

*Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges
Commission on Colleges*

**A Full-Scale
Evaluation Committee Report**

**University of Alaska Anchorage
Anchorage, Alaska**

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Introduction

The institution that is now the University of Alaska Anchorage has its roots in Anchorage Community College, founded in 1954. During the subsequent 46 years, the group of institutions that are now part of UAA have sometimes been considered a single unit, at other times individual units. Together they were initially accredited in 1974 as the University of Alaska Southcentral Region, but they were subsequently returned to individual status for purposes of accreditation. A substantial restructuring of higher education in Alaska in 1987 resulted in the creation of three universities known as Major Administrative Units, one each in Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau. UA Southcentral Region—by then known as University of Alaska, Anchorage; Anchorage Community College; and Kenai Peninsula, Kodiak, and Matanuska-Susitna Community Colleges were incorporated into one MAU as the University of Alaska Anchorage, and the 2000 full-scale evaluation was for the single MAU, including all campuses.

Today UAA has approximately 17,000 students (headcount) taking credit courses on its several campuses, making it the largest of the three MAUs. UAA also offers degree programs at four military bases in Alaska. The University offers associate, baccalaureate and selected master's degrees.

The Visit

Most members of the evaluation team conducted interviews on the Anchorage campus, an attractive, wooded campus that housed the original Anchorage Community College, as well as the original university. Two team members visited distant sites. Weather prevented a visit to Kodiak College, so arrangements were made for telephone communication.

On-site arrangements for the visit were well planned, and UAA cooperated with team members in every respect. Team members remarked about the friendliness and positive outlook that pervaded the campus, and expressed appreciation for the hospitality and candor exhibited in the visit.

The Self-Study

The self-study was generally helpful in its descriptiveness. However, the evaluation team had difficulty discovering the character of UAA within its pages. Elements that make UAA the special institution that it is frequently were lost amidst routine details. As is often the case in a committee-framed document, the sections of the Self-Study were uneven in their usefulness to the evaluation team, some providing more analysis and insight than others.

The summary chapter suggested a number of issues with which UAA and the State are grappling, but sometimes there was little in the narrative that provided context for the summary statements. Both the evaluation team and UAA would have benefitted if the self-study had given more attention to issues and analysis.

Standard One

Institutional Mission and Goals, Planning and Effectiveness

Since the 1990 full-scale accreditation visit, UAA has experienced significant financial challenges. Through much of the decade both state appropriations and student enrollments were flat or on the decline. Like the financial exigencies of the mid-to-late 1980s that led to the formation of the MAUs, funding issues in the 1990s necessitated re-examination of UAA's mission as the institution has sought to find its niche in providing higher education in Alaska. Budget cuts and flat or declining enrollment have demanded greater efficiencies and sharper focus on mission. New campus leadership at mid-decade responded with UAA 2000, a mission and goals statement intended to guide the institution from 1995 through 1999.

In 1998 a change in leadership at the system level brought with it a number of initiatives that are expected to shape development at each of the MAUs in the Alaska system. UAA mission and planning activities slowed to determine how to incorporate the system initiatives into UAA planning beyond 1999. Subsequent renewed emphasis on planning resulted in UAA 2005, a well-articulated statement of mission and goals that includes the ambition of becoming a "university of first choice" in Alaska and the Pacific Northwest. The Chancellor describes the University as "mission driven," and evidence of campus acceptance and understanding of the mission was widespread on campus.

Fiscal year 2000 marked the first increase in state appropriations in five years, and with this renewed support for UAA's development, the University can further re-energize its planning activities beyond goal-setting.

The planning process at UAA clearly incorporates multiple voices at all levels. Faculty, staff, and students indicate that they participate in planning as appropriate to their interest and knowledge about various issues. However, it was difficult for the evaluation team to see the process followed for planning. Similarly, it was difficult to determine the extent and impact of assessment on the institution's planning and subsequent allocation of resources. Material submitted subsequent to the visit did much to clarify planning activities, but the Committee continues to be concerned that the process and activities are not more transparent to those who care to look for them. This may be even more of a concern for the extended campuses than for the Anchorage campus.

The diffusion of planning activity throughout existing administrative and governance units seems to work for UAA. Nevertheless, a clear definition of the planning process, showing at least in general terms who participates at what stages and following through the full cycle of planning, implementation, assessment, and new planning, will provide the campus constituencies with a road map.

Similarly, although the assignment of responsibility for educational assessment to the colleges, rather than from a central administrative office, is likely to increase grass roots involvement in the process, it does not reduce the need for UAA central administrators to give attention to assessment concerns that have University-wide implications.

Commendations

1. The Committee commends UAA for its careful attention to the articulation of a mission consistent with the needs and ambitions of its community.
2. The Committee further commends the UAA leadership for giving all segments of the campus community a voice in the planning process.

Recommendation

1. Successful planning is an ongoing effort, requiring a clear definition of the planning process, assessment of planning activities, and use of the results of assessment to identify institutional priorities and allocate resources, leading to another round of the process. The Committee recommends that UAA not only clearly define its planning process, but also demonstrate that it integrates planning and assessment with the development of institutional priorities and the allocation of resources. (Standard 1.B)

Standard Two

Educational Programs and Effectiveness

Educational programs at University of Alaska Anchorage are carried out in five academic administrative units on the Anchorage campus—College Arts and Sciences, College of Business and Public Policy, College of Health, Education and Social Welfare, Community and Technical College, and the School of Engineering—and in Kenai Peninsula College, Matanuska-Susitna College, and Kodiak College. These will be discussed in turn, followed by a review of Educational Assessment, General Education/Related Instruction, Distance Education, and other academic programs.

College of Arts and Sciences

Division of Arts

The Performing and Fine Arts Departments are housed in a fairly new building at one end of the campus. The Department of Art has rectified its shortage of work-stations in the computer lab with the recent addition of six new stations. There is a plan to alleviate some of the space problems by consolidating the ceramics labs. Technicians to help in studios and the slide library are still needed. Engagement with the community includes a Paint-a-thon and ceramics “Empty Bowls” events. A gallery offers exhibitions, including many supported through grants. Throughout the campus, the physical facilities and grounds are enhanced with sculpture and other works of art.

As with Art, the Department of Music is extremely visible in the community, participating in Anchorage Symphony and youth symphony and operating an opera program. Close relationships with the high schools are also a hallmark of the department. The Theatre/Dance Department offers summer and academic year productions in addition to producing traveling shows for prisons, nursing homes, and other locations. Students get hands-on experience in all areas of theatre production.

Division of Humanities

Ten departments/programs are housed within Humanities. Communication is notable for its Seawolf Debate Team, which consistently wins awards regionally and nationally, and for its support of General Education Requirements through oral communications courses. Faculty in this program are key to creating a new Faculty Development Center.

Separated from English since the last accreditation visit, the Creative Writing and Literary Arts Program—although small—offers a graduate program that features opportunities for writing and publishing work beyond coursework (e.g., *Inklings*). The *Alaska Quarterly Review* is a notable publication with a national reputation. The National Endowment for the Arts funded *LitSite*, an innovative web-based and CD-ROM project to bring reading and writing to all areas and peoples of Alaska. UAA is also the site for the Alaska Center for the Book.

The English Department has clarified its mission and refined its focus as a result of the departure of CWLA. Faculty serve on three curricular committees to oversee the design and review of composition, undergraduate, and graduate programs. In-service workshops for

adjunct instructors occur monthly; graduate teaching assistants teach collaboratively with faculty and no longer have sole responsibility for classes. Composition instructors across campuses have met to discuss the program and teaching. Support for faculty professional activities is limited (as it is across the university). A Reading/Writing Center provides support in offering individualized instruction to students. A formal writing across the curriculum, writing in the disciplines, or communication across the curriculum program does not exist; a booklet on writing in the disciplines was developed and published. The department also sponsors the Pacific Rim Literary Conference, another outreach activity that supports UAA's mission to engage the community.

The Department of History/Geography assesses its program through a senior seminar from which papers are cataloged for analysis and reference, the results of the analysis reflected back in program reform. The program would benefit from explicit, articulated purpose statement and objectives in its syllabi.

Journalism/Public Communication offers students a dynamic program that receives extramural funding to support its operations. Other programs might look to this department as a model for establishing chairs, endowed annually or permanently. JPC is engaged in important ways with the community, especially in its native health initiative. The program is creative in finding ways to make equipment and outreach work.

The Department of Languages is an active, eager participant in the new North Pacific Rim program that brings together courses in Russia Far East, East Asian, and Far Canadian West. Given the diverse languages present in Alaska, language study at the university and public school level is important, and this department works extensively with school districts, sharing in faculty development activities.

Philosophy has focused on two areas appropriate to the community: environmental ethics and biomedical ethics. The department is to be commended on hosting an NEH Summer Institute.

Interdisciplinary programs in CAS include Alaska Native Studies and Women's Studies. The latter offers a popular list of activities during its Women's History Month celebration, activities enjoyed by the community. The program won a chancellor's award for intra-campus activities. A curriculum committee has a plan in place to look at curriculum annually; the program should articulate its mission and goals to its constituents. Alaska Native Studies is comprised of a small, committed faculty and advisory board. A goal is to create a Center for Indigenous Studies. There appears to be some uneasiness about the role and primacy of Alaska Native Studies in the overall institutional mission. The administration of the University might seek to clarify the mission of this program, perhaps through an external review. A number of interdisciplinary opportunities seem to be possible, ranging from collaboration with Business (e.g. native industry and corporate activities) to outreach (e.g., the LitSite noted earlier, internships with the Interior Department).

Explicit mission statements with goals and annual review would be helpful to all units in these divisions to meet the Commission's policy on assessment. These divisions have a tradition of not explicitly articulating objectives to their students—as is generally true on most campuses. Units might look to Helen Barrett, on the faculty of Education, who has done innovative work on electronic portfolios and is a nationally recognized leader in this area.

The Committee suggests that the College of Arts and Sciences continue to seek extramural funds through contracts, grants, and donations.

Commendation

1. The Committee commends the faculty for its commitment to the academic mission, its outreach to the community, and its positive attitude in the face of financial constraints.

Recommendation

1. The Committee recommends that the College oversee a process of program and course review that encourages faculty—who have the primary responsibility for the design and oversight of the curriculum—to develop, publish, and share with students program mission statements and overall objectives, as well as course objectives. (Policy 2.2)

Division of Social Sciences

The faculty of the social sciences programs are generally very well qualified to offer their current programs. They are committed, engaged, and enthusiastic. They actively participate in curriculum oversight and participate in faculty governance. Upper division and graduate students, at least, are delighted with the personal contact and individual attention that they receive from their departmental faculty. They find the courses challenging and worthwhile.

Individual course and program assessment appears to be working reasonably well in the social sciences, but with some variability. End-of-program assessment is accomplished with national exams that provide benchmarks or via capstone courses that provide more qualitative assessments of students' knowledge and skills. All include some assessment of writing skills. Several examples are available of the way in which the departments have used these assessments to modify curricula and offerings.

Individual course assessments have been conducted variously. Some efforts have relied on a content examination and some have relied on measurement of student skills. That is, both knowledge of the discipline content and the epistemology or methodology are addressed in these assessments. In larger units these assessments are well underway. In smaller units they have only reached the conceptual stage and are hampered by a lack of resources to actually conduct the assessments. These comments apply to both the departmental majors as well as to courses in the general education requirements. Thus, it appears that the individual social science courses and those that are included in the general education curriculum are, for the most part, well managed. There is, however, unevenness in the units' adoption of an assessment culture and it is not known from this process whether the overall education assessment process is achieving its goals.

Undergraduate and Graduate Programs

The curricula appear to be generally appropriate and coherent. Scheduling of classes, however, is sometimes a challenge. Particularly in the higher level classes, including graduate classes, the sequence and frequency of offering sometimes preclude timely completion of a student's program. This leads one to wonder whether the units are attempting to do too much with the resources that are available. Indeed, the Psychology master's program has been attempting to offer several different tracks within the degree and is learning that the slate of offerings is more than can be adequately handled with current resources.

The social sciences offer graduate degrees only in Psychology and Anthropology. The degree in Psychology has been offered for many years, and in fact preceded the undergraduate degree. This program has a long history, good reputation, and a record of having been managed well. It is currently suffering from a decline in students, perhaps in

part as a result of competition from new degrees in social work and human services. If there is a shift of students from one degree to another without attracting additional students, it may not be in the institution's best interest and perhaps suggests a need for greater institution-level planning

The use of technical resources, library, etc. appears to be appropriately included in the program planning. While all agree that the library has made major strides in the past couple of years, most still see it as inadequate to support upper level undergraduate and graduate education as well as faculty research. Most frequently cited is the delay in getting materials via inter-library loan.

The master's degree in Anthropology was instituted only three semesters ago. As a result, evaluation of its effectiveness is not yet possible. It should be noted, however, that this new master's degree was initiated without new faculty resources. In addition, it was created via a combination of 400-level courses, "stacked" courses (courses which combine undergraduate and graduate instruction), and a few specifically graduate pro-seminars. Other institutions have found it impossible to maintain a quality graduate program with such a course structure. The requirements of Standards 2.D and 2.E, raise questions about the appropriateness of implementing this program in this fashion and without additional resources.

Recommendation

1. The committee recommends that the University and the department develop a system to monitor very closely the quality of the new master's degree in Anthropology and be prepared to support and modify or eliminate this program as necessary.

Division of Mathematical and Natural Sciences

There are five science-related departments housed in the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS). Three of these—Biological Sciences, Chemistry, and Mathematics—offer bachelor's degrees, the other two—Geology and Physics—provide supporting course work for other majors in the CAS and across the University and are very small. A Master of Science is offered in the Biological Sciences and there is collaboration between the UAA faculty in the biological sciences with counterparts at the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) in Ph.D. degree programs, the degrees being conferred by UAF. There are two special programs of note, the Environment and Natural Resources Institute (ENRI), a multidisciplinary research and teaching institute, and the WWAMI (Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho) program in Biomedicine, which assists in preparing Alaska citizens for careers in medicine—M.D. degrees being conferred by the University of Washington.

Undergraduate programs in the sciences appear to satisfy most elements of Standard 2.A— General Requirements. However, Standard 2.A.1 requires, in part, that the institution "demonstrates its commitment to high standards of teaching and learning by providing sufficient human, physical, and financial resources." In the science programs there is a serious problem with laboratory space and some problems with classroom and office space availability as well. The lack of adequate space for laboratory instruction and storage of equipment is negatively affecting the ability of faculty members in their instructional efforts. Problems with equipment storage space require faculty members to spend considerable unproductive time in simply moving materials into and out of the teaching facilities. The institution is encouraged to provide additional space of adequate quality to ameliorate this difficulty.

In the area of Educational Program Planning and Assessment, the CAS has much work remaining. The Mathematics Department is the only unit among the sciences to have an

assessment activity in place. Other departments did not mention the subject in the self-study document or they state that their assessment activities are either in discussion or development stages. The use of standard assessment mechanisms such as surveys of graduates and surveys of employers has not been instituted in any systematic way.

Assessment efforts in the Mathematics Department have involved three different courses and have occurred over a span of several years. The most recent effort, which is highlighted in the self-study, was an ambitious and labor-intensive effort involving Math 270, Applied Finite Mathematics for the Managerial Sciences. The self-study claims some success from this effort; however, some concerns remain among the faculty regarding the benefits gained from this exercise relative to the effort expended. Less ambitious methods of assessing learning outcomes would likely receive greater acceptance by the faculty.

The lack of a coordinated program of learning outcomes assessment was a shortcoming at UAA for many years. This situation was mentioned in two previous Commission reports and appears to have been addressed, in a serious manner, only recently and by very few units in the University. The responsibility for instituting educational assessment programs has been made the responsibility of the academic deans effective Fall Semester 2000, and it is anticipated that this will finally get all academic units fully engaged in the process. The institution now states its intention to make such activities mandatory for all units.

None of the three subsections under Standard 2.B (Educational Program Planning and Assessment) have been fully implemented across the science departments in the CAS.

Science Graduate Program

The only graduate degree program in the sciences is an M.S. in Biological Sciences. The faculty, equipment, facilities, and library resources available are adequate to support this effort. Library resources for this program are viewed as unsatisfactory by the faculty although improvements are being made.

Ancillary resources to support graduate education and research are limited. One faculty member has had to rely on ENRI personnel to provide accounting services for a research grant. No such capability exists within the CAS.

Both the ENRI and WWAMI programs are generally healthy and are making impressive accomplishments.

Some problems exist in providing sufficient laboratory space for funded research on the UAA campus. The lack of appropriate space has resulted in the resignation of a key faculty member in WWAMI, with current research funding in excess of \$2 million. As the research efforts at the University increase, the problem of adequate space will become more acute and could impact research accomplishments as well as hiring in a negative manner.

Other subsets of Standard 2.D relating to graduate programs in the sciences appear to be satisfied; there are no doctoral programs at this institution.

Honors Program

Established in 1998, the Honors Program contributes to the University's aspiration of being a "university of first choice" by offering enhanced education opportunities for stellar students. A small, but energetic program, Honors offers interdisciplinary courses, undergraduate research experiences, and a residence community.

The program has a published mission statement and admissions criteria. Students are recruited from Alaska and beyond in a concentrated effort to diversify the student body in terms of geographic location. An Honors Program Committee oversees curriculum

development and revision in consultation with the director. A Student Advisory Board offers input on curriculum development, student activities, and outreach. Six departments offer departmental honors designations.

Although a young program, Honors has sought review in several ways. First, a consultant from the University of Washington visited the Anchorage campus and provided feedback on the start-up of the program and advice for future directions. An administrator outside the program conducted 30-minute interviews with each student and submitted a report to the program. The report was discussed by the program committee in a formal brainstorming session. Changes were made in the curriculum and the activities as a result of the feedback received.

In terms of physical facilities, the administrative offices are located in temporary quarters while the computer classroom/study workspace is located in another building. A residence hall has a designated Honors Wing. Staff support is .50 student help.

Students have opportunities for internships and undergraduate research through a proactive, committed director and faculty. The program has aspirations to become an office of honors and undergraduate research/scholarship/creative activities, serving as a locus of activity to support student inquiry. The university has a good track record of supporting student travel to present papers at conferences and has an excellent event and publication in its Student Showcase.

Commendations

1. UAA is to be commended for launching an Honors Program to enhance its reputation, to increase its attractiveness to academically-outstanding students, and to provide a locus of activity for student inquiry and research.

College of Business and Public Policy

The College of Business and Public Policy (CBPP) provides educational programs at the community college, bachelor's and master's levels, and offers several A.A.S. and B.B.A. degrees, the M.B.A. degree, and the M.P.A. degree. The College is organized into four departments (Accounting, Business Administration, Computer Information and Office Systems [CIOS], and Economics), and staffs the Master of Public Administration degree program. Its collective degree programs account for approximately 10 percent of the student credit hours generated on the UAA campus, and its faculty of 38 FTE amounts to approximately 10 percent of the University's full-time tenure-track faculty FTE.

The faculty of the College and the educational programs delivered by those faculty are located in the Business Education Building on the Anchorage campus, a building that provides up-to-date facilities for instruction and computer technology support.

The College received initial accreditation from the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) [now called the AACSB-International Association for Management Education] in 1995. This accreditation status resulted from a rigorous examination of the quality of the College's faculty and its bachelor's and master's programs in business and indicates that the College has met the educational standards of its field of collegiate education as judged by its peers. The College will be up for a re-accreditation site visit in 2004-2005, thus requiring an AACSB self-study in the 2003-2004 academic year.

Within the past two-year period the faculty and dean of the College of Business and Public Policy have been involved with preparations to offer a major new initiative in the area of global logistics and supply chain management at both the undergraduate and graduate

levels. The program was started in 1999-2000 at the undergraduate level and will begin at the master's level in early 2001. This significant initiative has received widespread support from the University's administration, the City of Anchorage, and the relevant external business community, and it has the potential to gain considerable visibility for not only the College but also for the University at large. At the least, it provides a concrete example of what can be achieved in cooperation and planning by the combined efforts of the university-governmental-business segments of Alaskan society.

The various degree programs offered by the College are wholly consistent with the intent and substance of Standard Two. At the undergraduate level, students are offered the opportunity to major in finance, marketing, management, global logistics management, economics, and management information systems. For any of these programs students are required to meet the University's General Education Requirements (which are also consistent with the equivalent requirements of the AACSB); they also are required to take a set of common core courses in business subjects and complete a set of required courses in their respective major. Again, the total set of business courses offered by the College has been judged to meet the AACSB curriculum requirements.

At the graduate level, the College offers appropriately-designed curricula for the Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.) and the Master of Public Administration (M.P.A.) degrees. The curriculum in the M.B.A. program has been judged to meet AACSB standards for appropriate coverage of relevant subject matter areas. Approximately 80 students are enrolled at any given time in the M.B.A. program, with all courses being offered in the evening hours after work. The quality of entering students in the program appears to be somewhat mixed, but is very good at the upper ends of the distribution. Some 20-30 students are enrolled in the M.P.A. program, and student quality appears appropriate for master's level work.

With respect to the educational assessment of student learning and outcomes in the various programs offered by the College, efforts to date have been somewhat inconsistent across the different units within the College but have resulted in the specific implementation of assessment approaches in some areas. Both the Accounting and CIOS departments have surveyed employers of their graduates, and the former has also surveyed its graduates. In the case of Accounting, the data obtained from employers and graduates have led to current curriculum revision planning that will result in changes to the set of courses being offered in this area. In the CIOS area, employer feedback has resulted in the department's initiation of new courses. In short, for both of these departments, assessment activities have had identifiable effects.

The Department of Economics has experimented with using standardized nationwide tests of economic knowledge, but to date the data obtained from these test results have not been directly used in curriculum planning or revisions. The M.B.A. program has not undergone any systematic assessment of student learning outcomes in recent years. However, there are current activities underway (based on a class project directed by a faculty member) that include a Delphi-type approach to soliciting opinions from various constituent groups (e.g., current students, graduates, employers) about the existing program and how it might be improved. It is expected that curriculum revisions will result from this activity coupled with intensive faculty review of the present curriculum.

Interviews with a limited sample of undergraduate students in the College indicated general overall satisfaction with their education. They unanimously reported that faculty members were readily accessible outside of class, and they especially appreciated the

relatively small class sizes of many of their courses. They gave mixed reviews to the quality of classroom instruction, agreeing that the majority of their classes provided first-rate instruction but also that, in their opinion, in some other classes they received inferior instruction. They also were concerned that in some specific instances there was too much overlap of material across classes and also that sometimes there were wide variations in content from one section to another section of the same course.

A small sample of M.B.A. and M.P.A. students who were interviewed indicated positive reactions to the education they were receiving in their respective programs. They felt their programs were meeting their expectations and would prepare them well for their subsequent careers in the business and public sectors.

All students enrolled in the undergraduate and graduate programs in the College of Business and Public Policy benefit from the exceptionally well-equipped classrooms of the College in regard to computing and instructional technology. Not only is this high level of technology available in the College's classrooms, but, more importantly, it is put to considerable use by the faculty in the teaching of their courses. The College is generally regarded as a leader on the Anchorage campus in employing information technology in classroom instruction.

The faculty in the College of Business and Public Policy appear to be appropriately qualified for their particular instructional activities. Virtually all faculty teaching at the upper-division and graduate levels possess the relevant terminal (doctoral) degree. New faculty members recruited in the past few years seem particularly well qualified for appointment in the College, and collectively they should provide a significant source of ideas and energy for the continuous revitalization that any thriving academic unit requires.

Procedures and criteria for evaluation of faculty for advancement and promotion seem well understood and accepted by junior faculty in the College.

Research carried out by faculty in the College is predominantly of an applied nature. This is especially true of the several research and technical assistance centers operated by the College: The Alaska Small Business Development Center, the Institute of Social and Economic Research, the Center for Economic Development and the Center for Economic Education (which recently received a commendation from the National Council on Economic Education). Although these centers facilitate the research efforts of the faculty and are instrumental in bringing in external contract funding, the amount of published peer-reviewed applied research currently being produced by the faculty collectively is regarded as modest. However, with the recent and projected additions of more research-oriented faculty, the research and scholarship productivity of the faculty can reasonably be expected to increase in the future.

The morale among faculty, staff and students in the College of Business and Public Policy seems generally quite high, and the dean is given credit for being a significant factor in helping to generate this highly collegial atmosphere.

Suggestions to consider for the future include the following:

- X attention to the student-reported uneven quality of some elements of the undergraduate instructional program (such as occasional inferior classroom teaching, possible overlap of some material across courses, and instances of inconsistency in content across different sections of the same course);
- X persuading well-qualified candidates to accept appointment in the College by providing the necessary support and encouragement for their scholarly as well as their instructional activities; and

X giving some additional attention to how the international /global activities of the College in instruction and research can be strengthened and made more visible and coherent.

Commendations

1. The committee commends the College for its initiative in developing the global logistics programs; for utilizing information technology in classroom instruction in a substantial way; for developing and strengthening multiple points of contacts with the local business community; and for serving as a strong academic component of the overall UAA campus community.

College of Health, Education and Social Welfare

Formed in 1996, the College of Health, Education and Social Welfare offers its certificate, bachelor's, and master's degree programs through the School of Education, the School of Nursing, the Division of Human Services and Health Services, the Justice Center, and the School of Social Work. Each of these units has a clearly defined mission and goals. These missions and goals are compatible with the overall mission of the University and are reviewed periodically. However, the overall college mission, while stated in self-study, was not found in other documents and does not seem to be known to the faculty leadership in College. Further, very little has occurred to stimulate and/or sustain cross-unit work—but the college is quite young yet.

The College takes very seriously its responsibility to serve the region and has developed collaborations, conducted studies and provided services to better serve the health, education, and social needs of the community.

The College provides sufficient human and financial resources to support its educational programs. Full-time faculty members have terminal degrees and demonstrate currency in their respective fields.

The curricula appear to demonstrate coherent designs and are characterized by appropriate breadth, depth, and sequencing. As is typical of professional programs, the curricula allow students opportunities for only a few electives, if any at all. Appropriate procedures are in place for the design, approval, implementation, and review of programs.

The process for developing new programs is thorough, and reflects standards of relevant national professional associations.

The identification of student outcomes is characteristic of the college's programs. However, the systematic assessment of educational effectiveness and implementation of results are uneven. The School of Nursing and the School of Social Work have made the most progress in this regard. They have developed and implemented assessment plans. The School of Education and the Justice Center have not made significant progress.

Part-time/clinical faculty members contribute knowledge and understanding from the world of practice that is essential to the quality of professional programs and student learning. Over-reliance on part-time faculty often places increased demands on full-time faculty for advising, program development, assessment and other programmatic activities that part-time faculty generally do not support. While the self-study noted concern about the overuse of part-time faculty, unit heads reported that the situation has improved and had lessened as an issue.

Faculty hiring policies and practices are well defined. Faculty members receive little support for professional development. They report receiving \$500 per year for travel to professional conferences. While some university-wide grants are available and sabbaticals are given, little support for faculty research and development is provided at the college or unit level. At the University level, a Faculty Development Center was recently opened which will provide some assistance to faculty. Increased professional development opportunities to support faculty research productivity will be necessary to underpin expansion of graduate offerings.

The College appears to have good procedures and policies in place for student advising. Based on some student feedback, perhaps a strengthening of outreach to students at the lower division level and a more proactive program for majors are necessary.

The School of Education does not have an adequate facility in which to house a curriculum materials library. It is important to the quality of a teacher education program that students have access to such materials, including textbooks, supplementary materials, non-print materials, and children's literature. Further, there appears to be a need for more classroom and office facilities college-wide. The facilities issue can negatively impact the desire to expand at the graduate level and increase the grants and contract activity of the College.

The School of Education is planning a new fifth year elementary education program in response to a directive from the UA Board of Regents. However, there appears to be a lack of agreement among university and state leaders, which has resulted in some "mixed messages." Of particular importance is addressing the need for teachers in rural areas. This situation may necessitate the development of a program with different tracks and delivery modes.

While Anchorage is the major population area in Alaska, UAA does not offer doctoral programs. Yet, a typical pattern for professionals in education, health, nursing, and social work is to seek a doctoral degree part-time while maintaining their professional jobs. The lack of doctoral programs in these fields at UAA hinders the development of personnel in these areas and the improvement of human services in the state's most populous region.

The School of Nursing offers a solid group of programs and contributes to the health care needs of the region. When coupled with the programs offered in the Division of Human Services and Health Services, the School of Social Work, and the facilities and expertise of the health and other human services providers in the area, the College appears poised to make an even larger contribution to health and human services in Alaska. Further, through its programs and research activities, the Justice Center makes valuable contributions to the Alaskan justice system.

The Committee suggests that the College increase its support to faculty development in order to help faculty maintain and expand expertise in their fields. This is especially important given Alaska's geographic isolation.

The Committee suggests that the College review its current practices for part-time faculty including recruitment, orientation, mentoring, and other forms of professional development and evaluation to assure that part-time faculty are involved in the curricular and collegial activities of the College and are encouraged and supported in their efforts to advance their professional skills and understanding.

The Committee suggests that the College give careful consideration to offering either jointly or independently doctoral programs to support education and other human service professions in the Anchorage region. Linked to the offering of doctoral programs will be further development of a research/graduate faculty.

Commendations

1. The College is to be commended for its service orientation and the contributions its faculty and students make to the larger community.
2. Faculty members are commended for their genuine interest in their students and for their concern to provide them with the best educational experiences they can.
3. The Justice Center is commended for the important work it is doing to serve the region.
4. Within the context of national reform initiatives and state needs, the School of Education's efforts to revise its programs in teacher education is most appropriate.

Recommendations

1. The Committee recommends that the College develop and implement a comprehensive assessment program for all of its programs.
2. The Committee recommends that the College provide appropriate and adequate space to support its academic programs, including a curriculum library and classrooms especially designed to support teacher training.

School of Engineering

The School of Engineering at the University Alaska Anchorage consists of 14 FTE faculty. Two additional faculty searches will occur during the 2000-2001 academic year. The School offers the following degrees: Associate of Applied Science, Geomatics; B.S. in Civil Engineering and Geomatics; M.S. in Civil Engineering, Arctic Engineering, Engineering Management, Science Management, Environmental Quality Engineering, and Environmental Quality Science, and Master of Civil Engineering. In addition, coursework amounting to the first two years of study in Electrical Engineering and in Mechanical Engineering is offered for students who will subsequently complete their B.S. in these areas at UAF.

The B.S. programs in Civil Engineering and in Geomatics are accredited by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET).

In educational program planning and assessment Civil Engineering has made impressive progress. An assessment plan in Civil Engineering was adopted in 1998, an amended plan was approved by the faculty in 1999, and the first Class Level Assessment Meeting (CLAM) was held in May 2000 to review assessment data and determine remedial action where necessary. During this three-day meeting of all CE faculty, all of the assessment tools were reviewed, the data analyzed, and appropriate changes made in the curriculum and in individual courses.

Assessment tools included course GPA's, performance in the Civil Engineering capstone course, results of students taking the Engineering Fundamentals Examination, student evaluations of courses, graduate employment statistics, and alumni and employer surveys.

The Civil Engineering Department assessment program includes all of the important elements of academic program assessment and has already provided the basis for constructive changes. Continued use of the assessment mechanisms will undoubtedly result in additional improvements in the program.

The other undergraduate program, Geomatics, is in the process of formulating an assessment plan. The model provided by the Civil Engineering Department will be a valuable guide.

Engineering graduate programs primarily involve students who are employed locally. Currently, there are very few full-time graduate students and most graduate courses are offered in the evening. Graduate student project or thesis topics also reflect technological problems related to local industry, government, or societal needs.

Commendation

1. Faculty members in the School of Engineering are commended for the high quality of their educational programs and for their dedication to students' educational experiences.

Community and Technical College

The Community and Technical College has responsibility for a diverse array of programs. These include non-transcripted certificate programs, credit-bearing certificate programs, Associate of Applied Science degree programs, two bachelor's degree programs, a post-baccalaureate program, and a master's degree program—in the areas of Applied Technology, Automotive/Diesel Technology, Aviation, Career and Technical Education, Culinary Arts and Hospitality Services, Dental, Fire Service Administration/Emergency Services, Health Education and Training, Mining and Petroleum Training Services, Medical Assisting, Medical Lab Technology, Physical Education, and Transportation and Power. In addition, the College has responsibility for the following administrative units: the Adult Learning Center, Developmental Education, the Chugiak-Eagle River Campus, Military Education Services, the Alaska Outdoor and Experiential Education Program, the North Pacific Fisheries Observer Training Center, and the Workforce Development Center.

The nearly 60 full-time faculty members in the College are almost entirely bi-partite. In addition, over 300 adjunct faculty teach within the Community and Technical College each semester. Of these adjuncts, many teach within the vocational/technical programs of the College, while many others represent disciplines from across the University taught at sites administered by CTC.

The College has made great efforts to be responsive to multiple and diverse populations. A high level of energy, dedication, and commitment to quality was apparent in faculty and staff across the College. With multiple changes in college leadership over the past several years, much of this on an interim basis, faculty and staff seemed grateful to have permanent leadership (a new dean and two new associate deans) now in place. With this new leadership team, the College should be well positioned to move forward on a number of important issues.

The College has begun a systematic cycle of program review, with programs being scrutinized more rigorously for quality and currency. The development of an "umbrella" set of competencies for the workplace (e.g., critical thinking skills and team work) that cross all programs is an excellent plan. Examining the overlay of common coursework across programs, using existing courses wherever possible, and considering the development of technology clusters of core classes would be productive. The committee encourages the college's review of advisory committee composition and role in order to strengthen their impact on the program review and update process. The need for both faculty and equipment to remain current in quickly changing technology program areas will continue to be a challenge. Ongoing financial planning and possibly even more attention to developing consortial and company partnerships will be required in order to leverage community resources.

The college's programs are housed in a multitude of spaces across the University and around the community, some of the latter because of a more appropriate fit, but in other cases because of lack of space on campus. Some programs would benefit from access to more centralized space on campus. The need to lease space for some self-support programs also results in inconsistent fees passed on to the student.

The College has made a commitment to addressing outcomes assessment. While a few departments have developed assessment plans, the majority have not. The dean and associate deans will need to play a major role in supporting and facilitating the development and implementation of effective assessment plans. A beneficial first step is the focus on developing course content guides, which itemize learning outcomes and the means by which they will be measured.

The College has noted that marketing initiatives have been inconsistent in some cases, nonexistent in others, and lacking in sophistication and effectiveness in yet others. The College and individual programs would benefit from the development and implementation of a college-wide marketing plan which created a recognized identity for the College and more effectively leveraged unit and college expenditures.

The continuing education function of the University is administered by the Community and Technical College. Off-campus courses are offered at the Chugiak-Eagle River Center and at five military bases around the state. The Chugiak-Eagle River Center offers primarily lower division courses and the military sites offer a combination of lower and upper division courses and one graduate degree. These courses are the same courses offered on campus; they and the faculty who teach them (primarily adjunct faculty) are approved by the appropriate academic departments. Site administrators oversee the delivery of these courses, with input from the academic department chairs on campus. The same standards for course approval and credit hours of student involvement are utilized as on campus. Appropriate and flexible enrollment and student support services are available at these campuses. Fees for off-campus courses are equitable with those delivered on campus. Students pay the same tuition but do not pay parking and other on-campus fees.

The university's developmental education function is administered by the College—through the Adult Learning Center and the Developmental Education Program. A significant proportion of university students (estimated at 30-40%) take at least one developmental education course; thus the program provides a very important “feeder” function for the entire University. While the organizational placement of this function within a university is often a challenge, UAA's approach seems to be working well, particularly in the English area. Increasing numbers of ESL students appear to be straining current staff resources. Early success of developmental education students is likely to have a positive impact on their retention. It is important that adequate university resources be directed to this program area.

The majority of non-credit programs are delivered to the community through the Workforce Development Center in the Community and Technical College. Additionally, programs can be developed by faculty in the other colleges and administered either in conjunction with or by the CTC administrative structure, with revenues being apportioned appropriately. Faculty from the appropriate academic department are involved in the planning process, and courses go through an appropriate approval process. Courses awarding CEU's conform to national standards.

Commendations

1. The College is commended for the commitment and dedication of its faculty and staff to effectively serving a diverse range of students.

2. The College is commended for its high quality community outreach programs—the Chugiak-Eagle River Center, military sites across the state, and the Adult Learning Center/Developmental Education as well as the many vocational/technical partnership programs.

Recommendations

1. Committee recommends that the College complete its plans for and implement outcomes assessment in all programs. Initial steps have been taken but much more work needs to be done.

2. The College will always need to rely on a significant proportion of adjunct faculty. In order to maximize their effectiveness, the Committee recommends that the College develop a more systematic and effective approach to orienting, developing, mentoring, supporting, evaluating, and integrating adjunct faculty into their departments, the College, and the University.

Kenai Peninsula College and the Kachemak Bay Branch

KPC does a good job of educating its students in both Soldotna and Homer (Kachemak Bay Branch). Faculty are dedicated to their mission and eager to help students in both locations. As is the norm in small campus locations, faculty are accessible and willing to work with students regarding class material, career planning, academic advising, and transition issues. Faculty also seem appreciative of the particular challenges faced by older students who have to balance family, job, and college responsibilities. Faculty qualifications appear appropriate to the courses taught and adjunct faculty use does not appear to be excessive given the remote locations served. Morale seems excellent and many faculty members have taught in these locations for years. Full-time faculty in Soldotna are to be commended for their willingness to teach in the evening program.

Two specific problems need to be addressed in Kachemak Bay (Homer), however, in order to ensure that KPC physical and human resources are adequate to achieve program and student objectives. The first problem concerns physical facilities. In addition to the childcare facility, the branch campus currently occupies three separate locations—the east and west buildings and the classrooms in use at the Homer High School. Students must drive from the location in which they have the majority of their classes to the building containing the library, computer laboratories, and student support services. Plans have been drawn for a new structure combining all functions, but funding has not been made available. With the pending expiration of the lease for the classroom facility, finding a permanent solution to the Homer space problem can no longer be postponed. The branch will benefit from development of a plan covering needs, funding, and timing that details current and future space requirements. Any new structure planning needs to give particular attention to expanding the library, improving and expanding computer facilities, and providing additional general purpose classroom space.

The second major area of concern at the branch campus in Homer relates to the adequacy of human resources. There are currently 3.6 FTE full-time faculty. Faculty members must be prepared to teach an extremely broad array of classes to cover the programs offered. Because

of weather and distance it is sometimes difficult to recruit faculty members from Soldotna to teach in Homer. The addition of a science faculty member has repeatedly been suggested and should be pursued if the goal of offering a complete instructional program in Homer is to be achieved.

Of even greater concern to the Committee, however, is the inadequate provision of student service support to the 438 students at Homer. One student services professional, no matter how dedicated or qualified, cannot be expected to cope with a workload of this magnitude. The Committee believes the lack of proper student services support at the Homer location seriously jeopardizes the quality of the educational program and encourages the University to correct this deficiency as soon as possible.

As noted elsewhere in the Committee's report about other sectors of UAA, educational program planning and assessment appears neither systematic nor well documented. In small campus locations such planning frequently takes place in an informal manner, which is certainly to be applauded, but additional documentation to support the standard would be useful.

A formal system of assessment is needed at KPC to demonstrate and ensure the quality of the educational offerings. The syllabi for some class offerings contain expected student outcomes, but many do not. There is ample anecdotal evidence of program quality (transfer admission rates, employer feedback, and job placements) but KPC appears to have not implemented widespread and systematic processes for assessing outcomes and connecting these to improvements in teaching and in meeting community needs.

Student Services

Student services support on the Homer campus has been discussed above. On the Soldotna campus, support appears to be adequate although consideration should be given to flexing the hours of one of the counselors so as to improve the availability of professional support during the evening instructional hours. The augmentation of scarce resources by using student "peer counselors" is to be commended.

Both campus locations have clearly made significant efforts to increase student interaction and extra-curricular life. This will prove important as efforts continue to attract and retain additional younger full-time students.

Support for students with registered disabilities is limited but adequate. Since the arrival of even one student with extensive accommodation requirements could have serious budgetary impact at these small campus locations, UAA should provide for contingency financial support.

Faculty

Despite the distances and travel difficulties, faculty from KPC participate actively in University and departmental committees. To do so takes considerable effort and faculty are to be commended for the roles they have chosen to play at the UAA level. As the University continues to make progress toward full integration, the provision of the views of faculty members from the "hinterlands" can only benefit decision-making and the accomplishment of UAA's multi-faceted mission.

KPC participates in the UAA promotion and tenure system. Most faculty have bi-partite contracts with a community service component rather than a research requirement. Community service by KPC faculty has taken many forms ranging from the creation of literary anthologies and the organization of the Homer women's conference to the very

successful Sunday forum series in Soldotna. Such contributions to the intellectual life of these small communities do much to enhance the image and value of the University as a whole. Faculty at KPC, however, have expressed concern that their community service efforts may not be given appropriate recognition in the promotion and tenure process. The Committee suggests that data be collected and shared with faculty comparing the rates of tenure and promotion for those individuals on bi-partite contracts with those individuals who have research requirements in their contracts.

Elsewhere in its report, the Committee has noted the importance of a regular and fully funded program of faculty development. KPC faculty in both locations need to be encouraged and supported to participate in such enrichment activities. Both vocational and academic faculty members benefit from attending conferences and other opportunities to interact with colleagues or from exposure to new materials and techniques. The Committee hopes that the University will recognize the remote and frequently isolated natures of the Soldotna and Homer locations and increase funding in this area.

Library and Information Resources

The KPC library in Soldotna appears adequate to support the classes offered. The physical facility is well-arranged and friendly. The collection receives adequate funding each year so that it can be kept up to date. The availability of materials in print is limited by space and budget while access to electronic formats is severely constrained by the slow Internet connection. Considerable effort has been made to select and maintain the small collection, but its physical location is problematic. Since classroom space is also constrained, expansion of the library in the current building is not possible. Interlibrary loan from Anchorage helps, but is not the answer. The Committee wishes to underscore previous recommendations in this area and is of the opinion that library resources may not be adequate to support the upper division classes being offered. This area needs immediate attention and funding, guided by professional help from Anchorage. Upgrading the library's Internet connection beyond the current 256k standard would be a start.

Physical plant

KPC personnel are to be commended for their maintenance of facilities in both locations. Spaces appear clean, light, generally ADA compliant, and well-appointed. The Soldotna campus presents a positive appearance, although additional external signage would be welcome. The re-facing of the east building in Homer (a converted post office) is similarly attractive. Effort has also been made to ensure the functionality of the conversion of the classroom floor leased above the Boys and Girls Club in the west building, but only so much is possible inside an aging structure.

It is unclear how campus planning efforts at the KPC locations interface with the overall master plan for the UAA other than by the establishment of budget priorities. The committee suggests the utility of UAA-wide space planning so as to effectively meld KPC's needs and mission with those of the other UAA campus locations.

Commendation

KPC faculty members are to be commended for their excellent, varied, and continued contributions to the intellectual life of the communities in which they live. The Borough is clearly a beneficiary of their scholarship, creativity and service.

Recommendations

The Committee recommends that UAA

- 1) proceed with specific facility planning to ensure adequate instructional and support space at the Kachemak Branch location. (Standard 2.A.1, Standard 8.A)
- 2) increase faculty resources in a science discipline for the Kachemak Branch, perhaps by adding a full-time faculty member, if a complete instructional program is to be maintained at that location. (Standard 2.A)
- 3) provide additional resources to increase the availability of student support services at KBB. (Standard 3.A.1)
- 4) give immediate attention to library resources in Homer in order to support the instruction currently being delivered. (Standard 5)

Kodiak College

Kodiak College, an extended college of the University of Alaska Anchorage, serves the entire Kodiak community, primarily non-traditional, part-time students seeking one or more of the following: a two-year academic degree, continuing education, transfer to baccalaureate programs, an upgrade of employment skills, and/or classes for personal enrichment. Kodiak is the smallest of the extended colleges of UAA.

Kodiak College is headed by a college director who reports directly to the UAA Provost. The director maintains the authority for the College's budget, which includes all tuition revenue and grant appropriations. There are nine full-time faculty members including a counselor and librarian and approximately 30 part-time instructors. Full-time faculty teach the core general education requirement courses.

Kodiak College actively participates in the University of Alaska statewide distance education program by providing resources to local students enabling them to enroll in courses from other campuses. Resources include classroom space, test proctors, photocopying services, computers, and fax machines.

Campus programs focus on the areas of health, computers, and technology. Faculty and staff are constantly exploring innovative ways to broaden the student base of the college. This year the campus is experiencing an increase in enrollment in part because of efforts by the Director and faculty to identify courses to better serve the needs of the community and the implementation of a new technology program. The campus is up 39 percent in credit hour production, 80 percent in full-time students, and 13 percent in headcount.

The college provides for regular evaluation of faculty performance. Students evaluate full- and part-time faculty each semester with results of the evaluations reviewed by the department head or director. Full-time faculty are evaluated yearly until the seventh year, which is tenure. Tenured faculty are evaluated every three years. Professional development opportunities are available to faculty and staff. Academic advising is the responsibility of program department heads and Student Services. Student Services provides career counseling and placement testing for entry into English and math classes.

The College offers collegiate level programs that culminate in identified student competencies and lead to degrees or certificates in recognized fields of study. Programs exhibit the characteristics described in the Standards. The Committee suggests that an advisory committee be formed for each AAS degree.

Commendation

1. The Committee commends faculty for their energy and commitment to the success of their program and their students.

Recommendation

1. The Committee recommends that steps be taken to assure that all programs assess education outcomes. To meet standards fully, the institution must demonstrate not only assessment of educational outcomes but also use the results for decision making and planning to continuously improve individual programs and the institution's total education programs. (Standard 2.B. and Policy 2.2.)

Matanuska-Susitna College

Matanuska-Susitna College (MSC), a community campus of University of Alaska Anchorage, offers certificates, Associate of Applied Science degrees, and the Associate of Arts with a baccalaureate link. As a college within the UAA, MSC offers University general education courses and upper division courses on a rotation basis in English, communication, social sciences, justice, business, science math, art, computers, and education. The College's mission addresses the needs of MSC students: those up-grading job-related skills; those who are preparing to enter into a new vocation; and those who are preparing to matriculate at a four-year university with a baccalaureate degree.

Matanuska-Susitna College is headed by a director who is both campus Chief Executive Officer and Chief Academic Officer. It is staffed by a business manager; 13 full time-faculty including the library director; approximately 100 adjunct faculty; and 28 staff members. The director reports directly to the UAA Provost. The director maintains the authority for the College's budget, which includes all tuition revenue and grant appropriations.

The College offers collegiate-level programs that culminate in identified student competencies and lead to degree and certificates in recognized fields of study. The programs also exhibit the characteristics described in the Standards.

Academic advising is the responsibility of the Student Services manager, who is assisted by a part-time advisor, and a temporary advisor during peak periods.

Students evaluate full-time and part-time faculty each semester with results of the evaluations on file in the library accessible for public review. Department heads are responsible for the evaluation of part-time faculty and the dDirector evaluates full-time faculty. Although the Committee is impressed by the commitment and enthusiasm of the faculty, it is concerned that the ratio of 13 full-time and 100+ part-time faculty is out of balance.

The Committee suggests that MSC

- X Add a Dean of Instruction to coordinate instruction and academic programming.
- X Increase the number of upper division courses available at MSC to better serve the community.

Commendations

1. The Committee commends faculty for being innovative, enthusiastic, and student-centered.

2. The Committee also commends the past campus director and president for providing invaluable support to the campus through their continued employment with Title III and student services advising.

Recommendations

1. The Committee recommends that steps be taken to assure that all programs assess educational outcomes. To fully meet standards, the institution must not only demonstrate assessment of educational outcomes but also use the results for decision making and planning to continuously improve individual programs and the institution's total education programs. (Standards 2.B and Policy 2.2)

2. The Committee recommends that the institution take steps to ensure that the number of full-time faculty is adequate for the educational levels offered. (Standard 2.A.1 and Standard 2.C.7))

Standard 2.B, Policy 2.2. Educational Assessment

The Commission has reviewed the progress of UAA in meeting the standard and policy of educational assessment on two previous occasions. In 1990, the Commission recommended that UAA "continue to explore and develop methods for assessing the impact and outcomes of its educational programs." As a result of the interim visit in 1995, the Commission again recommended that the institution "move rapidly towards implementing an effective and accountable outcomes assessment program." Since then, UAA has devoted considerable time and attention to making progress toward meeting the Commission's standard and policy.

The first phase of the assessment process (1993-2000) focused on developing and implementing assessment procedures in basic skills and general education, and included an initial round of certificate and program assessments. The second phase began in Fall 2000 and entails the expansion of the areas of assessment and a new administrative organization which decentralizes assessment to the college level.

During Phase 1 the University provided staff assistance and funding and to support the development of assessment processes by individual faculty members. Of particular merit is the work done in English 111 which has led to substantive and documented improvement of student learning. Work on the general education requirements proceeded in fine arts, humanities and social science, but has encountered resistance in the natural sciences. Several program assessments were thoughtfully and successfully completed, including the one in civil engineering. However, assessment of educational effectiveness has not been fully implemented in the majority of programs or courses at the University.

The Academic Affairs staff guided the assessment effort until recently. Based on their observations and the work of others, they developed a guidebook on assessment that will be useful to the deans and faculty as they continue their work in the assessment of educational effectiveness. The delegation of responsibility for assessment to the deans hopefully will accelerate the design and implementation of assessment processes in the University.

By design, assessment efforts have purposely been separated from faculty evaluation, periodic program review and budgetary decisions. Participation in assessment was voluntary to build faculty leadership and commitment, and to provide a foundation for further development of assessment. There is evidence that some faculty members have become positive toward the benefits of assessment, developed creative approaches to it, and have

used the results for improvements in teaching and curriculum. However, as noted earlier progress in implementation is uneven and has been slow in light of the decade of Commission findings that the University has failed to meet Commission standards.

Recommendations

1. The Committee recommends that the University fully implement a comprehensive institution-wide educational assessment program that includes the articulation and publication of intended outcomes, to be conducted on a systematic basis and with the results directly linked to planning and budgeting which reflect the institutional mission (Standard 2.B and Policy 2.2.).

2. The Committee recommends that the College oversee a process of program and course review that encourages faculty—who have the primary responsibility for the design and oversight of the curriculum—to develop, publish, and share with students program mission statements and overall objectives as well as course objectives. (Policy 2.2)

Policy 2.1. General Education/Related Instruction

The campus has identified in its own self-study a need to review and update the UAA general education program. This provides an opportunity to have a campus discussion about the philosophy, design, and delivery of the program. In its present configuration, the general education program includes offerings in the humanities and fine arts, the natural sciences mathematics, and the social sciences; however, it is not clear if the program also includes courses that focus on the interrelationships among these major fields of study. A new general education requirements (GER) preamble was approved by the Faculty Senate in spring 2000. Consistently, the committee found faculty saying, “It’s time for review.”

At present, general education seems to be vested in “islands” with little interconnectedness. It is not clear how courses beyond the basic skills classes reinforce communication skills, technological literacy, library skills, and critical thinking. Also unclear is whether students understand and have communicated to them the purposes of the general education program and whether or not they see connections between and among classes. While some double counting of classes for general education and major requirements is allowed, it is prohibited for social sciences, humanities, and nursing majors. The College of Arts and Sciences has separate general education requirements, and these, too, should be reviewed, clarifying their rationale and logic.

Responsibility for the design, approval, and implementation of the curriculum is vested in the Undergraduate Academic Board (UAB) with general education specifically overseen by a sub-committee. To begin a review of general education, the sub-committee responsible should receive a charge to do so.

Assessment of general education has begun with the development of outcomes objectives and development of mission/purpose statements. A working group in fine arts, for instance, has developed a guide, *Fostering a Deeper Understanding of the Arts*, that can be shared with anyone teaching a Fine Arts GER class. The value in establishing assessment and program review processes lies not only in determining whether goals of a course or curriculum have been met but in the bringing together of faculty to discuss common goals, share pedagogical approaches, and deepen their understanding of their own teaching.

Once a thorough review has been undertaken, regular and continuous assessment of general education will help UAA meet the standard on assessment. Designating a particular director or administrator to be responsible for this oversight could be helpful.

Recommendation

1. The committee recommends that the Faculty Senate formalize a review of general education requirements that addresses their rationale and plan. Input should be sought from the faculty, administrative staff, and other stakeholders. It is expected that the work on articulating and communicating general education's mission, goals, and objectives will continue. (Standard 2, Policy 2.1)

Summer Programs

The university's Summer Programs are administered by the Summer Programs Office, within the Vice Provost's purview. Summer Sessions utilize a centralized cost-recovery model and work appropriately with deans, directors, and department chairs to plan and develop the summer schedule.

Study Abroad

Study Abroad programs are administered by the Director of Enrollment Services. These programs support the university's mission and goals. Clear information is provided to students on program options and expectations (consortium-based programs, direct exchanges, and National Student Exchange). Participating students are eligible for financial aid. These programs meet the same academic standards, award similar credit, and are subject to the same institutional controls as other programs administered by the University.

Distance Education

The University was once a leader in distance education, but because of lack of resources, inadequate leadership, outdated technology, faculty distrust of services, and personnel issues, the distance education administrative structure had become dysfunctional. In the absence of effective leadership, departments made their own decisions and developed their own structures and systems. A comprehensive reorganization of the information technology administrative structure has been accomplished, centralizing multiple IT functions.

Academic Technology Services and the New Media Center now provide efficient and effective technical training and support for distance education and technology-assisted instruction. Planning and delivery of academic courses is more appropriately done by the academic departments. Faculty appear to be pleased and even relieved to finally have centralized leadership and support for their efforts.

Support for television- and satellite-delivered programs has shifted to a greater emphasis on web-based instructional delivery. An appropriate attempt is being made to move toward a more standardized user interface.

A number of innovative distance education initiatives (e.g., nursing, education, MLT, developmental, and core courses) are either in development or are underway, some using the web and others using multiple technologies. Many are experimenting with different methods of facilitating interactivity between students, and several are attempting to assess learning outcomes. Most are attempting to ensure comparability with on-campus classes. Increasingly, appropriate learning resources are accessible on the web either online through the university library or other online sources.

The funding model previously utilized for the delivery of distance education classes resulted in a disincentive for departments interested in teaching via distance. Academic Technology Services is instituting a new model in spring 2001 that will separate the generation of credits (returning these to the appropriate academic department) from the tuition and fees (which will be retained by Academic Technology Services). This is an important first step on the financial side.

Commendation

1. The University is to be commended for the reorganization of Information Technology and its more effective and efficient delivery of services.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that a distance education plan and strategy be developed, targeting audiences, program areas, and technology(ies) of delivery. This planning should be done UAA-wide and also involve the other MAU's. It is further recommended that planning include the development of appropriate student support mechanisms to allow and encourage full participation by all students. (Policy 2.6)

2. It is recommended that the University address the funding of distance education by reconsidering the current self-support and charge-back structure of delivering distance education courses, creating an incentive system, and providing opportunities for release time and/or other support for faculty development of distance-delivered courses. (Policy 2.6)

Standard Three Students

Student services and programs at the University of Alaska Anchorage are structured and staffed to provide effectively the student support services necessary to further the academic mission of the institution. Administratively clustered within major units that report to three different cabinet level administrators, the programs complement one another and communicate well among themselves and with other units of the institution.

The self-study description of the organization of student services generally and of the individual units conveys accurately the work of these units. Policies and procedures are developed cooperatively with students and administrators. The reporting relationships to the senior administrators provide natural interactions among related activities, e.g., housing academic advising within a unit of the Provost's Office naturally connects this distinctly academic activity with the faculty of the academy.

The 1998 restructuring of student affairs was based on sound reasoning with a goal of delivery of programming to students.

The physical facilities used for the student activities are generally adequate or, in those cases where the adequacy is being tested, there are either discussions of or plans for expansion.

Student Affairs programming at the Anchorage location meets each of the standards for such programming. In the case of the extended learning centers, however, provision of such services is uneven. On the Soldotna and Matanuska-Susitna campuses services appear to be adequate. However, in the cases of Homer and Kodiak, it appears that inadequate resources and FTE are devoted to such programming (see discussion of these campuses in Standard Two).

The following paragraphs are organized to reflect the current administrative structure on the Anchorage campus for the provision of student affairs programming:

Student Affairs within Academic Affairs

Enrollment Services

Admissions: Enrollment services at the University of Alaska Anchorage are well organized and effective. The University is beginning the programming that will make this a destination campus for out-of-state students. Recent shifts in emphasis toward “recruiting” students as opposed to simply enrolling or admitting students promise to change significantly the work of this unit. Furthermore, such recruiting based on work to draw in the best students from within the state—using such incentives as the University of Alaska Scholars program—and efforts to draw in students from out of state who seek the specific strengths of this University promises to positively affect the educational program as well as the national stature of the institution.

The University is struggling to define “admitted” and “enrolled” within the question of open enrollment vs. open admission.

Financial Aid: With the recent mergers that have incorporated service-delivery sites that were previously stand-alone institutions, programming to deliver financial aid to students has

changed. All financial aid services are provided through the Anchorage campus and this appears to be effective. Particularly laudable is the transition to a perspective on service for students that does not require them “to come in to the office to take care of business.” This forms-to-foundation of financial aid delivery serves not only those students in Anchorage itself but also those in the extended locations.

Student Records and Curriculum Management: UAA is struggling with scheduling and course offerings that will allow students to graduate in a timely manner. Another issue is the scheduling of courses and programs to allow the institution to meet its metropolitan mission.

As an outgrowth of CQI initiatives led by staff input, UAA now has a general calendar in place. The impact of this reform is far reaching, enhancing communication across units and allowing scheduling of student activities—including athletic events—on dates that minimize negative impacts on students.

Academic Advising: The relatively recent creation of the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) reflects a significant step in addressing the challenge of providing effective advising to the broad range of students involved in programming at the Anchorage campus. Students on the campus range from those simply registered for a course to those who are seeking certificates or degrees. This heterogeneity adds to the complexity of providing advising or even identifying those students who might need advising.

Division of Student Affairs

The Division of Student Affairs reports to the Dean of Students, a cabinet-level administrator with significant involvement in institution-wide policy making and programming. Several areas of emphasis within this division deserve specific commentary. The creation of a Career Services Center and a program for Disability Support Services effectively address weaknesses pointed to in previous accreditation visits.

With the addition of new residence halls and new dining facilities, the residence life programming within student affairs becomes more robust. This programming will be a keystone to efforts to serve well those “traditional” students that the institution is seeking to admit, enroll, and retain. Not only are the new facilities themselves state of the art with physical attributes and design that have student needs at the center, the programming within those facilities is rich.

The Student Health Center serves all students enrolled in six or more academic credits and who therefore pay a nominal health service fee. The University faces a challenge in sustaining this important service as medical costs rise. Reports indicate that approximately 77 percent of UAA students have no form of health insurance; this statistic and its implications for provision of necessary health services should be considered and addressed in planning activities.

Student Services within Administrative Services

University Housing, the Campus Bookstore and Intercollegiate Athletics report through the Vice Chancellor for Administrative Services. Each of these areas of programming is strong and appropriate to the mission of the institution. As noted above, the new residential facilities deserve particular commendation.

Intercollegiate Athletics

At the University of Alaska Anchorage intercollegiate athletics are well integrated into the educational program of the institution. They have appropriate oversight and are well run.

Specific attention is paid to integrating participation in athletics. The introduction of an institution-wide calendar, with academic dates set for at least five years into the future, now allows those scheduling athletic events and travel to minimize student athlete absence from campus. Furthermore, creation of the new athletic conference promises to reduce travel time while also allowing the Seawolves to compete athletically with those institutions with whom the UAA will increasingly be competing for new students.

In summary, during a decade of rapid and dramatic institutional change, the Anchorage campus of the University of Alaska Anchorage has paid appropriate and effective attention to developing those services and programs that support student learning and enhance quality of student life. While there are instances of strong student programming on the extended learning sites, the Committee suggests that the institution be especially vigilant to ensure that students in these sites are receiving the student services they need.

Standard Four Faculty

The University of Alaska Anchorage has a history of imposed structural and budgetary changes that continues to influence the current structure and functioning of the institution. The combination of the original community colleges and the University of Alaska into a single institution creates multiple missions, multiple expectations, multiple faculty traditions, and multiple processes that impact faculty appointments, faculty evaluation, and faculty reward systems.

The faculty uniformly provide an image of being invested in the institution and their students. Their enthusiasm and collegiality are especially borne out in the numerous small family-sized departments. The qualifications of the faculty appear generally to be appropriate to the disciplines and to the expectations of their performance. Overall the faculty quality appears to be good.

By all accounts, the appointment of faculty to tri-partite or bi-partite contracts has been working well, at least on the Anchorage campus. It provides an opportunity to define faculty work loads up front at the time of appointment and makes expectations clear. At the same time, it has some tendency to inhibit changes in faculty assignment and expectations with changing conditions. This limitation, however, is primarily a result of the different bargaining units rather than the kind of appointment as such.

Faculty who have tri-partite appointments are members of the UA-AAUP/AFT, as are those who have bi-partite appointments and who have responsibility for teaching above the sophomore level. Faculty with responsibilities only at the lower division level have bi-partite responsibilities and are members of the ACCFT. More recent appointments, especially, but not only, at the Anchorage campus have been tri-partite ones. As a result, some units now have only members of the UA-AAUP/AFT among their full-time faculty. Most units with members of both the UA-AAUP/AFT and ACCFT appear to have cordial and collegial relationships, suggesting that the combination of different kinds of faculty has reached a stage where any dysfunctional elements have been largely overcome.

The remaining difficulty in faculty appointment appears to be in connection with adjunct faculty who are hired to teach only lower division classes at locations outside of Anchorage proper. In some cases these faculty are initially screened and approved by the department and department chair. In other cases, it appears that these persons are selected without the involvement of the department and chair. In all cases it appears that the performance of these adjunct faculty is not consistently reviewed by those who represent the discipline. Those responsible for the non-Anchorage sites express concern that the academic departments are unresponsive to the needs of the remote sites. This anomaly of faculty appointment appears to be an artifact of the original configuration of different institutions with independent directors.

Evaluation and Professional Development

Evaluation of non-tenured faculty occurs every year. The particular materials and credentials examined vary some depending on the bargaining unit of which that person is a member. Generally these include various indices, measures and criteria. All include teaching evaluations. More comprehensive reviews are conducted once during the pre-tenure period

and at the time that granting of tenure and/or promotion is contemplated. These evaluations occur at various levels with, again, some variations depending on the particular unit. Typically the department and department chair provide an evaluation as does a committee of the faculty from the division. Subsequently the academic dean provides an evaluation. In the event of consideration for promotion or tenure, the university wide peer committee and the Provost provide an evaluation. Each of these evaluations is shared with the faculty member who has an opportunity to respond to each.

Faculty evaluation policies continue to change as a result of collective bargaining and faculty senate deliberations. For example, until recently one of the bargaining units precluded evaluation by the department chair. The change in this policy is still not understood by some department chairs and faculty.

Post-tenure reviews are conducted every three years. The materials and criteria reviewed are dependent partially upon the bargaining unit. It appears that teaching evaluations are not required in post-tenure reviews, given the bargaining unit contract, but are routinely included in the faculty review by administrative direction and request. The import of post-tenure review for full professors is not completely clear. Currently merit or performance-based salary increments are not permitted under the contracts with the bargaining units. Consequently, post-tenure review for full professors relies upon personal, social, and cultural process rather than monetary incentives to ensure excellence on the part of fully advanced faculty. It is not clear that the institution has other mechanisms to recognize and reward stellar performance or to reinvigorate and redirect lagging efforts among its most experienced faculty.

Faculty development appears to be most commonly ad-hoc and dependent upon colleagues in one's own unit. The university has recently launched a new program for faculty development. It has been in place for only a short duration and evaluation of its effectiveness cannot be made at this time. It is, however, a very commendable effort. Acquisition of technical skills is described as being broadly supported on the main campus but spotty elsewhere. The faculty development program, available on a competitive basis, helps to support both teaching and scholarly activities largely via added summer salary. The university's faculty fellows program provides laudable opportunities for faculty wishing to develop leadership skills. Still, a sizeable portion of the University's instruction occurs outside of Anchorage and is provided by faculty who are adjuncts. It is not clear that efforts to support faculty development have been extended to those who teach at branch campuses, off campus centers, non-university sites, or via electronic media. Finally, the faculty development efforts that have been focused on teaching and scholarship would be strengthened by including the faculty's responsibilities for service, particularly as they relate to engaging the local community.

Scholarship, Research and Artistic Creation

Faculty participation in scholarly activities appears to be quite varied. It is virtually non-existent in some areas and approaches the level of research universities in others. Not surprisingly, scholarship is strongest in units that have graduate programs. It is also more evident among junior faculty. And it is clearly more evident among faculty with tri-partite appointments. For the most part, the scholarly activity of the faculty is commensurate with the current role and mission of the institution but is insufficient to support the institution's stated goal of expanding the "quality and quantity of scholarly works, creative expression and professional service."

Student participation in scholarly activities with faculty is surprisingly frequent. This participation serves a dual purpose of providing assistance to faculty research efforts and provides students with additional important educational experiences.

Commonly cited concerns of faculty are the lack of resources to support scholarly activity. These include concerns about the lack of adequate library resources which they acknowledge are improving. They include lack of financial support to defray the cost of conducting research, lack of space for conducting the scholarly activity and for housing people who assist in it, and lack of travel funds to support data collection, dissemination of the work, and/or contact with colleagues outside of the institution.

Commendations

1. The faculty at UAA are commended for their enthusiasm and dedication.
2. UAA is commended for its initiation of faculty development programs.

Recommendations

1. It is strongly recommended that UAA clarify the relationship of faculty outside of Anchorage to the department for which they teach. In addition it is necessary that the university provide clear communication to all faculty and units regarding the expected faculty appointment and evaluation process across all of its instructional sites. (Standard 4.A)

2. It is strongly recommended that the university improve mechanisms of communicating with faculty and administrators regarding changes in all university procedures. (Standard 4.A)

3. The development of faculty is of paramount importance to the institution. Development of faculty includes not only professorial faculty but also adjunct instructors, graduate teaching assistants, and librarians who contribute to the academic mission. The creation of a new Faculty Development Center is a laudable beginning to meet this goal, but the Committee recommends that the University continue to seek ways to enhance development in all areas of faculty work—teaching, research, and service. (Standard 4.A)

4. The committee recommends that UAA undertake strategic planning efforts to increase the amount and quality of faculty scholarship/creative activity commensurate with the institution's long-range goals.

Standard Five

Library and Information Resources

Core library and information resources and services are provided primarily by the Consortium Library, the community campus libraries, and the Learning Resources Center.

The Consortium Library

The Consortium Library developed from an agreement made in 1971 between the University of Alaska and Alaska Methodist University, the predecessor to what is now Alaska Pacific University (APU). The Consortium Library's mission is to provide and maintain collections and resources that support the educational and research programs of the University of Alaska Anchorage and Alaska Pacific University.

The library has been the subject of strong recommendations in past accreditation reviews, but it has responded positively to those recommendations and now provides library and information resources adequate to support its mission. Some major changes have brought this about especially on the fiscal side and the personnel side.

Information Resources and Services

Previously the quality and quantity of the information holdings was not adequate, due to low and unstable budgets. Since 1990, four additional one-time Alaska legislative capital appropriations have been made for library acquisitions; in addition the UAA campus directed over \$250,000 to the base budget and \$100,000 in non-base reallocations to the library to strengthen the collections. The institutional self-study pointed to "weaknesses in the acquisitions budget" and the high rate of dissatisfaction with the library's book collection evidenced in the 1999 Faculty survey (46% of respondents). Also, although UAA's Accreditation Academic Unit Self-Studies contained numerous comments about library collections being inadequate, the Committee heard only a small number of such observations during the site visit—noted in previous sections of this Committee report. It appears that improvements subsequent to the compilation of the survey and academic self-studies have had a positive effect.

Probably the activity of greatest impact has been the electronic library program initiative begun in 1999, which delivers resources directly to the desktop, supporting UAA and APU students, faculty, and staff on campus and at home, in addition to supporting all at the community campuses. Highlighting the resources now available via the library's redesigned home page are web access to the following:

- More than 100 databases with over 100 million citations
- 4,000 electronic journals with full text of over 600,000 journal articles
- NetLibrary, which makes 500+ current books available electronically

A Chancellor's Exemplary Group Achievement award recognized the significance of this initiative.

The high number of cooperative arrangements with Alaskan and out-of-state libraries for hardcopy and electronic resources is noteworthy. For distance learning students, the Consortium Library currently provides access via a long distance modem pool (to

authenticate on IP) and for others by limited password access. Information Technology Services is looking into how to provide proxy server access so that (perhaps by Spring of 2001) all involved with distance learning and designated others not on the UAA campus/not linked by the area network will have access to library resources.

The institution acquires materials to support the wide range of programs and degrees. Collection materials are selected via an approval plan (Blackwell NA 1990), plus recommendations from faculty and librarians. Items in all UAA libraries are now catalogued on the OCLC system and are displayed in the Joint Library Catalog along with the holdings for all the community campus libraries, as well as the Anchorage Municipal Libraries, Alaska Resources Library and Information Services, and the Anchorage Museum of History and Art. Circulation, done with the newly installed Data Research Associates (DRA) system, also includes requesting from various remote sites. Students, faculty and staff can independently and effectively identify and locate the library's resources, with high quality access via the web-based catalog. They can initiate interlibrary loans from an online request form. Also promoting independent library use is a newly created CD-ROM, which provides an audio tour. The Consortium Library would benefit from reviewing the approval plan to ensure it is optimal.

Facilities and Access

Very good physical access and hours are provided. While the 70,000 sq. ft. facility has been out of space for over a decade, some remodeling and weeding out of older materials have helped make some space for new materials. However, most importantly, recent state government approval has cleared the way for a new three-floor, 109,000 sq. ft. addition, scheduled for completion in 2004, tied in with a parking structure and enclosed walkway. Renovation of the current facility is also planned.

Personnel and Management

Library personnel have over the years have consistently received accolades from faculty and students for their dedication and knowledgeable assistance. With support from the institution, the staff has been enlarged to 14.8 FTE professional (from previously inadequate 9.0 in 1990) plus 26.9 FTE staff—an appropriate total. Together, they provide an impressively large number of hours of reference and circulation services, classes and workshops, and interlibrary loans, as well as the behind-the-scenes acquisitions and technical processing.

In the leadership arena, the Dean of the Consortium Library, who arrived in late 1998, has brought vision, vitality, and visibility. The caliber of personnel is quite high, especially given difficulty of recruiting from the “lower 48.” While library faculty and staff get encouragement in terms of release time to attend conferences and training, minimal financial support for travel is provided. The Consortium Library Dean is providing a new procedure to help this situation; the Committee encourages the institution to recognize the importance of staff development and training. Library faculty participate in the UAA promotion and tenure system including peer committee review for retention (at three years) and campus committee review for tenure. Additionally, they are evaluated annually by their UAA peers and by the Dean of the Consortium Library.

Planning and Evaluation

In terms of planning, the Library Advisory Committee of faculty, staff, and students, with good representation from APU, meets monthly during the academic year to participate in library planning. As mentioned briefly above, the 1999 Faculty Survey included questions

about the library's resources and services. The library is currently re-strengthening its librarian liaison program, to address the dissatisfaction expressed in that survey and Academic Unit Self Studies. It is suggested that the Library Dean also look into library assessment in direct support of teaching and learning in line with other successful outcome-based models. *UAA 2005*, a recent planning document, has within Goal 1 (Advance excellence in learning, creativity, and discovery): to "Create a Library of the 21st Century." For that, the Consortium Library has prepared good, objective indicators to measure its achievements. Moreover, its short-term plans are well designed with trends in mind.

Commendation

1. The committee commends the University for its significant progress in improving the library and information resources. The Consortium Library's electronic library program initiative begun in 1999, its cooperative arrangements for funding, and its high caliber staff, together with plans for the new library building, are evidence of UAA's commitment to its motto "We Learn for Life."

Community Campus Libraries

Of the four community campuses, three of them (Matanuska-Susitna, Kodiak, and Kenai Peninsula College) have libraries, while Kachemak Bay Branch has a library resource room. Each library collection reflects the nature of the programs offered at its site, but all provide access to the electronic library resources mentioned above and use the circulation system which enhances borrowing of materials from other UA campuses. With the exception of Kachemak Bay, these campuses have one faculty librarian plus additional levels of staffing. Librarians are evaluated annually by their UAA peers, by the Dean of the Consortium, and by their directors. The Self-Study described less than optimal support for community campus library collections, but also noted how much the electronic library initiative has been of benefit.

Remoteness of the locations, relatively limited collection spaces, and dependence on the Consortium Library for resources—especially to support upper division coursework—do factor in as well. Faculty at the Matanuska-Susitna and Kodiak campuses said that their campus libraries, supplemented by the Consortium Library resources and services, met their information needs. Earlier in this Committee report, the Kenai Peninsula College and the Kachemak Bay Branch library and information services were addressed. The Consortium Library appears to be providing a good amount of support as it (1) hosts one to two meetings a year for all the community campus librarians: training is the primary focus; (2) provides library listservs which include all the remote librarians; (3) has designated as a contact one of the Consortium librarians whose responsibilities included visits to those campuses; (4) conducts databases searches, answers reference questions, and provides additional assistance.

Commendation

1. The Committee commends the UAA for providing librarian faculty at its community campuses and commends those librarians and their staff for the dedicated service they give with limited space and resources.

Recommendation

1. The Committee recommends that the community campus libraries (and Consortium Library) assess the information needs of the remote location users—faculty, staff, and students—and apply those findings to planning. (Standard 5.E)

Learning Resources Center (LRC)

The Learning Resources Center (LRC) reports administratively to the Community and Technical College. LRC's mission includes providing support and services to students and faculty as well as researching, modeling, and facilitating new educational approaches and technologies. Special emphasis is on support for the Developmental Education and Languages Department, minority, foreign, and mathematics students, in addition to students with special needs. Located on the western part of the campus, the 9,000 sq. ft. LRC complements the services of the Consortium Library by concentrating on the distribution and use of non-print materials. Its core collection and information resources are sufficient to support the curriculum and programs it serves. It also is a location for reserve materials. UAA would benefit if the LRC holdings would be catalogued and known via the Joint Library Catalog thus enabling enhanced use of the LRC collections.

This is obviously a very well-used place for many students. Surveys show it serves approximately 4,000 a week. The equipment and materials are well selected, acquired, and maintained. For example, the UAA Media Library contains over 3,000 films and tapes, supplemented by reciprocal service agreements to share additional titles. Through a variety of formats, students are encouraged to use the resources independently and effectively. Via the student technology fee-supported general-use computer lab (one of four on the campus), the LRC provides computer access to the Consortium Library's web-based catalog along with other resources both on- and off-campus. The LRC supports distance learning by providing online courses, telecourses, having materials available for checkout, and being the designated site in Anchorage for correspondence test proctoring.

The LRC is a facility with relatively long hours, open all seven days. Recognition of value of the LRC has been shown by the recent and soon-to-be completed renovations and refurbishing. The Center's personnel are enthusiastic about their work, qualified, and conduct an on-going training program to maintain performance quality. The unit head's background and on-going training make her an exceptionally valuable leader who is keeping LRC on the leading edge, anticipating needs and requesting equipment and resources UAA students need.

The LRC Manager and the Consortium Library Dean have met to discuss the new Library building, which will include an audiovisual viewing area and a listening room for music study. Ongoing coordination to avoid potential unnecessary duplication of collections and services is suggested.

For all libraries and LRC, hardware/software needs to be upgraded ("technology refresh") every 3-4 years, but there is currently no budget mechanism. Per the self study and interviews, the institution intends to support this need. UAA's Information Technology Services (ITS) has made a commendably significant difference by upgrading the university's information technology and communications infrastructure combined with its successful planning, projects, and initiatives.

In summary, the Consortium Library, the Community Campus libraries, the Learning Resource Center and the general information infrastructure are a credit to the UAA as well as the state.

Standard Six

Governance and Administration

UAA is a Major Administrative Unit of the University of Alaska, and is thus part of a multi-unit system governed by a single board and a system president. The current system emphasis on unity and strong central governance and administration offers both strengths and challenges for UAA, which is located in the most populous area of the state. On the one hand, an emphasis on unity may ensure that UAA receives an equitable share of UA resources needed to accomplish its mission as a comprehensive metropolitan university; on the other, UAA's goal of becoming a "university of first choice" for the region will require that it be allowed to have a distinctive identity.

The president and representatives of the board who met with the Committee expressed confidence in the future of UAA and supportive of new initiatives, particularly those that contribute to the Alaskan economy. Some regents still lament what they see as a dilution of the community college mission by absorption of the community colleges into the university, but they indicate approval of efforts by UAA to be responsive to community needs, citing the new degree program in global logistics management as an important example.

Leadership and Management

UAA has experienced significant changes in governance in the last decade. Financial pressures brought about reorganization and streamlining of administrative structure. In 1990, the Anchorage campus had eight schools and colleges; in 2000 it has five, with the concomitant succession of individuals holding administrative positions as the new structure has evolved. In addition, although the institution has had only two chancellors during the decade—the present chancellor took office in 1994, having been a dean at UAA prior to that time—the present provost is the fourth in ten years (including two interim provosts). However, a sense of administrative stability now pervades the campus.

A switch from a Faculty Senate composed of all members of the faculty who cared to participate to a representative Senate seen as less susceptible to domination by a few voices has increased the sense of fairness of the governance structure. In addition, both faculty and administration confirm acceptance of the principle of shared governance, and the level of mutual trust is reportedly high.

The present Chancellor and his administrative team are seen as having improved communication so that faculty, staff, and students not only feel they have a better idea of what is happening, they also say their voices are heard on governance issues. The institution has a revived sense of pride and belief in the future. UAA was described as a "nice place to work," and overall, the climate on campus is positive and optimistic.

Efforts to incorporate those working at the extended campuses into the larger life of the university have produced positive results. Continued good interactions will require continued attention to inclusiveness.

Important to the high campus morale is the fact that, after a number of years of flat or declining State support for higher education, new resources have become available for the University of Alaska system of which UAA is a part. Recruiting is underway for some of the

faculty lines that have been unfilled for about three years following a retirement incentive program, and plans for the new “Library of the 21st Century” are moving ahead. Wariness that accompanied the arrival of a new system president in 1998, who introduced his own set of initiatives, has evolved into apparent general support of the president, thanks to his success with the State Legislature.

It was suggested to the Committee by several interviewees that the 1990s should have been a premier development decade for UAA. The economic cutbacks of the early to mid decade unfortunately impacted UAA at a time when it should have been rising to meet the needs of its urban community and providing leadership in the system. With changes in governance and improved financial support, system leadership and campus representatives are optimistic that 2000-2010 will be UAA’s decade to shine.

Collective Bargaining

The existence of multiple collective bargaining contracts does not appear to have affected the University’s responsibilities under the Standards. An issue regarding faculty evaluation has been recently resolved.

Commendation

1. UAA leadership is commended for developing mechanisms to give voice to faculty, staff, and students in the direction of the institution, which has contributed to the positive, forward-looking atmosphere on campus.

Standard Seven Finance

Financial Planning

The Board of Regents and the University President have provided considerable autonomy to the University of Alaska Anchorage for financial planning and budgeting within the overall framework of the University's budget process. UAA participates in the initiative budgeting process on an equal footing with other Major Administrative Units and retains control over its base budget within available state funding.

The University of Alaska's budgeting process for FY 2003 began as it entered FY 2001. Priorities are set in accordance with the guidance of the President of the University statewide. Administrators at the University of Alaska Anchorage look at their long-term strategic goals as they determine short-term budget initiatives and choices.

The University of Alaska publishes a statewide budget each year. It provides information about all three major administrative units. However, detailed allocations for the major administrative units are not included. The University of Alaska Anchorage prepares its budget annually and provides it to the University of Alaska for inclusion in the statewide University budget. The budget published by the University statewide is distributed to all senior managers at the campus and, upon request, to others.

The faculty committee involved in the budget process has asked that changes be made in the process (whose schedule is established by the President of the University statewide) in order to facilitate opportunities for faculty involvement. Such involvement has been limited in the past two years. The Statewide Academic Council, comprised of the three provosts of the major administrative units, recently voted to change the budget schedule in order to allow for greater faculty review and involvement.

Debt is tracked carefully and its repayment controlled closely. The amount of funds which otherwise could be used for educational purposes diverted to meet debt service payments is carefully controlled and limited and is made available only after adoption of a business plan.

Financial Resources

The University of Alaska Anchorage has sought and received support from business partners to supplement its state appropriations and tuition income. It also has selectively set higher tuition and fee levels for certain programs in order to make them more viable financially. In addition, it has increased its grant and contract income. It has not yet been able to attract significant private donations. Its allocation of resources is guided by its mission, goals and priorities. This extends to the auxiliary enterprises as well as the educational and general programs.

The University of Alaska Anchorage is to be commended for the carefully planned and skillfully executed way it built its well-conceived and excellently constructed housing and dining facilities to attract and retain students. This has led already to filling the housing complex and appears to be on its way to meeting its target for helping to build enrollment of traditional aged students while eliminating on schedule the \$400,000 subsidy the housing and dining facility was to receive in each of its first three years of operation.

The University of Alaska Anchorage has sufficient resources to meet its debt service requirements under current assumptions. It has, thus far, met its expectations with regard to the business plan for the new housing and dining facilities. However, if enrollment erodes or state funding is reduced, the University may have difficulty meeting its commitments in future.

The University of Alaska Anchorage did a good job of maintaining its fiscal stability in the face of eroding state funding. Despite some years when expenditures exceeded revenue, the University has maintained its available unrestricted fund balance over the five-year period.

Transfers among the major funds and interfund borrowing appear to be legal and guided by clearly stated policies and made in accordance with prudent financial planning and control.

Generally, the institution demonstrates the adequacy of financial resources for the support of all its offerings including specialized occupational, technical, and professional programs. The overall financial picture of the University has been constrained by state appropriation stagnation for many years. This has led to program reductions and to the transfer of some programs towards self-support. Further, the structure of the University requires community campuses to incur significant travel costs to be a part of the University and its governance process. This has created a hardship on at least one community campus.

The University of Alaska Anchorage administers federal financial aid, the Alaska State Student Loan Program, and a tuition waiver program. The waiver program is limited by Board policy to 3 percent of tuition income, although UAA currently offers a lower level of waivers than that. The Commission on Postsecondary Education provides information to UAA about the Alaska State Student Loan Program barely in advance of the academic term. This has made it difficult for the UAA to plan.

The University of Alaska Anchorage has incurred considerable levels of debt in recent years. However, reserves have not been increasing. The University presently has sufficient reserves to meet its requirements but should be wary of taking on additional debt before building up its reserves. The University monitors its auxiliary balances carefully and is diligent about meeting the debt service covenants of its bonds.

The University of Alaska Anchorage plans its programs and budgets holistically, paying attention to the contributions which housing and dining, in particular, can bring to campus life and the education and general efforts of the university.

Recommendations

1. The Committee recommends that the University of Alaska Anchorage consider providing additional travel funds to its community campuses to permit their full participation in the life of the University.

2. The Committee recommends that the University seek ways to receive information about Alaska State Student Loan recipients and amounts according to a schedule which meets the particular needs of both the University and the Commission on Postsecondary Education.

Financial Management

The UAA Chancellor reports regularly to the UA President and twice a year to the board about the financial adequacy and stability of the institution. The President provides regular reports to the board.

The Vice Chancellor for finance and administration is responsible for the university's financial functions, including budgeting, purchasing, cash handling, and accounting. The Vice Chancellor maintains oversight of the financial affairs of the administrative units, of the Provost, and of the Vice Chancellor for Advancement. The Vice Chancellor is qualified for these roles.

Overall policy guidance and the preparation of balance sheets and maintenance of the general ledger are activities of the University of Alaska statewide. With respect to the self-study, the Anchorage major administrative unit did not reconcile between the IPEDS data and the financial report data presented to the Committee. There did not appear to be clear understanding at the University of Alaska Anchorage of the activities of and adjustments made by the University of Alaska statewide office. Reconciliation of all figures presented to the Committee has now been completed through the cooperation of the University of Alaska Anchorage and the University of Alaska statewide office.

The University of Alaska Anchorage has met the requirement that expenditures and income be fully controlled by the institution and included in its regular planning, budgeting, accounting, and auditing procedures.

The University of Alaska's president's office has the centralized responsibility on behalf of all its units for cash management. The University of Alaska Anchorage has adequate control of cash but its management and investment is conducted by the statewide president's office.

The University of Alaska utilizes the SCT BANNER Financial Information System. That system and the modifications made to it follow generally accepted principles of accounting as do University personnel. The University of Alaska's controller's office has verified that its system follows GAAP.

Although the State of Alaska, through its legislative auditor, performs occasional audits of University of Alaska functions and entities, regular financial audits are done by an independent certified public accountant. The University of Alaska (statewide) is audited each year. The most recent audit was performed by an independent certified public accountant (KPMG) and includes a management letter.

The University of Alaska president's office includes a statewide internal audit staff which audits the operations of the University of Alaska Anchorage both on a scheduled and an as-needed basis.

No recommendations were made in the most recent independent audit. The University of Alaska Anchorage has followed up on all recommendations made by the University's statewide internal audit staff.

The independent auditor's report was provided.

Recommendation

1. The Committee recommends that the University of Alaska Anchorage and the University of Alaska's statewide office develop and implement frequent, regularly scheduled, systematic communications about financial adjustments and other financial information so that reconciliations are and can be made accurately, routinely and in a timely manner.

Fundraising and Development

Although fundraising at the University of Alaska Anchorage has not matured, it is guided by written policies and appears to be conducted in accordance with applicable requirements and standards. These standards are established by policies adopted by the University of Alaska Board of Regents and regulations promulgated by the University's Director of Development. Policies of the University of Alaska direct all gifts to the Foundation.

Endowments are managed by the University of Alaska Foundation, a University of Alaska-wide private, non-profit institution. The Foundation is chartered to operate "solely for the benefit of the University of Alaska." The Foundation is charged with the management of donations made to the University and, by agreement with the University, with management of funds associated with the Land Grant Trust Fund. It has no formal agreement with the University for the management of donations or other funds other than the Land Grant Trust Fund. The Foundation's Executive Director (who also is the University's Director of Development) emphasized that the Foundation respects donors' wishes in its activities. The Foundation, through its Board, establishes investment policies for the Consolidated Fund (which consists of the Pooled Endowment Fund and the Land Grant Trust Fund). Donations made to and endowments maintained for the University of Alaska Anchorage are accounted for separately in the Consolidated Fund and income is allocated appropriately to those donations and endowments.

Other than the agreement governing the management of the Land Grant Trust Fund, the University and the Foundation have no contractual agreements. Further, employees of the University provide all services to the Foundation. In October 2000, the Foundation Board voted to begin planning for the separation of employees providing services to the Foundation from the University. The Foundation's Executive Director expects that an operating agreement soon will be prepared between the Foundation and University spelling out the respective relationships of the two entities.

Standard Eight Physical Resources

Instructional and Support Facilities

Generally, the University of Alaska Anchorage has sufficient facilities to achieve its mission and goals. The addition of the Library for the 21st Century will provide further enhancement to the physical plant. Science laboratories are viewed by many to be inadequate in number, size, modernity, and equipment. Faculty in both education and arts and sciences areas noted a lack of office space, adequately equipped classrooms, and storage as issues. In addition, other units have been required to lease space off-campus and increase student fees to pay for lease costs due to inadequate suitable space on the campus. Finally, there was evidence that the lack of space may be resulting in a loss of funded research.

The University is moving to address these issues. A \$1.5 million renovation of science laboratory facilities is planned for FY 01 in order to provide adequate facilities until a new science building can be built (estimated at 5-7 years). Planning funds have been requested for the new building. In addition, the University of Alaska Anchorage plans to renovate selected faculty offices during the next two years. It also has just established a space policy committee whose goal is to maximize the use of existing space.

No special issues were raised or appeared concerning the adequacy of furnishings on campus although staff expressed frustration with the state of some of the furnishings.

The plant is in good repair and the University has in place the systems and commitment to maintain their functionality and quality. A board policy requires that 1.5 percent of the replacement value of the physical plant be expended each year for cyclical maintenance and repair. This, plus the addition of specially appropriated state funds, has helped reduce the deferred maintenance backlog.

Facilities appeared to meet this standard in that they reflect due regard for health and safety and for access by the physically disabled. The University has in place policies to ensure continuation of this fact. The University has an active environmental health and safety program and has embarked on a state-funded ADA upgrade program. The University of Alaska Anchorage sought and received a special legislative appropriation for this latter effort.

Extended Campuses

Generally, the facilities at the extended campuses seem adequate. However, additional facilities and improved maintenance were deemed desirable by some of the community campuses. The Kachemak Bay (Homer) facility is viewed as being too small and inadequate. Further, the lease on the principal classroom facility in Homer soon will expire and may not be renewed.

Until recently, departments could lease space off-campus without central review or approval. Some leased facilities are deemed adequate or better while at least one was termed as questionable. The new leased-space policy requires review by the facilities office and approval by the purchasing office and is expected to lead to more standardization of condition of leased facilities.

Equipment and Materials

Generally, equipment was judged to be available and adequate. However, there is concern about the state and currency of some laboratory equipment. Further, replacement of information technology equipment could become an issue unless steps are taken to establish appropriate replacement schedules with identified funding to ensure they can be met. Thus far, replacement/refreshment has been accommodated using technology fees (for student-related equipment) and annual budget savings. It should be noted, too, that network connections to community campuses, particularly at Homer, are not of the same speed and quality as those available in Anchorage.

Equipment is well maintained and controlled. Laboratory equipment has not been replaced or upgraded in a timely fashion, although funds from the laboratory renovation projects may help with this in FY 01. There is concern that the same could happen with information technology equipment. The advent of expanded distance education efforts, predicted to occur soon, also will require continual upgrading and replacement of equipment.

The University of Alaska Anchorage handles hazardous materials in accordance with its written and detailed procedures. The University is proud of its record in this arena.

Physical Resources Planning

The physical master plan was completed in 1990 and covers the period 1990-2015. It provided good historical and other background. However, the master plan has not proved to be a good guide to the actual development of new facilities on the Anchorage campus. The master plan is now being updated using a highly participative process. The integration of community campuses into the master planning process is of concern.

The University of Alaska Anchorage participates in the University of Alaska capital budgeting process. Each major administrative unit develops its own project priorities to meet its needs. The three MAU's work with the president's office to develop a University-wide priority list. This list is separated into new construction/major renovation, planning, residential, equipment renewal and replacement (including telecommunications), and maintenance categories. Funding is sought through the State of Alaska for University priorities.

The University of Alaska Anchorage pays close attention to security and to meeting the needs of special constituencies in its planning for facilities.

The governing board must approve all construction projects prior to their submission to the State of Alaska for funding. Neighborhood groups, campus users and other appropriate interested persons and groups are actively involved in both master planning and in planning for facilities projects.

Recommendations

1. The Committee recommends that the University of Alaska Anchorage actively seek funding for a new science facility as soon as possible. Further, the Committee has made a general recommendation concerning this standard. (Standards 8.A. and 8.B)

2. The Committee also recommends that UAA pursue new or improved permanent facilities in Homer. (Standard 8.A)

3. The committee recommends that the University of Alaska Anchorage improve its network connections to its community campuses, especially the Homer facility. (Standard 8.B.1)

4. The Committee recommends that the community campuses specifically be included in the physical master plan update. (Standard 8.C)

Standard Nine Institutional Integrity

There was every indication that UAA adheres to the highest ethical standards and honors and implements the principle of academic freedom.

Conclusion

The Committee found that University of Alaska Anchorage had progressed greatly from previous accreditation visits. The institution has been responsive to the recommendations in previous reports and has addressed deficiencies, such as in planning and the library. It faces continued financial challenges as it develops ways to meet the needs of its community and to grow in stature, but students, faculty, staff, and administrators appear to be working together for the benefit of the university.

General Commendations and Recommendations

General Commendations

1. Goal Three of UAA 2005 calls for expanded partnerships with the community as UAA seeks to “fully engage [its] talent and knowledge for the future of Alaska.” The Committee commends UAA for vigorously pursuing this aspect of its mission, and for its success in creating viable partnerships with local community services, education, industry and the arts.
2. Given the challenges of the past decade, the high level of morale and energy on the UAA campus is remarkable. The Committee commends UAA faculty, staff, students, and administrators for their positive outlook, confidence in the future of their institution, and determination to make UAA a “University of First Choice.”
3. The committee commends the University of Alaska Anchorage for using the University of Alaska Scholars program effectively to increase the number of students from Alaska High Schools who are making this institution their university of first choice.
4. The committee commends the Anchorage campus for providing excellent, well-managed, new residence halls and dining facilities that enhance the residential aspects of the institution, contribute to the attraction and retention of recent high school graduates, and build learning communities. As the institution grows, continuing attention and planning should be devoted to transportation patterns and campus layout to ensure that these residence halls contribute fully to the development of a university with a strong sense of community.
5. The Committee commends the University for its significant progress in improving the library and information resources. The Consortium Library’s electronic library program initiative begun in 1999, its cooperative arrangements for funding, and its high caliber staff, together with plans for the new library building, are evidence of UAA’s commitment to its motto “We Learn for Life.”
6. UAA is to be commended for launching an Honors Program to enhance its reputation, to increase its attractiveness to academically outstanding students, and to provide a locus of activity for student inquiry and research.

General Recommendations

1. Standard One states the expectation that planning will be an ongoing effort, with a clear definition of the planning process, assessment of planning activities, and use of the results of assessment to identify institutional priorities and allocate resources, leading to another round of the process. The Committee recommends that UAA not only clearly define its planning process, but also demonstrate that it integrates planning and assessment with the development of institutional priorities and the allocation of resources. (Standard 1.B)
2. The University has made progress in the assessment of educational effectiveness, including the creation of a guidebook for college deans and the implementation of assessments in specific courses and programs, which have led to improvements. However, progress is uneven. The Committee recommends that the University ensure that its educational program assessment process be comprehensive, systematic and institution-wide. (Standard 2.B, Policy 2.2)
3. Through recent and continuing developments that include mergers of institutions, the University of Alaska Anchorage has become an institution with multiple and diverse sites for delivery of educational programming and services. These changes require ongoing attention to governance, budgeting, allocation of resources, and communication among geographically dispersed locations. The committee recommends specific and demonstrable attention to ensure that all educational units are integral components of the institution's organizations. (Standard 2.G.4)
4. The Committee is concerned that the University of Alaska Anchorage may not have sufficient or adequately outfitted space for the effective operation of all of its programs. Of particular note is the serious lack of laboratory space for both instruction and research and for housing grant-funded activities. Other issues appear to be a lack of appropriate classroom and faculty office space in certain disciplines and locations. The Committee recommends that the University of Alaska Anchorage develop and implement short- and long-term plans to provide sufficient, adequate, and suitable space for all of its programs and locations. (Standard 8.A.1 and 8.A.2)
5. The Committee recommends that the Faculty Senate formalize a review of general education requirements that addresses their rationale and plan. Input should be sought from the faculty, administrative staff, and other stakeholders throughout UAA. It is expected that the work on articulating and communicating general education's mission, goals, and objectives of general education will continue. (Standard 2, Policy 2.1)
6. While the Committee is pleased to note the effective reorganization of information technology, it recommends the development of a UAA-wide plan for distance education in order to maximize opportunities for students. It is further recommended that planning for distance education involve the other MAU's and address program emphases, technology(ies) to be targeted, funding, faculty and student support, and enrollment

services. (Standard 2, Policy 2.6)

7. Because of the division of responsibility for financial management between the University of Alaska Anchorage and the University of Alaska, the Committee recommends that UAA and UA ensure that financial systems, reports, and communications are accurate, understood by their financial management personnel, and reconciled on a routine basis. (Standard 7)