

# Adding a Faculty Regent to the UA Board of Regents

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## Why It Matters

Since 2017 or earlier, this concept has been supported by:

UA Faculty Senates

UA Faculty Alliance

UA Student Governance

United Academics' Representative Assembly

Rank-and-file faculty across the UA system



# A Sampling of Evidence of Support from UA Faculty & Students Since 2017

- 2017 UAS Faculty Senate Resolution
- 2020 UAA Union of Students (USUAA) Resolution
- 2021 UAS, Juneau Campus Student Government Resolution
- 2022 United Academics Representative Assembly Resolution
- 2023 United Academics Representative Assembly Renewed Resolution
- 2025 United Academics President Letter in Support of HB10-adding a faculty regent to the UA BOR
- 2025 UA Faculty Alliance Letter of Support forthcoming

# UA Faculty Support Adding a Faculty Regent to the BOR

In March 2023,  
**393 UA faculty members**  
signed a letter in support of adding a  
faculty regent to the UA board of  
regents.

Faculty does the core functions of a University-teaching and research. So faculty should have a seat at the table.

A faculty regent would add some perspective to the BOR's discussions. The faculty carry out the university mission of teaching, research and service through their daily activities and have the most direct contact with the students and the public of any university stakeholder.

I would like to be this person appointed to the BOR.

BOR needs the perspective of a faculty member. In addition, a member with a stellar scholarly record would be extremely beneficial to all.

I believe a faculty regent will improve the working relationship between administration and faculty through consistent professional communication.

Faculty expertise in higher education would be a great asset to the BOR.

A faculty voice on the Board of Regents is deeply necessary to ensure a broad range of viewpoints and perspectives. This is in the best interest of a dynamic university system that values shared governance and decision making.

Too much emphasis on business folks. What do they know about the delivery of a quality education?

## From a current faculty member:

"As a superintendent of a public school district in Alaska who sat at the school board table, I brought to deliberations experience as a classroom teacher, and I regularly spent time in classrooms throughout the district. In higher education, administration does not always have the benefit of classroom teaching experience and may or may not be able to attend classes regularly. Consequently, the input of faculty when it comes to deliberations by the Board of Regents is currently a missing and necessary voice."

*-Mary Wegner*

*Assistant Professor of Education Leadership at UAS,  
retired Sitka School District Superintendent*

# An Incomplete List of Other Universities with a Faculty Regent

- Baylor University
- California State System
- College System of Tennessee
- Connecticut State Colleges and Universities
- East Tennessee State University
- Eastern Kentucky University
- Gonzaga University
- Kentucky Community and Technical College System
- Kentucky State University
- Middle State University
- Montclair State University
- Morehead State University
- Murray State University
- Northern Kentucky University
- Rutgers
- University of California system (2 faculty regents)
- University of Memphis
- University of New Mexico
- State University of New York
- Western Kentucky University

# Benefits of Having a Student Regent on the BOR

Student regents:

- provide a student perspective to the BOR during discussions and important decision making processes
- gain insight into how UA operates and then convey that information back to the student bodies at each university
- go on to fill important roles throughout Alaska that build upon their experience as student regents

# A Faculty Regent Would Enhance Communication & Understanding

## As a BOR member, a Faculty Regent would:

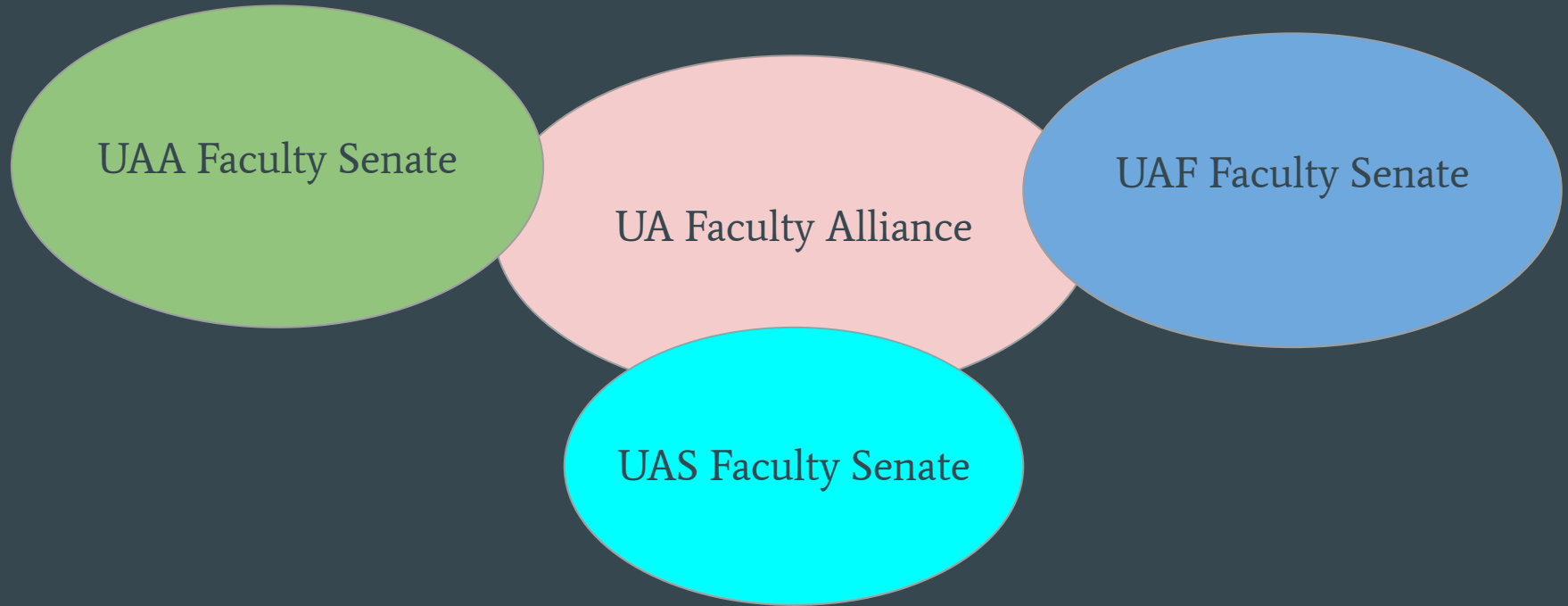
- listen to the Faculty Alliance, other governance, and chancellor reports & ask questions
- participate and speak throughout BOR meetings to illuminate potential impacts on student learning, faculty teaching, & research
- participate in BOR committee work
- provide the faculty and research perspective to issues under discussion by the BOR
- recuse themselves when conflicts of interest arise
- gain an understanding of the complexities faced by the BOR & communicate these complexities back to the faculty body



## Current Faculty Involvement in UA's BOR

- Faculty Alliance chair presents a 7 minute report at the BOR's quarterly meetings
- Faculty Alliance chair *cannot otherwise speak* at BOR meetings unless directly asked a question or upon closing comments
- Faculty Alliance chair DOES participate in BOR committee work as an ex-officio committee member

# The Structure of UA Faculty Leadership



## A Few Details on Faculty Senates, UA Administration, United Academics, and the UA BOR

**UA faculty** (through faculty senates) have primary responsibility over curriculum and degree content.

**UA administration** has primary responsibility for ensuring the UA mission is met, UA policies and sound academic practices are followed, & the institution is positively perceived by the public.

**UA's BOR** has primary responsibility for ensuring that UA stays true to its mission & has the financial resources it needs to operate successfully; the BOR possesses final decision-making authority.

**UA's faculty union,** United Academics, protects faculty working conditions through collective bargaining and represents approximately 1,100 faculty and postdoctoral fellows in the bargaining unit throughout the UA system.

*Source: <https://www.aaup.org/programs/shared-governance/faqs-shared-governance>*

# Selecting the Faculty Regent

- mirror selection process for student regent
  - each Faculty Senate provides a short list of names to the Faculty Alliance (FA)
  - FA chair submits a comprehensive list of nominees to the governor for selection
  - Governor makes final selection
- limited to tenured faculty to ensure their protection & depth of knowledge of the UA system
- limited to two year terms to limit interruption to faculty regent's professional and personal life

## What about conflicts of interest?

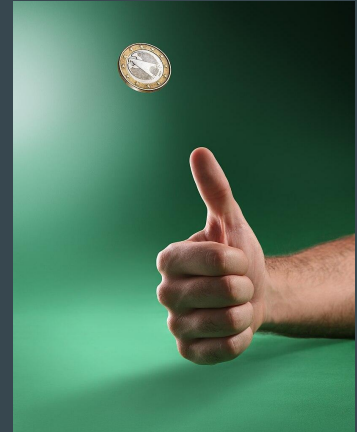
**Faculty members** would recuse themselves when the BOR discusses items that present conflicts of interest (CBA approval, elimination of the faculty member's program, etc)

**Student regents** are trusted to recuse themselves when the BOR discusses items that present conflicts of interest (tuition increases, program elimination, etc)

**Every member of the BOR** will have a potential conflict of interest during their 8 year term (UA programs that compete with their businesses, children/grandchildren's athletic or academic programs, etc)

## What about a tie vote?

- The likelihood of this happening is extremely small; the BOR generally votes unanimously, or nearly so.
- Roberts Rules of Order are followed by the BOR, presumably including how to handle a tie vote.



## Other Boards Include Stakeholders Similar to a Faculty Member on the BOR

- Hospital boards regularly include doctors
- Alaska Board of Fisheries includes a variety of fishers (subsistence, commercial, recreational)
- Construction boards include architects
- UA BOR includes a student regent

# The Iditarod Board Includes a Musher

That musher helped the board hear the warnings of other mushers, and the board voted to reroute the 2025 trail to avoid dangerous conditions.



*Photo source:*

*<https://iditarod.com/musher/the-burn-really-has-no-snow/>*



# A Faculty Member on the UA Board of Regents MATTERS

- It is in the best interests of Alaska's university system, its students, its faculty members, and its mission.
- It will improve the status of the UA system as a mechanism for the public good.
- The concept has existed in bill status in the Alaska House for *years*.
- NOW is the time to make it happen.



*Prepared by staff of United Academics, the union representing faculty and post doctoral fellows in the University of Alaska system.*

*2-18-2025*