

01-81-05

Howard Cutler, Barry Best, James Matthews, and Larry Bennett speak at the University of Alaska Fairbanks convocation.

January 22, 1981

University of Alaska Fairbanks

Howard Cutler announced that the enrollment was 2.2 percent higher than the previous spring. Enrollment has increased every spring and fall. He said he is not happy about the governor's recommendation in the budget. The governor has recommended only a .9 percent increase over last year for instruction at the Fairbanks campus and a 1.4 percent increase for research. Cutler is pleased that the statewide administration is going to present the whole budget directly to the Alaska Legislature and not spend time on the governor's recommendation. They are moving forward with the recommendations in support of the budget that the regents have presented. He talked about capital projects: extension at the library, Seward fisheries education center, central receiving building on campus, and an addition to the Elvey Building. There will also be a request for a statewide administration building. Both the Elvey Building and the administration building will free up space in the research and instruction areas. They don't have large classroom and office buildings plans but these two buildings do fulfill that item.

He said he has the pleasure to present Barry Best who will talk about the EEO and AA programs. He talked about the implementation of the programs. Barry Best said he will talk about Affirmative Action statistics for the calendar quarter ending September 1980. He delineated the differences between the Equal Employment Opportunity and the Affirmative Action programs and prohibiting discrimination in employment in the university. Best said they have made progress in the past year in achieving their affirmative action goals. The present workforce composition is 653 males, 492 females, 1,021 whites, 28 blacks, 20 Hispanics, 50 Asians and 26 Natives. This is the total in all EEO job categories. He listed the breakdown in all EEO categories. The present composition in EEO category one (administration) is 41 males, 13 females, 50 whites, 1 black, 2 Hispanics and 1 Native. In EEO category two (faculty) the present composition is 277 males, 61 females, 313 whites, 2 blacks, 1 Hispanic, 4 Asians and 8 Natives. EEO category three (professional non-faculty) 85 males, 46 females, 124 whites, 1 black, 2 Asians and 4 Natives. In EEO category four (clerical) the present composition is 15 males, 241 females, 225 whites, 12 blacks, 7 Hispanics, 2 Asians and 10 Natives. In EEO category five (technical) the present composition is 116 males, 86 females, 193 whites, 2 blacks, 2 Hispanics, 4 Asians and 1 Native. In EEO category six (skilled crafts and trades) the present composition is 69 males, 5 females, 67 whites, 2 blacks, 2 Hispanics, 1 Asian and 2 Natives. In EEO category seven (service and maintenance) the present composition is 50 males, 40 females, 49 whites, 8 blacks, 6 Hispanics, and 27 Asians. Best said they have made progress since last year in achieving their Affirmative Action goals. He thinks this reports reflects the time and commitment in the past year. He said they must eliminate those qualifications that are not essential for the performance of the job. They must continue to eliminate social barriers. Interviews must be objective. He said women, minorities, disabled veterans, veterans and the disabled must be

given a chance to be productive citizens. He continued to talk about equal opportunities for these categories of potential employees. He said higher education must be the vanguard.

Howard Cutler said one of the distinguishing characteristics of American higher education has been its devotion through the function of community service. They are recognizing the 50 year anniversary of the Cooperative Extension Service at UAF. Twenty-five of those years have been run by Dr. James Matthews. Dr. Matthews said his white hair is a family characteristics and not an experience of administration in the north. He said they are excited about the future. He will talk about opportunities and program development for the future. He talked about their role in the Extension Service. Their orientation is away from campus for the most part. He discussed the methods used in their program development. His staff is involved in consultations and working with people wherever they live. They have specialists with statewide roles and the agents who are more general in their responsibilities and assigned to geographic regions. They also work with volunteer leaders in the education delivery process. They did a campus survey and many departments responded as to how they might work more effectively. Some of the suggestions received were to take a cooperative approach to education planning and delivery, involvement in developing education material, having staff identify audiences and their characteristics, and how to reach the audiences more effectively. They recognize that many departments do have delivery systems underway. He asked the audience how many have participated in an extension education setting as a learner or as a resource person, how many people were on an extension newsletter mailing list, how many people volunteered in some program, and how many people use an extension news article or consulted a specialist or agent. He said it is interesting to see this range of involvement. He said he would like to look at some opportunities for the future. The campus has an array of scientific talent and they in extension have a 4H youth program and they could benefit from the campus input in several ways. They reviewed their program and saw a need to make their education project materials more relevant to the state of Alaska. He listed interests. He said they are broadly involved in agriculture, fisheries, and marine resource development and think there are opportunities for interaction. Another example is family nutrition and health education. He said they have a large number of home economists and thinks there are other disciplines that relate to this area. He would like greater interaction of students. It would serve as a good learning experience. He thinks it provides an opportunity for young people to see if they want to be involved in community and adult education. They have been involved in housing education and conservation of energy. He would like to recognize Axel "Bob" Carlson who has provided leadership in this area. Matthews said they are attempting to build greater interaction in the future.

Howard Cutler said they are always looking at opportunities to award and recognize students. They are seeking nominations for various awards. He said one of his projects over the years has been faculty development. He introduced Larry Bennett to report on where they are at the present time.

Larry Bennett said in December 1979 the Mellon Foundation awarded UAF a grant of a quarter of a million dollars to provide a program of faculty and curriculum development. They are now in the second year of this program and he will report on their status. Bennett reported on the professional travel portion of the program and participants, mini grants for the improvement of teaching and research and the recipients and projects, interdisciplinary faculty discussion groups programs, a rural Alaska

orientation program for new faculty and the communities visited, special leave program for one faculty a year, a study of library needs and assessment, and funds to study teaching methods in classes with Native students in the School of Education. He talked about deadlines for the following year.

Howard Cutler asked what they are doing to involve their students in the academic experience. He said education must not be a spectator sport. He asked if they were enhancing the involvement or cutting the student out. He said they at UAF have reasons to be proud. They have increased the retention of students. He discussed the improvements in advancement rate. Many factors are involved including the lack of employment opportunities, but the faculty can take credit, too. He said most of them have made a contribution through their involvement of the student. Almost all of the attrition has occurred in the freshman year. Less than one half of the freshmen return. They have an open admission policy. For the last five years except 1976 they enrolled more juniors than the previous years. For the last five years they have enrolled more seniors than juniors than the previous years. Their upper division retention and recruitment efforts are working. The last study of drop outs indicated no relationship between GPA and retention. He said 75 percent of dropouts had entered college with GPAs of 3.0 and better. Most studies reported dropouts coming from the ranks of the most capable. Statistics do not support the explanation that drop outs are inferior students. He said it comes from a lack of effort and persistence. Attitudinal factors affect persistence. Dropouts are more lacking in flexibility to deal with changing circumstances. They have less emotional commitment to education and come from lower socio-economic status. [break in recording]. Cutler said a third identifiable factor affecting retention is unreal expectations. They are overcoming this through recruitment efforts. The drop out is distinguished by a lack of direction. He or she is often academically ruthless and has little idea where they are headed. One third of the students at UAF are registered as undeclared. This puts a stress on the advising system. The undeclared group is swollen by current unemployment and by a loan system that supports full time and not part-time students. Student involvement appears to be one of the most critical factors in retention. The more involved the student is in academic experience the better the chance the student has of persisting. One expert states that virtually every policy or practice that seems to enhance persistence also increases student involvement. This pattern of effect would suggest that as a general operating principle the university should strive to encourage students to become involved and invest more of their time and energy in the education process. Involvement is not limited to the classroom. Students with jobs on campus have a higher retention rate than those with off campus job. Those with extracurricular activities have a tendency to return. They can do something about the contact between faculty and student. There is a need for more personalized and individualized attention. Cutler asked if they were aware of the impact that they can and do make on students. He talked about examples of colleges that have successful retention. He said the retention rate reflects your interest and caring. He encouraged them to increase the student's involvement in and out of the classroom. He asked what they are doing to increase the student's involvement in the academic and non-academic programs of this campus.