November 25, 2013

To: Faculty
     Members of the Faculty180 Advisory Committee

From: Susan Henrichs, Provost
     Eric Madsen, Faculty180 Implementation Manager

On behalf of UAF, we would like to thank the faculty members who submitted their AY13 Annual Activity Reports via Faculty180 and those who made time to send feedback and recommendations for improvement.

Most large-scale software systems require fine-tuning for the particular institutions where they will be used; Faculty180 is no exception. Your participation and feedback were essential toward making Faculty180 work smoothly for UAF because they were the only ways to learn how the system would work in actual practice. Many of your recommendations have been implemented, and we are working with the company on others that are somewhat more complicated.

One specific concern was the way the AY13 report period was displayed: summer '12 through spring '13. This was a first attempt to make Faculty180's default semester/year approach match course data from Banner so that faculty would not have to enter credit-course information manually, but it caused confusion. Next year, credit-course data will be displayed as late summer '13, fall '13, spring '14, and early summer '14, which will more clearly represent the 7/1/13 - 6/30/14 report period. In addition, faculty may enter non-credit teaching activity in a separate section, using whatever dates are appropriate. All sections of the AAR will default to late summer '13 - early summer '14 so users will not need to enter begin and end-dates for each section. However, you will be able to override the default time period with specific dates that more accurately represent short courses, guest lectures, short research or outreach projects, and other activities with specific begin and end-dates. Please note that UAF faculty may enter data into all sections at any time, with the sole exception of the credit-course sections. These will become available as each term's data is finalized and loaded to Faculty180, approximately three weeks into the following term.

We also thank the members of the F180 Faculty Advisory Committee who are working through different approaches to resolving outstanding concerns in order to assure a convenient, secure, and effective system to manage the annual activity report process. Feedback from the faculty members who voluntarily used the system and made time in their schedules to think about ways to improve it have allowed this committee to focus on actual concerns and suggestions.

We appreciate that early adopters accept a certain amount of frustration so that those who follow will have an easier time. Thank you for volunteering to take on this service to your colleagues and to UAF, and for your helpful feedback and recommendations regarding Faculty180.