



CHANCELLOR'S COMMENTS: From UAS Chancellor Rick Caulfield

Dear UAS faculty and staff:

I am pleased to share some exciting news in the aftermath of Spring Semester as well as updates about how we are addressing the impact of COVID-19. Despite all of the challenges of the pandemic, UAS graduates across our three campuses earned 459 undergraduate and graduate degrees, certificates, and occupational endorsements. We celebrated the accomplishments of our graduates through virtual commencement events posted on our UAS website. You can still see them there at uas.alaska.edu/commencement. Congratulations to them all!

And on another high note, the UAS Alaska College of Education just received notice that is fully reaccredited by CAEP—the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation. UAS programs met all standards. As you know, this accreditation is required by the State of Alaska in order for us to offer teacher preparation programs to Alaskan students. Congratulations to our AKCOE faculty and staff for this achievement, working under the leadership of AKCOE Executive Dean Steve Atwater and Associate Dean Scott Christian. Well done!

Students are now enrolled in many Summer Semester courses across our three UAS campuses. Nearly all of these are offered online or through alternative means of delivery. As we move into the new semester, the focus of many continues to be on what Fall Semester and indeed all of AY20-21 will look like. In short, no decisions have been made as of yet about whether face-to-face classes will be offered, or if we'll have students in housing on the Juneau Campus. Informed by guidance from UA leadership statewide and by public health officials, we are monitoring the trajectory of the pandemic in our state and our communities as we consider what comes next.

In the past week, the UA system statewide took a significant step by developing a five-phase planning framework for considering how UA universities and campuses might ease the restrictions now in place. It outlines principles under which an easing of restrictions can take place, what metrics need to be monitored, and what protective measures will need to be in place before any university or campus moves from one phase to a less-restrictive phase. This document was reviewed by the President, chancellors, and the statewide Incident Management Team (IMT). It will be released by the President later this week, and it will provide a framework for development of a UAS-specific plan applicable to our three campuses.

As the UA-wide plan is unveiled, I've asked UAS Emergency Management Planner Ryan Sand to reach out to Chancellor's Cabinet members and governance groups to invite feedback about what that UAS-specific plan should include. A UAS-specific plan will be used to assess whether or not we will be able to offer face-to-face classes and invite students into campus housing this fall. The UAS plan will be developed and reviewed by our UAS COVID-19 Response Team, which meets weekly and has representation from UAS administration, all three campuses, deans and directors, plus faculty and staff leadership. With this plan in place, and mindful of the UA-systemwide framework, we will hopefully be able to make a decision soon about what the fall semester will look like here at our university.

As this UAS plan is developed, we will keep you fully informed about its elements and the decision process used to determine our next steps. You can be assured that that the safety and health of our students and our employees will be at the forefront of that decision.