

The University of Alaska Fairbanks is a world-class public institution of higher education founded in 1917 that leads the nation in Arctic research. UAF offers an educational experience that is not only academically exceptional but inclusive, caring, diverse and one of a kind.

Through our strategic plan, UAF has defined six visionary and aspirational goals that reflect our mission, core themes and key messaging. Each goal is equally important in supporting the success of the university.

Starting in 2018, a broad cross-section of people across our campuses met to define the visions and aspirations represented by each goal. Below are summary statements from their work.

1 Modernize the student experience

An urgent task of our times is to forge transformative responses to the intensifying existential threats that challenge humanity and the planet. Publicly engaged universities can embrace their unique untapped potential to play a major role in bringing together communities across sectors to generate the knowledge, moral courage and creative powers that our times require. In order to modernize the student experience, UAF must serve as a hub of catalytic change for our community, the state, the country and the world. The objective is not merely to capacitate students by endowing them with knowledge and understanding but also to empower students to become boundary spanners and change agents.

2 Establish global leadership in Alaska Native and Indigenous programs

We reside upon the lands of Indigenous nations. We have a responsibility to learn about, acknowledge and uplift Indigenous knowledge, history, culture and peoples as we seek to heal relations and honor Indigenous nations. At UAF, we are committed to being a global leader in Alaska Native and Indigenous programs throughout the circumpolar North, Americas and Pacific Islands. We will work to build and enhance leadership in Alaska Native and Indigenous programs, research and workforce development. We seek to be a leader in Alaska Native and Indigenous faculty, staff and student success; be a leader in elevating and situating Indigenous knowledge within academia as its own intact knowledge system; and be a leader in preparing Alaska Native, Indigenous and other students in academic and professional areas critical to Alaska Native and Indigenous communities.

3 Achieve tier 1 research status

Achieving tier 1 status will elevate UAF to a prestigious class of doctorate-granting U.S. universities with very high research activity as defined by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. Attaining tier 1 research status can provide global recognition for our high research productivity; enhance our competitiveness for funding resources; attract globally competitive faculty, staff and students to improve the quality and caliber of UAF research and education; increase student enrollment; and provide local economic benefits to the broader Fairbanks community. UAF's research vision extends beyond the metrics highlighted by the Carnegie classification system. Elevating research across disciplines and units would greatly strengthen the overall educational, research and societal benefits imparted by UAF, not least by realizing the great potential of greater cross-disciplinary scholarship. Research is critical for advancing UAF's mission and core themes, including educating our students, preparing a skilled Alaska workforce, connecting with Alaska Native peoples and engaging with fellow Alaskans.

4 Transform UAF's intellectual property development and commercialization

There is an inherent entrepreneurial spirit in all of us as we pursue answers to the major challenges of today's society to build the Alaska and Arctic of tomorrow. In driving Alaska's innovation economy and being a leadership voice for Arctic innovation and entrepreneurship, UAF will produce graduates with an entrepreneurial mindset and skilled in the processes to bring research to commercialization and grow viable businesses. UAF will continue to engage with and be a part of the growing entrepreneurial ecosystem within Alaska and the Arctic and build a new philosophy within its academics to support today's entrepreneurs and build the next generation of Alaskan innovators. The vision is to develop and support a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship on campus and in the greater community through reciprocal partnerships; provide the resources to foster creative, social and technological entrepreneurship; build innovative communities to develop solutions to focused challenges and needs; and create opportunities to grow today's and tomorrow's innovators and entrepreneurs.

5 Embrace and grow a culture of respect, diversity, inclusion and caring

At UAF, we work every day to operationalize the equity and inclusion that we seek to advance in Alaska and beyond. Genuine equity requires continual transformation: a thorough and deep examination and shift when needed in organizational practices, norms, culture and composition. At UAF, we deeply value a culture of respect, diversity, inclusion and caring. We are a positive, human-centric university focused on individual and community well-being. We celebrate the unique nature of our students and employees through strengths-based approaches. A culture of respect at UAF would include honoring and valuing all individuals in our community, helping them feel a sense of worth and value. A culture that embraces diversity at UAF would engage individuals, including those in leadership and mentoring positions, who represent a wide array of backgrounds and reflect the state's demographics. An inclusive culture would ensure all members of our community are welcomed and supported, and that our environment — from artwork on display to marketing materials — reflects our community. In a culture of caring, we would demonstrate kindness toward one another and create a proactive focus on improving mental health and well-being.

6 Revitalize key academic programs

UAF will revitalize key academic programs to make them responsive to workforce development needs across the state of Alaska and to national and international economic climates. UAF will ensure that different modalities of course delivery address diverse student needs and communities, and will create a culture where all students, staff and faculty are ambassadors for UAF. We aspire to a culture of integration and access, from occupational endorsements to Ph.D. programs. UAF should be known for its investment in and support of faculty and staff, with a sense of community and high morale among those employed at UAF. UAF students at all campuses should have easy access to advising, support and research opportunities through faculty and staff. The university should provide robust outreach, engagement and promotion for all programs.

