

Vicki's Views

By Vicki Orazem
UAS Vice Provost of Student Success



About two weeks ago, I was sitting in the airport waiting for the fog to lift with a well-respected English professor and Math professor. We were attending a national conference in Chicago where Learning Center managers from across the country gather to discuss and find ways to cope with issues of increasing need (more and more students wanting and seeking help to be successful in their classes) coupled with decreasing federal and state funding support.

As I sat at the airport, the English professor showed me a paper handed in recently by a student. The topic of the paper was "Why I Keep Coming Back." This student said, "I . . . further my learning by walking through the door,

because the people who work there keep me coming back." The student goes on to say that the Learning Center "is sort of a safety net to fall into when the professor is drowning in papers and can't quite answer your questions."

It seems there are concerns about the Learning Center on the Juneau campus. Many students have approached me and asked if the Learning Center is closing. There are probably many more students asking that question as well. The answer to that is unequivocally no! The Learning Center is a vibrant, dynamic and very important component of academic success at the University of Alaska Southeast.

However, there may be some future concerns in regards to funding. Returning to the student paper, the author said, "we students are using the Learning Center and we pay out of our pockets to keep the LC. It's a small additional fee that we pay, and because we pay for it, we get help with our work that we need."

I think what is at issue here is the concept of, "we pay for it." In actuality, the Learning Center is funded by general fund dollars—the funds that the university receives directly from the legislature. UAS students are not paying specifically for the services at the Learning Center, as in many other universities that charge a fee for such services. We've been lucky here in Alaska and have had the luxury of providing these services to our students for no extra charge. Unfortunately, we are probably at the end of that era.

If you are reading the newspapers and keeping up on Alaska news, it is no secret that the university may be facing flat funding during the next legislative session. If the funding remains flat, the university will need to cover the costs of raises, rising health costs, etc.

So, how do we continue to offer the services of the Learning Center to our students? Some possible solutions to this dilemma include the following:

1) Decrease services and continue to provide limited services at no charge to our students.

2) Look for alternative ways to tutor students: review sessions associated with classes (accounting uses this model).

3) Charge a fee for services.

- o All students pay \$20 a semester for unlimited use at the Learning Center.
- o A fee for limited use, \$10 a semester buys a student 10 hours.

Students can play an integral role in this decision-making process so give us your thoughts and ideas. Please recognize that the administration is well aware of the important role the LC plays in academic support and success to students at UAS.

This section is designed to respond to students concerns with issues related to academic support, or student success. The Vice Provost of Student Success, Vicki Orazem, is working to help students be successful at the university. The types of issues that come through her office are issues related to, but not limited to the following: academic support (learning center), freshman programs, advising, registration, leadership to name a few. If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please address them to either the Whalesong at jywhale@uas.alaska.edu or Vicki at jnvno@uas.alaska.edu.

Student Exchange Programs Add to Campus Life, College Experience

By Sofya Bogdanova
Whalesong Staff

The college years can provide invaluable experiences that can last a lifetime. In addition to academic training for a future career, opportunities exist for students to round out their educational experience with exposure to different parts of the country or the world and the people and cultures they find there.

At UAS, one way to find these opportunities is through the National Students Exchange Program (NSEP) and the International Students Exchange Program (ISEP).

According to Marsha Squires, who, along with Elizabeth Schelle, coordinates these two exchanges for UAS, the programs offer opportunities for foreign students and American students from other parts of the country to come study a

the Juneau campus. Likewise, the program offers UAS students the option of study abroad or in another state.

Currently, there are four foreign students studying here under the ISEP, two from Switzerland and one each from Australia and Finland. There are six students in the NSEP, two from Iowa, two from Maine and one each from Minnesota and California.

On the other side of the equation, there are four UAS students studying abroad this semester in South Africa, Sweden, Holland and Finland. There are four local students in programs in other states including California, Oregon and Hawaii plus one student in Guam.

The NSEP was founded as a parallel to study abroad programs, recognizing that not every student is ready for a study opportunity outside their own country. Language, cost, and program compatibility are some of the reasons why students may not consider study abroad. Exchange within the United States and

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for meetings and activities.

Like other chapters of Beta Sigma Phi, a chapter at UAS would be dedicated to friendship and serving the community. Beta Sigma Phi members raise more than \$3 million for local charities and donate over 200,000 volunteer hours annually. However, each chapter determines its own service projects and level of community involvement.

Beta Sigma Phi is an international women's friendship network. Susan Krogstad, president of Juneau chapter Preceptor Gamma commented that, "when many people hear the words Beta Sigma Phi, they immediately think 'college sorority,' but that's a misconception. In fact, the sorority is comprised of women of all ages and backgrounds, from doctors and housewives to secretaries and school teachers to retired individuals." Lori also explained the positive effects that the sorority has had in her life. "When you go through the good times or when you go through the bad times, your sisters are there for you. You are friends forever," she said.

Because this sorority is not affiliated with any university, a new chapter would be like any other student club at UAS. There would be no designated housing, and meetings would take place



about twice a month. However, membership in Beta Sigma Phi is not limited to the college years. Some Beta Sigma Phi members have been a part of the organization for over 50 years.

Freshman Heather Horton hopes to see a chapter at UAS in the future. The elementary education major believes that, "Beta Sigma Phi will offer UAS female students a positive support system and would be a great opportunity."

Like Heather, several students have already shown interest in starting a chapter and are eager to get others involved as well. Students wanting to join or interested in learning more about Beta Sigma Phi can contact Susan Krogstad at 789-3284.