

A Summary Explanation of The UA Consortium Model

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The UA Consortium Model is designed to enhance cooperation and cost-savings among UAF, UAA, and UAS, while maintaining each university's status as a separately accredited institution.

The UA Consortium Model

- Promotes costs-savings by sharing functions common to the three universities. These functions may be managed by a team of university-specific administrators or housed at one of the three universities and distributed to the others according to shared service agreements.
- Promotes interoperability of course numbering systems, course time blocks, and course credits and transfers so that students can benefit from access to course offerings and programs offered at other universities in the consortium besides their own.
- Provides avenues for singular colleges or mergers as it makes regional sense (e.g. college of health), not forced mergers according to rigid formula.
- Favors local (chancellor) decision-making, based on firsthand knowledge of student needs, demographic and economic trends.
- Optimizes current accreditation, preventing loss of accreditation and therefore revenues.
- Sustains our existing and significant investments in student recruitment, student success.
- Maintains and continues to foster stronger connections between institutions of higher learning and communities across the state.
- Provides Alaskans with options.
- Leverages existing and significant investments in branding and marketing.
- Promotes higher rates of giving, because donors are more likely to give to their local university than to a university system.
- Promotes alumni support, because alumni are more likely to stay engaged with the institution they know and love, rather than with a university system.

Approach to Cost Savings

- Chancellors work together to surgically reduce costs at each university and to find natural consolidations that generate cost savings without added administration and with the least reduction in enrollment.
- Consolidations are economically driven and a collaborative process among the chancellors at all three universities.
 - Historically, it is such consolidations, rather than consolidations imposed by the president, that have succeeded in saving money and maintaining student access.

- By contrast, enrollment in education programs across the state is down 30% (268 students) from a year ago this week, in the wake of the top-down elimination of UAA’s School of Education and consolidation into UAF’s School of Education.
- President Johnsen proposes a One University Model that would impose the same top-down consolidation upon every college in the state.
- Cost savings are realized from a balanced reduction (e.g. administration, instruction athletics), to minimize the impact on students.
- The chancellors’ relationship with their communities, universities, and to each other puts them in a position to collaboratively develop the optimal strategy for budget reductions while maintaining strong universities that serve their individual communities.

Accreditation Considerations

- The Consortium Model can be achieved quickly with minor substantive change and no additional risk to loss of accreditation.
- Currently, all three universities are accredited. UAA and UAS just gained reaffirmation, good for seven years. UAF is in the cycle for reaffirmation.
- The Consortium Model fosters a less disruptive, collective, more thoughtful process for restructuring.

One Size Does Not Fit All

This model recognizes that a one-size fits all approach does not work for our Alaskan communities and is antithetical to promoting efficiency across the system.

- While promoting cooperation across universities, the Consortium Model enables each university to respond to regional needs and differences in their student populations.
- The Consortium Model avoids the creation of statewide “directors of directors,” and needless bureaucratic oversight, a natural byproduct of the One University Model.
- The Consortium Model is flexible, recognizing that in some cases the most efficient and effective way to fulfill certain university functions is by maintaining local control of those functions (University Specific), while in other cases, the best option is for one of the three universities to oversee and distribute a function (Lead University), and in yet other cases it is by sharing a function through a consortium model overseen by cross-functional teams of leaders from each university , sharing responsibility for service quality and student success (Consortium).
- The primary advantage of the Consortium Model is that the same leaders who know their university-specific student populations oversee the shared functions as a team, rather than an additional layer of administration that is disconnected from the communities it is supposed serve.

This approach is illustrated with the following table, categorizing functions within Student Affairs. Some functions are suitably maintained through a consortium, others distributed from a lead university, and others housed at each university.

Suitable for Consortium (communities of practice)	Suitable for Lead University	Suitable for University Specific
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Financial Aid 2. Admissions 3. Registrar 4. Military & Veteran Student Services 5. UA Foundation scholarship management 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Career Services 2. Disability Support Services 3. Out-of-state and rural student recruitment 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student conduct, crisis & care, Federal mandate compliance (DOS/CSSR) 2. Alaska Native & diversity prog's. 3. Intercollegiate Athletics 4. Student Health and Counseling 5. Student activities, leadership, governance and organizations 6. Residence Life 7. Intl. student and exchange visitor management (SEVIS) 8. Orientation & first year experience programs 9. Community engagement

Because Student Affairs provides student-facing services, a One University Model could not do without administration of these functions at each major campus location. The One University Model would simply add an additional layer of administration at the Statewide level, when through shared service agreements and cross-functional teams of administrators, already paid for at each institution, services could be delivered collaboratively where it makes economic sense.

Many business services are already shared across the universities, others are in progress, and there are future opportunities for additional savings. The Consortium Model can maximize back-office savings to reduce impacts on instruction and research as effectively as the One-University Model.

Current	In Progress	Future Opportunities
Controller/Financial & Tax Reporting & External Audit	Travel	Payables, Procurement
Internal Audit		Bookstores
Treasury - Endowment & Debt		Risk Management
Risk Management – Insurance & Claims for Property, Liability, Workers Comp	Student Accounting (Fees, common deadlines, etc.)	Common IT Help call center
Human Resources – Compensation, Payroll and Employee Benefits, Union negotiations	Student ID Cards (PolarExpress, Whale Card, Wolf Card)	Campus Security
IT Infrastructure & Security		Further collaborations and decentralization for cost savings and utilization of campus level expertise

Potential Future Savings through the Consortium Model

Currently each university is required (without a service agreement) to use tuition and research dollars to support a large statewide administrative unit with expenditures exceeding \$55M.

With changes in university policy or structure the Consortium Model could realize the following objectives, generating additional cost savings:

- Continued reduction of systemwide costs and additional exploration of cost sharing alternatives through Lead University and Consortium approaches.
- Increase of tuition at UAF (and possibly elsewhere) to match tuition rates at peer institutions
- Increase in donations and separate endowments through regional partnerships as each university is permitted to manage its own foundation account.

Faculty strongly support this approach over the president's One University Model, recognizing the significant threats his model poses to accreditation, student-facing services, and innovation.

Offered a rare opportunity by the UA Student Regent to share their views before the Board of Regents last week, the chancellors had this to say about the advantages of something like the Consortium Model versus the One University Model:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mn_LaRGdY4E