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offices which they oversee. In addition, they were asked to provide insight on expenses, in particular contractual services.

Since most of the representatives on the system office review were also members of the university-based administrative review teams, the majority of meetings included updates on the progress occurring in the university administrative reviews.

On several occasions the committee received briefings from Bishko who is looking for synergies across and throughout the entire UA system to reduce costs in an effort complementary to this administrative review. This provided valuable context to the review committee.

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Committee Observations

While many functions performed in the System Office are necessary and vital, the mission of the office is not always clear to staff, faculty, and university stakeholders. This has at times manifested itself in a lack of trust and understanding over the role of the System Office at the three separately-accredited universities.

Leadership at the System Office and the universities have not always worked collaboratively to chart a path forward for the university system. This seems to have reached a low point during discussions of "One UA" and the attendant crisis management brought on by state budget cuts over the last several years.

The need for the system to operate as a single legal entity and the needs of the universities to manage their own success initiatives and develop their own institutional identities is not inherently at odds. But the lack of commonly understood roles and responsibilities has fostered distrust of the System Office instead of seeing it as a vital resource.

Too often, initiatives started at the system level aren't seen as adding value, but rather as simply adding work. Moreover, there remains a persistent belief that the System Office acts unilaterally to exert operational control over university functions and communications instead of providing administrative support or service.

The three most critical areas of the System's Office for day to day business are the CFO (finance), HR, and OIT. Of those three, the CFO's office is the most highly regarded from feedback as well as being the most solvent.

OIT is in a critical mission state, and without support will suffer cascade failure that will negatively impact the entire university system. There should be intense focus from leadership on resolving the issues of stability at OIT.

HR, as a system, is in need of review. The leadership positions there are necessary, but the scope of HR is poorly defined with regards to where front of the house operations reside. If the front of the house operations are to be housed at the campus levels, clear lines/workflows need to be provided showing what areas are responsible for what, and accurate and effective training needs to be provided to campus HR coordinators to bridge that gap.

The roles of the VP for University Relations and the VP of Academics, Students and Research are highly misunderstood. Their capacity is to act as a bridge of knowledge to the Board of Regents, the President's Office, and as liaisons of the university system to the state legislature. More emphasis should be placed on these roles reporting back to the campuses, and engaging in more dialogue with their campus counterparts. This closely models what is seen in the Chief Equity and compliance Officer position: providing that resource for not only the BOR/President, but relaying changes from legislative and other regulatory agencies to the campuses to efficiently and effectively adjust to changing realities. Additional value can be provided by these positions in providing foundational information to members of governance who are not well versed in the functions of the university. This will create the opportunity to maintain institutional knowledge of the functions of the university system as a whole, and provide a solid foundation of knowledge to incoming members of not only the BOR, but System and campus leadership as well.

There is a general feeling that System Office should not grow, and could possibly be reduced. There seems to be a distrust of the office. System Office responsibilities should be more clearly defined and the operations of the System Office not extend beyond those areas of responsibility. Further, the System Office should operate primarily to support the three universities.

There are widespread feelings that the System Office does not understand the needs of each university. We should be very careful about any recommendations to add positions or responsibilities to the office. A serious effort should be made to explain the role, services, and added value that the System Office provides. The office should make a serious attempt to meet with appropriate representatives from each university and to understand each university's needs. The universities in general want more positions, resources, and freedom.

The committee observes that these impressions, while perhaps deeply held across the university system, are not unshakable. The majority of staff, faculty, and administration share a great deal of common ground and want Alaska's university system, as well as their respective universities and the communities with which they serve, to flourish. With skilled and patient leadership many, if not all, of the divisions that have been exposed over the previous years may be addressed and the university system may move forward with greater purpose and unity.

General Recommendations

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In 2015, the Statewide Transformation Team, composed of leadership across the university system, noted that the System Office (or Statewide) should "shift from a model of control to one of facilitation and support." In addition, the team's final report suggested: "service to and active collaboration with universities must be incorporated in the SW mission and management philosophy. This committee agrees with the interim president and believes the interim president would be well advised to formally adopt a mission statement for the System Office that explicitly affirms the role of the office primarily as one of support and collaboration rather than one of command and control."

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The System Office is also uniquely situated to take advantage of economies of scale. The office should emphasize and leverage its role in managing risk, serving as the single payer for insurance across the three universities, and managing higher-level financial considerations of the university system. The System Office is also well positioned to centralize functions related to federal and state relations and land management. Human resources, public affairs, and tech support, if managed efficiently and sensitive to local feedback, are likely best coordinated through the System Office but with a distributed workforce throughout Alaska's universities and communities.

Beyond the ffi

mission, reduce costs, and concentrate the span of control to fewer executive administrators (one goal could be the reduction or elimination of VP and AVP position classifications) with greater assistance at the staff level.

5. Strengthen offices that deliver shared services and enter into purchase agreements and contracts based on economies of scale, most notably OIT, HR, and Finance.

Rationale for affirmation

This position is required to support the compliance with the federal and state laws and should not be eliminated.

There may be trust issues with the campus E&C Offices to overcome, but the process itself is vital and should remain.

This is a small office that may be necessary for legal/federal regulatory reasons so, there's not much for us to change about its scope or span of control.

Rationale/Suggestions for reorganization

There's a lack of clarity around this position now that the VRA is over.

Potential for expansion:

With more support this office could oversee additional areas of compliance beyond Title IX, including Clery Act, Drug Free, FERPA, Minors and Campus, ADA etc. There's an opportunity to fold in some of the other compliance areas formerly under AVP Student Enrollment Strategy

Potential for reduction:

This function may be reduced to Title IX compliance only

General Counsel

Office of General Counsel

FY20 Department Budget - \$1,329,584.17

Contractual Expenses - \$170,569.87

Employees - 7 (5 attorneys, 1 paralegal, 1 administrative staff)

Position Description

[BOR Policy](#) P02.02.030. General Counsel.

The General Counsel is the chief legal officer of the board and the university. The office serves the entire institution on legal matters ranging from contracts to employee matters. The office size has not changed in the 10 year period.

Contractual expenses are for the provision of legal services. They hire external attorneys as needed on a case-by-case basis when they need greater experience or must have an external representative.

Rationale for affirmation

Overall responses indicate high approval of this unit.

The General Counsel office was praised for increased interactions and assistance.

We are fortunate to have their expertise and commitment to the institution. They manage a wide variety of legal tasks from policy review and guidance to legal representation and counsel.

Rationale/Suggestions for reorganization

There seems to be a conflict of interest issue in the structure and responsibilities of the General Counsel office. The General Counsel office receives its funding from the state/tuition revenue/ICR etc. However, the office provides legal counsel only to administrators and not to faculty and staff. In internal disputes, this is

The General Counsel office should be neutral in internal dispute resolutions. However, it should represent the university in external disputes and other legal functions required by the university.

The office employs four Associate General Counsels, yet it outsources its functions to consultants at a high rate. If the General Counsel office focused only on legal functions ~~that~~ support the university, then 3 (of the 4) Associate General Counsel positions could be eliminated. The support for the General Counsel office (with one General Counsel and one Associate General Counsel) could be accomplished by additional para-legal staff recruitment and support.

Human Resources

UA Human Resources Office

FY20 department budget - \$5,142,841.83

Contractual Expenses - \$521,267.75

Employees - 50 (1 CHRO, 4 directors, 45 staff)

In 2019, UA underwent a system-wide redesign of human resources functions into a unified Office organized by areas of functional expertise. Instead of maintaining three separate campus organizations and a System Office, a wholly new single human resources organization was organized to provide human resources service throughout the system.

Observations on the reorganization and function of Human Resources

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The chief human resources officer administers the university's human resource program including employee relations, labor-management relations, compensation planning, faculty and staff benefits, training, and development. The CHRO coordinates the development and implementation of regents' policy and university regulation regarding human resources and administers and interprets human resources policy and university regulation. The CHRO is responsible for the issuance of all HR procedures, directives, and manuals required, to coordinate workforce planning, and assists the board and the president in the recruitment and selection of university officers.

Rationale for affirmation

CHRO function is a critical support function for the universities. Hence, this position should not be eliminated.

Affirm administrative management position, but there needs to be a serious attempt to better clarify what employees need to do and where they go for the support they need.

Dir. Employee Transition & Benefits

[Position Description](#)

Rationale for affirmation

The Director of Employee Transition and Benefits is a critical support function for the universities. This function needs to be strengthened further. The support for this position can be provided by additional staff recruitment.

Need greater engagement from this position and less reliance on canned updates and newsletters from our vendors. This is a critical area for employees and knowing the team behind our benefits would help improve relationships. Erika held the position for a long time and was a well known and responsive leader. That relationship needs to continue under the new leadership.

The Joint Health Care Committee is one of the most important councils in the system and needs to continue its role.

Dir. Talent Acquisition

[Position Description](#)

Rationale for affirmation

This area is improving with the implementation of new software. There is a lot of pressure now on diversity and inclusion and a lot of opportunity for this area to provide greater leadership and effectiveness.

Leadership in classification and compensation is also onis position f

Office of Finance/Audit/Procurement

Office of Finance/Audit

Rationale for affirmation

The Chief Audit Officer does a fantastic job overseeing the audit functions of the university and updating the Board of Regents and UA leadership. The office provides vital functions for the organization and is an important part of reducing loss, mitigating financial risks and ensuring adherence to financial standards.

This area is not duplicated on any of the campuses and is a necessary function of the university system.

Chief Procurement Officer

Procurement

FY20 Department Budget (Procurement) - \$1,361,755.04

Contractual Expenses - \$16,649.05

Employees - 12

[Position Description](#)

The procurement function was recently centralized into the system office, increasing the number of employees from 1 in the system office to 12, distributed across the university system, but managed as a single department.

Rationale for affirmation

The benefits of centralized procurement for large items are being realized. Greater department-level empowerment for smaller purchases which this reorganization accomplished strikes a good balance between central (large) procurement and department-level control.

The feedback from campus A/P is that the restructured procurement process is good. The Chief Procurement Officer is critical and should not be eliminated. The support for this position can be accomplished by additional staff in

The System Office of risk services manages insurance and claims for the entire system. In addition they coordinate with Federal agencies on disaster aid funding and oversee the system's emergency communications platforms.

Non-compensation budget items include self-insurance costs and premiums.

Rationale/Suggestions for reorganization

While on the one hand it seems the universities are managing Emergency Management well, on the other there needs to be some delegation of authority to someone to act as Chief Risk Officer, or this needs to be filled for the sake of legal agreements, MOUs, and strategic direction. This could be a matter of making a campus lead or designating the CFO or another individual as the signature authority.

Assess if actual scope of position is currently in line with the PD. A member's personal inclination was that the job duties for this position are incompatible to be rolled up into the other positions under the CFO, and that the CFO's duties preclude taking on those duties. However, more review of this position would help to solidify that belief. A concern the member had was that, by having the tasks absorbed by other areas, critical risk management issues might not be given due diligence or scrutiny due to competing job duties in the other positions.

Risk is clearly a cost that is most efficiently borne by the system office so as to maximize economies of scale, particularly for insurance purposes. However, this position is currently vacant, and its tasks absorbed by other positions. Might this be an opportunity to redistribute the work of this office across other positions in finance? If so, it suggests a way forward to reduce the number of executive administrative positions by consolidating, reducing level of work, and/or distributing the existing work across other positions.

Perhaps a combination of the above options present the best way forward.

Particularly notable feedback included: "Chief Risk Officer (Vacant) - while it has been a few years since I worked with this position I do feel it can be eliminated. Risk

Management should occur at the top or it is not worth the investment. I would like to see the position eliminated and the work distributed to other areas.

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University Relations

VP Univ. Relations/Chief Strat. Budget

FY20 Department Budget (UR/Budget, Government & Federal Relations) - \$1,546,795.94

Contractual Expenses - \$85,483.02

Employees - 6

Position Description

BOR Policy P02.02.050. Chief University Relations Officer.

This position serves as the chief officer of the university for internal communications and external

Due to previous administrative consolidations this position oversees departments previously managed by two separate university officers. Further consolidation or expansion of scope is not recommended.

Rationale/Suggestions for reorganization

This is a position that has taken on many related but somewhat disparate tasks. Clarity could be gained by streamlining the position.

Reclassify from VP to Chief, adjust compensation accordingly (positions should not be built to fit any specific individual).

If the job duties for this position increase, it may be untenable for one person to handle them all. Especially in light of the administrative burden that the land grant fulfillment will be providing.

The VPUR function has two components: university relations and chief strategist for budgets. These two functions are separate in how they support the academic mission of the universities. Neither of the two functions directly support the academic mission but have a peripheral impact. This position could be eliminated and the functions can be

accomplished as discussed in the following subsections.

Dir. Planning & Budget

Position Description not available

Rationale for affirmation

The director of budget plays a key role in relationships with the State of Alaska OMB.

At UAF, the OMB "forward planning" portion was broken out from the Financial Systems office (now known as OFA) around 2010. It has been extraordinarily useful to break out the forward planning from the day to day, and it feels counterproductive to try and merge those two very separate duties back into one role at the system's office level. So this is the liaá

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the liaison

Dir. Federal Relations

[Position Description](#)

Rationale for affirmation

The relationship with our Federal Delegation, funding agencies and offices is very strong.

This is an important function that should be maintained at the System Office. Federal relations must be centralized and handled in the system office.

No change is needed or possible.

Rationale/Suggestions for reorganization

The Director of Federal Relations could assume the VPUR component of University Relations, the Director of State Relations and also the component of AVP public affairs.

This position can exist as an EX or FR position reporting directly to the President. It could also be a senior staff person. The support for this position can be accomplished by additional staff recruitment.

AVP Public Affairs

Office of Public Affairs

FY20 Department Budget (Public Affairs) - \$565,379.14

Contractual Expenses - \$140,054.32

Employees - 3

[Position Description](#)

The role of the System Office of Public Affairs differentiates in scope and focus from the university relations/advancement functions on the universities in several key areas. This office oversees all Board and Presidential communications, assists in government relations, provides strategic counsel on matters of public relations and has been increasingly charged with monitoring and improving the reputation of the university. The AVP heads the PR Council, comprising university communications leads, and coordinates communications and system marketing efforts with the three universities and the UA Foundation.

Recent contractual expenses include the UA Strong advocacy campaign, public opinion research, media monitoring software and marketing efforts in collaboration with the universities.

Rationale/Suggestions for reorganization

This is a key area that should remain in the System Office, but there is an opportunity to look at a revision of the position. The PD still has it listed as a Director with 25% duty for Federal Relations. The current occupant is an AVP and does not lead in that role. There

is opportunity to redefine this position as a Director level, effectively reducing the number of AVPs at the system office.

Reclassify from AVP to Director.

This position also has a high degree of

Rationale for affirmation - Additional Investment

The Office of I

Academics, Students and Research

VP Academics, Students, Research

FY20 Department budget - \$671,141.80

Contractual Expenses - \$138,52

members at the system level this position is able to provide key perspective and insight to the president's cabinet.

As a liaison for the campus units engaged in these activities to the BOR and the legislature, this position serves a ~~E~~

This position could be "downgraded" to support Banner Student issues. That role is critical, while the rest of the roles have mostly been farmed out to various campuses. However, given short staffing at OIT, having a Student equivalent to FinSys banner support is a critical role.

Consider reclassifying from executive level position within VPASR to I

Rationale/Suggestions for reorganization

The position of Director of Data Strategy and Institutional Research should be reduced to a senior staff position uc

well positioned to focus its efforts and where it might be advised to defer administrative functions or leadership initiatives to the three universities.

The committee thanks those who participated in the review and reiterates the broad consensus of its members as grateful for the opportunity to explore the administrative structure of the System Office more deeply. This has been a positive and productive experience.

The committee recommends a periodic review process to remain adaptive to changing circumstances and ensure long-term institutional effectiveness.