

# UAS Arts & Sciences Strategic Plan

2023-2028

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# Message from the Dean

## Carin Silkaitis

This is an exciting time to be in the School of Arts and Sciences at the University of Alaska Southeast. We have just completed our visionary strategic plan that positions our School to anticipate and respond to the major challenges that face current and future faculty, staff and students in Southeast Alaska, while advancing our uniqueness to drive innovation and creativity.

From the start, our planning process has been outward-facing and inclusive. I wouldn't have done it any other way. This was exciting work that required a fully engaged team uniting around a common vision and shared core values.

These values will serve as the litmus test for our future endeavors, allowing us to stay focused on excellence, access, service, and engagement. I felt honored and privileged to be able to participate in some of these sessions with our external stakeholders, steering committee, and our initiative champions, and I learned so much from the expertise of our community at each one.

A commitment to these priority/focus areas coupled to our core values provide the framework we need to build and grow in new and exciting ways. We want the School of Arts and Sciences to emerge as a progressive and vital hub of inspiration and creative problem-solving.

Our work is just beginning. I hope you will be as inspired by our new strategic plan as I am, and that you will partner with us to bring it to fruition.

I invite you to stay engaged and to reach out and ask questions.

I look forward to hearing from you!



**“UAS has wonderful students, interesting interdisciplinary collaborations and opportunities to engage with our remarkable geography.”**

- Member of the Administration

**“The absolute freedom we have to write, think, paint, carve, research... direct our thinking in any direction we want, and then to offer that kind of individualized teaching to our students is amazing.”**

- Faculty Member

**“We are developing people and ourselves. UAS is a productive, positive, and safe place.”**

- Staff Member

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*of* **ALASKA**  
**SOUTHEAST**

## Message from the Provost

### Maren Haavig

I am honored to be a part of the School of Arts and Sciences' inaugural Strategic Plan. After the first year of coordinated activity within and across every unit in the School, we have much to be proud of and even more to look forward to in the months and years ahead.

I echo the priorities this work has laid out, and believe they fully align with the priorities of the University of Alaska Southeast overall.

1. A commitment to student success
2. Prioritizing faculty and staff empowerment and morale
3. Creating a cohesive Arts and Sciences experience across campuses
4. Energizing a future of innovation for Arts and Sciences

Achieving these priorities will happen through the dedication of our faculty and staff and the relationships and connections they make with their students. Once we begin, we will continue to evolve our plan based on new information and changing circumstances. For now, I encourage

everyone to review this report and learn more about the amazing future we envision for the School of Arts and Sciences.



# Arts & Sciences by the Numbers

641

## Arts & Sciences Majors

In the fall of 2022, Arts & Sciences had over 600 students with majors declared in one of the school's departments.

53%

## Distance Courses

Over half of the offered courses were conducted via distance education, allowing for course access for remote learners.

25%

## Indigenous Students

A quarter of students who attended Arts & Sciences classes during the fall 2022 semester were Alaska Native.

727

## Non-Traditional Students

Over half of Arts & Sciences students are non-traditional students, many of whom engage in distance education.

# Vision

At UAS Arts and Sciences, students are a part of hands-on learning guided by passionate and engaged faculty. Whether interests lie in leadership or interdisciplinary studies, our learners will find flexible programs to help them reach their goals. We celebrate the diverse identities of our students and strive to ensure each will have an engaging experience that provides the support and impact they seek. Further, the School of Arts and Sciences is passionate about giving students the opportunity to engage with the unique ecosystem, history, culture, and community in Southeast Alaska to prepare to be future global leaders.

In this new strategic plan (2023-2028), together we will focus on four key areas: **our commitment to student success, prioritizing faculty and staff empowerment and morale, creating a cohesive experience across campuses, and energizing a future of innovation for Arts and Sciences** (see below for additional details on each area). Our commitment to this plan signals an intention towards growing our school in number of students, securing our future financially, and ensuring our positive impact in the long term.



# Shared Core Values



## Excellence

in our efforts to provide an empowering educational and professional experience.



## Access

equitably to learning and opportunity to diverse learners to ensure inclusivity and address barriers.



## Honor & Serve

Alaska Native languages, cultures, traditions, and people.



## Engage & Elevate

communities across Southeast Alaska to strengthen partnerships, collaborations, and grow our reach.

# The Plan - Focus One



## Commitment to Student Success

In the Arts & Sciences, we invest our resources into a student-centered approach. We honor students' goals for their own work and lives by **providing courses, programming, and support services that allow students to be seen, heard, and known by UAS staff and faculty.** In addition to academic excellence, we are invested in the socio-emotional health of our students. We believe we all learn best when we all share a sense of belonging.

# Commitment to Student Success

Initiative	Time Horizon	Excellence	Inclusivity	Honor and serve Alaska Natives	Engage and elevate
1.1 Review processes around scheduling and course rotation with a lens trained on student needs	First 12 months	X			
1.2 Convene a working group to examine/explore the metrics we use to track and define student success ensuring that they are inclusive of all learners.	First 12 months	X	X	X	
1.3 Identify and bolster experiential opportunities and relationships with community partners, including local schools, to enhance student learning	12-24 months	X		X	X
1.4 Participate in UAS-wide efforts to create a first year experience model - (including efforts around transfer students, non-traditional, non-residential) connecting the dots for native orientation/curriculum - through land acknowledgment, moving into a welcoming experience for all.	24-36 months	X	X	X	
1.5 Assess student needs and interest in communities (social, academic support, professional network), with an examination of variation in online learners, and continue to build/support these efforts across programs	24-36 months	X	X	X	
1.6 Research and identify additional support, resources, etc. for online course delivery to ensure that all students have a shared, quality experience when taking online courses regardless to promote more equity in pass rates. (related to the disparity data)	24-36 months	X	X		



# The Plan - Focus Two



## Prioritizing Faculty and Staff Empowerment and Morale

The School of Arts and Sciences cares deeply about building a culture that promotes employee and organizational success. We will **prioritize communication, compassion, respect, and autonomy in the workplace.** We strive to promote strong connections, equity, and higher morale within the School of Arts and Sciences.

# Prioritizing Faculty and Staff Empowerment and Morale

Initiative	Time Horizon	Excellence	Inclusivity	Honor and serve Alaska Natives	Engage and elevate
2.1 Conduct process-mapping across a series of identified highly problematic or bottle-necked issues and mitigate pain points in processes.	First 12 months	X			
2.2 Enhance communication, transparency, and seeking of listening opportunities	First 12 months	X	X		
2.3 Provide mentorship, additional training and professional development opportunities for faculty and staff to build career pathways and promote retention	First 12 months	X	X		
2.4 Examine and address equity and transparency in workloads and service across departments and among categories of faculty	12-24 months	X	X		
2.5 Clarify roles of current staff members, identify gaps for future hiring.	12-24 months	X	X		
2.6 Offer more classes/training/support for faculty and staff in DEI, as well as Alaska Native language and culture, particularly during the onboarding process	24-36 months	X	X	X	X
2.7 Identify external partnerships that will elevate faculty profile and support (i.e. Endowed Chairs)	36-48 months	X			X

# The Plan - Focus Three



## Creating a Cohesive Arts & Sciences Experience Across Campuses

While each campus has its own unique priorities and makes decisions to serve individual community needs, the School of Arts & Sciences is excited to create a more cohesive environment across the three locations and in our online space. This cohesive experience for students will **unite faculty and staff around a common vision that focuses on our shared values.**

# Creating a Cohesive Arts & Sciences Experience Across Campuses

Initiative	Time Horizon	Excellence	Inclusivity	Honor and serve Alaska Natives	Engage and elevate
3.1 Identify opportunities (reviewing existing data or collecting new student input as needed) for greater efficiency in operating workflows to improve the student experience across campuses	First 12 months	X			
3.2 Facilitate faculty, staff, leadership collaboration - pursue a collaborative culture across campus, that balances efficiency for the whole with distinctiveness/nimbleness within the three campuses... (i.e. planning for course loads, scheduling, communication for events, including all relevant faculty/staff in events, decision making at department/program level)	12-24 months	X	X		
3.3 Develop a fellowship or funding source (i.e. faculty exchange) for faculty/staff/students to have experiences on campuses beyond their "home campus."	36-48 months	X			X
3.4 Identify opportunities to ensure Alaska Native arts/culture resources and support are equitable across all campuses	36-48 months	X		X	

# The Plan - Focus Four



## Energizing a Future of Innovation for Arts & Sciences

A primary objective for UAS School of Arts and Sciences is to impact the world through innovation, integration and entrepreneurship. We should advance the uniqueness of Southeast Alaska to **drive innovation as thought leaders and knowledge creators whose work will have a lasting impact on pressing global issues of our time.** We intend to honor, serve, and be informed by Alaska Native languages, histories, cultures, and peoples. The School of Arts and Sciences will emerge as a progressive, dynamic hub of ideation and creative problem-solving.

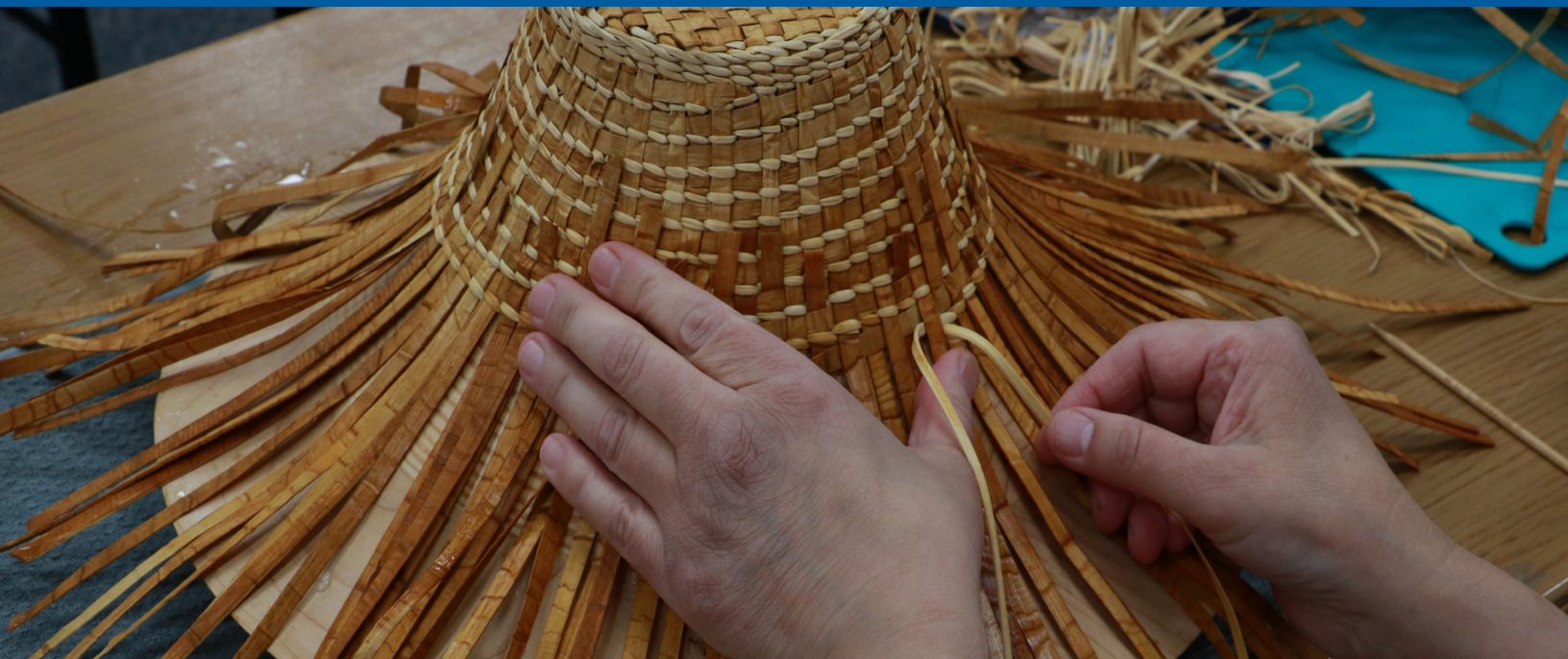
# Energizing a Future of Innovation for Arts & Sciences

Initiative	Time Horizon	Excellence	Inclusivity	Honor and serve Alaska Natives	Engage and elevate
4.1 Explore more mini-/short courses - including summer, travel, immersive, etc.	First 12 months	X			X
4.2 Create more intentional connections and working relationships with Southeast Alaska Tribes, ANCSA Corporations, and Heritage Organizations with the expectation that all programs are aware of and involved in those connections.	First 12 months	X	X	X	
4.3 Foster inter/trans disciplinary partnerships and collaborations to create exciting learning opportunities and experiences by leveraging new infrastructure investments to create more experiential learning for students, elevate faculty scholarly and creative contributions and identify new community partners.	12-24 months	X	X	X	X
4.4 Explore unique and innovative approaches to market and communicate our story, showcase the distinctions between campuses and create an energizing/inspiring message about our value proposition.	24-36 months	X			X
4.5 Identify and support efforts to gain new resources for innovation in curriculum, scholarly and creative projects (including training and mentorship for faculty, incorporating partnerships across campus - such as with CTE).	36-48 months	X			X

# Strategic Planning Approach

The planning process was conducted over one year between July 2022 and June 2023. A steering committee was convened to lead the effort, guide data collection and synthesize findings.

Data collection included a series of surveys and focus groups with key stakeholder groups in Arts and Sciences. This included faculty, staff, students, alumni and community partners. Respondents were asked about strengths to build on, areas of concern, and opportunities for growth and innovation. From this input, the key focus areas and core values were developed. Through subsequent and ongoing feedback opportunities stakeholders were able to share their thoughts about potential initiatives to tackle in each of these areas over the next 5 years.



# Initiative Champions

In the Spring of 2023, the work largely moved into the hands of the initiative champions.

Initiative champions either self-identified or were recruited by the steering committee. The champions worked collaboratively to prioritize initiatives, propose timelines and assess the final selections through a rubric grounded in the identified core values.

## **Commitment to Student Success**

Lillian Bannerman, Marnie Chapman, Kathy DiLorenzo, Kristen Handley, Lori Klein, Aimée Richards, Jay Szczepanski, Amanda Triplett

## **Prioritizing Faculty and Staff**

### **Empowerment and Morale**

Rosemarie Alexander-Isett, Amy Bannerman, Jill Dumesnil, Beverley Keefe, Katie Sill

## **Creating a Cohesive Arts & Sciences**

### **Experience Across Campuses**

Maren Haavig, Colleen Ianuzzi, Kitty LaBounty, Jon Martin

## **Energizing a Future of Innovation for Arts & Sciences**

Éedaa Heather Burge, Kelly Jensen, Joel Markis, Sarah Niecko, Carin Silkaitis, X'unei Lance Twitchell





# Steering Committee

## **Carin Silkaitis**

Dean of Arts & Sciences

## **Maren Haavig**

Provost

## **Kristen Handley**

Institutional Effectiveness Director

## **Beverley Keefe**

Administrative Officer

## **Lori Klein**

Vice Chancellor for Enrollment  
Management & Student Affairs

## **Paul Kraft**

Sitka Campus Director

## **Priscilla Schulte**

Ketchikan Campus Director



# In Closing

The work to develop this plan was comprehensive and strived to engage many diverse and thoughtful voices from across the campus community. Our final product is not a static document, but a living and breathing resource to help guide our work. We will evaluate progress annually and allow the plan to evolve as needs emerge.

For questions about the strategic plan contact:

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