

ALASKA NATIVE STUDIES COUNCIL



- ☐ Lance *Xh'unei* Twitchell, UAS
- ☐ Jeane *T'áaw xíwaa* Breinig, UAA
- ☐ Beth *Ginondidoy* Leonard, UAF
- ☐ Sharon *Chilux* Lind, UAA

- ☐ Maria *Shaa Tláa* Williams, UAA
- ☐ Gordon Pullar, UAF
- ☐ Sean *Asiqluq* Topkok, UAA
- ☐ Alvin Amason, UAA
- ☐ Da-ka-xeen Mehner, UAF
- ☐ Paul Ongtooguk, UAA
- ☐ Dalee Sambo-Dorough, UAA
- ☐ Ray Barnhardt, UAF
- ☐ April *Lisik* Laktonen Counciller,
Alutiiq Museum
- ☐ Theresa John, UAF
- ☐ Agatha John-Shields, UAA
- ☐ Evon Peter, UAF
- ☐ Alberta Jones, UAS
- ☐ Lenora "Lolly" Carpluk, UAF
- ☐ Annette Freiburger, UAF
- ☐ Ernestine Hayes, UAS
- ☐ Marie *Arnaq* Meade, UAA
- ☐ Liza Mack, UAF
- ☐ Medeia Csoha-Dehass, UAA
- ☐ Ryan Harrod, UAA
- ☐ Thomas Swensen, Univ of
Colorado
- ☐ Charlene Stern, UAF
- ☐ Phillip *Aarnaquq* Charette, UAF

- ☐ Patricia Sekaquaptewa UAF
- ☐ Jennifer Carroll, UAF

alaskanativestudies.org

info@alaskanativestudies.org

October 22, 2015

Dear Regents,

Thank you for your service to the University. We appreciate your leadership in guiding the University of Alaska to excellence. I am sending this letter on behalf of the Alaska Native Studies Council. This Council consists of Alaska Native and Alaska Native Studies faculty from all UA campuses system-wide. As a group, we work to promote sustained commitment to integrating Indigenous perspectives into a variety of educational settings. Our mission is to identify, develop, and implement Native-focused curricula, and to promote and publish Alaska Native-related research and pedagogical strategies. Probably the most significant collaborative effort of the Alaska Native Studies Council has been the development of the now annual Alaska Native Studies Conference. This academic conference has been held successfully at UAA in 2013, UAS in 2014, UAF in 2015 and soon to be UAA again in 2016. We expect approximately 500 attendees from Universities across the world to attend this growing event this coming year. We have also published two journals based on the 2013 and 2014 conferences proceedings and 2015 is in press.

The Council recognizes and has frequently discussed at length a critical gap for all UA students. Many, perhaps the majority of our students graduate without even a basic knowledge of Alaska Native peoples, their histories and their cultures. We would like to see a change within the UA system and advocate for requiring an Alaska Native focused general education course or other requirement that addresses this gap. We hope the UA Board of Regents will consider addressing this deficit in our curriculum at a future meeting.

Mission/Vision

The Alaska Native Studies Council promotes a deeper and more sustained commitment to integrating Indigenous perspectives into a variety of educational settings. Our mission is to identify, develop, and implement Native-focused curricula, to promote and publish Alaska Native-related research and pedagogical strategies, and to develop a strategic plan to help us attain these goals.

Given that Alaska Natives are nearly 20 percent of the state's populations, Alaska Native corporations are the state's number one employer, contribute to 25% of the state's GDP, and 75% of UA graduates secure jobs in Alaska, we believe the University of Alaska should implement a curricular requirement pertaining to Alaska Native coursework. The requirement will strengthen students' education, and will enhance their employability within our state. We are doing a disservice to our students by not equipping them with an understanding of Alaska's first peoples whose homelands they occupy. Other universities have done this including University of Hawaii – Hilo which requires a Pan-Hawai'in GER.

There are a variety of options available that can be explored and discussed further, and the Alaska Studies Council stands ready to assist in this discussion. We urge the UA Board of Regents to explore the possibility UA system-wide.

Best regards,

Alaska Native Studies Council



Union of Students of the University of Alaska Anchorage

Resolution #16-17

Endorsing the Creation of an Alaska Native Studies General Education Requirement

SPONSORED BY: Sophie Leshan, *Senator*; Joseph McMahon, *Delegate*

WRITTEN BY: Sophie Leshan, *Senator*; Joseph McMahon, *Delegate*

ENDORSED BY: Dr. Maria Williams, *Director of Alaska Native Studies*; Jonathon Taylor, *President*; Stacey R. Lucason, *Regent*

DATE: February 1st, 2016

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- WHEREAS: The Union of Students of the University of Alaska Anchorage (USUAA) recognizes the inherent value of Alaska Native cultures, peoples, and traditional knowledge within the State of Alaska and our educational institution; and,
- WHEREAS: USUAA is discontent with the prospect of students being educated in Alaska with minimal knowledge of Alaska Native cultures; and,
- WHEREAS: The University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) Mission Statement identifies “serving the higher education needs of the state, its communities, and its diverse peoples” as a fundamental and important role; and,
- WHEREAS: The UAA 2017 Strategic Plan aims to “increase the cultural, social, and intellectual diversity of students, staff, and faculty and “place special emphasis on the recruitment, retention, and success of Alaska Natives;” and,
- WHEREAS: Research indicates the inclusion of Alaska Native culture within an educational setting promotes academic success for Alaska Native and non-native students;^{1 2} and,
- WHEREAS: USUAA believes implementation of an Alaska Native-focused General Education Requirement (GER) will enhance the learning of all students stemming from diverse backgrounds, promoting post-graduate success in Alaska; and,

¹ McDowell Group. (2001). *Alaska Native education study: A statewide study of Alaska Native values and opinions regarding education in Alaska*. Juneau, AK.

² University Leadership Council. (2008). *Breakthrough Advances in Faculty Diversity Lessons and Innovative Practices from the Frontier*. Washington D.C.

WHEREAS: An Alaska Native-focused GER corresponds to the University of Alaska’s Mission Statement regarding our commitment to “the North and its diverse people;” and,

WHEREAS: USUAA recognizes existing Alaska Native-focused courses within the UA system—several of which fulfill the baccalaureate GER in academic disciplines such as Fine Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences—grant students the opportunity to choose an Alaska Native-focused course within their interest of study to satisfy this proposed requirement; and,

WHEREAS: The Alaska Native Studies Council—comprised of Alaska Native students and Alaska Native Studies faculty systemwide—sent a memo to the University of Alaska Board of Regents in October requesting the inclusion of an Alaska Native-focused GER within the University of Alaska;³

THEREFORE BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED

The Union of Students of the University of Alaska Anchorage endorses the creation of an Alaska Native Studies General Education Requirement, which could be fulfilled with courses already existing within the University of Alaska System; and,

THEREFORE BE IT HEREBY FURTHER RESOLVED

The Union of Students of the University of Alaska Anchorage supports Alaska Native-focused content inclusion as a University of Alaska General Education Requirement; and,

THEREFORE BE IT HEREBY FURTHER RESOLVED

The Union of Students of the University of Alaska Anchorage supports the Alaska Native Studies Council’s October 22nd, 2015 memo to the University of Alaska Board of Regents;

THEREFORE BE IT HEREBY FURTHER RESOLVED

That a copy of this legislation be forwarded to the University of Alaska Board of Regents; University of Alaska Anchorage Chancellor Tom Case; Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs Dr. Samuel Gingerich; Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Dr. Bruce Schultz; Interim Associate Vice Chancellor for Alaska Natives & Diversity Jeane Breinig; Dean of Students and Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Development Dr. Dewain L. Lee; Director of Alaska Native Studies Dr. Maria Williams; Director of Native Student Services Willie Templeton; Director of Student Life and Leadership Annie Route; Assistant Director of Student Leadership Paula Fish; and the Alaska Native Studies Council.

³ See Appendix A

The Assembly has passed the attached legislation by a 13-0-2 vote. This legislation required a majority vote of the Assembly, and has been through all of the Assembly's legislative processes. This requires the President's signature of approval or disapproval seven days from its receipt.

DocuSigned by:
Samuel Doepken February 6, 2016 11:45
3B968EE489FD403...
Speaker of the Assembly Samuel Doepken Date Time

☒ Approved ☐ Vetoed
DocuSigned by:
Jonathon Taylor February 6, 2016 12:03PM
BC252103E7104DC...
President Jonathon Taylor Date Time

For Office Use Only

Date of Meeting and Approval: _____ Date of Receipt: _____ Scan ☐ Web ☐ Binder ☐

Appendix A

ALASKA NATIVE STUDIES COUNCIL



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Appendix A - Cont'd.

Given that Alaska Natives are nearly 20 percent of the state's populations, Alaska Native corporations are the state's number one employer, contribute to 25% of the state's GDP, and 75% of UA graduates secure jobs in Alaska, we believe the University of Alaska should implement a curricular requirement pertaining to Alaska Native coursework. The requirement will strengthen students' education, and will enhance their employability within our state. We are doing a disservice to our students by not equipping them with an understanding of Alaska's first peoples whose homelands they occupy. Other universities have done this including University of Hawaii – Hilo which requires a Pan-Hawai'in GER.

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Best regards,

Alaska Native Studies Council



USUAS-JC

Student Government

Resolution 1516-05

Endorsing the Alaska Native Studies Council's 10/22/15 Memo to the UA-BOR

SPONSORED BY: Senator David Russell-Jensen and Vice President Austin Tagaban

DATE OF INTRODUCTION: 11/13/15

PURPOSE: To endorse the Alaska Native Studies Council's 10/22/15 memo to the University of Alaska Board of Regents which requests the Regents include Alaska Native content in the University of Alaska's General Education Requirements (GER).

WHEREAS: We recognize the inherent value, intelligence, and complexity of Alaska Native cultures, histories (oral and written), literature (oral and written), languages, sciences and other ways of knowing, and peoples.

WHEREAS: The UA GER nearly exclusively values European cultures, histories (oral and written), literature (oral and written), languages, sciences and other ways of knowing, and peoples at the expense of other diverse, valuable perspectives.

WHEREAS: Per our mission statement, UAS seeks to "enhance student learning ... with the cultures and environment of Southeast Alaska."

WHEREAS: We recognize that including Alaska Native content in the UA GER will enhance student learning and postgraduate success in Alaska, which is 20% Alaska Native, a State where Alaska Native corporations are the number one job provider and contribute to 25% of the State's GDP, and a State where 75% of UA graduates secure jobs.

WHEREAS: We are dissatisfied with students graduating in Alaska with minimal knowledge of Alaska Native cultures, histories (oral and written), literature (oral and written), languages, sciences and other ways of knowing, and peoples.

BE IT RESOLVED: USUAS-JC officially endorses the Alaska Native Studies Council's 10/22/15 Memo to the University of Alaska Board of Regents.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: USUAS-JC requests Alaska Native content be included in the University of Alaska General Education Requirements.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: USUAS-JC sends this resolution to the Alaska Native Studies Council, University of Alaska Southeast Curriculum Committee, University of Alaska Southeast Faculty Senate, University of Alaska Southeast Humanities Department, University of Alaska Southeast Social Science Department, University of Alaska Southeast Registrar's Office, University of Alaska Southeast Provost's Office, University of Alaska Southeast Chancellor's Office, University of Alaska Anchorage Chancellor's Office, University of Alaska Fairbanks Chancellor's Office, University of Alaska President's Office, and the University of Alaska Board of Regents.

THIS RESOLUTION IS TO TAKE EFFECT: 11/20/15

PRESIDENT'S SIGNATURE:


