

TO: UAS Executive Cabinet:
Chancellor John Pugh
Provost Richard Caulfield
Vice Chancellor Joseph Nelson

FROM: Interim Vice Chancellor Michael Ciri 

DATE: April 11, 2014

RE: Bookstore Program Review – revised response to the Institutional Review Committee

The purpose of this memo is to clarify and elaborate on my earlier recommendations regarding the future of the UAS Bookstore.

My earlier March 19th memo provided an initial response from Vice Chancellor to the recommendations of the bookstore institutional review committee. I will not repeat my broader response here, but rather use this opportunity to focus my earlier recommendations.

Since drafting that memo, a number of scheduling issues arose which prevented discussion by the full executive cabinet. In part this delay is a positive thing as it provided the opportunity for me to receive additional feedback which has helped refine my perspective. Unfortunately, the delays now make it difficult to implement substantial changes for the fall semester. In addition, in the intervening weeks, we received the announcement that the current bookstore manager will retire. We will miss Sara Hagan's perspective and dedication; however, this change in staffing provides an opportunity to accelerate change.

Attached are my updated recommendations for the future of UAS Bookstore services.

UAS FY2014 Bookstore Program Review

Revised: April 11, 2014

Vice Chancellor Recommendations to Executive Cabinet

The current bookstore is wonderful. It is a testament to the commitment of UAS as an institution and the dedicated work by many people. However, UAS does not have the discretion to operate the bookstore at a sustained and significant loss. Modest cost reductions or revenue enhancements cannot close the gap. Thus, the bookstore must fundamentally change.

As we look at ways we might change, there are three important factors to consider:

1. While traditional bookstores continue to face challenges, there are successful models which we can emulate. Some of these include the fully-online bookstores within UA, including those at our own Ketchikan and Sitka campuses.
2. This bookstore review, while significant, is only one of many significant changes on the Juneau campus. Our future plans should seek opportunities from the opening of freshman housing, in-sourcing of our dining services, and the campus space renovation planning currently underway.
3. While there are reasons to seek rapid change, we should ensure that due care is taken that changes do not adversely impact the successful delivery of classes and overall student success.

Keeping these in mind, the following are my recommendations to the Executive Cabinet. These recommendations are both grounded in the work of the IRC and informed by the stakeholder survey and bookstore analysis:

1. FY15 should be viewed as the transition year. This means that UAs will continue to incur additional costs in FY15, both from the currently unsustainable business model and from the costs incurred during transition.
2. **Current space:** The current bookstore operation should be shut down by the end calendar year 2014. The fall semester use of the current space should allow for transition planning as well as the sale of existing inventory items. The objective, however, should be to fully vacate the space so it can be repurposed and reassigned in 2015.
3. **Textbook sales:** UAS should transition to a fully-online model. Classes which can be moved without disruption for the Fall 2014 semester should do so. All other classes should be converted in time for the Spring semester.
4. **Staffing:** With the retirement of the current manager, UAS should transition to a single full-time position to handle the management of the website, MBS direct contract, book ordering, and other critical operations. During the transition year, the bookstore should leverage student labor and temporary staff. In the future, staffing should be a single FTE, student labor and partnerships with existing staff on campus.
5. **Sundry Supplies:** These sales should be managed out of existing points-of-sale on campus and/or through self-service vending solutions. Obvious location possibilities include the Novatney one-stop, the Mourant building, Spike's Café, Bear's Pantry and the Egan Library.
6. **Logo-wear:** As above, logo-wear should be available at existing points of contact. In addition, UAS should seek to enhance the sale of these items through the web site and seek partnerships with development and alumni relations.