
From: Chad Hutchison <clhutchison@alaska.edu>
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2025 2:45 PM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot; Rep. Andi Story; Tammy Smith; Claire Fordyce; Michelle Rizk; kemccall@alaska.edu; Alesia Kruckenberg; Wayne Mowery Jr; Gwendolyn Gruenig; Karen Perdue; Christine Resler; Bridget Weiss; Brian Smentkowski
Subject: From UA - House Education Committee Answers to Questions from 3/17/2025 Hearing

Dear House Education Co-Chair Himschoot and Co-Chair Story,

Please see answers from the questions asked during the March 17, 2025 House Education Committee meeting:

Question 1: "Was the Board of Regents (BOR) in compliance with the Open Meetings Act during the February 2025 meeting? Was the DEI issue on the agenda and did the Board provide an opportunity for public testimony on that issue?" (Rep. Eischeid)

ANSWER: The BOR February meeting agenda did include notice of an executive session discussion on federal issues. Agenda Item #5 for the full board session specified that the executive session would include a discussion of "regulatory compliance updates." Presidential EOs, including regulatory obligations and compliance expectations resulting from the EOs were discussed with the BOR under this executive session topic and were permissible executive session topics given the potential for adverse financial impacts.

In compliance with the Open Meetings Act, no BOR decision was made during the executive session on this topic. Rather the executive session existed to allow the administration to inform the BOR on the matter, and for counsel to provide legal advice regarding the recent EOs.

It is not uncommon for additional motions to be put on the floor by a board member, based on specific needs identified during the course of a meeting including, as may be necessary, to effectuate Board action on items that the Board received information on or advice regarding during an executive session. A BOR member put a motion on the floor and the Chair did open the motion for discussion. The vote on the motion, including a roll call vote, was completed in public session.

There was prior public commentary on the Presidential EOs, and specifically on the DEI EOs, from the Chancellors and from representatives of multiple governance groups, as part of their reports and engagement with the BOR during open session.

Question 2: "I have concerns about college readiness. Can you show data for UA developmental studies courses over time?" (Rep. Schwanke)

ANSWER: Please find the 10 year trend of first-time freshmen taking developmental coursework below. The proportion of incoming first-time freshmen taking one or more developmental courses has gone from about 30% ten years ago to about 20% today.

**University of Alaska
First-Time Freshmen Enrolled in at Least One Developmental Class, 10 Year Trend**

Fall Semester	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
First-Time Freshmen	3,072	2,970	2,950	2,672	2,231	1,921	1,821	1,904	2,158	2,381

Taking Developmental Course(s)	880	887	725	563	436	286	314	395	408	449
% Taking Developmental Course(s)	29%	30%	25%	21%	20%	15%	17%	21%	19%	19%

In other words: Enrollment in developmental classes has declined in the past 10 years. This is due to a variety of factors. In some cases there have been high levels of coordination and collaboration between K-12 districts and their university partner to more clearly understand the expectations for 100 and above level courses, examine the testing protocols for placement into developmental courses, and in some cases, look at curriculum alignment. In addition, a higher number of K-12 students engaging in dual enrollment opportunities has provided increased college readiness growth while at the same time naturally deepening the partnerships between universities and K-12 districts.

Noteworthy: Developmental courses provide basic or supplemental preparation for introductory college courses and are available in several areas, with those in math and English making up the vast majority of courses taken. Developmental courses are for-credit courses with a course number between 050 and 099. Developmental coursework is not applicable to transcribed certificates or to associate, baccalaureate, or graduate degrees, even by petition. Headcount includes students who audit credit courses. A first-time freshman is a degree seeking student enrolled in the first semester of an undergraduate degree program. Transfer students are not included in this group.

Source: Data Analysis and Institutional Research, www.alaska.edu/ir/

Thanks
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