UAF must be considered at multiple levels of organization (Borough, City, Region, State) and bureaucracy (Mayor, State Legislator, Governor, Agency Administrators, etc.). One can use general approaches such as outreach, community based participatory research (CBPR), direct fact provision to political entities, Public Information Offices with direct links to community organizations. An outreach program must be fundamentally based on UAF core values of Knowledge Dissemination and an Envisioned Future of Economic Sustainability beyond Oil and Gas.

University of Alaska Community: Various meetings and seminars occur daily within the UAF and these do not need to be increased in effort. One may consider better coordination to avoid conflicts of scheduling and to enhance advertising of speakers across campus.

Interior Alaska Community: The transition team suggests the Chancellor consider an open Forum for the local community and local legislators where we discuss the research at UAF related to:

1. Community participation (physically and intellectually, two way interactive)
2. Community communication (outreach from grade school to seniors)
3. Research topics and themes (of local interest and concern)

The emphasis would be on what the community would like to see improved, initiated, or identifying what is not working. We suggest a local personality act as facilitator or chairman and that a rapporteur be consulted to record the meeting and to prepare a summary of it. The panel of scientists should include UAF Administration (Center for Research Services) and Institute Directors.

State of Alaska Community: The state as a whole is more of a communication challenge and we could likely use the public television and public radio more effectively. This cannot depend on face to face interactions or focused local relevance so we need some effective media platform. The short IPY blurbs were done well and we should broaden these to the many research efforts at the UAF. One can even consider a 30 minute “Research at the UAF” show.

Reaching legislators: This is the most important and difficult issue because legislators want immediate action and satisfaction. Research does not function on that timescale. However, we need to bring researchers and legislators in direct communication. Venues in Juneau and on campus must be exploited and the emphasis on Fairbanks legislators must be decreased (we need to invite legislators from other regions).

Research Services

A survey was distributed broadly to solicit input on improvements to the operational aspects of conducting research at UAF. The researchers and the administrative staff offered many viable solutions to existing obstacles and encourage the Chancellor and his implementation team to carefully look at all the responses. These were separated by main and rural campuses and the individual comments are attached in Appendix 3. They may be categorized in the following themes:

Structural

Finance (FN), Facility (FL), Curriculum (CM), Library, Research Management (RM)

1. Finance – Administer restricted funds (FN)
2. Grants Management (FN)
3. OGCA micromanagement and speed (FN)
4. Aging facilities, Laboratory modernization (FL)
5. OSP and OGCA decentralization (FN)
6. Bringing Research Institute under schools (RM)
7. Access to online journals Library
8. Overhead recovery (FN)
9. Budget spending flexibility (FN)
10. Curriculum restructuring (CM)
11. Overall research structure (RM)

HR

Speed (SP), Sexual discrimination (SD), Performance evaluation (PE), Pay discrimination (PD), Benefits (BF), EEO, Communication with finance (COMM-FN), Training (TR), Post-doc issue (PDI)

12. Slow and complications of hiring (SP)
13. Sexual discrimination (SD)
14. Technical evaluation of the research personnel (PE)
15. Pay discrimination (PD)
16. Better benefits for research professionals (BF)
17. Equal representation and base salary support for research faculty (EEO)
18. Post-Doc issues and expertise (PDI)
19. Ease of communication with the Financial Services (COM-FN)
20. OGCA and other admin staff training – (TR)

Political

Relevance (RL), Community involvement (CI), Outreach (OR), Elected representatives (ER)

21. Research Viability to the state (RL)
22. Community based research (CI)
23. Outreach (OR)
24. Updating elected representatives (ER)

Symbolic

UAF- Research Day (URD), Award (AD), PI interaction (PI)

25. UAF research Day – Symposium/conference (URD)
26. Research performance Vs award (AD)
27. Enhanced Vice Chancellor (Research) and PI interaction (PI)

Appendix 1: Dominant research themes and needs at local, regional and national level

Dominant research theme/need **As identified by:** **UAF Response (as of June 2008)**

<i>Local (Fairbanks Northstar Borough and Rural Communities in Interior Alaska)</i>		
<p>Cost of energy to community - minimize heat loss and energy use in homes - renewable energy - locally sustainable energy resources</p>	<p>Interior Issues Council, FNSB Administration, State of Alaska SJR44 report & Alaska R&D plan under Cold Regions Engineering, and National Science Board 208 under “Economic Modeling”</p>	<p>- AK Center for Energy & Power (ACEP) & CCHRC & other cross-campus research Gaps/Recommendations: support ACEP, CCHRC & other research across campus in addressing information needs to help reduce home heating & energy costs & to promote sustainable energy use/production</p>
<p>Community economy & preparation for economic future - need accurate forest inventory & new uses for low-quality wood - mining underdeveloped w/ cost of energy and transportation as stumbling blocks - other sectors with room to grow: air cargo, UAF-research spawned industry, health care</p>	<p>Interior Issues Council and by NSF Director under “Humanities Research” and by National Science Board R&D 2008 under “Economic Modeling”</p>	<p>- Forestry: SNRAS, ACEP, & CCHRC (biomass fuel) - Mining: CEM, ACEP - Other sectors: OEM Gaps/Recommendations: deficient in transportation & logistics research (expand AK University Transportation Center & build links to UAA?), survey/foster UAF start-ups</p>
<p>Land use planning - improve current planning process to maximize opportunities, one key focus is sustainability</p>	<p>Interior Issues Council SJR44 report; Alaska R&D plan under Land resource management, and also by AAAS-International Office and NSF Director under “Coupled human and natural ecosystems”</p>	<p>- Scenarios for Alaska Planning (SNAP), Resilience & Adaptation Program (RAP), EPSCoR Phase III Gaps/Recommendations: Support research (graduate student stipends) able to provide input to short-/mid-term planning needs for sustainability</p>
<p>Workforce development & Education & Health - Working partnerships w/ UAF & TVC as workforce assets</p>	<p>Interior Issues Council SJR report, Alaska R&D plan for Health & Biomedicine; and by NSF director and AAAS under “Education Research”, and by National Science Board R&D2008 and AAAS-International under “Basic Research in all fields: workforce capacity”</p>	<p>- Certificate/Associate programs Gaps/Recommendations: create means to integrate professional development needs w/ research & start-up development</p>
<p>Climate change: - in early stages of assessing current situation and prioritizing</p>	<p>Interior Issues Council SJR44 report, Alaska R&D plan, by NSF Director 2008, and AAAS-International office</p>	<p>- SNAP, AK Center for Climate Assessment & Policy (ACCAP), other research across campus</p>
<i>Regional (State of Alaska)</i>		
<p>Marine Science and Fisheries - assess fisheries resources & habitats - add economics, marketing, outreach.....</p>	<p>SJR44 report: Alaska Res. & Dev Plan</p>	<p>SFOS</p>
<p>Land Resource Management - focus integration of UAF, UAA, UAS efforts,</p>	<p>SJR44 report: Alaska Res. & Dev. Plan</p>	<p>SNRAS, CSREES</p>

Cold Regions Engineering -energy technology for remote areas	SJF44 report: Alaska Res. & Dev. Plan	Cold Climate Housing Research Ctr
Health & Biomedicine -strengthen behavioral health R&D -biomedical capacity & facilities -foster research in the social science aspect	SJR44 report: Alaska Res. & Dev. Plan	IAB, CANHR, INBrE, SNRP, CLA-based applied behavioral health res.
Education Research -issues of rural teacher retention -issues of rural student non-achievement - distance learning technologies/systems (advance cyberlearning, understand the human-technology interface) - ways to expand client-centered options	SJR44 report: Alaska Res. & Dev. Plan NSF Director’s speech (April 2008) AAAS	SoEd: Alaska Teachers’ Research Fund CLA: Boys’ Project
Coupled Human & Natural Ecosystems -strengthen holistic approach & capacity -develop new, dynamic systems models - understand social systems & how humans react to change. - sustainable development	SJR44 report: Alaska Res. & Dev. Plan NSF Director’s speech (April, 2008) AAAS-International Office (2008)	IGERT, RAP, EPSCoR-Phase III
<i>National</i>		
Global Climate Change -sophisticated observing systems; apply to emerging problems. -rapid transmission to decision-makers	NSF Director’s speech (April, 2008)	IARC, GI, ARSC
Humanities Research -means to collect, digitize & distribute data to educators & decision-makers	NSF Director’s speech (April, 2008) Morrill Act of 1862	
Arts - integration of technologies(computer synthesis, modeling, simulation & visualization).	NSF Director’s speech (April, 2008)	ARSC-“Art on the Grid”
Economic Modeling New data are critically needed to track the implications for the U.S. economy of the globalization of manufacturing and services in high technology industries “value flows”.	National Science Board R&D 2008	

<p>Basic Research in all fields</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enhance the level of funding for, and the transformational nature of, basic research - capacity building in all areas - workforce enhancement 	<p>National Science Board R&D 2008</p> <p>AAAS-International Office (2008)</p>	
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Appendix 2: Goals and recommendations from past reviews relevant to research administration at UAF

Maintain international prominence -in research -in scholarships	Strategic Plan 2010	Pathway to guide the university toward its vision and has eight specific goals to accomplish.
Increase research programs that address the Arctic and its indigenous people.	Strategic Plan 2010	
Focus on participation and outcomes associated with the International Polar Year	Strategic Plan 2010	
Expand and improve both applied and collaborative research ventures	Strategic Plan 2010	
Increase the proportion of students and faculty engaged in research and scholarly activities	Strategic Plan 2010	
Document and disseminate indigenous knowledge	Strategic Plan 2010	
Increase, promote and monitor undergraduate research opportunities, activities and accomplishments	Strategic Plan 2010	
Increase revitalized research space in the existing facilities on West Ridge	Strategic Plan 2010	
Vision - the President must make a serious commitment to a coherent UA research agenda.	EPSCoR External Report on Research Admin & Mgmt – July 2000	
The EPSCoR Process - Institutionalize EPSCoR and make it a System-wide program - consider an elevation of role within the University - Implement development strategies	EPSCoR External Report on Research Admin & Mgmt – July 2000	
UA Research Leadership - Encourage, coordinate, and facilitate efforts to capitalize on existing research strengths - more fully integrate them into the academic program - develop new emerging R&D areas - build collaborations state-wide	EPSCoR External Report on Research Admin & Mgmt – July 2000	

<p>Research Institutes and Academic Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - integrate more closely the research institutes with the academic programs; such integration might entail the combining of some colleges with some of the institutes. - Emphasize “foci of excellence” rather than support all programs evenly throughout the University - Examine the potential for new or existing institutes becoming statewide, bridging across the MAU’s 	<p>EPSCoR External Report on Research Admin & Mgmt – July 2000</p>	
<p>Sponsored Research Offices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - create a UA System level Sponsored Research Programs Office and restructure and enhance the research offices on the campuses - Hire SRO Directors at the System level and on each campus 	<p>EPSCoR External Report on Research Admin & Mgmt – July 2000</p>	
<p>R&D Policy and Procedures Manual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a university-wide policy manual for the preparation, conduct and oversight of sponsored research and other creative and scholarly activities 	<p>EPSCoR External Report on Research Admin & Mgmt – July 2000</p>	
<p>HR Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthen submission of peer-reviewed proposals, in addition to obtaining set-aside funds and designated state funding - A strategic “talent acquisition plan” program needs to be developed System-wide to guide recruitment and retention of administrators, faculty, students and support personnel aligned with UA’s R&D vision and System-wide plan. 	<p>EPSCoR External Report on Research Admin & Mgmt – July 2000</p>	

<p>Graduate Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expand the Alaska Scholar's Program to the graduate level. - Encourage the Japanese government to support more graduate students across the UA in order to strengthen the number of graduate students. - Explore various types of increased support for housing and transportation, for new faculty and graduate students - A new Masters or PhD. In environmental science or computer science and logistics, for example, should be considered and possibly developed by the UA with external foundation support. 	<p>EPSCoR External Report on Research Admin & Mgmt – July 2000</p>	
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