

## UAA Administrative Review Questionnaire – Spring 2020

### For the Graduate School

#### What are the core functions of your unit that are funded in Fund 1 (i.e. Fund 104110)?

Core functions of the Graduate School include strategic visioning and planning, implementing, and evaluating graduate programs to drive enrollment growth and to meet the workforce needs of the state and beyond. To accomplish this, the Graduate Dean and staff of the Graduate School:

- Provide general leadership for graduate education
- Coordinate the contribution of graduate programming to the strategic plan fulfillment
- Work with the Provost, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, and Associate Vice Provost for Institutional Research to ensure high quality graduate education
- Assist with accreditation related activities that impact graduate education.
- Reach out to industry groups and program advisory boards to understand state needs for graduate education and workforce development and facilitate program development to meet those needs.
- Work with the Vice Provost for Research, academic college deans, and faculty to conceptualize, develop, and implement new graduate programs to meet workforce needs and advance research.
- Collaborate across the university to develop and market graduate programs and promote the recruitment, retention, graduation, and career success of students earning graduate degrees.
- Advocate for appropriate budgets for graduate programs across the university, in collaboration with academic college deans.
- Provide focused leadership for graduate education across multiple delivery modalities including blended and online programs.
- Working with academic deans and faculty of graduate programs, provide support for faculty professional development and mentoring. Supervise and support the staff of the Graduate School.
- Create a sense of community and graduate student culture within programs and across colleges that support student success.
- Work with Faculty Senate to develop and maintain a shared governance structure that serves the needs of the Graduate School's students and faculty.
- Support diversity, inclusion, and a culture of respect.

**If one or more of these functions was reduced or discontinued, what would be the impact on:**

More students persisting and completing educational goals?

In its function of quality control and maintaining equitable standards, not having this kind of centralized oversight would be detrimental to student matriculation, retention, and degree completion. For example, the Graduate School Office monitors the annual progress reports for each graduate student, ensuring that students obtain timely and appropriate feedback on progress towards degree completion. The office also supports a Graduate Student Association which helps to address graduate student specific concerns.

Supporting overall student, faculty and staff success in meeting UAA's mission?

As a Carnegie Classified Comprehensive, Masters degree institution, maintaining a strong graduate school is critical to maintaining our accreditation. Without a Graduate School, graduate programming would be left entirely to individual colleges, so there would be replication of services across multiple units, leading to unnecessary duplication and inefficient use of resources. Furthermore, there would be a real risk of declining enrollments and a decrease in tuition and fee revenues (currently approximately \$5.8M and \$2.5M, respectively).

Impacts to UAA's reputation, and ability to attract and retain students and/or external support?

Graduate students are critical to maintaining strong research in many of our departments and help PI's win important research funding from State and Federal agencies as well as industrial partners. Strong graduate programs also help to improve local economies as local professionals upgrade their skills through graduate education at UAA.

**Identify measures and targets used to monitor the impact of functions on each of the above (not all elements may be relevant for your unit, only address relevant items).**

The measures the Graduate School uses include:

Yield of student admitted to enrolled  
Enrollment (number of majors)  
Progress of individual students towards degree  
Number of awards per year  
Time to degree  
Emsi workforce placement

Targets vary depending on the program, type of degree, and whether program is designed for part-time or full-time enrollment. In terms of workforce placement, 75% in-field placement is the target.

**What improvements have been achieved over the last five years year?**

The Office of Academic Affairs engaged the Council of Graduate Schools Fall 2018 to do a thorough review of the Graduate School and make recommendations. Early Spring 2019 at site visit team met with various constituencies and stakeholder of the Graduate School and provided a comprehensive report May 2019. Coincident with the decision of OAA to review the Graduate School, the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) site visit team recommended that attention be directed to improving graduate programming at UAA. with a new graduate dean being recruited for the 2020-2021 academic year.

The report from the Council of Graduate School made specific recommendations regarding recruitment, admissions, and degree certification functions, as well as recommending that UAA institute have graduate faculty designation with associated standards for mentoring and research. The report also encouraged

the recruitment of a new Dean of the Graduate School and an additional staff position.

**What efforts have your unit made to improve efficiencies and reduce costs? What was the result?**

The Graduate School already operates on a small budget. Staff and processes are operating at minimally acceptable level to serve the UAA graduate community in the core functions as listed above. Current staffing is an Acting Dean (who also serves as Interim Provost), one staff person, and a student assistant just hired.

**List and briefly describe any current or proposed Board of Regents Policy, State or Federal mandates, or laws that require the continuation of your core function(s).**

As mentioned above, the NWCCU has stated that UAA needs to pay more attention to graduate education and the Council of Graduate Schools completed an audit in 2019 and outlined steps to make graduate education more robust at UAA.

**Potential cuts: a. Please describe any function reductions or eliminations that are feasible without significantly affecting UAA's mission fulfillment or its compliance mandates? b. Are any functions within your unit are duplicated elsewhere at UAA? c. Is there an opportunity for efficiency to be created by partnering or combining functions? Please describe the opportunities you identify within your unit and include the approximate dollar values and savings that would result.**

- a. Any reduction to the Graduate School budget will result in the complete shutdown of the office and be contrary to the recommendations from NWCCU. The office will need enhanced funding to hire the new dean, which will need to come from other OAA units.
- b. Aspects of Recruitment, Admissions, and the Registrar's office functions are dispersed and could be centralized under the Graduate School for more targeted customer/student service and economy of scale. There is a strong need to do more of the work electronically and current limitations to SW IT services drive up the cost.
- c. Partnering opportunities include collaborating with CAFÉ to provide workshops for new or junior faculty, and post-docs in Best Practices in Graduate Students Mentoring. There are opportunities for partnering with community resources to advocate for graduate studies and increased funding for research and student support.